Hey Pop,

This letter has been a long time coming.

Thank you, thank you for your courage, your resilience, your persistence, your wisdom and your strength in your story of survival.

I have had the honour and privileged of sitting down with family and hearing yarns of the ‘old days’, the way that some stories are told I can easily imagine myself being there.

The story of you, being blackbirded to Australia as a young boy at around the tender age of ten years old, to work in the cane fields for the Young brothers at Fairymead Plantation at Bundaberg fascinates me as from what the Elders of the family have said this is the second time you had embarked on the long trip to Australia. The first time you were not allowed to disembark as they thought you were too young.

I wish I could have a conversation with you and ask you all about it. I often wonder, if you were to tell me your life story, how, when and where you would tell me. What words would you use to describe your life journey? Many family members have used the words courageous, important, resilience, persistence, wise and strong, how does this fit with you? Does this fit with you at all? If not, what words would you be more comfortable with? What does this say about your values? What does this say about your hopes and dreams? Why is this important to you? Who else knows this? Can you tell me about another time in your life that these words were evident?

In exchange I will tell you about my journey and the influence that you have had on me. I can only hope that you are as proud of me as I am of you.

You and Nan would be beaming with pride to know that your strength, resilience, courage, pride, persistence and wisdom has trickled down through your future generations that span over six Australian Generations of the Yow Yeh Family. If you look at the intricate blood lines of our family tree, you will notice that both of your names are carried throughout the six generations. I am one of the many 3rd Australian Generations of the Yow Yeh family, my connection to you derives from the bloodline of your son Daniel, to his daughter, your granddaughter Sylvia and her daughter and your great granddaughter, me.

I know that these yarns will take more than a few letters but if you give me permission I would like to continue to pay tribute to you and your life journey.

I love you Poppy.

Annette xo