



OWN

News & Views



Summer 2016-2017

Our Women's Network North Shore • PO Box 34-383, Birkenhead, Auckland 0746 • info@own.org.nz • www.own.org.nz



No, not the great New Zealand novel
... but better!

The OWN Writing for Future Generations
groups' second storybook launch
and OWN End of Year Celebration.
See page 3 for all the details.



OWN is a women's network which connects women through a variety of activities and events which enhance feelings of belonging and well-being



Dear OWN members ...



Now we can welcome summer and enjoy the colour and brightness it brings. We are indeed fortunate to live on the North Shore with all its trees, open spaces, and the sea around us.

By now I hope that you have all seen the new OWN Brochure and that you all enjoy the new format. The feedback we have had has been very positive. Looking back it has been a busy time for OWN.

The atmosphere on the **Pub Night** was great, singing all the 'old songs' with our band, *Men in Black*. The food was tasty and all in all it was most enjoyable.

On 1 October, OWN, together with *Takapuna North Trust*, held a **Variety Concert** for the **International Year of the Older Person** at the *Positive Ageing Centre*. People were invited from many agencies on the North Shore, and again it was a great success. Many thanks to *Clara* and *Marina* for their dances, young *Medha* for her beautiful Indian dance, to *Danny Phillips* for his entertaining magic show, and to *Lin* and *Hershall* for their music and songs (including my favourite *On the Beach*) and the other performers. Participants enjoyed a sumptuous lunch prepared by our caterer *Emma*. It was a pleasure to see *Mike Cohen* from the *Devonport-Takapuna Local Board* mingling with the guests. OWN raised funds by doing the organising and stage managing for the show. We are most grateful and give many thanks to the *Devonport-Takapuna Local Board* for sponsoring this event.

Fifteen OWN members of the **Theatre Group** thoroughly enjoyed the matinee performance of the musical *Billy Elliot* in the new *ASB Waterfront Theatre*. As usual, the staff

looked after us, and we had good seats – all at a special price.

We congratulate *Anne Briggs*, *Patricia Russell*, and *Cherrie Keane* on putting together the next volume of the **Writing for Future Generations** storybook. Thanks to *Beate Matthies* for suggesting the **OWN Storybook Launch** and to combine it with our **End of Year Function**. The event will take place at the *Positive Ageing Centre in Takapuna* on Saturday, 10 December (see page 3 for details). This is an OWN event and everybody is invited. We look forward to sharing the special time with each other and hearing about OWN groups' activities.

I would like to thank the members of the *OWN Committee* for their contributions and also a special thanks to the organisers of our different *OWN Groups*. We are aware that there is so much talent amongst our members and as it says in our brochure, we are looking forward to sharing stories and ideas, that is what OWN is all about. The organisers do a tremendous job – not forgetting the importance of the participants!

I do hope that members of the different *OWN Groups* will take the opportunity to meet and mingle at our events. Thank you to the *Devonport-Takapuna Local Board* for their contribution and especially thank you to *Rachael Bro*, the *Takapuna North Community Co-ordinator* for her enthusiasm and support.

Wishing you all a very ...

Merry Christmas
& Happy New Year!

Joan Lardner-Rivlin
Chairperson



Up-coming Events ...



OWN Storybook Launch & End of Year Function

We are celebrating an eventful and exciting 2016 year and the launch of the second volume of *Our Own Stories* by our two **Writing for Future Generations** groups. Come and celebrate our OWN values: making friends, sharing stories and ideas.

When: 10:30am – 2:00pm, Saturday, 10 December

Venue: Positive Aging Centre, The Strand, Takapuna
(above the Takapuna CAB and beside Takapuna Library)

Cost: FREE! Lunch provided.

RSVP by 3 December for catering purposes
to email: info@own.org.nz or Joan, ph: 483-9671.



OWN Festival 2017
Saturday, 6 May, 2017 – pencil this date into your calendar now!

OWN Group Contacts

Writing for Future Generations (WFFG)

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



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

OWNs Alone Lunch

Meets on Sundays twice monthly at the *Fairview Retirement Village* in Albany. For details, contact *Judith Sumich*, ph: 478-6618.

Tai Chi for Older Women

Meets on Wednesdays. For details, contact *Susan Pichler*, ph: 478-5569.



Heloisa's Art Classes

Free classes (gold coin donation appreciated), limit 10 people. Meets on Tuesdays at the *Mary Thomas Centre*, Takapuna. For details or to register, contact *Rachael Bro*, ph.: 486-2098.

OWN Events / Workshops

To be confirmed – see the next issue of *Oh! What Next?* for details.

OWN Theatre Group

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



OWN Discussion Group

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

Rummikub Club

A good way to keep your brain active. Meets on the last Friday of each month in Beach Haven. For details, contact *Rika Werner*, ph: 950-6501.



Singing for Joy

Sing songs together, old or new, to help maintain or develop ability – *no concerts*. For details, contact *Heloisa Barczak*, ph: 489-4638.





More New *OWN* Committee Members

Val Bird

Val was born in Chatham, Kent, England. As an only child, especially in the war years, life was often lonely. After leaving school she enjoyed working in the proof-reading department of the local printers.

Val married in her early twenties and seven years later had her first child, a son, and two years later a daughter. As a mother of young children she did many "different" jobs to fit in with school hours; e.g. merchandising and party planning.

Sadly Val's husband died aged 63. Her son had by then emigrated to Australia and later her daughter emigrated to New Zealand. Val visited her daughter and family from November to February for three years before finally deciding to join them here. She has lived in Browns Bay for eight and a half years.



By joining several clubs, *Probus*, *OWN*, and the local gym, Val has met lovely people and made many new friends.

Lennie Crawford

Lennie was born in Australia and came to New Zealand when she was age 7. She attended *Meadowbank School* and *Otahuhu College*.

Before she was married, Lennie worked at *Warner Brothers* as a shorthand / typist receptionist. She also worked part-time at the then *Mercury Theatre* as an usherette. In her time, Lennie has worked at various jobs and for the last 25 years was in partnership with her then husband working in a retail landscape business. This business was sold three years ago and since then she has become a lady of leisure.

Lennie joined the *Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)* 21 years ago and has been involved in various roles within the organisation which she has thoroughly enjoyed. She became a Justice of the Peace (JP) 16 years ago when it became obvious that there was a need in the CAB for JPs.

Lennie has three wonderful children, five grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter who is the light of her life.

For Lexophiles (Lovers of Words)

☺ A chicken crossing the road: poultry in motion.

☺ When cannibals ate a missionary, they got a taste of religion.

☺ Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!

☺ The guy who fell into an upholstery machine was fully recovered.

☺ This girl said she recognised me from the Vegetarian Club, but I'd never met herbivore.

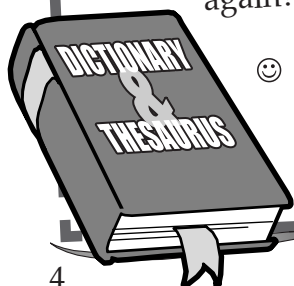
☺ What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A Thesaurus.

☺ Jokes about German sausages are the wurst.

☺ A lot of money is tainted – 'taint yours and 'taint mine.

☺ Don't worry about old age ... it doesn't last.

☺ Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.



☺ Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead to know basis.





Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

(To be read to the tune of the Christmas carol)

Christmas comes just once a year.
Everything is very dear.
Shirt for father? He wants a phone –
'Fraid he'll have to buy his own.
Mother's scent – we want it nice,
But at not too high a price.
Matthew wants a slot car set –
What's the cheapest we can get?
Hark, the Herald Angels Sing,
Glory to the New-born King.

Sarah wants a princess dress.
Wish her room wasn't such a mess!
An easy one is baby *Kyle* –
Chewing the wrapper'll make him smile.
Aunt Maud's coming, did you hear?
She'll want yoga, keep-fit gear.
Uncle Ted's ferrets are his life –
Loves them better than his wife.
Hark, the Herald
Angels Sing,
Glory to the
New-born King.

On the day they'll all arrive,
Just like honeybees to the hive.
The bird is stuffed with sage and bread,
Still got feathers – is it dead?
The Christmas pud last year was dour –
Mum used salt instead of flour.
We lit the top, had to smother the flame –
Bucket of water if we do that again.
Hark, the Herald Angels Sing,
Glory to the New-born King.

Christmas Day – the big day's here,
House full of paper and Christmas cheer.
Sarah's eaten and is feeling sick,
Cream spilt on the carpet, thick.
Dishes mounting, no place clear,
Ted is tipsy with too much beer.
Maud's doing handstands against the door,
Says it helps her to eat some more.
Heralds still singing their
sweet refrain –
But will we do all this
again?



Jenny Goldsbro
Written 2009, amended 2014



*Good friends
make bad days
a little more bearable!*

Author unknown



A Very Crackers Christmas



It all began one Labour weekend in 1994, when the conversation among our family moved on to Christmas and crackers. I forget who should be held responsible for the idea that we make our own. In any event, it was met with great enthusiasm by all of us, after years of the disappointing tissue paper hats and so-called novelties found in every commercial cracker, irrespective of the cost.

So, buoyed with enthusiasm, we put names into a hat, and whoever's name we pulled out was the lucky recipient of our cracker. Little did we know this was the start of something big, and would eventually become as traditional to our family as roast turkey and the *Queen's Message*.

It was generally agreed that very few terms and conditions applied to these hand-crafted crackers. In fact, the only rule was that no outside help was permitted. There was to be no size restriction or limit on materials used. The hat is the main focus of the cracker, with the addition of a novelty item and joke.



Looking back on our family Christmas photos, it seems that our powers of imagination and ingenuity knew no bounds. At least we thought so!

It soon became apparent after our first home-made *Cracker Christmas*

“Christmas is a tonic for our souls. It moves us to think of others rather than of ourselves. It directs our thoughts to giving.”

– B.C. Forbes



that we would need to re-think the timing of opening our crackers. I say this because, first time around, way back in 1994, we placed them on the table, for opening just before dinner was served, in line with tradition. However, little did we realise the entertainment value that our creations would provide. Consequently, the dinner got cold, as we fell about laughing. Since then, our Christmas morning has been re-scheduled to accommodate the cracker opening ceremony in plenty of time before we eat.

As the years go by, our imaginations can be sorely tested, ever conscious that we can't do a repeat performance, as some sharp-eyed family member is sure to remember a similar creation way back over time.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the advent of the \$2 Shops, which can provide an abundance of materials to be collected over weeks and months beforehand, as we embark on our latest creations.

Patricia Russell





A 1930s Christmas



Christmas is the time of the year when we seem to look back to the special ones. How excited we were just to see the city lights, the decorations and Christmas scenes displayed in shop windows.



The year was 1930 and we were living through the depression years. In the shops we would visit *Santa*, but we were not allowed to ask for anything as he would know what we liked and we were never disappointed.



As a five year old my days were spent

playing with my kewpie doll, which was about three inches tall and had its legs stuck together, which made it a bit difficult to dress.

I had learned to knit and would spend many hours sitting on the front porch knitting dresses for it. They never fitted very well, but that was not important.

My sister *Jean* and I played with these dolls so much, putting them to bed in cots made from old cardboard boxes, and we were always admiring larger dolls in shop windows. I was a good child as I was shy and controlled by my older sister *Jean*. Maybe one day, if I was very good, *Santa* would bring me one.



Then one Christmas that I remember, *Jean* and I each received a doll.

I thought mine was the most beautiful doll that I had ever seen. It was about 10 inches tall and had beautiful blond ringlets and a pink party dress, and it even had underpants and little white shoes and socks.

Jean's doll had brown ringlets and a blue dress, and she wanted me to put mine to bed with her doll, but I just wanted to nurse mine.

She grabbed my doll by the leg and tried to take it from

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Christmas Eve in Curitiba, Brazil



Christmas Eve and I was alone, almost. My husband was sleeping – he had health problems and was very tired and sleepy. We had enjoyed dinner with a nephew and his wife earlier in the evening, it was a nice time, but they had gone home early.

It was almost midnight and I was thinking of going to bed too. Where we lived there were many apartment buildings around. I could hear many happy families chatting and laughing, the kids happily playing with their Christmas presents. This is our tradition in Brazil – presents are opened on the night of the 24th December.



Suddenly, I heard a marvellous sound: a trumpet started playing Christmas songs. I searched and finally located where the sound was coming from. One of the buildings had balconies and on some there were people listening to the music, applauding, and asking for more. It was a magical moment, a real Christmas moment. Finally after several songs, the instrument player, whom I couldn't see, started a song that means "It's the Last One" – a beautiful sound. Again a lot of applause and people shouting thanks.

It was one of my best times on Christmas Eve. I was grateful and very, very happy!

Heloisa Barczak



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me, and in doing so pulled the leg off!

I was so upset. My mother took the doll from me and put it in the linen press on the top shelf, and that was the last that I saw of it. Whether it went back to the shop and they refunded or what happened to it, I never found out. I never saw my beautiful doll again.



I have always loved dolls and when my daughter was little I bought her one for Christmas, but she was never interested in it. She would have preferred a pair of six-shooters in holsters!

Oh, how times have changed over the years. Now children get pillowcases full of presents on Christmas morning.

I never forgot that beautiful doll that I held for only about an hour that Christmas 85 years ago.

Betty Faesen



Book
Review

Screw You Dolores

A wicked approach to happiness

By Sarah-Kate Lynch

Published by Random House NZ in 2015



What a perfectly delightful book written in Sarah-Kate's inimitable style. It made me want to write about it and recommend it to all my friends.

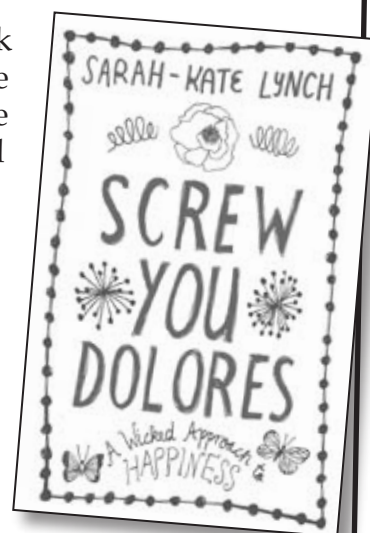
Sarah-Kate writes about turning 50 and her year of "me", ways of finding happiness, and the triumphs and tribulations in her life. She certainly had many. So much of what she writes about really resonates with me, especially her serious brush with "measles", as my three sisters all had a brush with "measles"*, in one sister's case – fatal.

She expresses everything with humour and her special take on life. I always read her columns when I come across a *Woman's Day* magazine, but this is the first time I have come across one of her books, and this is one book I want to keep in my library as opposed to many books that I just read, but don't wish to retain.

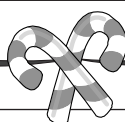
Sarah-Kate mentions that she makes her living by selling her books and only makes \$2.50 on each book sold, but if you don't wish to buy your own copy, borrow it from the library as she also receives money each time it has been borrowed.

Anne Mutu

* Editor's Note: 'Brush with the "measles"' refers to breast cancer, which runs in Anne's family.



“ Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently. – Maya Angelou ”



John's 80th Birthday



On 24 February this year it was my husband *John's* 80th birthday.

We were not planning a big celebration, because my 80th was coming up in August and then we could have all the family and friends over to celebrate in style. However, our daughters were not impressed by this idea, so our oldest daughter, *Virginia*, organised a party in their garden on the Sunday prior to his birthday.

It was a big surprise because we were thinking we were coming over to have drinks and nibbles. They had a mobile pizza oven burning in their garden, which they had hired for a party the day before, and they had hinted at possibly having some left-over pizza for us to have with them.

Our son-in-law *Tony* was behind the oven and my daughter *Celia*, her husband *Paul*, and their children

arrived shortly afterwards, as did our nephew *Richard* with his wife *Monique* and their children.

When it was time to start making pizzas all the youngsters got stuck in and decorated them with their own favourite toppings, and also came to *Opa John* with pizzas made just for him.

All the children had a good time and even made music. Then for dessert a big cake with **Happy 80th Birthday** on it was carried out whilst all the children sang *Happy Birthday*.

It was a real nice happening and an enormous surprise for *John*.



On 24 February, the actual birthday, our daughters together with sons-in-law invited us for a lunch. Once again another surprise for



the person who did not want any fuss – the girls were just not going to let this special birthday number go by unnoticed.

After the lunch we went on a trip up north for two nights. We had booked a cabin on a camping site where we had not been before. *John* and I camped a lot when we were younger, as we enjoyed the outdoors, and wherever we stayed was always close to the sea. Here too we could hear the waves, but to go to the beach we had to walk a bit, as it was a little further than anticipated.

We arrived at our cabin, which was clean and very spacious with room for five persons. The only thing that was missing was a bathroom. We felt that was ridiculous for the price we paid for this cabin. There was a door in the double bedroom, but



John and Sanny Leur

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◀ continued.

that was locked and we had tried the key. We pulled and pushed without success. *John* even put some extra pressure on the door, but it did not open.

I said, "no worries we can use the campground facilities." This we did, even at night making a trip over to the facilities, just like in the "old days". The moon was full and the noise of the sea close by was just magic!



In the morning as I was making breakfast, *John* started to complain again, "It is just crazy, to have such a huge hot water cylinder in the cupboard, for one tap."

That prompted me to go to that mystery door again. I grabbed the handle and it almost opened by itself. Ta ta ra ta! There was the bathroom! I called out to *John*, "Come and have a look what I found here".

We were flabbergasted and we had no idea what we had done wrong the day before.

We will never know, but now we could have our shower and a story to tell the family and have a good laugh. We had a lovely time and it was a very special 80th birthday celebration for *John*.

Sanny Leur



Africa – Rain

Sometimes something happens and a memory slips back – a snippet, maybe a bit of music or a smell, just a whiff – and you are back, for a moment, in another country, in another time. For me, it was the smell of a dusty road after rain.

In Zambia, in October, we waited for the rain. It was very, very hot and dry, and the dirt roads were dusty. October was called 'suicide month' because it was so hot, so dry, and no relief, no moisture. We would watch the clouds day after day – is that a rain cloud? – and then, one day, at 4:00pm exactly, the rain would come gushing down – what a relief. It would pour and pour, and then stop, and then the smell of dusty roads after rain would rise, filling our nostrils.



Chifubu was a 'township' in Ndola. The Town Council built houses for African workers – rows of neat houses each with a garden. The roads were dirt roads at that time. The gardens were beautifully looked after by the women. They also looked after the fields outside the township where they grew peanuts. They went into the bush to chop wood for their stoves and carried the wood on their heads on the way home. The wood was burnt to make charcoal – that way the bush was destroyed and erosion was taking place.

In the spring a beautiful flower would come up in the bush. We called it a 'Flame Lily'. Sometimes we had picnics in the bush and sat among the flowers. Each lily had its own slender stem and leaves, the petals looked like red or crimson flames with yellow tips. I did not see them anywhere else in the world, so I was delighted when some years ago I saw them in the *Auckland Domain's* hothouse. Another woman was also looking at them. She wore a brooch just like the lily. "Zambia", I said to her. "Yes," she replied, and we exchanged looks and memories came back, transporting us to another time, another place.

Joan Lardiner-Rivlin



My Father's Hand



My father's hands were different from other children's father's hands. Their fathers had four fingers and one thumb on each hand. My father had four fingers and a thumb on his left hand, but on his right hand he had only a thumb and the palm of his hand.

When I was a small child, friends coming to our house would ask, "What happened to your father's hand?"

The first time I was asked I said, "what hand?" because to me there was nothing wrong. We never took any notice. There did not seem to be anything Dad could not do. I suppose we just accepted him as he was.



When Dad was approaching seven years of age he dearly wanted a bicycle for his

birthday. He hoped and prayed there would be a bright shiny black bicycle for him there on the day. Alas, this did not eventuate.

His parents owned a grocery store on the corner of Jerrold Street and Lincoln Road in Addington, Christchurch. Lincoln Road was a main road with tram lines running down the centre.

Each day after school Dad helped his parents in the shop, bagging tea, flour and sugar, and displaying the many fruits and vegetables in the large shop window.

One Friday afternoon a young boy Dad knew walked into the shop. Dad noticed he had put his small bicycle against the shop front facing the road. Dad spied an opportunity.

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Judy's Kitchen



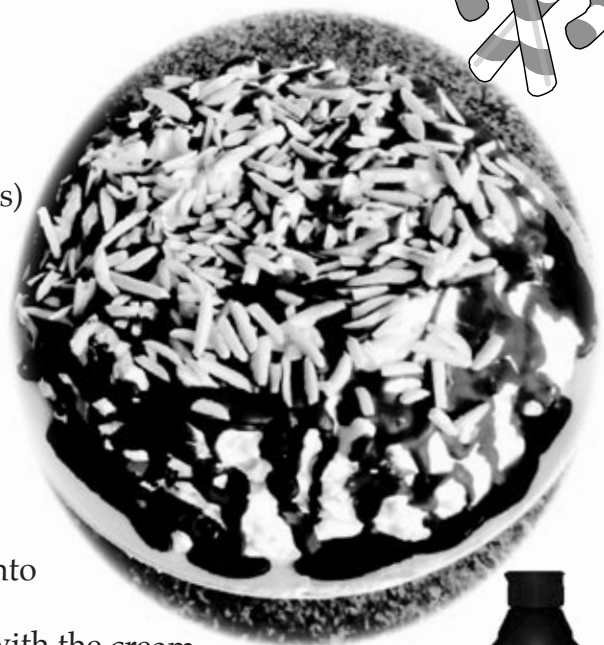
Pavamore

Ingredients

- 1 Pavlova (bought or home-made)
- 1 tin (450g) Fruit Salad (or use fresh Raspberries)
- 8 Pink Marshmallows (cut into quarters)
- 8 White Marshmallows (cut into quarters)
- 300ml Cream
- 70gm Slivered Almonds
- Chocolate Shell Topping (Hershey's or similar)

Method

1. Thoroughly drain the fruit salad.
2. Whip the cream.
3. Gently fold the fruit salad and marshmallows into the whipped cream.
4. Coat the top and sides of the pavlova liberally with the cream mixture. Put it in the **freezer** for 30 minutes.
5. Remove the pavlova from the freezer. Drizzle the Chocolate Shell liberally over the top and sides of the pavlova. Sprinkle the top with the slivered almonds before the chocolate sets hard.



This dessert looks like a decadent gâteau. It is nice to have with fresh in-season berries around the base.



Enjoy!





◀ continued.

Before the boy came out of the shop he would have a ride on the bike. He hopped on the bike, never having ridden before, and shakily started off along the road. To his horror he saw the tram coming. The distraction caused him to fall off the bike across the tram tracks. He looked up and saw the large black tram looming towards him. He had the presence of mind to quickly pull his head out of the way, but the tram ran over his right hand.

Dad spent 18 months in hospital. He had skin grafts and had to adjust to using his left hand for everything.

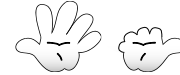


He was very academic, topping his classes at High School. He was also a great sportsman, representing *Christchurch Boys' High School* in the First Fifteen, the First Eleven, and was Captain of the tennis team. There seemed to be nothing he couldn't do.

Alas, when it was time to consider his future it was a different story. He wanted to be a Catholic Priest. He was turned down – it wouldn't look right. He applied to Training College to become a school teacher. He was turned down – it would be too embarrassing in front of children. He applied to become a Carpenter. He was turned down – it was deemed he would not be able to hold a hammer.

His *Uncle Dick* was a builder, so he offered Dad an apprenticeship as a carpenter. Dad

excelled and later ran his own business. Ten years later in 1950 there was a shortage of Primary School teachers. Dad had always wanted to be a school teacher. If a person had a trade they could apply to become a teacher. It was termed as a one year "pressure cooker" course. Dad applied, was accepted and a year later was in front of the classroom as a teacher. He loved teaching and continued in this profession until his retirement.



Dad had many and varied answers to the question, "What happened to your hand?"

I well remember the time a young school friend had dinner at our place. He ate the meat on his plate, but did not seem to be interested in the vegetables. He looked at my father and tentatively asked, "*Mr White*, what happened to your fingers?"

Dad eyed the boy's plate and said, "When I was a child, I didn't eat my vegetables and one by one they fell off."

I have never seen vegetables disappear so quickly!

Judy Brocherie

**Christmas tree,
O Christmas tree ...**

**your
ornaments
are
history!**

*Author
unknown*

