



Winter 2023

www.own.org.nz



OWN Festival – Saturday, 1 July, 2023
FREE for OWN Members. See page 3 for the Up-coming Event notice



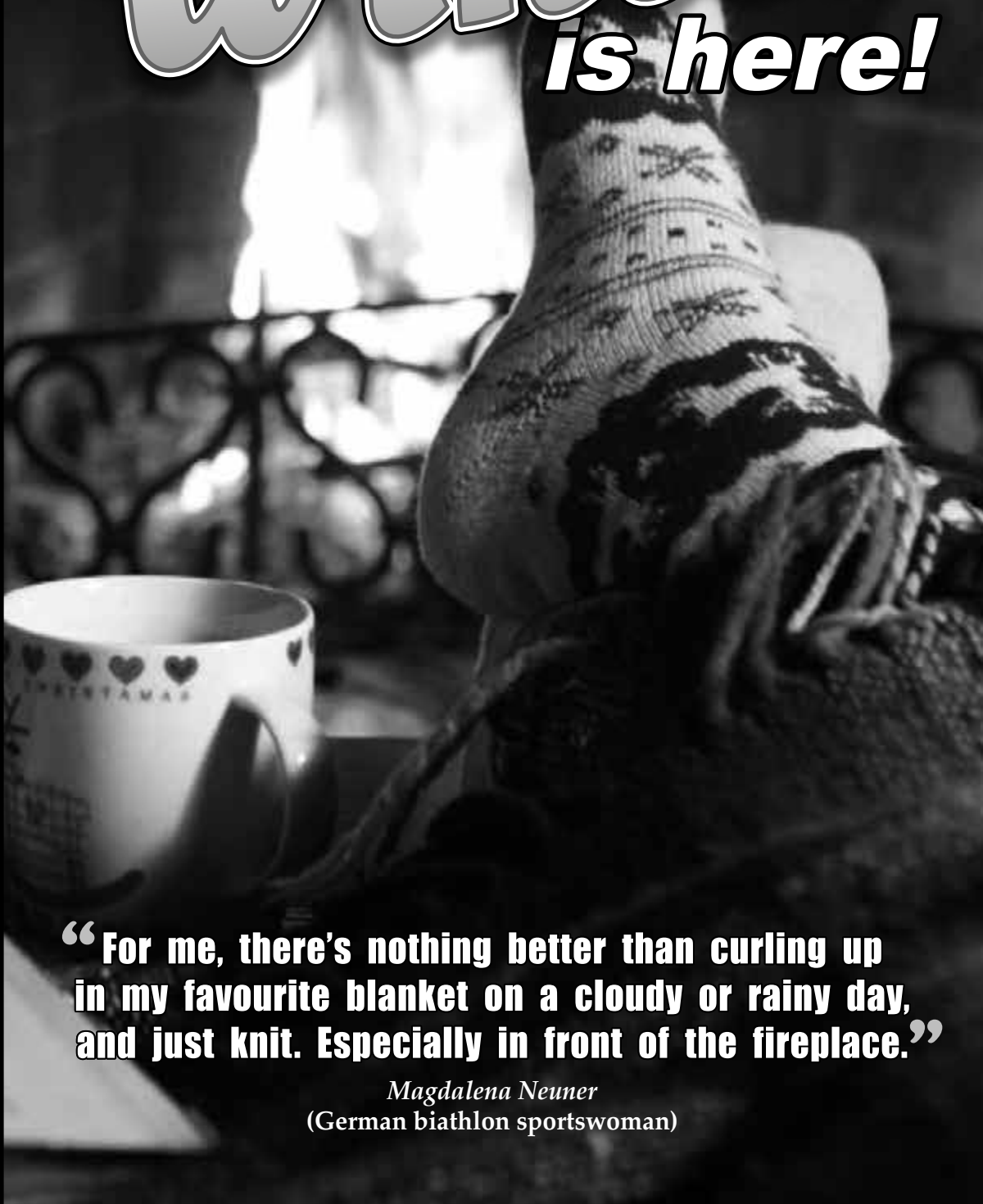
NEWS & VIEWS

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



OWN

Winter is here!



“For me, there’s nothing better than curling up in my favourite blanket on a cloudy or rainy day, and just knit. Especially in front of the fireplace.”

Magdalena Neuner
(German biathlon sportswoman)

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 ...

Chairperson's Report for OWN AGM 2023

Our Women's Network (OWN) is a network that connects women through a variety of activities and events. In the last year, sadly, OWN has not been very active. The *OWN Committee* had arranged several events, but due to limited response these had to be cancelled. As we age, especially those of us living on our own, it is important we enjoy the company of other people.

Currently OWN has 46 members. The **OWN Festival** last year was attended by 27 ladies, who gave us great feedback for the day. This was most positive.

The *OWN Committee* arranged a **Luncheon** at the *Bays Club* in December. This replaced the **High Tea** which was cancelled due to lack of interest. The luncheon proved very popular, going by the laughter and chatter by the 18 ladies present. So much so, we had another lunch in March. This seems to be the most popular event, so we will continue with these.

The monthly **OWN Coffee Group** meetings at the *White Flower Café* (now moved to the *Sugar n Cup Café*) in Browns Bay usually has approximately 10 ladies who enjoy the conviviality of getting together.

The backbone of OWN seems to be the two **Writing Groups**, Browns Bay and Beach Haven. These are run monthly and are very much enjoyed by the ladies attending, with much fun and hilarity as stories are read out in a safe and non-judgemental way.

Our annual **OWN Festival** this year is being held on Saturday, 1 July at the *Positive Ageing Centre* in Takapuna. There will be two workshops and a nutritious lunch will be provided (see **Up-coming Event** on page 3 for more details). We want as many ladies as possible to attend. The number of attendees, this will decide whether we hold future **OWN Festivals**.

Thank You ...

I would like to thank our Secretary, *Lennie Crawford*, who does an outstanding amount of work behind the scenes. Arranging events, and speakers and people to run workshops at the **OWN Festival**. *Dale Everiss*, our Treasurer, who has her finger on the pulse, does a wonderful job keeping our finances in order. To our other *OWN Committee* members, *Anita Knape*, *Val Bird*, and *Pat Bish*, thank you for the time and energy you put into **OWN**.

Kind regards,

Judy Brocherie
Chairperson



Silly Signs ...

Sign on a music shop door:



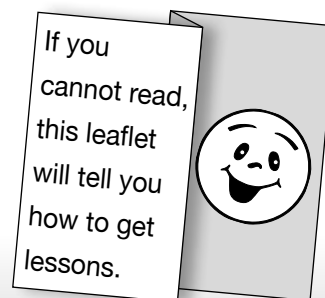
Sign outside second-hand shop:

We exchange
anything —
bicycles, washing
machines, etc.
Why not bring
your spouse?

Car bumper sticker:



Printed in a leaflet:



Safari park sign:



OWN Groups

Check by phoning
the co-ordinators for details.

OWN Writing for Future Generations

New members welcome -
please inform the Group's
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 *Sugar n Cup Café*, Browns Bay (79 Clyde Road, opposite *Unichem* chemist). For more details, contact *Judy Brocherie*, ph: (021)0239-4270.



**New
Venue**



Up-coming Event

OWN Festival 2023

When: Saturday, 1 July
Registrations at 9:30am
OWN Festival starts at 10:00am

**New
Date**

**Diarise
Now!**

Where: *Positive Ageing Centre*, 7 The Strand, Takapuna
(Parking available underneath the *Takapuna Library*)

Cost: **Free** for OWN members and \$10 for non-members

Programme:

- 9:30am Registrations and morning tea
- 10:00am **Origami** with *Yoshiko Barry*
- 11:00am **Finding Happiness** with *Sylvia Vowless*
- 12:00 noon **Chair Exercises for Older People** presented by *AUT Physiotherapy* students – they will be available during lunch to answer any questions.
- 12:30pm Lunch provided by *Emma*
- 1:15pm Short break
- 1:30pm **Guest Speaker:** *Jan Beaumont*,
New Zealand poet
- 2:30pm **OWN Festival ends**



Jan Beaumont

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



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

Growing Herbs in Water in Winter



Sage, peppermint, chives, thyme, rosemary, and others are worth a try on the window sill in winter. Cuttings are put into tap water (not distilled water), removing the lower leaves. Glass containers at least 12cm tall are best. The water needs to be changed once a week and observe the changes to the roots. Adding a rooting hormone if there is no change after a week will help.





Anne Mutu

OWN's Longest Active Serving Member

Anne Mutu grew up in Denmark and was 14 when her family emigrated to New Zealand in 1952. She and her husband settled in Beach Haven to raise their two daughters. Anne still lives there.

In one of her stories she said that looking back how really blessed she has been and what an interesting life she has had. Anne felt really lucky that she married a Maori and learnt so much about the Maori people, their language and life philosophy, and mentions how enriching and broadening of her horizons it has been and she would not have missed it for anything.

Anne became a member of OWN in 2001. She has facilitated the **Beach Haven Writing for Future Generations** group since 2011 (she also attends the **Browns Bay Writing for Future Generations** group) and her stories are always interesting. One in particular, about coffin making, was hilarious.

Anne is still is an active member of OWN and has hardly missed a **Festival, AGM**, or any of the other activities that OWN has put on over the years. She has distributed our magazine to all members, with some help from friends, but you can rely on Anne to get the job done.



She is the longest active serving member of OWN and we can't thank her enough for all the work that she has put into our organisation since she became a member. We wish her well and may she continue with the good work that she does.

The Gift That is You

The gift that is you, it is pint sized but mighty,
The backbone inside is not to take lightly,
Though tested and tried through each layer of skin,
An unbendable faith still resides deep within.

Keeper-in-touch there are friends far and wide,
It speaks volumes it's you in whom they confide,
With no judgement you offer a listening ear,
A safe place to land, and a moment of prayer.

Of the big and the grand you have nothing to boast,
But umpteen little moments that matter the most,
History and memories of those gone
and held dear,
The price of great love is deep grief
we must bear.

Your wickedness leaks out in many fun ways,
Passed down from your mum – one of many fine traits,
Your clever mind uses words with great aplomb,
Your fiery side knows when to drop the 'f-bomb'!

Family ties are the food of your soul,
To have your support is of value untold,
Trustworthy and constant, your presence holds strong,
The connections that remind us, just where we belong.

You've touched many hearts in eight decades lived well,
Sometimes what we give we deserve for ourselves,
Each thoughtful, small act with intent that is true,
We're so blessed to have been given the gift that is you!

Composed and written for Patsy Phillip's 80th birthday by her daughter



Peace & Tranquillity



We were so lucky to have the *Awaruku Bush Reserve* backing onto our property. The North-South path from the Awaruku Road entrance is half a kilometre in length. There are numerous native trees, ferns, and climbers, but the one that stands out is the kahikatea tree. It is one hundred feet tall and sixteen feet in girth – it is over 600 years old.

In autumn, the tree is covered with red and black berries, and attracts the tuis, 50 at a time. Fantails, wax-eyes, native pigeons, kingfishers, moreporks, and rosellas all frequent the reserve. We constantly hear the bird-song.

One day I was standing in the lounge and I heard a lot of squawking. I walked out on the deck and saw two rosellas sitting on the pole of the deck. The beautiful colours of these birds are just stunning.

The reserve has some special features – a concrete path you can walk along to a lookout platform where you can gaze up onto the kahikatea tree. Once I saw two men kitted out in climbing gear climb the tree to the top. I am glad it was only the once.

The original church of *St Mary's*, Torbay, was moved into the

reserve in 1978, but unfortunately it was burnt down by vandals in 1988.

When our children were young, they enjoyed going into the reserve with torches to find glow-worms in the banks on the side of the track, which led up to the quarry.

Labour Weekend, 2006, our son *Chris* said to me, “Mum, can you please lend *Katy* a raincoat? I am going to take her for a walk in the reserve.”

Later that day we went to the *Albany Hotel* with a few family members for lunch. *Chris* brought a bottle of champagne and announced his engagement to *Katy* – he had proposed to her under the magnificent kahikatea tree in our special place, the *Awaruku Bush Reserve*.

I hope it remains a reserve for many years to come.




Main entrance to Torbay's Awaruku Bush Reserve



600+ year old kahikatea tree

Meg Norton (Great Auckland Walks, greaataucklandwalks.com)



An inspiration & celebration of the 70th anniversary of the climbing of Everest ...

“People do not become extraordinary. They decide to accomplish extraordinary things.”

Sir Edmund Hillary

Do you remember where were you when Everest was conquered 70 years ago?

The Demon *Gabrielle*



"She" arrived on Sunday, 12 February and was howling around us by nightfall. We had four short power cuts during the night and our house alarm notified us each time with some unwelcome beeps. *Stephen* couldn't hear the beeps, so I had to get up four times to re-set the alarm. The noise of the wind was incredible and I couldn't even put on my earphones to listen to the radio because of the power cuts. Quite a disturbed night for me ... *Stephen* snored through it all!

When we got up on Monday morning, *Stephen* ventured outside to find a huge branch of a tree from the reserve across the road blocking the road from our front gate. He called the City Council and they sent two men in a ute to pull it to one side so that the traffic could get through. Their rope wasn't strong enough, so they had to go and get a stronger one. A *TreeScape* truck was there soon after to cut it up and mulch the branches. *Stephen* asked them to cut it into logs for firewood, which they did and left them on the berm for us. *Stephen* said he would go out when the wind abated and cut it up, but a young family drove past and took away most of the logs.

I called my friend *Helen* (my yoga teacher) who lives close to the town basin near the river, to come to our place if she was worried. When we had the tsunami warning some time ago, she rang and asked if she could evacuate to our place on the hill and duly arrived with teenagers, dog, and rabbit! Good fun. She had already arranged to go to another friend's place for *Gabrielle*, so it was just the two of us sitting it out for two and a half days.

It was really fierce on Monday and quite scary to watch through the ranchslider. It reminded me of *Hurricane Janet* in Barbados in 1955. We stood in our lounge looking through the "jalousies" (wooden shutters) in

the front door and watched the roofs on the chattel houses curling up and taking off. I watched our lovely Canton Lace tree tossing about, then split in half and one half fell gracefully onto the lawn. Sad, because the kereru loved that tree! We also lost one of our large shrubs which had fallen over onto the neighbour's driveway, taking about 12 feet of fence with it. *Stephen* went out and managed to mend the fence and get most of the branches thrown back to our side, but the next night was even worse and even more of the fence fell over.

My niece's husband, *Robbie*, phoned on Monday night and told us to call him if we needed him, so we rang him on Tuesday and he was over in about 20 minutes with a large chainsaw to take down the rest of the Canton Lace and cut up the branches and foliage into manageable pieces. He was our rescuer and I thought of the other Civil Defence and Fire Brigade personnel who were out and about the entire time.

After a few phone calls we realised we were truly blessed to escape with such minor damage, no flooding, and enough food in the pantry to feed us for many days. A few phone calls later and we were even more grateful that all our family and friends were safe, warm and dry as well.

And the greatest relief and gratitude came when we checked the slip at the back of our place which happened two and a half years ago, and spans three properties, remained steady even though it was only partially repaired.

Please don't send any of your "rellies" back here, *Gabrielle*.

Patsy Phillips

Patsy travels from Whangarei to attend the Beach Haven Writing for Future Generations group.



Cars on flooded roads in Whangarei as Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle hits the Northland. (Associated Press)

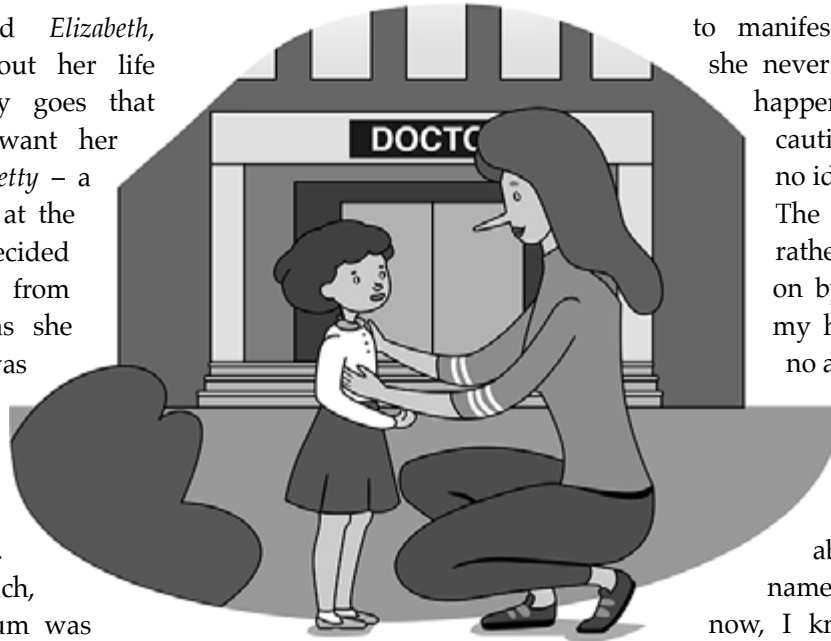
Fancy Nancy

She was christened *Elizabeth*, but known throughout her life as *Nancy*. The story goes that her mother didn't want her name shortened to *Betty* – a popular abbreviation at the time. And so it was decided to call her *Nancy* from thereon in. *Nancy*, as she became known, was my mother.

Perhaps I should have titled this story **Secrets and Lies**.

Well, not lies as such, rather, large fibs. Mum was an honest, loving person in all respects, except when the odd well-intentioned fib escaped her lips. My first memory of a “mum fib” was before a visit to the local doctor when I was about three years old. The reason for the visit escapes me, but I have a clear recollection of mum telling me we were “Just popping up to the shops”. Satisfied with this reason, we set off and soon found ourselves on the main street.

Rather than stopping off at the Co-op or the butchers we carried on, finally reaching the local doctor's surgery. Well, what a surprise that was – and not in a good way. This subterfuge was carried out with the best of intentions, so as not to alarm me unduly. In later years, mum



would even tell our dog that she was “Just popping up to the shops” when, in fact, she and my dad were off to Blackpool for a fortnight's holiday.

Mum was a devotee of ‘old wives’ tales. When caught pulling a face, I'd be reminded that if the wind changed, it would stay that way. Granted, many of these homilies would be difficult, if not impossible to prove either way. However, when mum told me never to get my feet or my hair wet when I had my period, I resolved to throw caution to the wind and test her theory. We lived in a seaside town, a few minutes walk from the beach so, ankle deep in the freezing North Sea, I waited for my mother's prophecy

to manifest itself. Trouble was, she never revealed what would happen, should I defy her cautionary words, so I had no idea as to what to expect. The only outcome was rather numb feet. Buoyed on by this result, I washed my hair the next day, with no after effects.

Around the age of seven or eight, I became curious about my parents' first names and their ages. By now, I knew my mum's given name was *Elizabeth*, but as dad always referred to her as *Nancy*, I assumed – wrongly – this was the shortened version of *Elizabeth*. And so, armed with this knowledge, I was confident in sharing this news at playtime one day with my school pals. I also told them that my mother was 21 years old.

Whenever I'd asked Mum how old she was, she would joke, “I'm 21 and your dad is just over 21.” I took this as gospel, and burst into tears when Mum decided to come clean on all counts, having realised her little joke had backfired. The fact that *Nancy* was not the shortened version of *Elizabeth* was bad enough, but nothing compared to the revelation that my 21 year old parents were actually in their forties.

Nancy, my “21 year old” mother, from that moment on, vowed to always tell the truth and nothing but the truth.

“I put on my favourite winter jacket for the first time the other day, and as soon as I put my hands in those pockets, I was immediately reminded that last year I didn't have any money, either.”

Ben Bailey
(American comedian and television host)

Patricia Russell



Luculia Gratissima

A fragrant gift to a winter's day

I am lucky enough to have this Himalayan shrub, known as *Early Dawn*, in my garden which is covered in beautiful balls of pink fragrant flowers.

Flowering in autumn and early winter, its pink bouquets brighten a dull day and wafts of its heady perfume add to the gift it brings.

It comes from the Himalayan region and southern China. *Luculia* originates from the Nepalese name "Luculi Swa" and the latin "Gratissima" which means pleasing, very pleasant, agreeable. It is certainly that.

Jos Coburn



I'm My Own Grandpaw



Many, many years ago when I was 23,
I was married to a widow who was pretty as can be.
This widow had a grown up daughter who had hair of red,
My father fell in love with her and soon the two were wed.
This made my dad my son-in-law and really changed my life,
For now my daughter was my mother 'cause she was my father's wife.
And to complicate the matter, even though it bought me joy,
I soon became the father of a bouncing baby boy.
My little boy became a brother-in-law to dad,
And so he became my uncle, though it made me very sad.
For if he was my uncle then, that also made him brother,
Of the widow's grown-up daughter, who was of course my step-mother.
My father's wife then had a son, who kept them on the run,
And he became my grandchild for he was my daughter's son.
My wife is now my mother's mother and it makes me blue,
Because although she is my wife she's now my grandmother too.
Now if my wife's my grandmother, then I'm her grandchild,
And every time I think of it, it nearly drives me wild.
'Cause now I have become the strangest case you ever saw,
As husband of my grandmother, I am my own grandpaw.

Dwight Latham and Moe Jaffe

i I'm My Own Grandpaw (sometimes titled as I'm My Own Grandpa) is a novelty song written in 1947 by *Dwight Latham* and *Moe Jaffe*, and was performed by *Lonzo* and *Oscar*. It is about a man who, through an unlikely (but legal) combination of marriages, becomes stepfather to his own stepmother – that is, tacitly dropping the 'step-' modifiers, he becomes his own grandfather.

Various people have sung the song over the years and a few versions are available on *YouTube*, including ones by ...

- *Lonzo* and *Oscar* (1947): tinyurl.com/OWN-grandpaw1
- *Willie Nelson* (2001): tinyurl.com/OWN-grandpaw2

Assassination

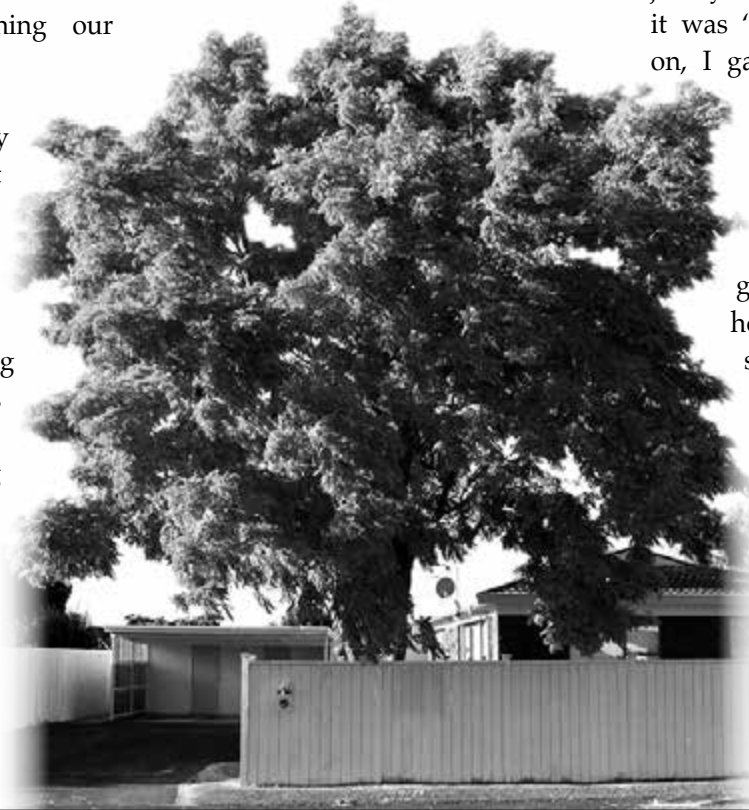
They came early. Even the morning motorway traffic-clog wasn't a hurdle. They needed the money. "A greatly reduced price", they said. It had been a quick decision. Practicalities had finally won over my respect and love for this beautiful tree. The chainsaws started up rowdily. The mulcher was wheeled into place.

My Golden Gleditsia Sunburst. I'd seen one on a rural zoo visit many years ago, hunted one down, thrilled to have its glorious umbrella shape and golden leaves growing in and adorning our garden.

It had offered so many years of pleasure. Last Spring saw it at its best. The contrast, against a painted blue sky, of its gold against the neighbouring Copper Beech leaves was absolutely stunning. It had done nothing wrong, but offer shelter and beauty, a perch for visiting tui and steadfast growth to a very great height.

The wrong was mine. In my misjudgement,

I had planted it on the neighbour's boundary. Each year we had swept their driveway of its leaves. After all, it was our tree causing the problem. Each year I had watched as it gradually took the sun from their dining room windows. Each storm we dreaded the outcome, picking its scattered branches from their property, glad they hadn't damaged their car, this time. Its huge drop of autumn leaves had begun to cover both roofs, clutter both gutters. A decision was going to have to be made.



As the chainsaws started, I hid inside. I couldn't witness the cruelty. I loved that tree. I cried for its innocence in just being, for growing so magnificently, for my putting it in the wrong place.

It happened quickly, the tree cutters' laughter and banter, as they worked, somehow lightening the mood of the day. Task completed, efficiently and safely, they left. I visited its remains; an overflowing pile of chips, a bare stump. I kept trying to justify my decision, to tell myself it was 'for the best.' But a week on, I gaze at the ever-reminding empty space where it flourished, still saddened.

Two of its small seedlings found at the end of the garden give some future hope. I've saved some seeds, apologised to tui, no doubt confused, and now perching in the Copper Beech and holding a hidden wish, that given Spring, my golden beauty may somehow overcome and sprout from that stump, all over again.

Jos Coburn

Clever



When I came to New Zealand, I became a Nanny for a baby boy. I stayed there for several years. When the boy got older, I realised he was very clever. I took him for a walk each day and when we came back to the house, we always looked in the letter box to see if there was any mail. I lifted him up so he could get the letters. On one of these days, he said to me, "Sanny this is no mail. These are bills."

Sanny Leur

Cooking Experiences



I first learnt to cook at about 12 years of age. At the time we lived in a country school house in Tuhua, south of Ruatoria, Gisborne. Twice a year Mum would fly to Christchurch for a couple of weeks to see her ageing father. This left me in charge of cooking the meals for Dad, who was a stranger to the kitchen, and my four younger siblings. The meals were simple, as they were back in the 1950s. Dad had a huge vegetable garden, so there were always plenty of fresh seasonal vegetables.

Even though I had had this early experience, it did not prevent me from having some cooking mishaps later on.

When we were first married and living in Christchurch, *Graeme* mentioned he would like a stew like his mother, *Eileen* made. I rang *Eileen* to ask for her 'stew recipe'. She replied, "Oh, there is no recipe. You just buy some chuck steak, potatoes, onions, carrots, and peas." The butcher was helpful with the steak. We lived across the road from the dairy. Off I went and asked for a potato, an onion, and a carrot. The grocer asked, "Have you just been married, dear." He also asked, "Do you have a freezer?" We didn't. "Anytime you want frozen peas for a meal, just bring over a cup and I will sell them to you for a shilling (10 cents)." I did this several times. The stew was edible and I gradually improved with experience.

Another memorable experience was making my first apple pie. *Graeme's* mother *Eileen* said cloves gave the pie a delicious flavour. I couldn't remember how many she said so I used the whole packet. The pie smelt delicious and I couldn't wait to try a piece. Just as well I tested it before our guests. My mouth was nearly anaesthetised. I never made that mistake again.

There was the time as a young bride living in Dunedin, I used a friend's mother's Gingerbread Loaf recipe. Mum was coming to stay. I was keen to impress her. The loaf turned out to be an utter disaster. When Mum saw the recipe she realised the lady had omitted baking soda and golden syrup which are essential ingredients in a Gingerbread Loaf. Apparently my friend's mother did not like sharing recipes. Wouldn't it have been much kinder to just state that fact?



In June 1969, our first born, *Joanne*, was being Christened. I planned on a hot lunch for the guests. Mum lent me her pressure cooker to make a beef curry. I had never used one before. The day before, I assembled the curry mixture in the pressure cooker, put it on and left it to cook. A while later I heard a loud explosion coming from the kitchen. As the pressure built up the lid had blown off ... there was curry everywhere, green stripes of curry down the yellow walls, the ceiling, and the floor. What a mess! It took hours to clean up.

On another occasion daughter *Jo* and I made desserts to take to a dinner party at a friend's house. Next morning *Anthea* rang to ask if we had lost a sapphire ring. *Jo* looked on the windowsill, where she had put her ring while cooking. It was not there. *Anthea* had found it when she bit into some leftover pavlova. If she had swallowed it, we would not have known where it went.

I remember going to classes on the uses of a microwave. There was a recipe for a cottage pie using instant mashed potato as a topping. Instructions were to use a third of a packet. I thought I want a decent topping so will use the whole packet, The dish was assembled and microwaved. When the meal was ready and removed from the oven the potato had quadrupled. The meal was three-quarters of this white fluff, hardly any meat.

My cooking must have improved because now I supply recipes for *OWN's* quarterly magazine **News&Views**.

Judy Brocherie



Judy's Scones

In response to several requests, here is the recipe for the scones I served at the OWN AGM on Saturday, 13 May, 2023.



Ingredients

- 4 cups of Self Raising Flour
- 300mls of Cream
- 300mls Lemonade
- Sprinkle of salt

Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to 200°C.
Line a baking tray with baking paper and sprinkle with a small amount of flour.
2. Sift self raising flour and salt into a bowl, add cream and lemonade. Gently mix.
3. Shape into a round form. Lay on the baking paper. Gently shape into a square with as little handling as possible. Mark into 16 squares – do not separate.
4. Bake 20 minutes. Remove from oven and place on a wire rack. Cover with a tea towel until cool. Cut into separate scones.
5. For Devonshire tea, serve with raspberry jam and cream.



Grandma's Apron

The principle use of Grandma's apron was to protect the dress underneath, but along with that, it served as a pot-holder for removing hot pans from the oven.

It was wonderful for drying children's tears, and on occasion was even used for cleaning out dirty ears.

From the chicken coup, the apron was used for carrying eggs, fussy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.

When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for shy kids. And when weather was cold, Grandma wrapped it around her arms.

Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, bent over the hot wood stove.

Chips and kindling wood were brought into the kitchen in that apron. From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables, after the peas had been shelled, it carried out the hulls. In Autumn the apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from trees.

When unexpected company drove up the road, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds. When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out on the porch, waved her apron, and the men knew to come in from the fields for dinner.

It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that 'old time apron' that served so many worthwhile purposes.

Remember ... Grandma set her hot baked apple pies on the window sill to cool. Her Granddaughters set theirs on the window sill to thaw.

We would go crazy now trying to figure out how many germs were on that apron. I don't think I ever caught anything from that apron ... except love.

Author unknown



Grandma's Magical Story



A member's children's story written to read to a grandchild

Grandma was old, but she was able to do all the things she loved most. She loved going for long walks in the beautiful bush. She loved to dance to music. She could even run if she needed to and she loved her exercise classes. But one day, Grandma felt a pain in her back.

At first, she tried to pretend it wasn't there and she kept going for walks even though her back hurt. Then she found she couldn't run, or dance, or exercise. The pain grew worse and Grandma knew she had to talk to her doctor. Her doctor said she would need to have an x-ray. This is a machine which can see right through your outside so that your bones can be seen, and if something is wrong with them, the machine will show it.

Oh dear! The machine showed that the bones in Grandma's back had worn down and Grandma was not going to be able to do all those things she loved any more. The kind doctor gave Grandma some special tablets which meant that her back wasn't sore any more, but they couldn't help Grandma to do those things she had loved. Poor Grandma! She felt very sad about this. But the Doctor said, "Don't be too sad, Grandma – I know of some things which can help you. First of all, there is a walking stick."

Julie bought Grandma the prettiest stick she could find. It was covered in little pink flowers and it could be folded up, so that if Grandma went on holiday it could fit into her suitcase. "Oh," said Grandma. "Thank you very much, Julie dear – I am going to call it my 'Magic Stick' and if anyone is naughty, I can point it at them and they will know to be good."

Second, Julie and Grandma went to a special shop where they bought a very smart Walking

Frame. It had a shopping basket, brakes, and a seat, so that if Grandma got tired she could sit down. But best of all, it could be folded up, so that Grandma could put it in her little red car and go to visit her friends and grandchildren. She had many grandchildren, and she loved to see them and tell them stories.

"Oh," she said. "This is wonderful – and I am going to call it my 'Chariot' – it can take me wherever I need to go."

Then the kind doctor said, "I think you need a special card, so that when you drive to the shops or the movies, you will be able to park your little red car close by. You need to place it where it can be seen."

"This special card will mean I can still do many things," said Grandma. "Thank you, very much."

When she got back home again, Grandma made a cup of tea and sat down in her comfortable blue chair. She said to herself, "I am so lucky. First I have tablets to stop the pain in my back. Second, I have a Magic Stick to lean on for short walks and to point at naughty people. Third, I have a Chariot to help me on longer walks and I can put it in my little red car to see my darling grandchildren and to shop. Fourth, I have a special card so that I can always park my little red car close to where I need to go. I don't have to stay at home and feel sad. Maybe I can't do everything I used to do now that I am very old, but I can do many wonderful, magical things because I have lots to help me."

I am indeed a lucky Grandma!

Shirley Williams

