

THE FIRST FOUR YEARS ARE THE HARDEST!

By Helga ten Brummelaar (Aug 2024)



Eve arrives with Helga and Henk, 1956 from Holland, flying for three days before arriving in Sydney. Theo had gone before to make ready for their arrival.

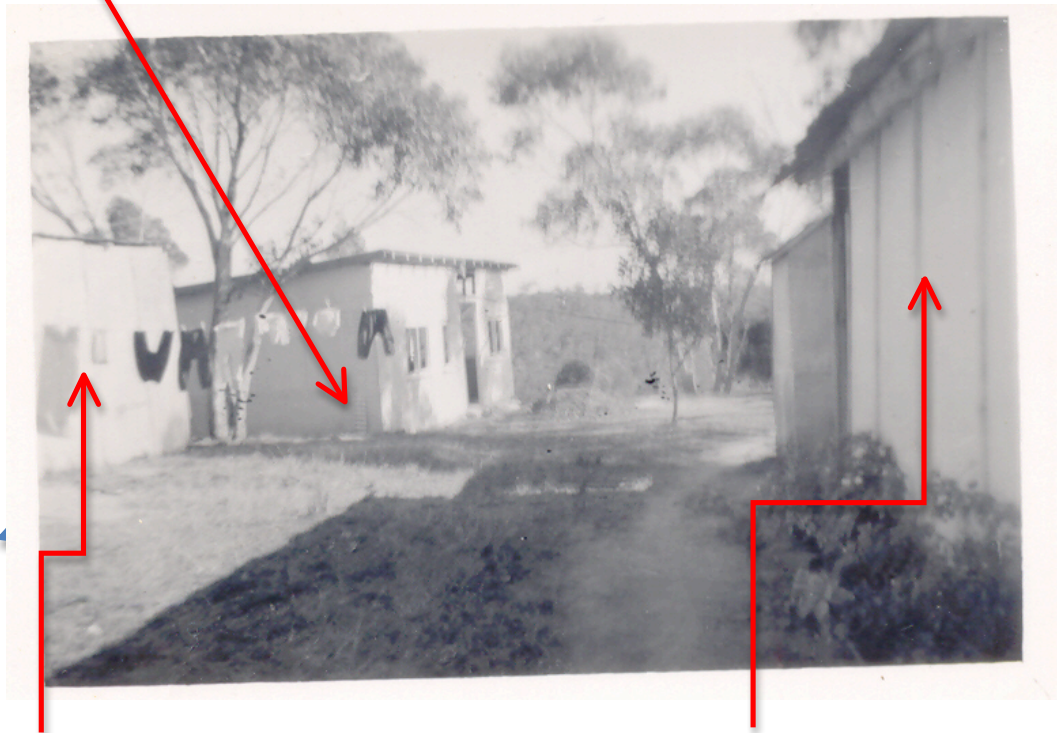
They originally lived with Theo's parents— "Opa and Oma" who had migrated earlier and had bought a 3 room house in Cowan NSW (no internal bathroom). As soon as possible Theo (with help from his brother) built a second small 'house' in the back yard to accommodate his own little family. In those days you could just build.... No need for planning permission etc. The little 'Kite' had two rooms – no power (they ran a power cable from the Main house) and no water – Eve filled a bucket every day from the laundry/bathroom – yet another separate building in the yard. The WC was an outdoor traditional 'dunny out the back'. Cooking was done on a two burner Primus Stove. They lived in this house for four years until Theo graduated from University and had a paid job with the DMR (Department of Main Roads) – and if he was prepared to move to rural areas, a house came with the job. We moved 4 times in about 6 years.

While living in Cowan, Theo studied at the University of NSW, whilst Eve (who spoke reasonable English) worked as a cleaner during the day. Oma looked after the kids and Eve shared her earnings from cleaning with her. At night, Eve would read and write abridged versions of the various texts and relevant chapters in reference books Theo had to use as reference material to gain his accreditation as a Civil Engineer. It was all hands to the pump!

ARRIVAL 1956



The Kite



The shower/laundry

Opa's 'workshop' (he was a blacksmith and began receiving small commissions in Sydney to add to the families income(eg decorative lamps)

FIRST HOUSE 'THE KITE' 1957-58 (ISH)



“Australia – WC in de tuin!!!!”

by Poewah 1959

(Eve’s mother, “ Poewah”, visited us to be there for the birth of Joan, born February 1960)



— the little school in Cowan had two classrooms and two teachers. One for years 3 to 6 - and the other for the kindergarten to year 2 class. About 30 kids attended the school. It was a 45 - minute walk each way from home to the school. In those days, it was common for Helga, Henk and the neighbour's two boys to walk this on their own. Sometimes the neighbour's boy rode his horse.



FIFTH BIRTHDAY AND FIRST YEAR AT SCHOOL 1959



NEW RURAL AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCES (1958) Summer Work with DMR – off to Mendooran to supervise the pouring of concrete piers for bridge supports over the Riversaw a drover for the first time



MUM TAKING US TO THE COWAN STATION FOR A DAY OUT 1959 – Note the hat, stockings, high heel shoes and the fur coat – standard outdoor wear in those days (sent out by her sister). Tucked away in dads 'basement' I believe I still have that wonderful doll!



After Graduation (including a Masters Degree) Theo worked as a Civil Engineer with the then Department of Main Roads, for some 4years(a condition of his 'scholarship') as "Officier in Charge. Theo was to return to the University of NSW as a Senior lecturer in the School of Traffic and Highway Engineering in 1966 and taught a further 27 years. He contributed to many innovations in traffic and highway design, including initiating the then new ideas about Landscaping of Roads – the first significant example he worked on was the Sydney-Newcastle expressway! In 2006 he won The Ray Moloney Award for Innovation for innovative use of "The Moss Programme" – an innovative and complex terrain CAD modeling tool that he introduced to the University training in Indonesia and of course the University of NSW School of Engineering.

GRADUATION APRIL 1960 "BACHELOR OF ENGINEERING"

MIGRANT'S UNI. SUCCESS



**SYDNEY
MORNING
HERALD
1960**

Mr Theo ten Brummelaar, of Taren Point, a Dutch migrant who arrived in Australia four-and-a-half years ago, shows his family his Civil Engineering degree after a graduation ceremony at the University of N.S.W. yesterday. With Mr and Mrs ten Brummelaar are their son, Henk, 5, and daughters Helga, 7 and Joan, two months. The Chancellor of the University, Mr Wallace C. Wurth, conferred 107 degrees in the faculties of Commerce and Engineering in the presence of about 1,000 relatives and friends.

IT'S GRADUATION DAY..



... AT THE UNIVERSITY OF N.S.W., Mr. Theo ten Brummelaar, who graduated as a Bachelor of Engineering, with his wife and children Helga (seven), Henk (five) and Heinrich (two months).

DEGREE WAS FAMILY AFFAIR FOR DUTCHMAN

Graduation at the University of New South Wales yesterday was very much a family affair for Mr. Theo ten Brummelaar.

The combined efforts of his family enabled him to get his Bachelor's Degree in Engineering.

Mr. ten Brummelaar was one of the 107 graduates in the Faculties of Commerce and Engineering who had degrees conferred on them yesterday by the Chancellor (Dr. Wallace T. Wurth).

Fourteen Asian students were among the graduates.

The graduation ceremony was the first function held in the new £200,000 science lecture theatre.

Mr. ten Brummelaar came to Australia from Singapore about five years ago.

As soon as he arrived in Australia his career became a family business.

the Main Roads Board and an allowance of £10 a week for the remainder of the course.

Mr. ten Brummelaar's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Heinrich Brummelaar, cleared a room at their home so he could study without disturbance.

Throughout the four-year course relatives in Europe sent gifts of m // up and clothing to his wife.

The lipstick she wore at her husband's graduation arrived in one of the relief parcels.

Last October Mrs. ten Brummelaar's mother, Mrs. E. Loos, came out from Holland to be present at her son-in-law's graduation.

She was among the crowd of well-wishers yesterday.

Word of advice

His brother, Herman, the first member of the family to come to Australia, gave him one word of advice: "Study."

So Mr. ten Brummelaar enrolled at the University of New South Wales.

For the first year he kept himself and his family on the money he had saved.

After that his money ran out.

Then he got a job with