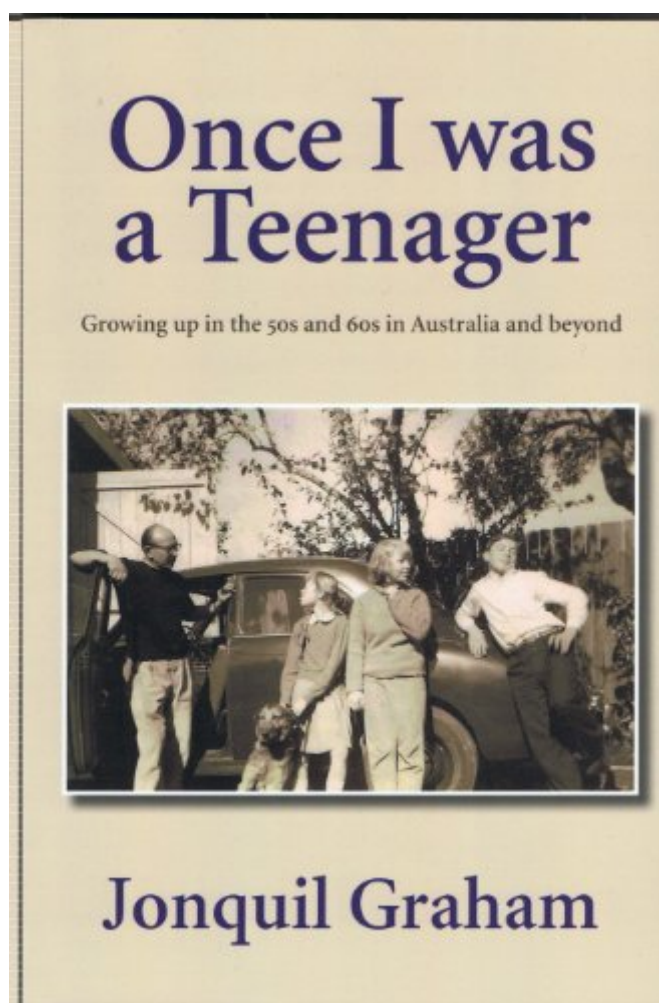


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# Once I Was A Teenager: Growing Up In The 50s And 60s In Australia And Beyond



## Synopsis

Remember those long-ago days of fatty Sunday roasts, junket, climbing mulberry trees, hula hoops, mini-skirts, surfing and rock 'n' roll? The advice your mother gave you to "Wear clean knickers in case you're in a car accident." Her threats of "Wait until your father gets home" or her warning, "No nice man will marry you if you eat with your mouth open." When the Strathern family moved to the coastal Sydney suburb of Collaroy, the neighbours feared the family of five and their dog in underpants would lower the tone on Pittwater Road. Whether they did or not is for you to decide as Jonquil Graham takes you on a return journey to childhood and teenage years that included sea voyages, modelling assignments, making a movie, Contiki trips, doing the hippie trail across Asia and hitch-hiking around Europe. Join her in this fun flashback to memories that will make you sigh and laugh aloud as she recalls life in Australia in the 50s and 60s.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have just finished reading Jonquil Graham's spellbinding book ONCE I WAS A TEENAGER. If you

lived through the 50's and 60's in Australia, this book will rekindle memories probably long forgotten. If you missed out on those amazing years, you will get to see, hear and even perhaps smell the excitement of living in that era if you take the time to read this book. Beautifully written by a lady with panache, style and love. Her attention to detail is astounding. I rarely recommend books to others because I don't read a lot. I'm too busy writing. This book got me, hook, line and sinker.

...but I got bored with this book, after the first few chapters. It might be a lot more entertaining for someone who actually grew up in Australia, given all the references that were related to that era in that part of the world. As a Canadian, this wasn't the kind of nostalgic and engaging story that I had hoped for. Obviously, a lot of work went into this book that's why I'm giving 3 instead of 2 stars, but it wasn't my "cup of tea".

don't know where I picked this one up, or why I wanted to read it. A girl telling about her life growing up in Australia. A biography about no one "famous", nor anyone I had ever heard about. But I gave it a chance. It just never really grabbed me. I did enjoy the stories of the parents, how they made up funny words, the mother's propensity for drama, their homelife with all the zany experiences the children had. For me the story felt condensed, incomplete. I'd get confused with the shuffling around, I'd be in the midst of an adventure, which would abruptly end, and then another would start, and I'd flip back thinking I must have missed part of the first. Each little story had a ton of promise, but she never really "went there". Just when I started getting intrigued I'd be thrown into the middle of a new story. Towards the end, on her hippie excursion (which I never would have lasted through one hour much less all the months she did) I was just wanting to get to the last page. Another annoyance was the constant use of the Aussie slang, which while I realize she IS Australian, made the reading a bit difficult for me. After a while I just kind of gave up.

I enjoyed the book for all the reasons mentioned in previous reviews. I also enjoyed Johnquil's travels on ships and hitching. The descriptions and details made me feel like I was with her the entire way.

Loved the family dynamics. The dialogue between the parents and the children was very witty and funny. Her parents were quite the characters. Love this line, "Don't ruin our holiday by getting murdered."

A surprisingly enjoyable "diary" by a woman apparently in similar age bracket, even though we were continents apart across the world. Somewhat exciting and courageous young woman, daring many potential dangers in her many travels around the world. That she & her husband have adopted 9 children is noble and inspiring, but why she herself never had any of her own is curious, and no reason is offered to inquiring minds. Whatever, many of us old codgers need to take the time and make the effort to leave a testimony of our own lifetime experiences for the next generations, so that they, too, may have some understanding of what made us tick, and what we experienced growing up in difficult times and before the electronic age to such a firm hold on the very way we live today. Hats off to Jonquil--I would have loved to have an opportunity to meet her in person, just to hear her express herself in her own "dialect"... g'day!

The beginning of this book is very interesting and well written, but author gets bogged down later in the story. The many traveling experiences may have precipitated the future desire for adoption, but just seemed to be so repetitious that I lost interest and found myself skipping over. That being said, it is interesting to note the similarities between growing up in the US in the 50s-60s and that of Oz.

My family emigrated to Australia in the mid 60's and for quite a long time now I had been searching for a book that would bring back memories of my life in those early years. I came across *Once I was a Teenager* by accident and decided to read it even though the time frame was not quite what I was looking for. Once started, I could not put the book down; I kept thinking this was exactly as I remembered. So much so, that upon reaching the period of the mid 60's, when Jonquil went to work, I felt the similarities in our lives were uncanny. Little did I suspect, upon coming across her photograph, that we actually knew each other! What absolute joy! This book is written for all of us who were teenagers in Australia in those years. Thank you Jonquil, you brought it all back and much more than I had expected! I have since read *How Many Planes to get Me* and can't wait for your third book.

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