

Part 2 by Lyn Burnett

19 Albemarle Street, Yeerongpilly



19 Albemarle St, Yeerongpilly, my family home is no longer to be found on a map, but it still is there now in the bones of the residence at 50 Soden Street, and always in my heart. This is a brief history of my house and home as I recall and from research I've done.

My paternal Great Grandparents, William and Susan Rogers (nee Cook) from County Armagh in Ireland, lived here from 1920-1950. After arriving in Australia in 1877, they acquired property in Sunnybank, on the corner of Jackson & Beenleigh Roads. As their daughters grew up, the Rogers moved from their farm around 1912 settling first in King St., then Villa St., Annerley before finally buying the Yeerongpilly property on 12th February 1920. It consisted of 3 blocks of 16 perches- lot nos. 70, 71 & 72 in Soden St (originally Herbert St according to the map of Lathorn Estate in 1885). The house though, always faced Albemarle St (originally Margaret St, till 1941). My Dad said the 3rd lot was sold off early on and William had grown strawberries on this block.

LATHORN ESTATE

Being Subdivisions 1 to 118 of Portions 131

PARISH OF YEERONGPILLY

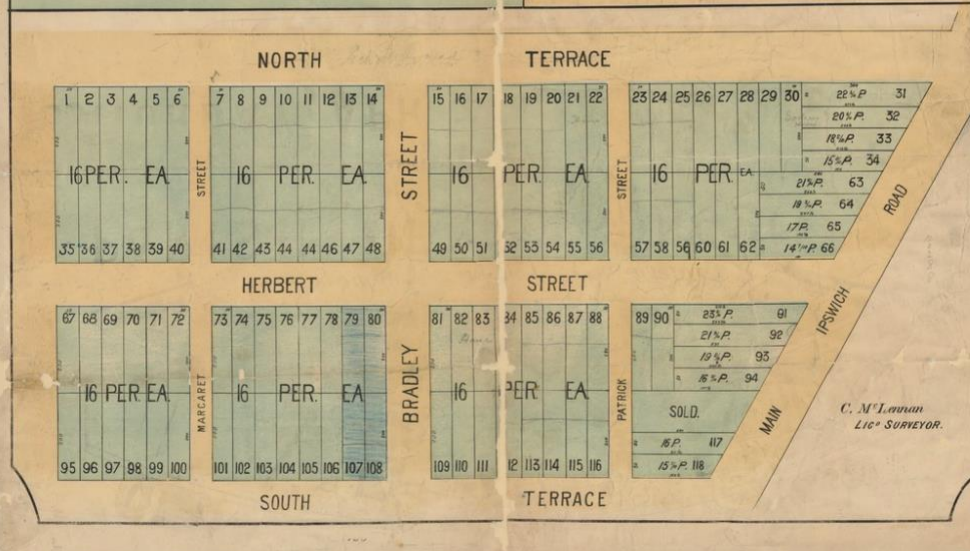
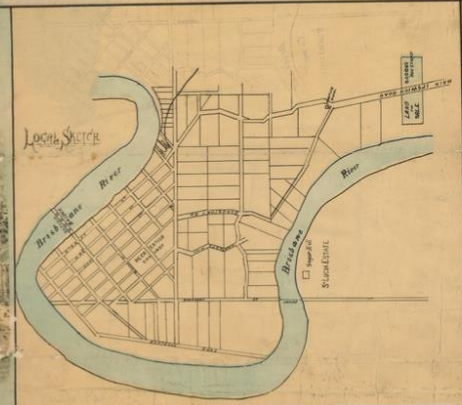
FOR SALE BY AUCTION ON THE GROUND

SATURDAY APRIL 25TH AT 2-30 P.M.

LUNCHEON PROVIDED

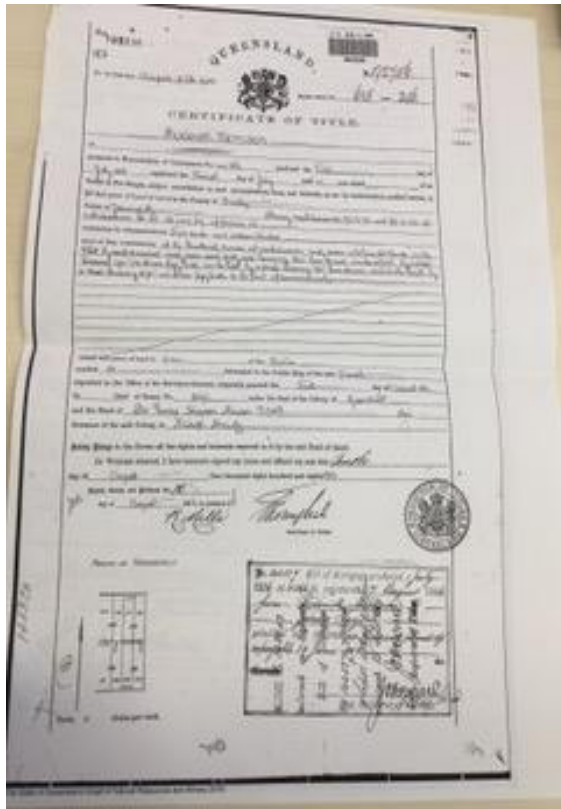
JAMES R. DICKSON & Co.

AUCT. OF. ERS



C. M. Lewman
Lic^d SURVEYOR.

Lathorn Estate 1885, State Library of Queensland collection. Note: North Terrace now School Road, Herbert Street now Soden Street, Margaret Street now Albemarle Street. Lots 70, 71, 72 on south-west corner of Herbert and Margaret Street were purchased by William and Susan Rogers. Lots 71 and 72 became 19 Albemarle Street.



Title Deeds 19 Albermarle Street



*1936 Aerial photo, Qimagery. Current street names from top: Yeronga Park and School Road, Soden Street, South Terrace.
From left: Nathan Terrace, Albemarle Street, Bradley Street.*



After William passed in 1939, my Nanna & Pa Fisher returned from Thorneside to live with Susan. Then in 1950, with Susan's passing, the house was left to my Nanna Beatrice. On the marriage of my parents, Roy & Val Fisher, an extra wing was added with a new bedroom and kitchen to house us all. On her passing in 1966, Nanna left the house to her children, Roy and Moya. As Moya already was settled at Red Hill, Dad bought her share. My Mum and Dad lived here well into their golden years. After a decline in their health and mobility and much soul searching, we made the sad but practical decision to sell the house at Yeerongpilly in 2017. It went to auction, and a Developer bought the property.



View from Albemarle Street during renovation. Note: the original house is roughly the right half of the structure and has been lifted moved westwards and rotated 90° to face north towards Soden Street.



View from Soden Street during renovation

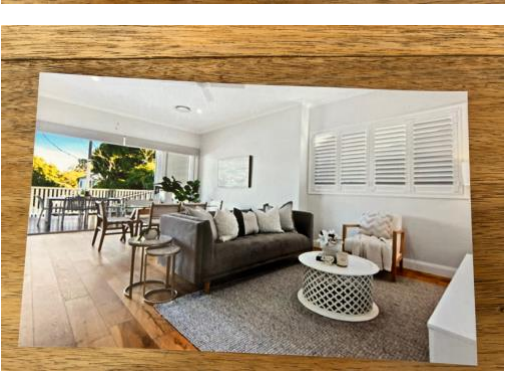
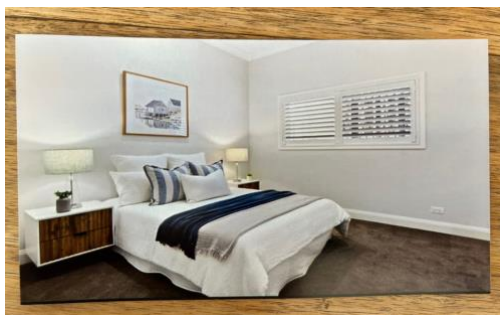


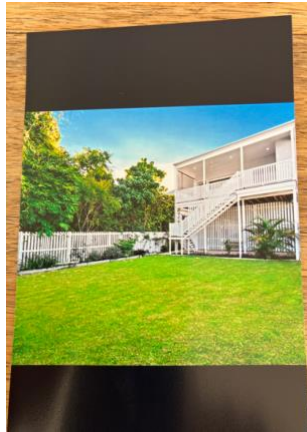
50 Soden Street

In early 2018, my mum and I were invited back to see what the new place looked like. There were Council restrictions on the property that included keeping the front character of the original home and not building underneath due to a watercourse issue. What a change we found when we returned. The house had been lifted, turned to face Soden St, and moved over to lot 71. The corner block, Lot 72, was left vacant to be sold off to another builder later in 2018. Here is 50 Soden St!



I feel the façade is still recognizable from the front, though many beg to differ. The new house was beautifully designed inside and out for the more modern family of the 21st century. Overall, the brand-new house was stunning, and I thought the Developer & Builder had done a wonderful job, just waiting for a new young family to love it and bring it back to life again. However, it was not the home called ROSENEATH that I had grown up in.





I knew the old house well, having lived in it for about 25 years before I married and moved out, then continuing to visit it nearly every week with my own children and caring for Mum & Dad as they aged. To me it was a home of joy and celebration, fun and adventure, life & death. When you mentioned 19 Albemarle St, Yeerongpilly to people they didn't know where it was or let alone spell it, but to us it was home. It was a great area, both the house & the suburb, to grow up in and to explore as a young child. As kids growing up in the 1960's we had a freedom that was amazing and missing today. We could go down to the local creek with others and spend the whole day there, only wandering home when we got hungry. We could play cricket, tennis etc. on the street, as Soden St was a dead end. Even though there were only three of us, my best friends (Janice & Peter) from across the road, we'd pretend we were the Famous Five, from the Enid Blyton series and plan secret missions across our neighbours' yards and houses. We didn't end up in too much trouble. Everyone had a sense of community and knew each other. So here is the home I grew up in as I remember it, starting with the outdoors, because the large, colourful garden was the first thing you saw when you arrived.



Roy and Val and grandchild c.1990

Dad loved his garden and spent much time with Mum's help to maintain and care for the beautiful, rambling, and ever-changing garden and yard. As I've grown older & wiser, I understand why he spent so much time in the garden. It is a place of peace, joy and accomplishment - a reflection on real life, I suppose. I recall numerous trees, such as a macadamia, mandarin (both great for climbing), grapefruit, mango, pawpaw & banana patch (where I often pretended the fairies lived) plus fir trees, a traveller's palm, frangipani and umbrella trees. Dad would pick excess mandarins,

grapefruit, & Qld. nuts, put them in a bucket at the front gate with a FOR SALE sign. People loved buying his fresh produce at a reasonable price.



We also had hedges and bushes of all shapes and sizes around the house and other spaces of the yard. Then there were choko vines & passionfruit vines along the neighbours' fence, flowering vines over Dad's self-made structures, such as the BBQ shelter, the wind break near the old, outdoor copper, and other trellises. Dad & Mum also loved flowers and as you can see from the photo, he did enter them in the annual Annerley Methodist church flower show. He was happy to give cuttings to other people and Mum used our flowers when doing the flower arrangements for church as well as Mother's Day chrysanthemum posies. I loved decorating wooden crosses or wire wreaths as a young girl with flowers from our garden for Anzac Day ceremonies at Yeronga State School. I often took a bunch of flowers from home for the teachers. Dad also had a sense of fun with all the quirky ornaments and gadgets he would bring home from outings to garden centres, markets and second-hand stores, like giant feet stepping stones, windmills, life-size kangaroos, bird baths, an ornamental pond with goldfish, chimes and a myriad of garden gnomes etc., etc. He also loved colour and everything that could be painted Dad used the brightest colours to paint, like the outdoor furniture, pots and statues. Lots of the neighbours would admire the garden and stop for a chat with Mum & Dad when they were out in the garden.



As kids, my brother and I played all sorts of games amongst the vegetation- it was so inspiring to dream up games around Cowboys & Indians, armies of the world, jungle adventures with Tarzan & Jane, fairies & pixies amid the flowers & leaves as well as making tree houses & cubby houses etc. At Easter, we would make nests of leaves and flowers in the hedge near the back stairs, for the bunny to leave eggs in. We had room for a round blow-up pool which was great for summer and Dad even ventured in on those really, hot days. The big backyard was great for parties and other celebrations, such as Christmas, Retirement, Cracker Night, wedding photos etc. The garden and backyard evolved over the seasons and years, with different plants and structures coming and going. It was a labour of love having such a huge space of 32perches to care for, but Mum and Dad left us a tremendous legacy in the garden of pure enjoyment, for which I am so grateful, despite not having the green thumbs that my parents had.



Now for inside the house. This is a plan of what the original house looked like when my Grandparents lived in it, from about the 1940's. Back then, it would have had weatherboard external walls and a corrugated iron roof. There were 2 bedrooms, a sleepout, a lounge room and eat-in kitchen with a stove recess. Underneath the house was dirt and battens were attached between the timber posts. Not sure when the downstairs area had a bathroom, but it had always been under the house for as long as I remember. There were 2 sets of wooden stairs one at the front and a set of back stairs leading from the kitchen towards the side street. There was an area outside for the dunny and washing (old wood copper). In 1955, the wing was added for Mum and Dad, with a bedroom and a kitchen, and another set of stairs, running down to the backyard from their kitchen. There was still a window between the 2 eating areas I recall, which later was removed, so you could see through from the kitchen to the dining room.



For some reason we would always enter the house by the back door and very rarely opened the front door, even to visitors. I realize now that was probably due to privacy as the sleepout was used as a bedroom. After Pa passed and my brother Darrell came along, he also inherited this area for his room. As you entered the house here, you would be greeted by a life-like Swaggie sitting in a chair. There was no door to the sleepout, but Dad added a beaded curtain for some privacy. On the internal wall there was a window between the sleepout and lounge room, so I think the sleepout may have been an open verandah at some stage.



At the right-hand end of the sleepout was my Nanna's bedroom. There was a yellow painted door made of VJ boards and a dark brass doorknob, with a keyhole to lock with an old-fashioned key. This room was not lined, and the old weatherboards, uprights and beams were exposed and painted a greenish colour. There were 2 sash windows, which had the top half fixed and the bottom half could be slid up and hooked in place to open. Later one window was replaced by an awning window above the new carport. The ceiling sloped in line with the outdoor roofline. A single light hung from the ceiling covered in a frosted glass shade. There was an old, patterned linoleum covering on the floor. Nanna had a brown wardrobe for her clothes and a black iron bed. I loved her room because it brings back fond memories of sitting on my Nanna's lap on her high soft mattress as she told me stories of her and the kids (my Dad, and his cousins) playing in the mud flats around Thorneside. She loved life and passed that sense of fun and adventure on to my Dad.



The next room as you entered from the front sleepout was the lounge room. It was not a huge room but cosy enough for us to sit in and spend time together. It had painted fibreboard/plasterboard walls with lots of pictures and other artefacts, growing in collection as the years went on. My Dad was an avid collector of the unique and interesting. There were replica guns, army weapons, posters, ornaments, souvenirs & indigenous artefacts given to Pop Kraatz (maternal grandfather) as payment for milk products he delivered in the early 1920's as a Milkman in West End. There was also my Great Grandad Rogers' pistol & revolver from the 1912 Tram Strike given to him when he was sworn in as a Special Constable to help control the Protestors on that day In February. We had a large print of Nelson's last sea voyage during the Battle of Trafalgar, that my Pa had brought with him from England. It was a picture I didn't like as it was quite gory and brutal but now, I realise it may have had some historical value. There were also 2 large family portrait photographs on the lounge room walls, of my Nanna, Pa, Dad, Roy and Aunty Moya taken in the 1920's.

As a very young girl, I can remember the large wireless cabinet in this room where my Pa would sit and listen to his favourite shows, e.g. Dad & Dave, Blue Hills, Gunsmoke, the Lone Ranger, Dragnet etc. There was always some sport or news to listen to as well and after tea at night we'd sit as a family and listen to something on the radio before going to bed. As Dad was a keen movie buff, he had purchased a Super 8 camera, projector and screen and often would play home movies and cartoons & short films in the lounge room. Some Saturday nights we'd invite other family members along to watch. I still have many of Dad's home movies, now on USB. After the movie camera Dad bought a video camera & player, and I'm sure he would have had the latest gadget if he was alive and well today. He certainly passed his love of photography on to me, as I use my phone camera to take photos wherever I go. Then along came TV to Australia and we had a smallish set at first. We loved watching the black & white shows with some favourites being "Bewitched, I Dream of Jeanie, Gilligan's Island, Beverley Hillbillies, Bonanza" as a family. We later upgraded the TV to colour.

Music also played a big part in my childhood. Mum and Dad both loved listening to Country music (especially Slim Dusty & Johnny Cash), Gospel hymns, any tunes from the 40's to the 60's and classic songs by Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin etc. We had the record player & transistor radio going most days. Hence, I've become a fan of most music genres. My brother loved drumming, and he practised in Nanna's front bedroom for many years, going on to play in local bands & teach percussion to school children.

Dad had purchased a large moose head from an auction, and it hung proudly in the lounge room above my bedroom door till the day we sold the house in 2017. For another form of entertainment, we'd play a game of "Toss Your Hat on the Moose." We had lots of laughter as we tossed our hats on to the moose's antlers. We would then have to retrieve them by using a broomstick or climbing on Dad's shoulders and reaching them. These were all simple but fun entertainment when we did not have TV.



Opposite the lounge was my bedroom, originally the main bedroom for William & Susan, I suppose. In my younger years before Nanna & Pa passed, it had been left vacant and I slept in my parents' bedroom on a stretcher bed. Around 9yrs of age, I progressed to the double bed in this room. It was both wonderful and daunting, especially since I heard all sorts of noises at night and imagined all

scary stuff going on around me. Some nights, I would hurry out of bed and find my way in the dark back to my parents' bedroom at the other end of the house to find comfort and peace. However, as I grew more used to the old house moving and groaning, I thought how lucky I was to have a double bed. My room of VJ boards and picture rails was painted a turquoise colour and there was a matching-coloured carpet on the floor when I lived in it. I decorated it with a few of my special ornaments and pictures along with some of my Nanna's treasures. There were 2 single sash windows, one facing the road and one facing the next-door neighbour's place, which I always kept closed, since it opened to the patio. I didn't want anyone or thing getting in. The one on the roadside was held open by a piece of timber as the latch had broken. I can recall one wet night, something landed on my forehead, as I was sleeping, and I awoke with a start, flicking it off. I quickly switched on the light to see a green frog hopping away on the floor.



Beyond my bedroom, there was a patio, this first one added in the late 1960's. I can remember there being another set of stairs leading down off the old kitchen, when I was young. There was a storm one evening, and Nanna was holding a saucepan at the time, with the door open, when a flash of lightning charged in. In a flash, Nanna had dropped the metal saucepan and there was an almighty crack of thunder that scared all of us. We all survived! A solid door with a deadlock and bolt led out onto the patio. Louvred awnings were placed on both sides of the patio for sun protection. These were ripped off during the Tornado of 1973 and found in the next street- South Tce. In fact, our house often seemed to be in the path of many severe summer storms, but it kept bouncing back with only minor damage. This patio was a favourite spot for family & friends to gather for morning teas and light lunches. As Mum & Dad aged, they would read the morning paper together over a cuppa out there, then put on the little portable radio to listen to the news and music. There were several fold-up chairs plus the cast iron table and chair setting on the patio with lots of pot plants and hanging baskets. It was a peaceful spot for all who visited.



Back inside was the dining room, originally the old kitchen with a wood stove recess. Dad put an imitation electric fireplace in the recess, and it would warm up the room in winter. Later this fireplace was replaced with a bookcase and many old books from my Great-grandparents, Grandparents and Parents were to be found here. I did enjoy reading as I grew up but some of these books did not interest me at that stage but now, I've looked at them with curiosity and fondness. There were another couple of bookcases on the other side of the room as well full of Dad's books ranging from World War History, Cowboy & Indians, Animals of the world, Travel, Gardening and Railways which were useful for school projects.

In one corner, there was a beautiful display cabinet made with a timber veneer back and a panelled front of stained glass. I really loved the treasures housed within and I now cherish these coloured glassware and dinner sets from my family. There was a buffet and matching dining table and 6 chairs that I think my parents bought from Tritton's/Coupon Furniture Shop in the City/ Woolloongabba. At one stage, Dad put in a large aquarium with exotic goldfish, which we had for quite a few years. The cats admired the fish I think more than us. Again, the walls were adorned with movie posters, a tapestry wall hanging, collectables, souvenirs and a singing fish, as well as ornaments on every surface. There were bead curtains between the lounge, dining and kitchen and a brightly coloured 70's patterned carpet. This room certainly had many family dinners and celebrations as the family grew over the years. I fondly remember playing many board games and card games at the dining room table.



Now we come to Mum and Dad's addition. First, the eat-in kitchen. I can recall never having any bench space, but it didn't seem to bother Mum as she prepared things on the table (hexagonal with mustard coloured vinyl swivel chairs) or in the sink. Note most furniture was painted bright green by Dad and the fridge covered fully in souvenir magnets. I can still picture Mum standing at the stove stirring our porridge for breakfast day in, day out all year round. There had always been lino on the floor and the plaster walls were painted purple at one time. The back door was quite solid with a couple of locks and chain. They did have a couple of break-ins as they lived alone well into their 80's & 90's but thank God they did not get hurt by anyone during these invasions.



Beyond the kitchen was their bedroom. It was made of plasterboard walls and picture rails. It had 3 casement windows, and all had significant hail damage in the 2014 Brisbane Hailstorm. There was a lot of furniture in this space, though. My parents each had a matching dark veneer wardrobe, on Mum's side of the bed. On Dad's side there was a bedside table, a tall boy, a chest of drawers and an upright woven cane laundry basket with lift- up lid. There also was a dressing table with round bevelled mirror & stool and a blanket box. There were softer colours and less wall pictures used in this room. My favourite memory from this room was of my parents tossing me and later Darrell across the bed and when they couldn't catch us, we'd fall on the soft mattress with lots of laughter. Ahh... the simple pleasures of childhood.

On the back landing was the toilet. It was added to the house when sewerage came to Brisbane in the late 1960's/early 1970's. At night, it was a little scary as you had to open the back door from the kitchen and rush across the landing hoping the gate at the bottom of the stairs was closed. Then lock the toilet door behind you. When returning to the house, you hoped no one had come up the stairs waiting to ambush you. The wooden stairs were protected by enclosed timber battens and a timber gate which could be locked by a chain and padlock when we were away from the house. An old bell was on the gate for visitors to ring on arrival. A brick and concrete path led from the stairs to the backyard, then under the house. When my parents got frailer, they had a chair lift put in on these back stairs so they could get down to the bathroom and yard.

Under the house, at this end, Besser blocks and windows had been added, as well as concreted floors. Dad had set up his model railway here. It covered 2 table lengths, and he had built a lot of the layout scenery himself. He loved to show visitors his trains and track. My family all loved it and "playing trains" was a common past time, as most of them worked in the QLD Railways. Just past the trains, Mum finally got a working indoor Laundry with concrete tubs and an electric washing machine and dryer. However, she still did a lot of hand washing and used a hand wringer to rinse the

clothes before carrying them out to the line in a bucket. Old habits die hard. There was also a linen cupboard for their towels and sheets.

At the front of the house was the bathroom. It had a pink enamel bathtub, with a shower over it (enclosed by a shower curtain), a vanity basin, and wall cabinet. In one corner was the hot water system. There were tiles on the floor and floral pink & white patterned wall panels around the bath. An awning type window made of opaque glass opened out to the garden. There was an old wooden door that locked with a key. It was strange to have a bathroom under the house, as there were no other walled rooms down there, but we just accepted it and so did Mum & Dad.





Other areas under the house were used for storage of toys, sporting equipment, tools and gardening stuff, paint tins and a night-time sanctuary for the pet birds- Charlie, a galah who would talk and dance and later Pretty Boy, a cockatiel who Mum & Dad rescued from a local footpath one day. They both loved animals and over the years, & we kept many pets, including cats, birds, fish, and even a 3-legged turtle that wandered into our backyard pond one day. There was a driveway on Soden St. side for Dad to park his car under the house, and later a carport was built over the driveway for my brother's car in the 1980's. Underneath the house was another wonderful place to play in as young kids. I set up a classroom with a blackboard and some chairs for my dolls & teddies etc. to learn. Other times my brother & I turned the space into a café, with table and chairs, a hand printed menu and matching concoctions of menu items made from natural things (leaves, dirt, stones, sticks, bark) and play money. We tried our food out on our parents or other visiting family members. Again, such simple family fun!

So, in closing I'd like to agree with what Denis said at the start - that house & home are inextricably linked together. When one remembers the house, you lived in as a child, all the memories and emotions associated with the actual building are hard to separate from the home. I look back now at 19 Albemarle St, Yeerongpilly with fondness, and it will be forever in my heart. I believe my house is not really lost but transformed, and my home is now very much a part of me.