

Dear Young Person,

I grew up on a passionfruit, mango and macadamia nut farm in Queensland, Australia, in the 1970's.

We also grew lots of other fruit (pawpaws, bananas, avocados, citrus fruit, mulberries, pineapples, watermelons, figs, custard apples and pomegranates), and vegetables for food and we had cows, chickens, ducks and geese for meat milk and eggs. We also had pets - peacocks, two Labrador dogs (1 black, 1 brown) and a ginger and white cat. When I was 10 and my brother was 8, our mother got us a pet goat (who was white with a black nose). She rescued the goat from a farmer who did not want her and was going to get rid of her.

My brother and I used to spend our play time running around with the goat, dogs and cat.

One summer we did not have any rain and all the water in one of the waterholes in the goat's pen dried up and left dried cracked earth which looked like mud bricks in different shapes. They were dry on the top and wet on the bottom. My brother and I pulled up the naturally formed mud bricks from the bottom of the dried up waterhole and used them to build a mud brick house for our pet goat.

We dug steps up the wall of the waterhole and built her house on top of the wall. The wet bottom of each brick helped them to stick together and they dried and stuck together really well. We made a bed of hay and blankets, and a roof out of branches and leaves. The mud brick house was round and taller than my brother and me, and it was very strong. It stood for all the years we lived on the farm and weathered drought, floods, wind and tropical storms. Our goat slept in her house every night and used the steps we dug out to run up from the field to her house on the waterhole wall. We were delighted that she slept in it every night and that 10 years later when we left the farm the mud house was still standing.

Together we worked hard to achieve a goal and plus our little old nanny goat gained a comfy gaff to snooze in.

Goaty was loved and spoilt and had a very happy life!

Best wishes

Ros

