



OWN

# NEWS & VIEWS

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



Autumn 2023

www.own.org.nz



OWN Festival & AGM 2023 – 20 May, 2023  
See page 3 for the Up-coming Event notice

# Autumn is here!



**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 ...

Hello ladies, as older women and some of us living on our own, it is most important we take every opportunity to meet up with one another as often as possible for friendship and enjoyment. Your OWN Committee organises events during the year for our members. This year let's make a concerted effort to support as many of these as possible. I look forward to seeing you all at one soon.

### OWN Luncheon

On Saturday, 4 March our OWN members had another successful get together. 18 Ladies met for a luncheon at *The Bays Club* in Browns Bay. It was a shame there was an event on in Browns Bay at the same time, which drew crowds of people and made finding parking close by very difficult. *The Bays Club* is a great venue overlooking the beach. With the sun shining on the sparkling water the view was breathtaking. The menu has a variety of choices to suit everyone's taste.

Hearing the chatter and laughter it was evident the ladies were enjoying themselves. Unfortunately, no one thought to take any photos. As we have had good responses to our luncheons at *The Bays Club*, we will be repeating these every few months. Catching up with our friends is so important.

Kind regards,

*Judy Brocherie*  
Chairperson



### A Reminder ...

## OWN Membership

Annual subscriptions still \$20.


Thank you to all members who have already paid and to those who included a donation to help with our rising expenses. Donations over \$5 are eligible to receive a tax receipt (on request).

You can pay online or in-branch to our bank account – please put your name and what the payment is for as the deposit reference.

Bank: **ASB Birkenhead**  
Account N<sup>o</sup>: **12-3053-0401733-000**

If you wish to pay by cash, please contact *Lennie Crawford*, ph: 444-3320 for your subscription payment collected and banked.

**Unpaid memberships by the end of April, 2023 will indicate to us that you wish to be removed from the mailing list.**



## Yesterday

I knew a place called Yesterday,  
Where once I used to live.  
Nobody there would turn away,  
Their time, they'd always give.  
Everyone looked out for you,  
As you did the same for them.  
In that place called Yesterday,  
I can still remember when.  
People never had anything much,  
What they did have, it was shared.  
They always waved and gave a smile,  
That's how we knew they cared.  
We used to call it mucking in,

That's what it was all about.  
It was easier to help each other,  
When all you had was nowt.  
Now I live here in the Present,  
In a street of those unknown.  
Whose life is so much easier,  
If they keep it close to home.  
Yes, I was raised in Yesterday,  
Where we always had respect.  
Here in this place called Present,  
I find it suffering from neglect.

*Author unknown*

# OWN Groups

Check by phoning the co-ordinators for details.

## Writing for Future Generations

New members welcome - please inform the appropriate Group Convenor prior to attending.



*Browns Bay Group* meets on the second Saturday of each month at the *Bays Community Centre*, Browns Bay. For more details, contact *Patricia Russell*, ph: 479-7519 or ph: 021-064-9522.

*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.

## OWN Browns Bay Coffee Group

Come and join us for a cuppa, or maybe lunch. Meets at 11:30am on the last Tuesday of each month at *White Flower Café*, Browns Bay. For more details, contact *Judy Brocherie*, ph: 473-5016 or ph: (021)0239-4270.



# Up-coming Event

## OWN Festival & AGM 2023

Details of the OWN Festival workshops and speaker to be advised. A scrumptious lunch will again be provided by *Emma*.

**When:** Saturday, 20 May  
Registrations at 9:30am  
OWN AGM at 10:00am  
OWN Festival starts at 10:30am



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

**Cost:** \$25 members and \$30 non-members

For more information, please contact *Lennie Crawford*, ph: 444-3320.



OWN AGM 2021



Remember to check out our website for news, pictures, events, etc.  
[www.own.org.nz](http://www.own.org.nz)



## OWN's Kitchen

Recipe supplied by *Judy Brocherie*



# Roast Vegetable Salad

### Ingredients

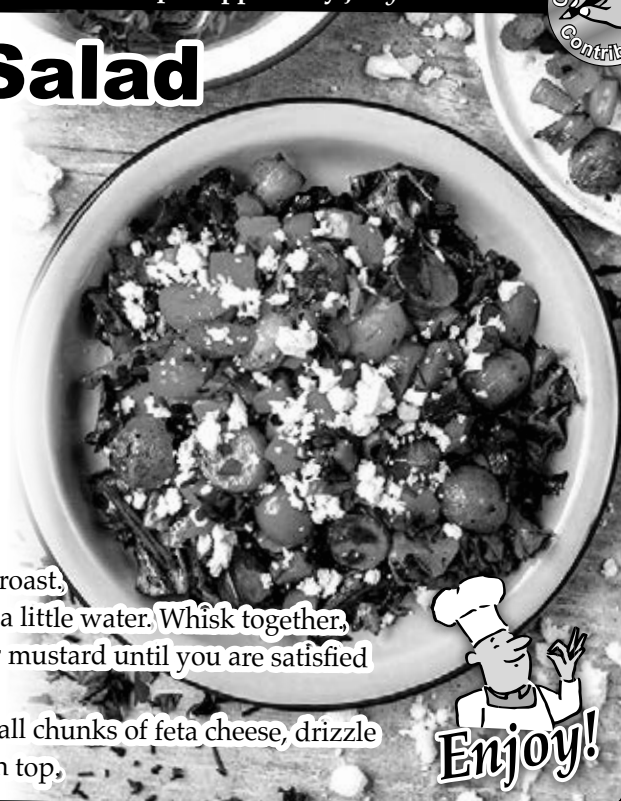
1 Red Capsicum	1 Green Capsicum
1 Kumara	1 Red Onion
Feta Cheese	300gms Pumpkin (peeled)
Lettuce	Pumpkin Seeds (to garnish)

### Dressing:

Juice of 1 Lemon	2 Tbsps Oil (personal choice)
1 Clove of Garlic (crushed)	Pinch of English Mustard
Salt and Pepper to taste	

### Method

1. Cut up the capsicums, kumara, pumpkin, and onion, then roast.
2. Mix the ingredients for the dressing. You may need to add a little water. Whisk together. Keep tasting – you may need to adjust the lemon, garlic, or mustard until you are satisfied with the flavour.
3. Arrange the roasted vegetables on a bed of lettuce, add small chunks of feta cheese, drizzle the dressing over, and lastly sprinkle the pumpkin seeds on top.





# Mary Martin

6 December, 2022

Mary Martin was a much loved and respected member of OWN. She was also a member of the Browns Bay Writing for Future Generations group. Mary's stories covering her life and travel were always interesting and entertaining – you can read a re-print of one of her stories on page 10. Below is a brief bio about Mary, from her daughter Helen.

Marie Therese Juliette Tregay, known as Mary, was born in Reading on 11 January, 1936. She had a brother Bill, who was six years her senior.

When she was seven years of age, an enemy plane dropped a bomb on Reading. She recalled her brother telling her, "Don't let the enemy see the whites of your eyes." It scared her so badly she refused to go to school. She was home schooled for quite some time after that.

Mary went to a Catholic girl's school in Reading. She wanted to become a translator, but headed into secretarial work instead. She was a keen horsewoman and an excellent dressmaker.



aged 23 and Eric was 32. Mary's dressmaking skills came to the fore when she made her own wedding dress.

Mary and Eric had four boys, including a set of twins, and a daughter. They loved the sea and body surfing. There are great memories of family trips to the seaside along the coast of Cornwall, Devon, and Wales.

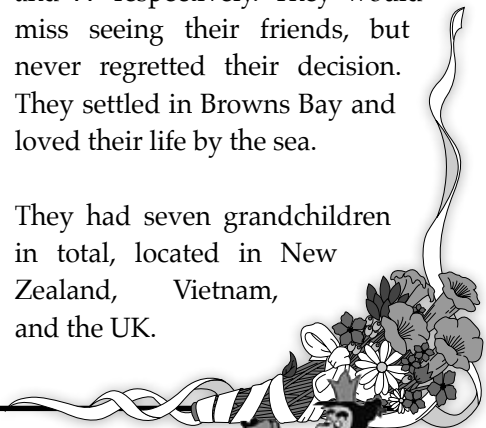
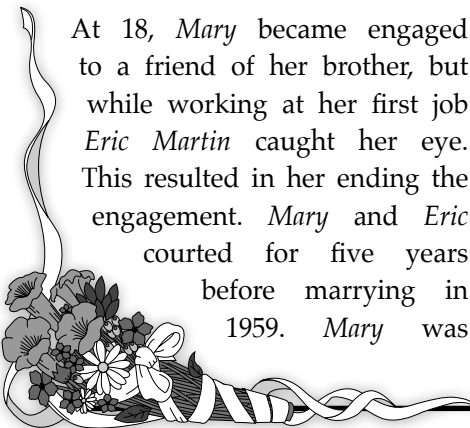
Eric's last employment as a Financial Director enabled them to go on company trips and travel the world.

In 1996, one of their twin sons moved to New Zealand with both sons eventually living there. Mary and Eric enjoyed several holidays visiting their sons in New Zealand.

In 2003, their daughter Helen, her husband, and two daughters decided to move to New Zealand for a better life. Mary, ever adventurous said, "Well if you are going, we are going too!" Mary and Eric flew out with Helen and her family for an eight week holiday to make sure it was what they wanted to do. By April 2004, they had sold their UK home, packed up their life there, and flew out to start their new life in New Zealand. They were aged 68 and 77 respectively. They would miss seeing their friends, but never regretted their decision. They settled in Browns Bay and loved their life by the sea.

They had seven grandchildren in total, located in New Zealand, Vietnam, and the UK.

At 18, Mary became engaged to a friend of her brother, but while working at her first job Eric Martin caught her eye. This resulted in her ending the engagement. Mary and Eric courted for five years before marrying in 1959. Mary was



**"There is no use trying," said Alice; "one can't believe impossible things."**

**"I dare say you haven't had much practice," said the Queen. "When I was your age, I always did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."**

*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Lewis Carroll*



© Disney Enterprises, Inc.



# Martha Hoani

22 January, 2023

*Matariki (Martha) Hoani* passed away on the 22 January, 2023. She was known as *Martha* until she decided she wanted to be called by her given name, *Matariki*.

She joined our *Browns Bay Writing for Future Generations* group many years ago and became a life member of OWN. She wrote some wonderful stories of her early married life in the Hokianga.

She was an extraordinary women. She and her husband, *Wolly*, moved to Beach Haven with their family, buying a house next to *Beach Haven Primary School*. She worked there for a time as a caretaker.

Later she took a caregiver role at the *Lady Allum Home*, working permanent night shift.



She also decided to become a teacher and went to Teacher's Training College for three years, while still working the night shift at *Lady Allum Home*. After graduating she went teaching, giving up her night job, and becoming an excellent teacher.

Her husband died in early 2000 and she was then on her own.

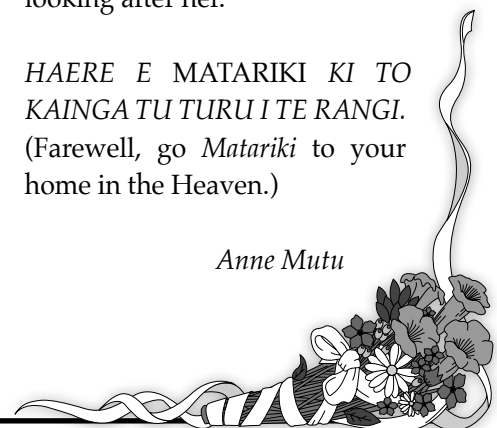
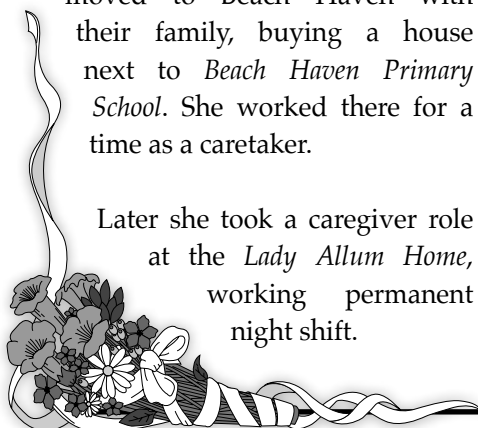
She worked for a while and then "retired" to study for a BA in Maori Theology, which she passed.

In her later years she was suffering from ill health, and was 87 years old when she passed away.

The next day her family took her up to the Hokianga, as was her wish. They just missed the closing of State highway 1 at Mangawhai – the angels were looking after her.

HAERE E MATARIKI KI TO KAINGA TU TURU I TE RANGI.  
(Farewell, go *Matariki* to your home in the Heaven.)

Anne Mutu



## Pranked Into a Top Job

In 1887, a group of men who hated the idea of women being involved in politics, decided to pull a prank. So, they submitted a list of candidate names from the *Women's Christian Temperance Union*. They thought that no man would vote for a female mayor, and wanted to humiliate the *Women's Union*.

*Susanna Salter* (right) didn't know about the prank until the local *Republican Party* sent representatives to her house to see if she was actually running for office. She went along with it and became the first female mayor in the USA, becoming the Mayor of Argonia, Kansas after winning over 60% of the votes.



Source: *Sideswipe, The New Zealand Herald*

# Picnic at *The Groynes*



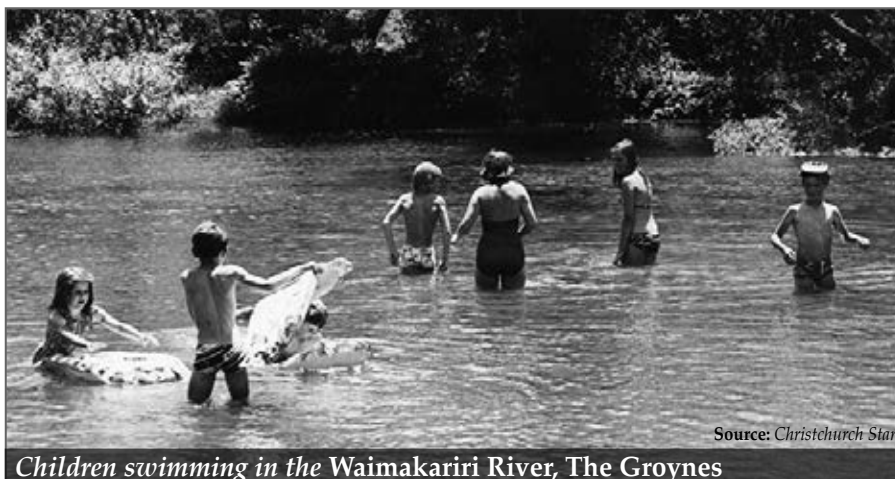
In January 1971, we were living in Christchurch. It was a typical hot norwest day. A perfect day for an outing to the *The Groynes*. This is known for its small lakes and waterways, walking tracks, and a playground for children. It is a popular picnic and swimming spot not far from our home in Redwood.

Mum and I decided to take the girls, *Joanne* (21 months) and *Nicki* (a baby of 3 months) for a picnic. Mum prepared the lunch as I gathered together all the gear needed for a toddler and a small baby. With the car packed, we set off.

After a short drive we arrived at *The Groynes*. I found a perfect picnic spot under a large shady tree. We were sitting close to the edge of a small lake with the water lapping the shore. I changed *Joanne* into her bright yellow bikini. *Nicki* was asleep in the carry-cot in the shade beside us.

Mum and I sat chatting and watching *Joanne* as she played and splashed in the shallow water in front of us thoroughly enjoying herself.

We had lunch and Mum said, "I will take the baby over to the car, give her a bottle, and change her." I was rummaging around in the baby bag getting the bottle and a change of clothes while Mum picked up *Nicki* from the carry-cot. I gave her the baby bag and she took *Nicki* over to the car.



I looked around and could not see *Joanne*. She was not in front of me in the shallow water. I looked up and down the edge of the lake. No *Joanne*.

I asked the two ladies near us if they had seen a little girl with blonde pigtails, yellow ribbons, and wearing a yellow bikini. They said "No" and carried on talking to each other. I was calling out, "*Joanne*". No *Joanne*. I ran over to the car to see if she had followed Mum. No *Joanne*. There were several families there that day. No one came up and offered to help look for *Joanne*.

I saw the Park Ranger and asked him if he had seen a little girl with blonde pigtails, yellow ribbons, and wearing a yellow bikini. No, he hadn't. He said, "I will go and get the 'frogman' while you go into the water and gently feel with your feet."

By this time I was beside myself. 'Feel with your feet,' he had said. I was crying. I had visions of a

funeral with a little white coffin. I thought, 'How am I going to tell *Graeme*.' He adored his little girls and one had disappeared under my watch.

Just as the frogman arrived, a middle-aged lady, unknown to me, appeared holding *Joanne's* hand. I said, "Oh, you have found her."

She said, "She wasn't lost. I took her over to the play area for a swing." I was so relieved to see *Joanne*. I picked her up and held her to my chest in a tight cuddle.

I was furious to think that this woman could just take a little child away without telling me. She had taken her while I had my back turned, getting the baby clothes from the bag, just a matter of seconds.

Luckily, all turned out well, but it shows how easily a child can be 'kidnapped'.

Judy Brocherie



*The Groynes* is a large park land in Christchurch with walking tracks, rivers, fishing spots, picnic areas, boating lake, and a dog exercise park. The name comes from the large concrete-filled wool sack blocks placed in the *Otukaikino Creek* during the 1930s to separate it from the *Waimakariri River* for flood protection.

# Rishikesh

March 2017. I was 81 years of age and had travelled to India with a small group, none of whom I had met. I had concerns, not so much about my age or health, but rather about the other participants. Would they be friendly, open, considerate, and inclusive? Or not? I needn't have worried – although I was the oldest by more than 20 years, they had all of those qualities and helped to make my experience of that incredible country a life-enriching experience.



After travelling from Delhi, through Agra and Jaipur over two weeks, we arrived in Rishikesh, a city in the foothills of the Himalayas in Northern India. It is a pilgrimage town and one of the holiest places in the world to Hindus. The river Ganges, clean and clear at this point, flows through it, dividing it into two halves. It is known as “The Yoga Capital” of the world and there are numerous yoga centres. *The Beatles* famously stayed there at the *Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's* ashram and composed many songs during their stay in 1968.

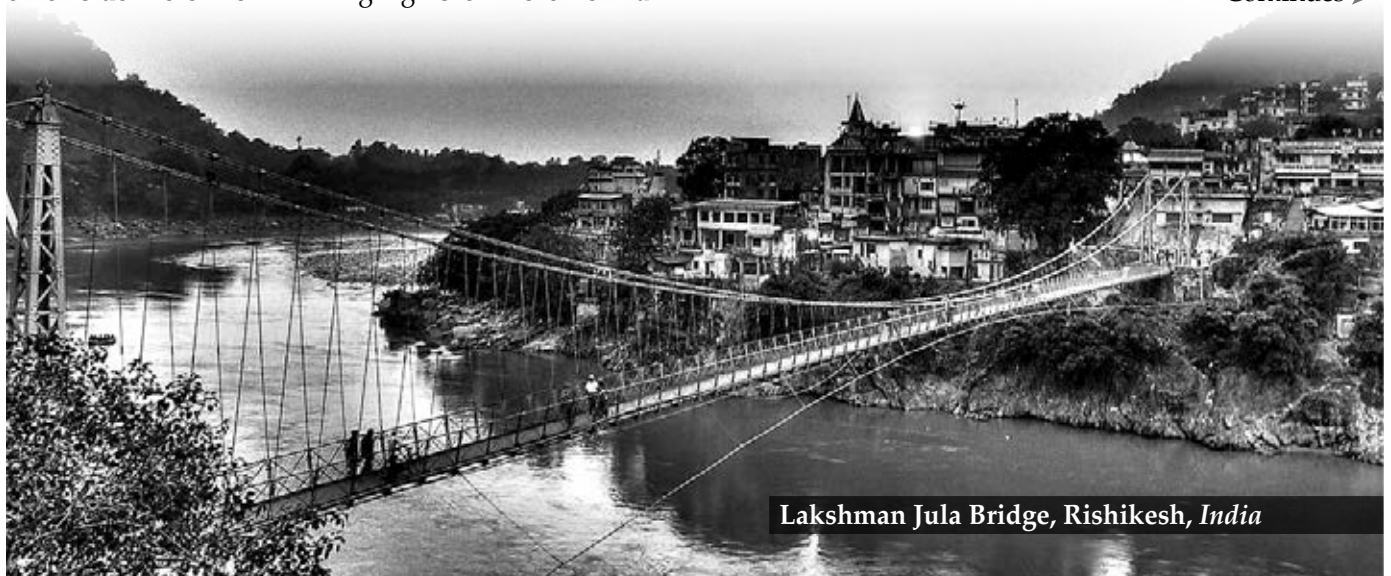
Our accommodation was at the *Vedic Yoga Guest House*, owned by *Surinder*, who taught yoga each morning, accompanied us to see the sunrise over the Himalayas, conducted a Fire Ceremony before we left, and gave a vegetarian cookery lesson as well. It was situated up a long path, directly opposite the river. A hundred metres or so along the road was the *Ganga View* restaurant – well named as it sat directly above the river – and dinner our first evening was there. It was almost dark when we arrived and across the other side were the twinkling lights of the other half

of Rishikesh. A full moon was overhead, it was calm and peaceful, and I thought it was a piece of heaven.

We returned two evenings later, as arranged, but that was a very different experience as a dramatic storm had blown in and electricity all over the town had failed. The severity of the wind and rain also meant that the suspension bridge, built in 1986, was closed, effectively cutting Rishikesh in two. That bridge – the *Lakshman Jula Bridge* – was not designed for cars and buses, which had to travel a lengthy route up the river to another crossing, but was in heavy use every day by pedestrians, motor-cycles, bicycles, cattle, and monkeys. We thought the restaurant might cancel our booking – they did not. The menu choices were necessarily reduced, but they valiantly carried on, cooking on two gas rings and by candle light. The atmosphere was the opposite of our previous experience which had been so tranquil. The beauty of the river was obliterated by the heavy rain and the darkness was only relieved by the table candles and the frequent lightning flashes. The thunder made conversation almost impossible, but the meal was delicious and the staff cheerful and welcoming.

The following morning, the sun was out, the rain had ceased, and after dropping off our laundry at a family-run business on the river bank, we were able once more to cross the re-opened bridge to our scheduled breakfast on the other side. We could actually see our personal laundry strung out to dry on old-fashioned lines on the grassy slopes, flapping beside that mighty river.

Continues ►



Lakshman Jula Bridge, Rishikesh, India

◀ continued.

Returning after market shopping and lunch, it seemed as though the whole world had gathered – it was the start of a holiday week-end and the bridge became jammed with people. Cattle, motorbikes, ... everything. We could only move as everyone else moved and this was against the tide of others going in the opposite direction. Somehow and very slowly, progress was made, inch by inch. At the half way point, with the river in full volume after the previous night's storm, rushing and roaring far below, I felt the bridge begin to sway. I was able to keep my balance, due to being held upright,

but I seriously wondered, would the bridge hold or would it be torn from its anchoring on each side, throwing us all far below?

That was the only occasion during a remarkable three weeks that I ever felt vulnerable and helpless. There was nothing I could do, so I closed my eyes and allowed myself to be carried forward little by little until I felt my feet on solid ground. A collective out-breath – we were all safe - and I'm sure I only imagined that the monkeys on the bridge railings laughed hilariously.



Shirley Williams

## Life's Small Gifts



Everyone's life is eventful with joys and sorrows, but is also filled with many small joys. I recall all the joys of childhood. Happy hours spent on the swing and see-saw. Careering down a hill on the sled in the winter snow, climbing trees, watching for the first sign of leaves on the bare branches in Spring, and hearing the Cuckoo calling. Walks in the woods when the ground was absolutely covered with anemones, and in the autumn when the leaves had turned on their beautiful autumn colours. Watching the tadpoles turning into frogs in Dad's water lily dams, with the beautiful dragonflies flitting among the colourful water lilies, and watching the swallows build their nest and raise their young on the stable wall.

And as you grow, the little pleasures of everyday life. A lovely warm bed, a cuppa to quench your thirst, a spectacular sunset. The first fruit in your

mandarin tree, and the Kereru in the Karaka trees eating the fruit. The pure joy of working in your garden, the scent of flowers, the spectacular show of the magnolia tree in flower, the soft skin and smell of a new baby. The sound of children playing, birds singing. The pleasure of a hot bath or shower, relaxing with a good book, watching your favourite TV programme – in short, all the little pleasures of daily life.

And then there are different small pleasures of life as you grow older. The pure bliss of being pain free. The triumph when you have managed to thread a needle, being able to cut your toe nails. Having a clothesline that winds down so you can reach to hang up the clothes. Being able to live in my own house, and actually having my own home. Managing fine on the "Super". Still being able to do a little gardening. Being able to stand long enough to do the cooking and the dishes. Being

able to shower myself. Being able to walk, albeit slower and small distances. Still able to hear children playing and birds singing. Still able to read. Taking special joy in the company of old friends. Still having a driving licence. And not least, taking myself to the toilet.

But most of all, being blessed with having a large supporting family, not least my sister, *Betty*, with whom I have shared life's ups and downs since we were children.

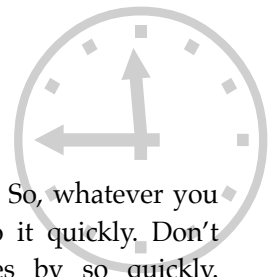
Thank God for all the small blessings in life.

Anne Mutu





# The Last Quarter



Time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems just yesterday that I was young and embarking on my new life. Yet, in a way, it seems like aeons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all.

Yes, I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams. However, here it is, the last quarter of my life and it catches me by surprise. How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go, and where did my youth go?

I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that I was only on the first quarter and that the fourth quarter was so far off that I could not visualize it or imagine fully what it would be like.

Yet, here it is ... my friends are retired and getting grey – they move slower and I see an older person now. Some are better and some in worse shape than me, but I see the great change. They're not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant ... but like me, their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd become.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day and taking a nap is not a treat anymore. It's mandatory because if I don't of my own free will, I fall asleep where I sit. And so, now I enter into this new season of my life, unprepared for all the aches and pains, and the loss of strength and ability to do things that I wish I had done, but never did. But at least I know that, though I'm on the last quarter and I'm not sure how long it will last, that when it's over on this earth, it's over. A new adventure will begin!

Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done; things I should have done, but truly there are many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime.

So, if you're not on the last quarter yet, let me remind you that

it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you want to accomplish in your life do it quickly. Don't put things off too long. Life goes by so quickly. So, do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether you're on the last quarter or not. You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of life. So, live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember – and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the past years.

Life is a Gift to You. Be Happy! Enjoy each moment of each day! Remember, good health is real wealth – NOT an expensive car, a big house, money in the bank, beauty, gold, silver, or even diamonds.

You may think:

- ☛ Going out is good – but coming home is better!
- ☛ You forget names – but it's okay because some people forgot they even knew you!
- ☛ You realize you're never going to be really good at anything like golf – but you enjoy the outdoors!
- ☛ The things you used to care to do, you aren't as interested in anymore – but you really don't care that you aren't as interested!
- ☛ You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV on than in bed – you call it 'pre-sleep'!
- ☛ You remember and miss the days when everything worked with just an 'On' and 'Off' switch!
- ☛ You tend to use more four letter words – 'what?' and 'when?'
- ☛ You have lots of clothes in your wardrobe, much of which you will never wear – but just in case!

Old is good ... old is comfortable ... old is safe ... old songs ... old movies ... and best of all, friends of old!

So, stay well, 'old friend!' Have a fantastic day! Have an awesome quarter – whichever one you're in! Take care.

**P.S.:** "It's not what you gather, but what you scatter that tells what kind of life you lived."

*Author unknown*



# The White Cupboard



First printed in the OWN Older & Bolder (Sept. 2008) newsletter and again in the first OWN Story Book in 2014, this story has been re-printed on request to honour Mary Martin, who passed away in December 2022 (see page 4).

The white cupboard actually started out as a rather pale yellow and was left behind by the vendors of the first house we bought in the UK. It was fairly tall, but not very wide with a small compartment at the top and a bar underneath in the main compartment. It had many uses over the years.

First it was used as an airing cupboard for the babies' clothing, etc. after my husband, who has two left hands and all thumbs, made some slatted shelves and fitted them in with a small heater on the bottom. He did a brilliant job!

Later it became a wardrobe for my daughter, after removing the slats. When we bought her new bedroom furniture, I used the cupboard for storage, after doing a really good job of painting it white.

In later years, when our twin sons left the UK for New Zealand, they

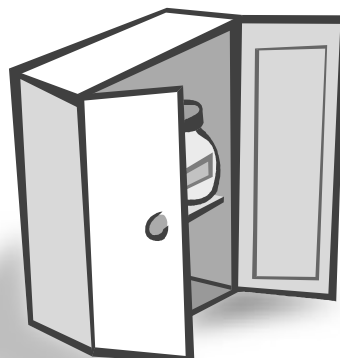
dumped all sorts of things on me and the white cupboard was bursting at the seams until I was asked to ship their belongings to New Zealand. What a sigh of relief when their things were packed. However, it didn't stay empty for long, and I remember I even had the top tier of my daughter-in-law's wedding cake stored in the top compartment.

Forty five years on since acquiring the cupboard, it was time for us to move to New Zealand. On the day the removal men came to pack all our belongings into a somewhat large container for delivery in

Auckland, everything was packed in really tightly and it appeared to be full, but there was still more to get in. A lot of items got taken out onto the pavement and the packing began again.

Eventually it all went in, apart from my white cupboard. It looked forlorn, lonely and unwanted standing all by itself on the pavement. My husband said that we didn't need it and to leave it behind. I replied, "I do want it as it has so many memories and I know that I am being silly."

It did make it to New Zealand, all on its own as a special delivery a few weeks after the main shipment, at no extra cost. I couldn't find anywhere to put it in our house here, so it sat in the garage for quite some time, until a good home was found for it in our son's house.



Mary Martin

## Did You Know...?

When my mother used to say the Kiwi expression, "It's no good doing things 'Half Pie'. You need to do it properly," little did I know that it wasn't 'Half Pie' she meant, but an expression based on te reo Maori: 'Half Pai'.

Half = 50%  
Pai = Good

So, 'Half Pai' means 'Half Good', or 'Not Good Enough'.



Source: Te Hamua Nikora, Stuff Limited (19 February, 2023)

## The Cold Darkening

Coming in to roost  
the flocks of starlings  
dip and sweep  
trailing filaments of dusk  
and then settle in  
to the weft of trees,  
anchoring night  
with their feet.

Joanna Preston



Joana Preston was the winner of  
the 2022 Ockham NZ Book award for Poetry.

# OWN Writing Groups



About 10 years ago, my friend *Joan* invited me to come along for a meeting in her writing group. The group was called *Writing for Our Grandchildren*. I told her that I wouldn't belong in such a group. While I have always loved writing stories, letters, and then emails, I said that I was never going to be a grandmother and saw no point in joining.

*Joan* didn't give up on me. She said that, actually, most of the members of the writing group were writing to share stories within the group. Many ladies wouldn't even like to share some stories with their own family members.

So, I decided to give it a go. She took me to the *Beach Haven Writing for Our Grandchildren* group. When I saw that *Anne Mutu* was the Convenor, I was very pleased as I had known her from church. I was still new in New Zealand, but it didn't take long to find out that I had also known other members by sight.

It was a group of about 15 ladies, and I have never regretted joining the group. *Joan* eventually also took me along to the *Browns Bay Writing for Our Grandchildren*, and in 2014, one of my contributions became part of our publication **Our Own Stories**. As I was not the only one who didn't have grandchildren, the group was happy with the more inclusive title *Writing for Future Generations*.

Since then, I have written a book of stories, and I have heard many stories from the diverse group of women who form part of the writing groups.

I think I have always been the youngest, but this didn't bother me. I learned so much from these ladies. They helped me understand the recent history of New Zealand, they shared their immigration stories, and some of their happy or sad moments in life. It is fascinating how some stories seem to be permanently connected to certain ladies.

I vividly remember one lady telling us about her three year old son who had escaped his bedroom, and that she was afraid he had fallen into the creek, but fortunately found him safe and sound.

Another lady told the story how her little brother had sought comfort in her bed, against the parents' instructions, only to be saved as the father's roof repair ended with him falling through the roof and right on top of the little brother's empty bed.

Another lady told us how she dressed up, put make-up on, and paid a visit to her husband's mistress, telling her that she could keep him.

One of my favourite stories has always been the story by the late, dear *Betty Faesen*. In her lady-like appearance, she was sharing her first experience on a camping ground. With her husband's furniture company's van, they arrived at the camping ground with a modern tent, but also with furniture, a big mirror, and carpets – only to be caught up in the rain without having installed the tent properly.



Betty Faesen

Last December, I attended the funeral of *Mary Martin* (see page 4). She was a member of the *Browns Bay Writing for Our Grandchildren* long before me. One of her stories stuck in my mind and I had to think about it every time I saw her. She told us about the struggles to live with her husband's dementia. In the beginning, she tried to correct him. She tried to tell



Mary Martin



Browns Bay Writing for Future Generations Christmas party 2019

Continues ➤

◀ continued.

him that he was wrong, forgetful, and that he should better remember – but then, she realised that it was not his fault that he couldn't remember. She realised that he was living in a different world.

With this in mind, she asked him one day if he would be interested in going on a little weekend trip with her. Her husband smiled and said, "I would love to, dear, but I'd better ask my wife first." She replied, "Would you like me to ask her or do you want to ask her yourself?" She had learned that he could no longer live in her world, so she decided to live in his world and this way, they could still be together.

I thought about this story many times and I find it such an inspiration for anyone who has loved ones suffering from dementia. It gives hope and helps to find some quality in life, even if this means "pretending" and immersing into another world.

For the last two years, my dear friend *Joan* has been suffering from dementia. She can hardly remember anything, and often doesn't even recognise people who have been very close to her. When I accompanied her son to visit her in the care home a few weeks ago, there was a little spark: when the nurse asked who I was, *Joan* said, "This is *Beate*. I have known her for many years. We were together in **OWN**." Both her son and I were surprised at how clearly she spoke.



From left: *Beate Matthies*, *Joan Lardner-Rivlin*, and *Anne Mutu*

*Joan* wouldn't remember her many stories. She wouldn't remember telling us that she was present at the coronation of the late *Queen Elizabeth II*, or how she and her husband attended a reception on a royal ship docked in Auckland – a unique moment when she was wearing make-up, which then was washed away in the rain while they were embarking the ship.

Writing for future generations is also writing for your friends of today. Writing the stories down might even help you train your own memory if it starts failing.

Memories are very personal. The same event might be remembered in different ways by different people – but that's the beauty. History is made of many stories.

*Beate Matthies*

## A Challenge ...



Believe it or not, you can read it

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wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt thng is taht the  
first and last ltteers be in the rghit plcae The  
rset can be a taotl mses and you can still raed it  
wouthit a porbelm bcuseae the huamn mnid  
deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod  
as a wlohe.

Amzanig, huh?

# hope

*Hope is the thing with feathers  
That perches in the soul  
And sings the tune without the words  
And never stops at all.*

*Emily Dickinson*

