



OWN

NEWS & VIEWS



Spring 2017

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

Life isn't meant to be easy,
it's meant to be
LIVED!

Sometimes happy,
other times rough ...

But with every up and down,
you learn lessons that make you
STRONG!

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 ...

Joan has had a bad fall, but is slowly improving. On behalf of all OWN members, we wish her a speedy recovery.



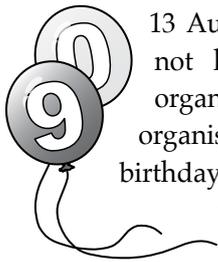
A Milestone Birthday



As we grow older the years seem to go faster and faster. But as a child it seems forever between birthdays.

Every year of our life is part of history with some memorable events recorded. As an example I have chosen 1927.

Did you know that in November, 1927 daylight saving started, Canberra replaced Melbourne as Australia's capital, *Charles Lindberg* flew non-stop from New York to Paris, and the US president was *Calvin Coolidge*?



13 August, 1927 was the birth of our OWN Chairperson. This is not history as she is still giving her service to charitable organisations. *Joan* is at present a member of ten different organisations - three of which have made her a life member. Her birthday celebrations were held two months early in order that her family from far and wide could be with her. Her son and granddaughter came over all the way from Canada.

At the celebration members of each of the groups wished her well and spoke of the service *Joan* has given and thanked her for a job well done.

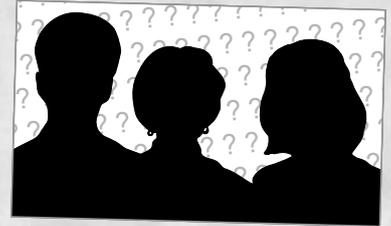


The 90 years of *Joan's* life have been most interesting, as we have learnt from the many stories she has read to us in the OWN **Writing for Future Generations** group. Much of her life covers many historical events. We would like to hear more and more of her amazing and memorable stories.

Happy 90th birthday for 13 August, from all of us at OWN.

Betty Faesen

Wanted



We are looking for active **Committee** members to join us as well as people for the **OWN Festival sub-committee** to actively support our committee. Our OWN lovely bunch of ladies would welcome some new faces.

Interested?

Email info@own.org.nz with "Committee Wanted" in the subject line for more details.

Handy Hints Banana Peel

Sprinkled throughout this newsletter are just five of the uses for the oft-neglected banana peel that will make you think twice before you throw it in the rubbish bin.

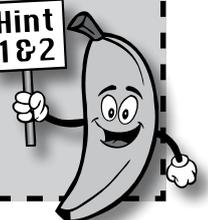
Compost

Put banana peels into your compost – they break down pretty quickly and add nutrients to your soil.

Meat Tenderizer

It will add just enough moisture to ensure that the roast doesn't get too dry.

Hint
1&2



OWN Groups

OWN Theatre Group

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



OWNs Alone Lunch

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

OWN Discussion Group

The **Discussion Group** which meets every second Tuesday of the month at 10:00am is looking for more people to join in with them. A range of subjects is discussed and it is a very interesting morning held in Room 3 (first floor) of the *Bays Community Centre*, Browns Bay. If you are interested, please contact *Jeanne Ford* ph: 410-4803.

Writing for Future Generations (WFFG)

Inform the Group Convenor prior to attending the Group.



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

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

Heloisa's Art Classes

Heloisa Barczak has resumed her classes this month at the *Mary Thomas Centre*, Takapuna on Tuesdays (2:00pm - 4:00pm). The classes are free, but a gold coin donation to cover materials is appreciated. Classes are limited to a maximum 10 people, therefore you must register for a class by contacting *Sarah Thorne*, Takapuna North Community Co-ordinator, ph: 486-2098 or email: office@takapunatrust.org.nz

Tai Chi for Older Women

Meets on Wednesdays at the *Bays Community Centre*, Browns Bay. For details, contact *Susan Pichler*, ph: 478-5569.



Up-coming Events

Last Legs

Growing old disgracefully! After a sell-out World Premiere season in 2016, *Roger Hall's* smash hit *Last Legs* is back. News that *Bill English* is to open a new wing of the *Cambridge Retirement Village* sparks a revolution amongst its residents. Though many want to turn on something special, others are less enthused and plan to stage a protest. Soon new fractures appear along old fault lines, transforming the swanky facility into a hotbed of insurrection, intrigue, and infidelity. The shenanigans and skulduggery continue right up to the last minute. With the Minister's car only moments away, a vehicle suddenly blocks the driveway. What's worse, it's a hearse!

When: 2:00pm, Saturday, 23 September

Where: *ASB Waterfront Theatre*,
138 Halsey Street,
Wynyard Quarter, City

The special OWN price tickets have all been sold, but regular-priced tickets may still be available.

For further details, please contact *Joan Lardner-Rivlin*, ph: 483-9671.

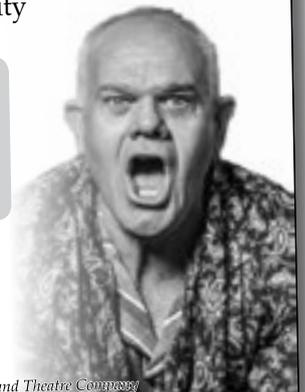


Photo: Auckland Theatre Company

High Tea

This is a really fun time so bring along your friends to join in with us! No need to wear a hat and gloves, but dressing up would be great.

When: Saturday, 18 November

Where: *Positive Aging Centre*,
The Strand, Takapuna

Cost: \$10 per person

For further details, please contact *Joan Lardner-Rivlin*, ph: 483-9671.



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

140th Anniversary of Kate Edger's Graduation

Kate Milligan Edger was the first woman in the British Empire to earn a Bachelor of Arts and the first woman in New Zealand to get a degree.

Kate graduated with a BA from the *University of New Zealand* on 11 July, 1887 after completing her studies through *Auckland College and Grammar School*.

Her story is well known and she is rightly held up as a pioneer of women's education. Less is known, however, about the women who quickly followed in her footsteps, or as she called them "The First Girl Graduates".

Among the early "girl graduates" from this university, which opened in 1883 as *Auckland University College*, are sportswomen, founders of literary journals, authors, and headmistresses of the country's top girls' schools.

One, *Clementine Emily Harrison*, graduated with her bachelors in 1884 and in 1885 was the first woman to gain an MA from *Auckland University College*. She was immediately hired as a teacher by *Kate* who was the headmistress at *Nelson College for Girls*. *Clementine* left in 1891 to become the founding headmistress of *Wanganui Girls' College*.



After her marriage to *Harold Mellsop*, she retired from teaching, but served on local school boards as the couple moved around the country. Reflecting her interest in golf, the *Mellsop Cup* is awarded in her memory each year to the country's top performing women's player; *Lydia Ko* is a recent recipient.

Another MA graduate and sportswoman, *Marguerita (Rita) Pickmere*, represented the university in tennis at the first *Easter Tournament* in 1902. The female competitors were chaperoned by their brothers. As *Marguerita's* brother was also competing, this proved to be no issue.

However, in her memoirs, she recalled that the men, including her brother, took charge of ensuring the luggage got on the right train. This resulted in her trunk being left in Wellington while the party travelled on to Christchurch to compete. She didn't get her trunk until after the tournament, forcing her to compete with a borrowed racquet and new shoes. She lost her game, but said, "It was greatly enjoyed by all of us".

After graduation she stayed involved in student life, helping to establish the student magazine *Kiwi*.

From 3 July to 18 August, **Special Collections** explores the lives of these and other early women graduates in a display outside the Reading Room on Level G of the General Library at the *University of Auckland*.

Article republished with permission of *Special Collections*, University of Auckland Libraries and Learning Services. Item by Sarah Dunbar, as appeared in *Alumni News* (August 2017).



I Remember ...

Memories of Life at the Tuhua School House

It was February of 1955. Dad, a primary school teacher, was posted from Christchurch to Tuhua, 100 kilometres north of Gisborne. I was 10 years of age at the time, the eldest of Mum and Dad's five children. We had never been to the North Island before, so this was a new experience for us and these are my memories.

I remember arriving at the school house which was situated on the school property about 300 metres from the school. The house looked pretty small to me. I wondered how our family of seven would fit into such a small two bedroom place. No problem ... Mum and Dad had the larger bedroom, the two boys had the second bedroom, and the huge lounge at the front of the house became the bedroom for us three girls.

In the very large farmhouse kitchen there was room for seven to be seated around the table. The dining room off the kitchen became the lounge. In the two and half years we lived at the school house it never felt too small.

I remember seeing Maori people for the first time wondering why their skin was darker than mine and why they spoke a different language. We were the only Pakeha children at the school.

I remember the huge peach tree outside the lounge window. In the summer it was laden with large juicy yellow million dollar peaches. I have never since tasted a peach as good as one off that

tree. Mum bottled the peaches for us to enjoy in desserts when the peaches were no longer in season.

I remember the big beautifully tended vegetable garden Dad had dug by hand. He said to keep the family in vegetables all year round the garden needed to be ten square feet per person. To dig 70 square feet was no mean feat for Dad having only one hand.

I remember the father of a large family leaving his horse in our school paddock, asking Dad to drive him the three kilometres to his home. The man was too drunk to go on horseback. Dad did this a couple of times, and then refused. One night, in retaliation, this man opened the gate into Dad's garden, letting his horse in. The horse destroyed the garden patch and demolished the vegetables. I certainly remember the look of horror and despair on Dad's face upon finding the destruction.

I remember going to the movies in Ruatoria, 25 kilometres away.

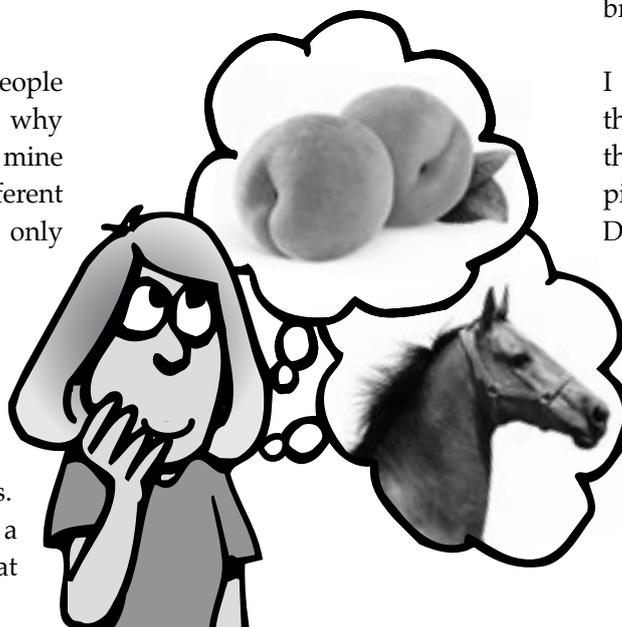
Horses tied to hitching posts outside the local hall. One particular evening when the projectionist was too slow in starting the movie, an impatient patron threw a beer bottle at the screen. He was soon dealt with by the local constabulary.

I remember each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday having to walk a kilometre up to the main road to collect the bread. The delivery man would leave the bread in a small shed like building about a metre by a metre, and a half a metre off the ground. One particular time a couple of dozen wild horses came stampeding down the road. My sisters *Barbara* and *Mary* and I very quickly jumped into the bread box and shut the door till the horses had passed.

I remember the time we were walking to get the bread only to find halfway there the river had flooded in the night. The water had risen above the bridge forcing us to return home without the bread.

I remember Mum cooking on the coal range. There was no thermostat. She would place a piece of paper in the oven. Depending upon how quickly the paper browned decided whether Mum would cook scones, a fruitcake, or a sponge.

I remember the fun filled summer days of my childhood at Tuhua with my



Continues ►

◀ continued.

brothers *Paul* and *David*, and sisters *Barbara* and *Mary*. We would take a packed lunch with some fruit, ride bareback on our horses across the paddocks, over the hills and be gone for the whole day. Today, to allow this our parents would be considered irresponsible.

I remember the look of shock on Mum and Dad's faces when they realised there was no electricity in the area. Light was supplied with a gas lantern. I will never forget the night I was holding the lantern by the bedroom window. I pulled back the curtain to see what the noise was outside. Suddenly there was a "whoosh". A bright orange glow lit the room as the flimsy net curtains were set alight. My bed was to the right, the door to the left ... could I rush past the flaming curtains and make it to safety?

Yes, I did, but I will also never forget the lecture and punishment I received because of such a careless act.

Judy Brocherie

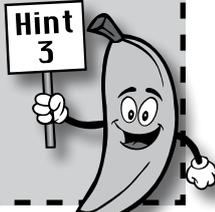


Handy Hints

Banana Peel

Itch Soother

Banana peels can help relieve bug bites and poison ivy. It won't remove the oils that cause the itching, but it will soothe the bite or rash.



School Dinners

Before filling our plates with the day's offerings, the headmistress leads us in prayer:

“ Thank you for the world so sweet,
Thank you for the food we eat.
Thank you for the birds that sing,
Thank you God for everything.”

The dinner ladies stand to attention at their station, metal trays, pots, and ladles at the ready. Their white overalls and caps give them an air of authority, sending out a silent message, "You'll eat what you're given – no pandering to fussy palates."

The weekly menu seldom varies:

- Irish stew (grey and fatty), peas (mushy and tasteless), and mashed potatoes (lumpy);
- sausages (greasy) in batter, better known as Toad in the Hole, gravy (thin) peas, and mashed potatoes;
- hot pot (unidentifiable meat – generally grisly), cabbage (watery), and mashed potatoes;
- mince (lumpy and pale) with carrots (overcooked), cabbage (also overcooked), and mashed potatoes;
- and on Fridays, fish (edible, but species unknown) with baked beans (definitely not *Heinz*, rather anaemic), and mashed potatoes.

The puddings are filling, and include some of my all time favourites:

- white steamed pudding with currants, better known as Spotted Dick, and custard (lumpy and runny);
- Jam Roly Poly and custard;
- Manchester Tart and custard;
- treacle sponge pudding and custard;
- prunes and custard;
- rice pudding;
- semolina;
- tapioca.

There's no allowance or consideration given to those with dietary needs, such as gluten intolerance, dairy allergies, or vegetarianism. These conditions are yet to be invented, identified, and named. Meanwhile, those unfortunates are generally referred to as fussy or picky eaters and told to get on with it.

Patricia Russell



A Fancy Pair of Knickers



I have always been in the habit of wearing sensible serviceable knickers, but have from time to time admired the lacy, frilly, pretty knickers that you could purchase for a price, but alas, they were not within my budget.

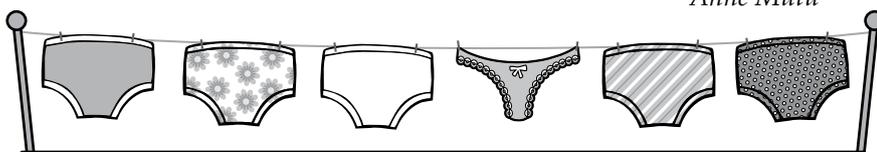
Here I am in my 70s, doing a stint in the Op Shop. I looked idly along the underwear rack and spotted this nice pair of black, lacy knickers. They looked almost new. I looked at the size. Ah, it was my size. I debated with myself for a minute; after all there was no husband to admire me in these sexy numbers, but, yes, I would get them anyway, for at least I would feel good knowing I had pretty underwear.

I told my 'offsider' that I would buy them and my reasoning for doing so. She said well, if you see me laughing when I see you next it will be because of the thought of you wearing those frilly knickers. The two of us roared with laughter at the thought.

That night, while undressing I thought I would try them on. Well, I got them on fine and they controlled my tummy, but alas pushed all the fat upwards into a roll of fat above. They looked anything but glamorous. Well, I told myself, you ARE a great grandmother and now and in the future you will stick to sensible practical knickers. Oh, the price of vanity!

But at \$1.50 for the pair they were well worth the price for the laugh they gave my fellow worker and me. And I guess that I am still young at heart.

Anne Mutu



My Living Will

Last night my sister and I were sitting in the den, and I said to her, "I never want to live in a vegetative state, dependent on some machine and fluids from a bottle to keep me alive. That would be no quality of life at all. If that ever happens, just pull the plug."

So, she got up, unplugged the computer and threw out my wine ... she's such a bitch!



Lost Love Another Cautionary Tale



He met her in the orchard
Beneath the apple trees;
Where the ripening russet pippins
Hung amongst the autumn leaves.

He took her hand and kissed it
Put his arm around her waist,
And gently drawing her to him
His lips on hers he placed.

"Dearest will you marry me?"
He was about to say
When his phone rang in his pocket
And the moment passed away.

He often thinks quite ruefully,
How different things might be
If he'd turned the damned thing off;
And just got down upon one knee.

But no, it is a different girl
Whose finger bears his ring.
He wishes now wholeheartedly,
The past back, he could bring.

Helen Welsh



Driving Licence



I had been driving for some time without a licence and my husband decided it was time that I sat my licence. I was seven months pregnant, but could still fit behind the steering wheel, so we didn't think that it would be a problem.

On the date for the driving test he decided that the brakes needed adjusting which he duly did. He told me to be careful when I put my foot on the brake.

When we arrived at the appointed time and place I got out and sat in the driver's seat. The traffic officer did a double take when he saw that I was pregnant – just gave me a funny look and didn't say anything, but was clearly not comfortable when he sat in the passenger seat next to me.

As you all know there were no seatbelts in cars in those days. The first time I put my foot on the brake the officer nearly went through the windscreen, as I had not had a chance to drive the car since the brakes had been adjusted. It was not a good start.

I was quick to say that my husband had just adjusted the brakes, to which he replied, "I noticed."

I thought that this was going to be detrimental to getting my licence, but was determined not to let it get the better of me. After many times round the block, reversing, and parking we finally went back to where I started. I asked the officer if I had passed and he replied, "Yes, because I don't want to see you and do it again before the baby gets here."

Lennie Crawford



Judy's Kitchen

White Chocolate & Raspberry Crème Brûlée



Ingredients

- 600ml Cream
- 125ml Milk
- 180g White Chocolate (chopped)
- 6 Egg Yolks
- 100g Caster Sugar (reserve 50g for topping)
- 1 cup Raspberries (fresh or frozen)

Method

1. Preheat oven to 150°C. Place six 1 cup capacity ramekins in a roasting pan.
2. Combine the cream milk and chocolate in a saucepan over medium-low heat. Cook, while stirring, for approximately 5 minutes or until chocolate melts and mixture comes to a simmer (not to the boil).
3. Meanwhile whisk together the egg yolks and 50g of caster sugar in a large heatproof bowl.
4. Gradually pour the hot cream mixture into the egg yolk mixture while continually stirring.
5. Evenly arrange the raspberries in the ramekins. Pour over cream mixture.
6. Pour enough boiling water into the roasting pan to reach halfway up the sides of the ramekins.
7. Cook in the oven for 40 minutes or until just set.
8. Remove ramekins from pan and set aside to cool for 1 hour.
9. Cover with plastic wrap and put in the fridge for 3 hours to set.
10. To serve: preheat grill to high. Sprinkle brûlée liberally with the remaining caster sugar. Cook under the grill for 2 to 3 minutes or until the caster sugar caramelises – watch them while grilling. Alternately, use a brûlée gun / blow torch to caramelise the sugar. Serve immediately.



The Southern Alps

Congrats!



Congratulations to Judy and Graeme Brocherie who celebrated their 52nd Wedding Anniversary on 28 August.

Judy is Deputy Chairperson of OWN and also supplies us with her fabulous Judy's Kitchen recipes (see page 8) for OWN News&Views.

In May 1974, my husband *Ian* and I took our three children on holiday to Christchurch. As a *New Zealand Railways* employee, each year *Ian* was entitled to a free month's rail pass anywhere in New Zealand. Early in the morning we left Auckland by train. After a long scenic trip we arrived in Wellington where we stayed the night. Next morning we boarded the Cook Strait ferry bound for Picton. From there we travelled to Christchurch by railcar.

Ian had long held the ambition to fly over the Southern Alps. We went to Christchurch Airport, hoping this would be possible. Alas, the day was too cloudy. On our second attempt, success!

The day was beautifully fine, perfect for our flight. The small plane was a four-seater, the cabin being no roomier than a medium sized car. Two seats in front and two seats behind. There was a spare seat at the back on my left. *Ian* sat in front of this seat. The pilot was the last to board. He sat in front of me. He started the engine, shut the door which was on my right, and we took to the air.

Flying over the Canterbury Plains we could not help but admire the beautiful scenery below. As we were climbing over the foothills of the Southern Alps the pilot pointed out the various mountains and lakes in the distance. I could not see this. My vision was obscured because of the angle of the plane and the height of the back of the pilot's seat. I removed my seatbelt, pulled myself up on the back of his seat to see the vista in front of me. It was absolutely awesome!

The pilot continued his commentary, but after a while my position became very uncomfortable. I started easing my way back into my seat. As I did so my right elbow caught the lever of the door handle and immediately the door flew open. I frantically grabbed hold of the back of the pilot's seat, wrapped my arms around it and screamed! The pilot, still wearing his seatbelt, calmly reached out, shut the door and said, "That should not have happened."

It took a few minutes and a lot of persuasion from the pilot for me to let go the back of his seat. I did so, very carefully lowering myself back into my seat. I fastened my seatbelt, sat back, and never moved a muscle for the remainder of our flight.

Kathleen Sharkey



I am a Seenager (Senior Teenager)

I have everything that I wanted as a teenager, only 60 years later.
 I don't have to go to school or work.
 I get an allowance every month.
 I have my own pad.
 I don't have a curfew.
 I have a drivers license and my own car.
 The people I hang around with are not scared of getting pregnant and they do not use drugs.
 And I don't have acne.
Life is great!



Lessons in Dance Etiquette



I have always loved to dance and when I was 16 I was introduced to my father's cousin *Miss Ethelberta Spencer*, a woman of short stature, bright sharp brown eyes, and a commanding presence. She asked about my school work, sporting, and other interests, and in a fair exchange, explained that she herself owned and operated a ballroom dance studio called *Symondsville*. We had a pleasant and lively conversation, at the end of which she said it would be her pleasure to teach me to dance at no cost to my parents.

I learned later that she was born in Auckland in 1885 and had taught dancing from the time she left school. In 1926 she built *Symondsville* next to *St Paul's Anglican Church* in Symonds Street to be her home, business, and studio. It was three stories high, her apartment was on the top level, other apartments on street level, and the dance studio down a long steep internal flight of stairs. Direct access from the street was by way of an equally steep external flight of stairs.

She had a reputation as a strict disciplinarian with very high standards, both in dance and etiquette. She would tolerate no nonsense, but always had a twinkle in her eye and a genuine fondness for young people. She was always addressed as *Miss Spencer* or *Ma'am*, but I was given the choice of calling her either *Cousin Berta* or *Auntie Berta*. I chose the latter, but in every other respect I was treated as simply another student.

On the first Saturday of every month she held a formal dance with a four-piece band and supper. Most men wore suits and black bow ties and the ladies wore full-length

gowns often accessorised with elbow-length gloves. We thought nothing of travelling by public transport dressed in this way – taxis were only for the major balls. For the regular dance classes *Auntie Berta* insisted the men wore white cotton gloves – “so as not to stain the young ladies' beautiful gowns” – and this usually carried over to the Saturday dances. She set high standards in both dancing and in the etiquette which went with social dancing at the time.

For three years this became my world and I absorbed everything I could from the twice-weekly lessons, to the balls, to occasionally helping to set up for those special occasions, and sometimes to make presentations to visiting dignitaries. I was introduced to her friends and colleagues as her niece and her “star pupil”, while she tried to hide her concern over the romances formed and what she called my “high spirits”.

After 67 years of teaching, she retired at the age of 87 and died five years later in 1977. Her obituary was written up in *The New Zealand Herald* as having been a ballroom dance teacher to three generations of pupils.

Symondsville was demolished years ago. Gone to make way for another way of life, a life *Auntie Berta* would not have recognised and would probably have abhorred with its lack of formal etiquette, graciousness and white cotton gloves to protect those beautiful ball gowns. For a brief time I was part of that way of life and I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

Shirley Williams



Lord, I need patience
and I need it
RIGHT NOW!

Author unknown

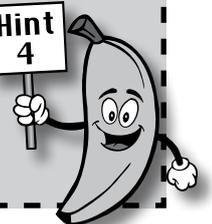


Handy Hints Banana Peel

Aphid Control

If you bury some banana peels around your the plants aphids love, you'll deter them from coming around.

Hint
4



Early One Morning

Lac Lemman (Lake Geneva), Autumn 2015

I walk down the steep cobbled way towards the lake. Normally I would take the funicular, but no matter, I have the time. I weave my way down the narrow lanes where once the fishermen lived, their nets strung out on their balconies. Now the small wooden houses have been converted into weekend homes, mostly for the Swiss. I hurry down to the harbour to catch my boat to Lausanne.

The air is cool on my face; the sun is only just coming up. The rich and slowly changing palette of the trees peeps through the mist, the gentle wisps of which shroud the view of the other shore, another country. I first saw *Lac Lemman (Lake Geneva)* when I was 15, and I have kept returning.

Time was when I lived on the other side and made regular forays to this side of the lake at the end of my working week. Now the journey is reversed and I am leaving Thonon to go to Lausanne and take the train to Vevey. My first week of visiting the retirement home of *Balconies of the Lake* is at an end. *Victoria* will have cousins and friends to visit her over the weekend.

Serene, majestic, the water laps gently on to the shore below the

debarcadère and the swans make their early morning sortie from the harbour. Shortly I am going to cross the distance of approximately 13 kilometres to Lausanne. Once the boats were the only way most people crossed the lake. Now the boats are mainly used by workers and students from Thonon and Evian who commute daily to Lausanne and, in season, the tourists. Throughout the summer, autumn, and spring, the wonderful grand old paddle steamers still traverse the waters, making day trips from Geneva, Lausanne, and Montreux to other parts of the lake.

The luxurious old dining room and lounge in first class is still there. In the 19th century there had been ladies in crinolines accompanied by elegantly attired men in tail coats, moustaches and top hats on *The Grand Tour* who took in the alpine scenery.

The dining room and lounge are now beautifully refurbished, but without the grandeur of their former occupants. Nowadays it is reserved for set meals for the tourists, mostly German-Swiss.

Once there used to be dances at the weekends through the summer

with coloured lights festooning the boat. A poster announces they have “Real Vaudois fondues” on Friday evenings.

The services for the boats along the lake below the steep and glorious vineyards of Lavaux from Lausanne to Montreux are now limited. Life is no longer taken at that leisurely pace, the efficient speedy Swiss trains and the extensive motorway snakes from Geneva to Montreux taking people to their destinations more quickly.

At last the boat comes. Even after all these years, the countless trips, the childhood anticipation of the journey is still there. One of my old favourites arrives, *La Savoie*. She arrives in the splendour of the early morning with her beautiful graceful lines, the paddles propelling this grand old lady through the water. A huge rush of water through the paddles as they go into reverse, the bells sound. It is almost time to embark. The mist lifts slightly, the deep blue of the lake beckons.

The passengers make their way towards the gangway; the men secure the ropes around the bollards, “Bonjour, bonjour Messieurs, Mesdames”.



Continues ►



We step back to allow two young cyclists with their huge backpacks to get on. Well-dressed women and men with briefcases, beautifully made up young girls, students with backpacks. We move in the hushed early morning to take our places. Some of the men in their business suits take their seats in the first class lounge and open their laptops.

I was hoping for a café crème with those old white china cups and a croissant, but alas, the 21st century gives us paper cups and a croissant folded in a paper napkin. It is served not by a waiter in black with long white starched apron and deferential manner, but a member of the crew in the blue uniform of the shipping company. Tant pis, (too bad).

The panorama of the lake is unfolding. Soon I shall see the stunning peaks of the *Dents du Midi* with their first dusting of snow.

Anne Briggs

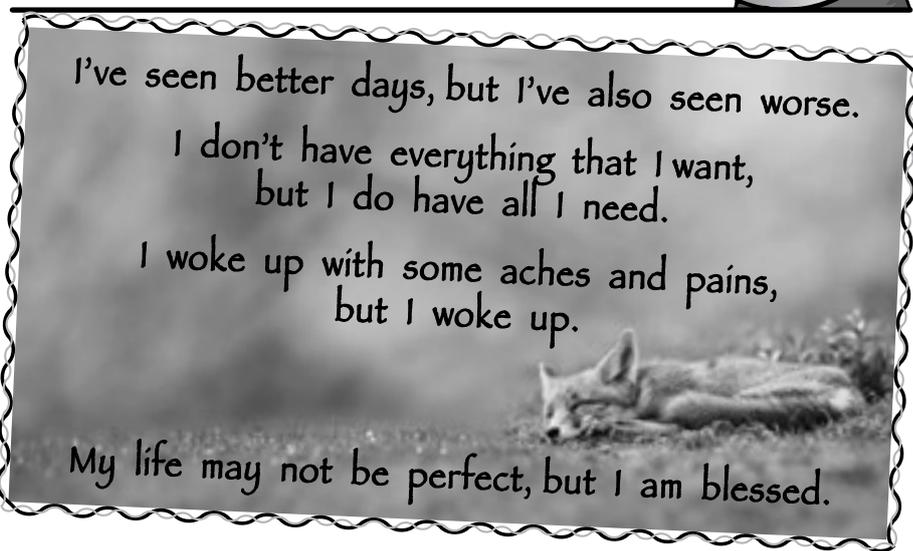
It's the end of a cold winter's afternoon. This was the last shoot of the week, and our owners are gathered round the game cart whilst we poor hard-working dogs are waiting, longing to get home for a feed and a sleep in front of the fire, but that doesn't look like happening any time soon. Most of my pals have returned to their respective vehicles, but three of us are still sitting in the game cart guarding the birds. Our gossiping owners really are the end – they can be very selfish at times.

All the other cars are leaving now. At last, thank goodness, our owners are coming over to us, *Shot's* owner (*Shot* is a Springer Spaniel) whistles to him, and he has jumped off the game wagon and gone running over to his owner. Now what? They are coming back. Someone has just discovered that something unheard of has occurred. One of the pheasants has been partially eaten, a heinous crime indeed! Well, it wasn't me, as if! I can't believe that *Shot* would shame his owner in that way, therefore that leaves *Dotty*, although her guilt is not an opinion shared by her owner. *Dotty*, like me, is a black Labrador, but this is her first work season.

All three owners are talking at once and all of them are denying strenuously that their dog is the culprit. *Dotty's* owner says loudly, "It is quite obviously *Meg* [that's me]. If *Meg* isn't guilty how come she has several feathers sticking to her nose?" I could have died of shame, I cast a swift look at *Dotty* who is sitting looking too virtuous for words, positively smug, but it is no good, I have been tried and found wanting, even *Shot* looks shocked. My Boss has an unreadable expression on his face, I'm sure he believes it's one of the others, but I can see him thinking about those feathers.

This is a clear case of mistaken identity, and a complete travesty of justice, how could anybody actually mistake me for that ... that Black Bitch! This whole sorry affair has ruined my reputation and it is going to take me a very long time to forget it.

Helen Welsh



Handy Hints
Banana Peel

Teeth Whitener
 Brush your teeth normally and then rub them with the inside of a banana peel. The peel's manganese, magnesium, and potassium will help to whiten the enamel.

Hint 5