

# AT NUMBER EIGHTY-THREE

By Mrs. Grace O'Clarkin

(All names, except two, are those of Aboriginal people.)

Dedicated to the Happy memories of Union Street, Newtown,  
1943-50:—

*Beth and Joyce Simpson.  
Frances Briggs and Dawn McDonald.  
Eddie MacKenzie and Jim Madden.  
Albert Hill and Mrs. Rose Smith.  
Alan Saunders and Ronnie Maher.  
Claude and Harry and Merv. Williams.  
Alex Grace and Cedric Nicol.  
Keith and Nell Smith. (Connie—Self).*

At seven ev'ry Sunday night, so happy, gay and free,  
We congregate where lights are bright at Number  
eighty-three.

We climb upon the sideboard and clutter up the door,  
We hang around the windows and we squat upon the  
floor.

We go for entertainment that is very hard to beat;  
If we're late arrivals we can never find a seat.

There's Beth and Frances, Dawn and Joyce,—There's  
children by the score,  
Who push and pinch and squabble for a possie by the  
door.

There's Eddie with his saxophone and Jim of 'cordion  
fame;  
They play the songs we want to sing if we but call the  
name.

Old Albert and his Ragtime Band; sings "How was  
I to know".

He takes along his Broken Doll, to make the Party go.

Aunt Rose sings "Whistling Rufus" and about a  
mountain peak  
She's going to climb and find the lover she is out to seek.

Then Alan yodels long and loud—Oh! What a voice  
has he.

He nearly makes the walls collapse at Number eighty-  
three.

You'd think the "Ink Spots" were in town,—Those  
famous Negro stars,

When Claude and Harry warble plaintively to their  
guitars.

While Ronnie harmonises with his gumleaf music rare,  
Till someonec oaxes Alex out to render "Grizzly  
Bear".

When ev'ryone stands in a ring to dance the "Hokey  
Pokey",

You're bound to see a lad or two sneak out and have  
a smoke.

The tinies get beneath our feet, it seems they're  
ev'rywhere

With runny noses, happy smiles and toffee in their hair.

The "Bobby Soxers" sway about, forgetting now their  
"Hep",

As Ceddie strums his 'oom-pah-pah and softly croons  
"Old Shep".

While Connie squats upon the floor and twangs a steel  
guitar

Her fourteen stone spread all around the room so wide  
and far.

Anyone will tell you Merv can sing if he but choose,  
But he nearly "busts" himself on old "Saint Louis  
Blues".

Then someone yells "It's Midnight!" and we know  
poor Keith and Nell.

Although they like our music, want to wish us all  
"Farewell".



An excellent black and white sketch by Betty Black of Murrin Bridge. Betty has been in hospital for some time and her drawings have helped her to while away the hours.