

"The Lost Sister of Groningen" by Nell Jones.

(My) Translation of an article on the Radio Netherlands website:

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It is a story that had to be told. Nell Jones wrote a book about the difficult childhood of her mother. In the Netherlands Anneke Suiding was left to her fate. After her emigration to Australia, she was abandoned, at the age of 13, by her older sister. "I'm proud of what my mother has made of her life."

In the period 1948-1958 many Dutch people emigrated to Australia. About all those people who went to Australia, according to Nell Jones, there are hundreds of stories to be told. Everyone had their own story and reason for making the crossing. But the life-story of her mother, to say the least, is unbelievable.

1942

The story of Anne Jones, as she is called, since her marriage in 1962, to Malcolm Jones, begins in 1942, her year of birth. The war years changed the family's way of life. Anne's father worked for the Germans and was often away from home for weeks. Besides, her mother slept with the Germans.

All this left its mark and caused disruption to the family. In 1943 Anne's parents divorced. She now experienced wandering from place to place and poverty. Anne ended up in orphanages and in addition was dumped by a relative.

Her father forgot to contribute child-support, so that Anneke had to leave the home of her Uncle Ari and Aunt Griet, again. She also lived for a time with her older sister Coby, the same sister who took her to Australia and then left her there, in the lurch. Coby was in love with one another and left her husband. This meant that Anne had lost her home again.

Lost Sister

Nell Jones wrote the book "The Lost Sister of Groningen" after her mother had told her about her childhood in the Netherlands, the voyage to Australia and what happened next. "She drew on her memory, telling about her childhood. But I knew there had to be more. "

The stories were not complete and in 2004 Nell decided go to the Netherlands, with her mother Anneke, to visit the places where she had lived during her childhood. "For a long time I did not want to return to the Netherlands, because I had such a horrible time there, in my younger years," said Anneke by telephone from Australia. "I have now overcome this."

Within two weeks, mother and daughter visited, among others, Groningen and Rotterdam. It was the beginning of a project that would take many years. Nell Jones in 2007 came another three months to the Netherlands to do research and in 2008 she spent a long time in the Netherlands. "I invested a lot of time in it."

Publisher

In 2009 she self-published the book. She hopes that, eventually, a real publisher will see value in the story. But Nell Jones could wait no longer with the publication. "I was not prepared to have to wait another two years."

Referring to the title of the book, mother Anneke says, "I am no longer lost. What you can learn from this book is that you can overcome adversity. You must keep going with your life and continue to point an accusing finger at those who have caused this. "

According to Nell is an impressive story. For her family, it also has meaning in the sense that it has clarified a lot for Anneke, her sisters and their children. "I hope for a healing effect on our family."

To Groningen

Nell Jones will come back, in a month or two, to the Netherlands, to put her book in in her mother's homeland, under the spotlight. A Dutch translation is not there yet. But she is working on the idea.

In conclusion, Mother Anneke is occasionally homesick for the Netherlands. So about once every two to three years she gets the itch. But she feels, on balance, herself to be more Australian than Dutch.

The reason: life in Australia has brought her much good. "But you never let go of your country of birth, completely. There is always a connection. You can never completely emotionally separate from it. "

The book: *The Lost Sister of Groningen* can be ordered via the Internet

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