

Older & Bolder

February
2015

Older Women's Network Inc. • PO Box 34-383, Birkenhead, Auckland 0746 • olderwomensnetworkns@gmail.com • www.olderwomensnetwork.org.nz



Edna Peters tribute issue



The purpose of life is to matter ...



*To count
To stand for something
To have it make some difference that
We lived at all.*

Leo Rosten

“We celebrate, honour and empower older women”

Dear OWN members ...

Those of us in the **Browns Bay Writing for Our Grandchildren Group** were some of the last OWN members to spend time with *Edna Peters*. We all gathered for the end of year Group meeting. *Edna* was on form, laughing, joking, and enjoying our celebration of the published book of stories (see page 4). None of us could have foretold that it would be the last time we would see her.



Many of you knew *Edna* through her involvement with OWN events, the **Festivals** she loved so much, and the **Writing for Our Grandchildren Group**. We were all familiar with her energy, her humour, and her total zest for life. Totally committed to OWN, *Edna* relished her role as Chairperson and as leader of the **Browns Bay Writing for Our Grandchildren Group**.

OWN will certainly not be the same without *Edna*, but she would be the first person to tell you all to "put your hand up", "step up", "have a go", and enjoy the involvement. She would expect OWN to continue and flourish.

To many, *Edna* was a colleague and friend, a leader. To her family she was everything. In this issue we have included a very personal view of *Edna* written by her eldest daughter, *Sue*, and one of her stories about *Edna's* father which the family chose to share with us (see pages 6 and 7). We extend to her family our most sincere condolences

Anne Briggs

Committee Member (2009 - 2014)

Did you know?

Those working on the definition of new entries to include for the **Oxford English Dictionary (OED)** have a target of 50 to 60 words a month. In 1989 five years of usage was looked at for each word, now it is ten years because there is so much more material to sift through due to the computer age. Once a word is in the **OED** it does not come out – it is a permanent record of language.



Haiku Competition

WIN PRIZES!

The closing date for the **Haiku Competition** has been extended to 5 April, 2015 – hasten to write your haiku!

Send your entries to:

Haiku Competition

Older Women's Network

PO Box 34-383

Birkenhead

Auckland 0746

or email them to:

Joan Lardner-Rivlin,

lardner-rivlin@xtra.co.nz

The haiku is one of the simplest forms of verse to write. It is usually made up of three lines – with five syllables, seven syllables, and then five syllables, giving a total of 17 syllables ... but rules are made for breaking. The 5-7-5 formula can be altered. Some poets have used from 15 to 25 syllables.

Here are three examples of haiku written by *Yosa Buson* in the late 1700s ...

A summer river being crossed
how pleasing
with sandals in my hands!

Light of the moon
moves west, flowers' shadows
creep eastward

In the moonlight
the colour and scent of the wisteria
seems far away

Up-coming Events ...

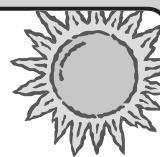


Seasonal Celebrations

Harvest / Autumn Celebration

Saturday, 28 March – Time and venue to be confirmed

We welcome all members and their friends. For more details, please contact *Linda Tisch*, ph: 418-2971 or email: tisch.geoffandlinda@gmail.com



OWN Annual General Meeting

Please diarise – we need your attendance

The formal notice of the AGM with a form for nominations for officers and Committee will be emailed or posted to you in March.



When: 10:00am – 12:00 noon
Saturday, 18 April

Venue: Rothesay Room,
Bays Community Centre,
Glen Road, Browns Bay

Cost: Koha
Please bring a plate for a shared lunch.

For more information, please contact *Patricia Russell*, ph: 479-7519.

The Blooming Buds of May OWN Festival 2015

Saturday, 16 May

Diarise now!



Watch out for details in the March issue of **Oh! What Next**.

**Think about volunteering to help.
Your OWN Festival needs you!!**

For more information, please contact *Joan Lardner-Rivlin*, ph: 483-9671.

North Shore Group

OWN Coffee Meetings



Thursday, 12 March

*Franks Bar & Café,
The Strand, Takapuna Beach,
Takapuna*

Thursday, 9 April

*Mangiamo Café, Shop 7,
Green Gables Mall, 378 Beach
Road, Mairangi Bay*

Thursday, 14 May

*Kings Plant Barn,
11 Porana Road, Glenfield*

Thursday, 26 March

*Ferry cruise to Pine Harbour
in Beachlands, East Auckland*

Thursday, 23 April

*Café Eleven, Unit E, 11 Link
Drive, Glenfield*

Thursday, 28 May

*Car pool to visit the Puhoi
Cheese Factory and museum
in Puhoi*

For more details and to register your interest, please contact *Audrey*, ph: 489-6035, or *Barbara*, ph: 419-0026. They will contact you nearer the time with full details, and maps, etc. for the trips.



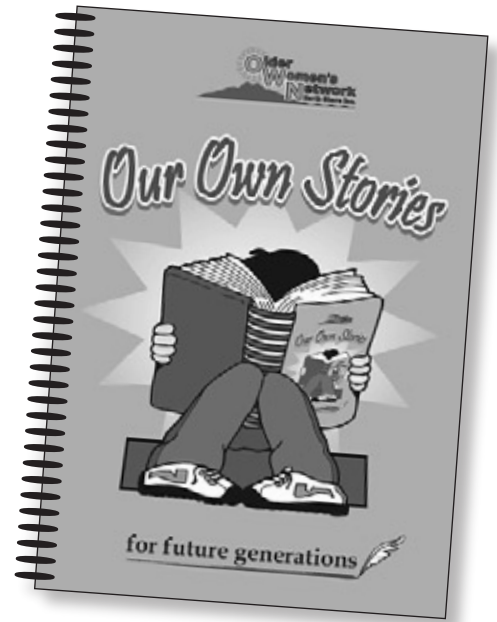
Remember to check out our website for news, pictures, events, etc.
www.olderwomensnetwork.org.nz

We Did It!

Browns Bay Writing Group publish their stories

One of the prime examples of people putting up their hand and saying "I'll do it" is *Cherrie Keane*, who volunteered to collate a volume of stories from members of the **OWN Writing for Our Grandchildren** group. She did a wonderful job. Along the way she enlisted the help of *Patricia Russell* and *Anne Briggs*. It was a very enjoyable process. There was a lot of discussion, laughter, and coffee during the sessions. The bonus was that everyone loved the book.

We have had a lot of queries about more copies of the book being available. If you are interested in purchasing a copy please contact *Patricia Russell*, ph: 479-7519 to indicate your interest – we are looking at having a second print run.



OWN Group Contacts

The groups are the strength of OWN – why not, check one (or more) out!

Saturday Events / Workshops

Meets on the third Saturday of each month. For more details, contact *Patricia Russell*, ph: 479-7519.

OWN Coffee Meetings

The *Shore Group* meets fortnightly at various venues. For more details, see page 3 or contact *Audrey Kendall*, ph: 489-6035.



OWN Discussion Group

Meets on the second Tuesday of each month. For more details, contact *Jeanne Ford*, ph: 410-4803.



Rummikub Club

A good way to keep your brain active. For more details, contact *Dawn Watson*, ph: 414-5351.

Tai Chi for Older Women

Wednesday Group: For more details, contact *Susan Pichler*, ph: 478-5569.



Friday Group: For more details, contact *Shirley Knight*, ph: 418-2322.



OWN Theatre Group

Exploring more theatre visits and other activities For details, contact *Joan Lardner-Rivlin*, ph: 483-9671.

OWNs Alone Lunch

Meets on the last Sunday of the month for lunch, and at other times. For more details, contact *Judith Sumich*, ph: 478-6618.

Writing for Our Grandchildren

The *Browns Bay Group* meets on the second Saturday of each month. For more details, contact *Patricia Russell*, ph: 479-7519.



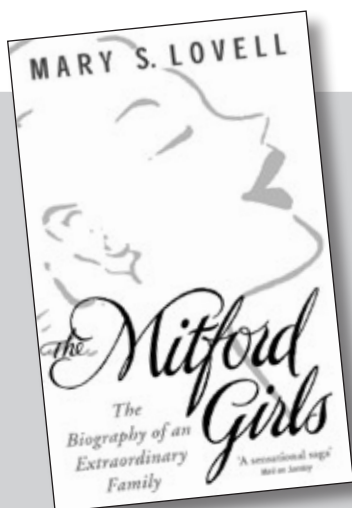
The *Beach Haven Group* meets on the fourth Saturday of each month. For more details, contact *Anne Mutu*, ph: 483-7704.

Seasonal Celebration Group

Meets throughout the year to celebrate the seasons and cycles in our lives (see **Seasonal Celebrations** on page 3 for the next date). For more details, contact *Linda Tisch*, ph: 418-2971.

The Mitford Girls

by Mary S. Lovell



From Amazon.com ...

The Mitford Girls tells the true story behind the gaiety and frivolity of the six *Mitford* daughters – facts which are as sensational as any novel: *Nancy*, whose bright social existence masked an obsessional doomed love which soured her success; *Pamela*, a countrywoman married to one of the best brains in Europe; *Diana*, an iconic beauty, who was already married when, at 22, she fell in love with *Oswald Moseley*, the leader of the British Fascists; *Unity*, who was romantically in love with *Hitler*, became a member of his inner circle before shooting herself when World War II was declared; *Jessica*, the family rebel, who declared herself a communist in the school room; and the youngest sister, *Debo*, who became the Duchess of Devonshire. This is an extraordinary story of an extraordinary family, containing much new material, based on exclusive access to *Mitford* archives.

With the recent death of the *Duchess of Devonshire (Debo)*, the last remaining sister of the widely known *Mitford* family has closed a chapter. Their lives spanned an era of enormous events and significant social changes.

Their father, eccentric *David, Lord Redesdale* once complained, “I am normal, my wife is normal, but my daughters are each more foolish than the other.” The reader may well agree with that – they were certainly a challenge to any parent and this cannot be blamed on their schooling (they were not allowed to be educated outside the home). Yet, they emerged with the ability to write successfully and each one of them, with the exception of *Pamela*, had strong ideological explorations. In addition, they occupied a position of fame / notoriety in the time between the two World Wars and after. Why was this?

Firstly, they were from what is now the lost aristocratic period, and at a time when women were being liberated by the use of birth control that was more efficacious than that dished out to their Victorian grandmothers. Finally, women had a public voice and more time to question their role in society. The *Mitford* girls (who also had one brother killed in World War II), were not only beautiful, but they had style and presence. They were brought up in stately homes, which are always of interest to the British public and press. Newspapers enjoyed a position now claimed by television and radio, and, until World War II, titled families were accorded a respect that is no longer granted solely on the status of privilege. Above all, they were beautiful, animated, and probably extraordinary in their fervour to pursue their beliefs, combined with an immense liveliness and sense of humour.

The writer has achieved a way of keeping this group in tandem throughout the book. I really enjoyed it and recommend it to anyone interested in this period following the Great War.



Enid Hillier

Edna Peters

18 August, 1937 – 15 December, 2014

We asked the Peters Clan if they would write a bio of Edna for us, and choose one of her stories they particularly liked.

Our Precious Edna

Edna Peters was wife to Graham, mum to Sue, Sarah, and Scott; mother-in-law to Nick and Bruce; and grandma to Josh, Emelia, Luke, Taya, Seth, and Jackson. Those roles spanned 54 years of her total life and she was intricately entwined in the lives of each and every one of us (even if sometimes we may have preferred otherwise!). Always on hand to offer advice or a shoulder to cry on ... she was the rock we all depended on.

We are all so proud and full of admiration for what she achieved a successful career, good friends, an interest in the world around her, a youthful positive attitude, and most of all she created the *Peters Clan*, a close, loving family unit.



She grew up in working class London, emigrating to New Zealand when she was 28. She shared her stories freely, and particularly amusing were those of her Dad and his love of the pub!

How very different our upbringing was, probably fuelled by her desire to give us a better start than hers. A lot of our treasured childhood memories were from the Tokoroa days – a carefree life from our perspective, although we were aware of the frustrations that Edna felt in that environment, which she managed to laugh about later in life.

As us kids have grown in to adulthood and followed our own paths, Edna and Graham have travelled in parallel. Losing the

responsibilities of parenting (as we were taking them on), enabled them to follow their travel passions and Edna's multitude of interests. However, she was never far away, a willing and enthusiastic grandma, our family grew further interwoven with shared events and traditions.

Edna, our family matriarch, was full of vitality and had an incredible zest for life. She is our on-going inspiration, and we will all strive to continue her legacy of living life to the full, giving things a go, chasing our dreams, and, above all, being there for family and loving unconditionally.

Sue Peters
February 2015



Edna Peters became the OWN Chairperson in 2009 and still held the position when she died. She was also heavily involved with the **OWN Festivals**, events, **Older & Bolder** newsletter, and the **Writing for Our Grandchildren** group.

Dad's Bike



It leaned against the wall in the passage
A heavy bike,
Black, with a silver bell on the handlebars
Lights fitted front and back,
And a black leather saddle bag behind.

Evenings
After too little sleep.
And with the anger that seemed to be forever
part of him
He'd pack and repack the saddlebag.
With his night-time sandwiches.
"Cheese again," he'd snarl at Mum.

We sat, silent, tense, silently pleading.
Please Mum, don't answer back. Don't try to
explain they're the only ones he'll eat. Don't
make it worse.

He'd fold his trousers neatly at the bottom into
his bicycle clips,
Carefully. Slowly. Creases just right. While we
held our breath and watched in silence, and
waited for him to go.
Then we could breathe again.
Then we could watch the telly.

"Can't wait to get rid of me, can you?" he'd
shout at us.

I watched him ride off to work sometimes,
Hunched over the handlebars
Feet pedalling so slowly I used to wonder that
he could keep his balance.

Christmas Eve one year
We waited for him to come home,
But he'd had "a few too many" and rode
straight into the lamp post outside Mrs
Smith's, next door.

He went in to Mrs Smith's to have the blood
sponged off,
But he could not disguise his blackened eye.
Mum was outraged
That he should go to Mrs Smith, "that stuck-up
cow."
Who would enjoy the gossip.

And not long after
On his way to work
(He'd had a few again)
His front tyre got stuck in the tram lines
And he came off the bike and dislocated his
shoulder.

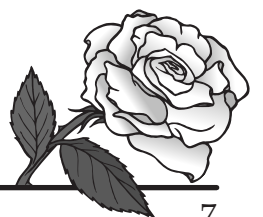
He'd had a few too many the last time he
rode his bike.
75 years old and drunk in charge of a bicycle!

"Weaving all over the road he was," said the
ambulance driver.

He'd overtaken Dad on the road.
And, with his mate, put Dad and his bike into
the ambulance.
Dad wouldn't give his own address,
So they delivered him to Bert.
"We were only saving ourselves a bit of time,"
they said.
"If we hadn't picked him up now,
We'd have had to come back later to scrape
him off the road."

It was the last straw.
When Mum found out
She got rid of the bike.

Edna Peters



Camping



Many of us have been camping over the years. Here is Betty Faeson's story of her initiation into camping.

We had just moved to a new area and my daughter had become friendly with the little girl next door. When holiday time came she was invited to go camping to Martins Bay with them. This she loved so much that she begged us to take her camping the next year, and so *Jim* and I eventually agreed.

We purchased a huge tent which had three rooms in it. There were two bedrooms partitioned off and the rest was living area.

The time came for the holiday – remember, I had never been camping before. As we owned a furniture shop, we loaded what we needed in the furniture truck and set off for the camp.

We commenced to unload: first a set of bunks, a set of trundler beds, a Formica dining table and four chairs, a chest of drawers, a hanging mirror, and a nice piece of carpet.

By the time we were half way through unloading we had half the camp watching

us set up house. It seemed to be the entertainment of the day.

“Where do you think you are going to put all that stuff?” was one remark.

“You are supposed to be roughing it!” was another.

I will leave it to your imagination what else was said.

By now I was so embarrassed that I didn't want to venture out.

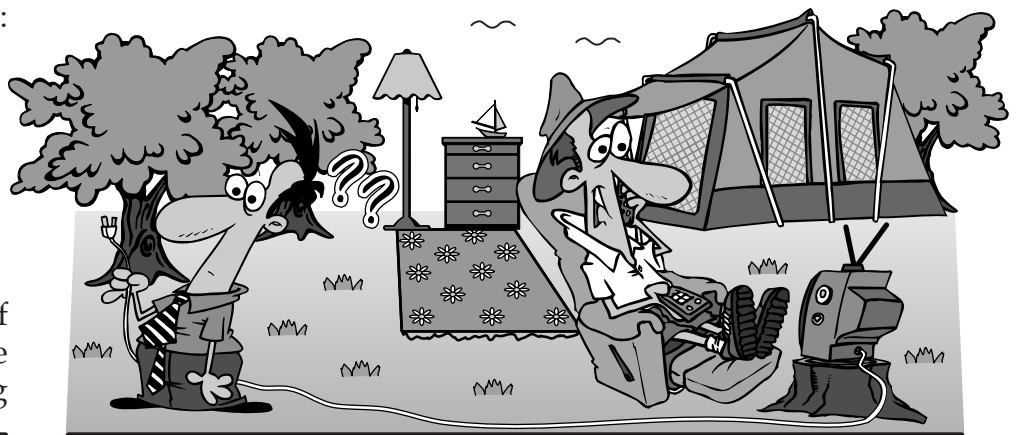
After walking around the camp sites I soon realised what camping meant.

The first night there it rained and when I say it rained, it was a real Christmas holiday storm. At about midnight, we were awoken by strange

noises outside and, on investigation, realised people were out digging trenches around the tents to keep the water out. We were also told that nothing was to touch the walls of the tent, or the water would come through. So, we had to start shifting furniture. By this time, I was just about ready to go home, but in the morning when I awoke the sun was shining, the water looked so inviting and I was talked into staying.

We became friendly with many other campers and I must say we ended up having a most wonderful holiday, so much so that we were regulars for many years. However, we soon learned how to go camping New Zealand style.

Betty Faeson



“Some people dream of success, while others wake up and work hard at it.”

Winston Churchill

Did you know?

Glamping is a relatively new word and is defined as glamorous, or luxury, camping – “roughing it” while taking all the comforts of home with you.

New Zealand Women in World War I

Many readers will have seen the recent TV programme about the ANZAC nurses. Over three and a half thousand New Zealand and Australian nurses served in World War I. For most of those women it was the first time they had left their native land with little idea of what would lay ahead of them.

There were also more than 900 women's patriotic organisations which operated during the war. Women made a huge contribution to the New Zealand war effort through fund-raising and supplying material to people in war-torn Belgium and France. With their fathers, brothers, and sweethearts gone to fight in the war, they had looked for ways to make their contribution.

Women who were not in paid employment formed groups to make clothing, knitted

garments, and helped with raising money through garden fetes and market stalls.

Soldiers kitbags would be fitted out with two pairs of socks and underpants, two woollen shirts and undershirts, towels, cholera belts, handkerchiefs, braces, chest protectors, balaclava cap, service ration bag, and a "housewife" – a sewing kit to deal with mending their uniforms. The groups also packed parcels to send to soldiers with tobacco, tinned food, and woollens.

When one thinks of the War Poets, the names of *Rupert Brooke*, *Wilfred Owen*, *Siegfried Sassoon*, and others spring to mind, but here is an extract of a poem from a World War

Continues ►



Otago & Southland Women's Patriotic Association members at one of their many fund-raising events

Gallipoli, 1915

We are planning a *Gallipoli* feature in the May issue of **Older & Bolder**. Do you have stories about relatives who served in the Great War? Have you visited *Gallipoli* or the battlefields of France and Belgium? Any articles, stories, anecdotes **OWN** members have would be gratefully received. Please contact:

Anne Briggs, ph: 473-9952
email: briggsa@orcon.net.nz

Patricia Russell, ph: 479-7519
email: redwingst@xtra.co.nz



◀ continued.

I woman poet, *Helen Mackay*. The extract below is from a poem in the collection **London, One November** published in 1916. *Helen Gansevoort Edwards Mackay* was born in America in 1876 and worked in a Parisian hospital for the duration of the war.

Train

Will the train never start?

God, make the train start.

She cannot bear it, keeping up so long;
And he, he no more tries to laugh at her.
He is going.

She holds his two hands now.
Now, she has touch of him and sight of him.
And then he will be gone.
He will be gone.

They are so young.
She stands under the window of his carriage,
And he stands in the window.
They hold each other's hands
Across the window ledge.
And look and look,
And know that they may never look again.

Helen Mackay



Word-play

Take a word or phrase and give it a new definition for modern day life ...

Abdicate: to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach.

Coffee: the person upon whom one coughs.

Flabbergasted: appalled over how much weight you have gained.

Flatulence: an emergency vehicle which picks you up after you have been run over by a steamroller.

Gargoyle: olive-flavored mouthwash.

Lymph: to walk with a lisp.



Take a word or phrase, add, subtract, or change one or more letters to get a brand new word ...

Balderdash: a rapidly receding hairline.

Cashtration: the act of buying a house, which renders the subject financially impotent for an indefinite period.

Caterpallor: the colour you turn after finding half a grub in the fruit you're eating.

Inoculatte: to take coffee intravenously when you are running late.

Sarchasm: the gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.

Terrorcota: alarm caused by clay-based ceramics.



Rural Women's Life in the 1840s



Some reflections on the lives of women in Little Addington, a rural village in Northamptonshire, England, in earlier times ...

Some of my ancestors came from the village of *Little Addington* (299 people were living there in 1841). Whilst looking for 'who begat whom' in church records, civil records, and census data covering about 400 years, I found myself reflecting on the lifestyles of the rural working class women of those times, compared to our lives today.

They had well developed social networks and support, and everyone would know everyone else's business. Since a lot of the families were highly interrelated, sometimes there were sad genetic consequences such

as 'an imbecile'. Family size was usually large. It was the norm for a lot of women to die in childbirth, and for children to die. There were very few families that did not lose children in infancy or childhood, which must have been devastating.

The pool of prospective marriage partners was small, but a number of the women who missed out at first married widowers, who often had young children and would have needed someone to help look after them. I suspect there were a lot of marriages of convenience.

Schooling was not compulsory until 1880, so until then many ordinary people were illiterate. Before that, clergymen and some others taught local children, with the Bible being the usual textbook.

More men than women were literate. Marriage records show whether the couple and their witnesses could sign their names or had to make their mark instead.

The great majority of the men were agricultural labourers,

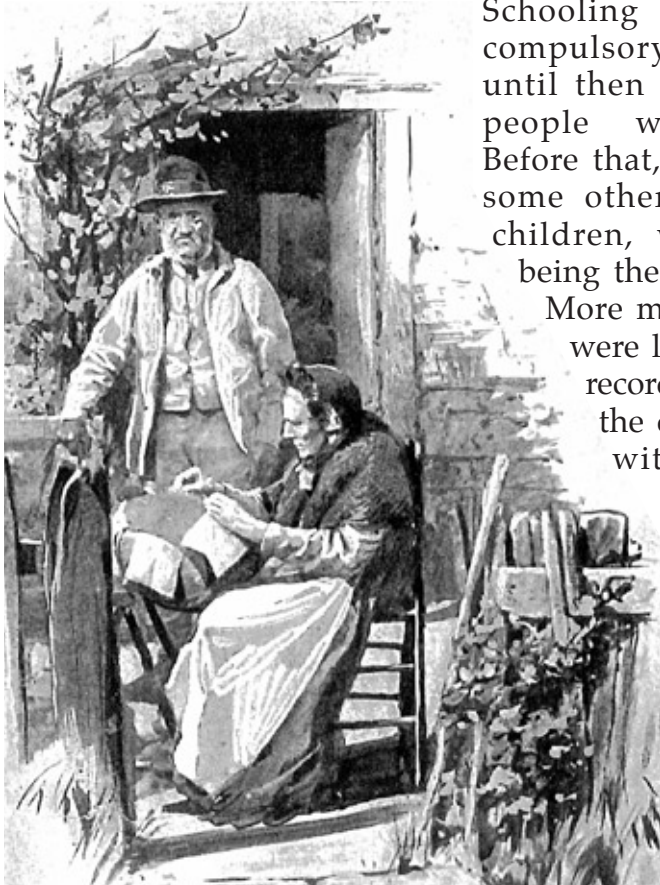
even in old age. A few were tradespeople, shopkeepers, carpenters, bakers, weavers, publicans, etc. By far the most prevalent in 1841 were the shoemakers. This was a very prominent occupation in the entire region. The clergyman, plus the occasional other family had servants. There were no doctors. Some of the women would have had expertise in herbal medicine and midwifery.

The women were mostly kept very busy with the two-yearly arrival of a new baby. The girls of the family helped with child care, sewing, probably spinning and knitting, as well as cleaning, laundry, cooking, and tending the vegetable patches and domestic animals.

Clothing would have been passed down through the family until well and truly worn out. Some women earned a little by lace making, a skill they passed on to their daughters. Other female positions were as servants or dressmakers.

Life could be very hard if you reached old age with no job or financial resources. Once widowed, the older generation generally lived

Continues ►



◀ continued.

with one of their married children. A number ended up supported by the parish, or in the dreaded workhouse – a 'pauper'.

The concept of hobbies, dear to many of us now, was probably unknown.

Opportunities were extremely limited, if time wasn't already fully occupied, you

were probably illiterate, and the only lighting was from candles. It is interesting that a number of essential activities of past times are now popular as hobbies, such as various fibre crafts and gardening.

It was all to do with people's expectations and opportunities. How fortunate we are to have so much more choice and many more possibilities available to us.

Imagine how limited life would be if you couldn't read or write, or were without electricity ... or computers.

I don't know whether we are happier now than they were, but life is so much more varied for us, and as women in New Zealand in the 21st century, we have so much more control over our own lives.

Patricia Lovell

OWN Recipes

Bread Pudding

Anne Briggs: *This recipe is for Edna Peters, I only wish I had sourced it sooner. We had fun reminiscing about the bread puddings of our childhood. The pudding was often made using stale bread (waste not want not!) by mothers on washing day. Quickly made, nourishing, and good to eat. This particular recipe comes from the BBC – it must be based on the true British version Edna and I remembered.*

Ingredients

- 500g White or Brown Bread
- 500g Mixed Dried Fruit
- 85g Mixed Peel (optional)
- 1 ½ teaspoons Mixed Spice
- 600ml Milk
- 2 large Eggs (beaten)
- 140g Raw Sugar
- Zest of 1 Lemon (optional)
- 100g melted Butter
- 2 tablespoons Soft Brown Sugar



Method

1. Tear the bread into a large mixing bowl and add the mixed fruit, peel, and spice.
2. Pour in the milk, then stir or scrunch through your fingers (à la Jamie Oliver) to mix well.
3. Add beaten eggs, raw sugar, and lemon zest. Stir well, then set aside to soak.
4. Preheat the oven to 170° - 180°C.
5. Grease a Pyrex 20cm square dish with butter.
6. Stir the melted butter into the pudding mixture. Pour the mixture into the Pyrex dish and scatter with soft brown sugar.
7. Bake for 1 ½ hours, until firm and golden. Cover with foil if it appears to be browning too much.
8. Cut into squares and serve warm. You can of course serve with custard, cream, whipped cream, or ice cream.

