



News & Views



Autumn 2025

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

OWN



Happy Easter



Moods



Autumn leaves are
Scattered by the wind,
Like scarlet shooting stars
Across the garden lawn
Dancing Dervishes twist
The new washed clothes
Around the washing line.
It bowls wide brimmed hats
Along the muddy road
The wind is being playful.

Gales send dark clouds
Scudding across the sky
Billowing sails and making
Boats dance on the waves
It turns the turbine's blades
To make the power we need
The power we waste
We can borrow the wind
But we cannot own it.

The bitter, howling storms
Of winter. Tornadoes
Hurricanes, Cyclones and
Whirlwinds, all pounding
And destroying as they roar
And tumble across the land
Ignore them at your peril.

Helen Welsh



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 ...

With the cooler mornings now upon us, we know autumn is here.

What an amazing summer we have had. The best I can remember for a while, I certainly have been taking advantage of the hot afternoons and the beach nearby for my daily swims.

We have had two milestones in February, with *Helen Welsh* turning 95 years of age and *Val Bird* turning 90 years of age. Both long standing supportive members of OWN. What an achievement! Congratulations *Helen* and *Val*. (See page 4 for more about them.)

Because of the lack of interest for the proposed **OWN Bus Trip**, this outing will no longer be going ahead. The **OWN Luncheons** at *The Bays Club* seem to be popular, so we will continue with these every few months. I look forward to seeing you all at the next one.

In the meantime, take advantage of our beautiful warm sunny days by getting out and enjoying the lovely areas, beaches, and parks that we have here on the North Shore ... even better with a friend, be it two-legged or four.

Kind regards,

Judy Brocherie
Chairperson



OWN Groups

Check for details by phoning
the co-ordinators.

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, please contact *Patricia Russell*, ph: 021-064-9522.

Beach Haven Group meets on the fourth Saturday of each month at the *Cedar Centre*, Beach Haven. For more details, please 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, please contact *Judy Brocherie*, ph: 021-0239-4270.



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



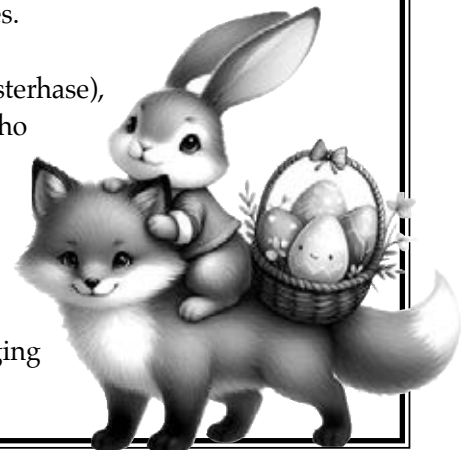
The Animals of Easter

In many countries, Easter is usually represented by the bunny and chickens (and sometimes lambs), but there are different animals associated with Easter in other countries.

The Easter Bunny itself likely has its origins in Germany's Easter Hare (Osterhase), but in some parts of the country, it is instead the Easter Fox (Osterfuchs) who goes around at night leaving presents of eggs for children.

In Switzerland, the children's baskets are, perhaps more appropriately, filled with eggs by the Easter Cuckoo.

While in Australia, where rabbits are not considered a pest, the job of bringing the Easter treats to children is done by the Easter Bilby.



Joke Corner

What is the cutest season?
Awww-tumn!

How do leaves travel around?
By autumn-mobile.

What did one autumn leaf say to the other?
"I'm falling for you."


What is it called when a tree does not think it is autumn?
Disbe-leaf!

What do farmers wear under their shirts in the autumn?
A har-vest.

What is the Easter Bunny's favourite way to travel?
By hare-plane!

How does the Easter Bunny stay fit?
Lots of eggs-ercise!

How can you tell where the Easter Bunny has been?
Eggs mark the spot.



A Reminder...

OWN Membership 2025

Annual subscriptions were due on 1 January, the start of our financial year.

Only **\$10** per member.

Thank you to all the wonderful members who have added donations to their subscriptions this past year. We really appreciate your thoughtful generosity and support. Every donation helps us to continue our activities. Donations over \$5 will receive a tax receipt (sent to you on request).

You can pay online or in-branch to our bank account ...

Bank: **ASB Birkenhead**
Account N^o: **12-3053-0401733-000**

Please put your name and what the payment is for as the deposit reference.

If you are unable to access internet banking and wish to pay by cash, please contact **Lennie Crawford**, ph: 444-3320 to arrange to have your subs payment collected and banked for you.

Living Well

A few tips to try, of the many "living well" tips suggested by the late *Michael Mosley* in his broadcasts and writings.

- 1 **Eat Chocolate:** Two squares of dark chocolate each day is good for health thanks to flavonoids in the cocoa, but it has to be **dark** chocolate.
- 2 **Sing:** Singing reduces the stress hormone, cortisol. It also increases the brain's levels of endocannabinoids, giving you a natural high.
- 3 **Chew Slowly:** This helps digestion, as it breaks down the food more and allows brain hormones recognise that you've eaten and feel fuller.
- 4 **Balancing:** Stand on one leg while brushing your teeth. This not only improves balance, but it can also help strengthen many muscle groups.
- 5 **Walk In or After the Rain:** Negative ions are thought to be created near moving water, such as raindrops hitting the footpath. They are thought to make the air cleaner, relieve stress, boost energy, and improve mood.





Val Bird Turns 90

Valerie Jean Menzies was born on 20 February, 1935 in Chatham, Kent, England. After leaving school she worked at McKays Printers as a copy holder and worked her way up to becoming a competent proof reader.

Val met Peter Bird when she was 16 years of age at the local youth club dance. They became engaged when Val was 18 years of age and married two years later on 28 May, 1955. The wedding took place at St John's Church in Chatham, Kent. Val and Peter had two children – a son, Mark, in 1962, followed by a daughter, Debbie, in 1964.

Sadly Val's husband Peter, who was the love of her life, passed away on 13 February, 1998.

With Mark living in Tasmania and Debbie living in New Zealand, Val decided to join Debbie here in Auckland. She came out to New Zealand on holiday for three years in a row before she finally decided, in 2007, that she could make the move to be near her family in New Zealand and also be closer to Mark in Tasmania.

Once Val was settled here, she joined several groups, one of which was OWN. She was introduced to OWN by the late Mary Martin. Other groups were Widows

and Widowers, Probus, the Torbay Garden Club, and the Beachside Gym which she absolutely loved.

For several years Val has been a long-standing, hard-working member of the OWN Committee, and currently still is. Many years ago, Val saw the need for members to meet regularly outside of OWN monthly meetings, and introduced the **OWN Coffee Mornings**, which continue to this day.



Helen Welsh Turns 95

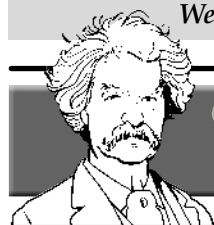
Helen Welsh was born in England on 25 February, 1930, which makes her 95 years of age and our oldest member of OWN.

She is a member of the **OWN Browns Bay Writing for Future Generations** group and enthalls us with her descriptive stories and amazing poems, as well as her stories and illustrations printed in the OWN newsletters.

Helen keeps active by starting the day with yoga, and ensures she has at least one walk each day along her favourite place, Browns Bay Beach.



We congratulate both Val and Helen on their birthdays and wish them well for the future!



“Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.”

Mark Twain (US author)

Our Beach Haven Writer's Group



I joined the Beach Haven OWN Writing for Future Generations group in 2012 and I love this group.

Our convenor is *Anne Mutu*. She rings us a couple of days before the monthly meeting and reminds us of the upcoming meeting in her friendly way, asking us if we are able to come along and bring a story.

We meet at the *Cedar Centre*, which belongs to the Anglican church in Beach Haven. The *Cedar Centre* is a separate building behind the church and is used as a community room where groups with children usually meet. The adults are more likely to meet in the hall that is connected to the church.

I don't think that any of our members are connected to this church, but the location is very good and, as far as I know, we have always met there.

Over the years, I think we have had any number from 5 to 20 ladies participating in our monthly meetings. One of the members who retired to Whangārei, joins us frequently to read her stories and enjoy our wonderful cuppa.



In January 2023, when many people in Auckland were still on holiday, *Anne* invited us to the *Cedar Centre* as usual. As our meeting was scheduled for 28 January, the day after the flooding in Auckland, *Anne* called us in the morning to let us know that we would try to meet unless she heard otherwise from the *Cedar Centre*.

We arrived, but realised there were no chairs in the room. We tried to squeeze on the tatty old sofa and some courageous ladies sat on the little plastic children's chairs. *Anne* found a big toy to sit on. We moved the toy closer and started our morning with a good laugh.

While sharing our stories on how we were impacted by the flood the day before, a man entered quietly



Beach Haven OWN Writing for Future Generations (January 2025)

into the room. He apologised for interrupting us and said he was just checking for any flood damage in the building. I told him that we thought that he was bringing some chairs for us. That's when he realised that the chairs had been removed from the room. He said that they had been taken to the church for Christmas and apparently not brought back. He immediately went to get the chairs for us.

As fun as it was to sit on children's chairs for a while, we all enjoyed sitting on bigger chairs again.

Beate Matthies



Anne Mutu sitting on the toy (January 2023)

Allergy & Me

An Unexpected Love-Hate Relationship

Allergies were never really a thing for me. Back in India and Dubai, I could eat, breathe, and roll around in just about anything without breaking into a sneezing fit.

But then I moved to New Zealand and suddenly my immune system decided to throw a tantrum. Is it something in the air? The water? The sheep? Or is it just a 21st century trend that I've unwillingly subscribed to?

Everywhere I go, there's some article about allergies – at the doctor's clinic, newspapers, and even in my kitchen.

The other day I read about a lady who was allergic to coriander. Coriander! The backbone of my culinary masterpieces! Her survival strategy? Plan, avoid all allergens and then forget about it. Easier said than done, but hey, worth a shot.

I've heard of kids who can't eat dairy, peanuts, eggs, or seafood, and I used to think, "Poor things". Now, I'm side-eying my plate like it's out to get me. Turns out, I have my list of dietary foes: grains with husks, raw cashews, and amaranthus. Ah, amaranthus ... a childhood favourite, lovingly cooked by my mother. I never had an issue with it. Then, like a genius, I planted it in my New Zealand garden, only to find out that it is called pigweed here and, plot twist, my body now rejects it like an expired coupon.

And then there's the mysterious grass in my garden – the one with the grains on top. The moment I get near it my eyes start watering like I am watching the world's saddest movie. My latest strategy, sunglasses and a mask, looking like a backyard burglar while simply trying to water my plants. Does it work? Not fully. But at least the neighbours find it entertaining.

This whole thing feels like a never ending detective story. Every day, I eliminate another culprit from my diet and environment.

Yet, the statistics aren't comforting – apparently, allergy cases have shot up by 50 per cent in the last decade. Even pharmacists are noticing an increase in sales of antihistamines and nasal sprays. Parents are reading food labels like they are decoding a secret message, trying to make sure they don't bring home a ticking time-bomb for their kids.

Speaking of danger zones, I recently worked with flowers and my eyes responded with swelling, itching, and blistering. Just when

I thought I was getting the hang of things, I read an article that said peanut butter might have traces of fungus from processing. Fantastic. There goes my childhood comfort food!

Of course the allergy industry is thriving. There are special vacuum cleaners, hypoallergenic beddings, gluten-free everything, and even low-allergy laundry detergents. I wouldn't be surprised if allergens are the result of new inventions and discoveries of the modern age.

The good news. I rarely eat out, which lowers my chances of accidentally ingesting something my immune systems despises.

The bad news? I still must buy groceries and who knows what sneaky preservatives or chemicals are lurking in them?

But the real silver lining? My long awaited appointment with the specialist is finally here, after six months of waiting. The funny part is the email read, "If you still have concerns see your G.P. and contact us if you want to cancel the appointment".

Let's just hope they don't just tell me I'm allergic to life itself!

Anonymous author
OWN Writing for Future
Generations (Beach Haven)



Whangamatā Post Office



Iris Kennedy nee Shaw was Postmistress at Whangamatā from 1944 - 1951. She may also have served in this capacity 1934 - 1940.

Our house was situated where the Catholic church is now. *New Zealand Post* built a large room on to the side of it and called it the *Whangamatā Post Office*. This site was very central before the causeway went in, as it was opposite the school and right on the intersection for people travelling on north to Opoutere/Tairua, or straight ahead to the Port. The daily passenger bus brought the mail, also bread and stores that had been ordered by residents to be picked up later. Mum also stocked a few staple food items to help people out.

As the Postmistress, one of Mum's tasks would be to take the news to local families of death, accident, or other misfortune – a hard task. Good news, births, celebration announcements, etc. travelled easier. A lot of these calls would come in the middle of the night.

If delivering sad news, Mum would then help to arrange whatever support was needed: cooking, babysitting, travel arrangements. Other people were mostly always willing to oblige in this way too.

As well as the usual duties of a Postmistress, some people needed help filling out forms, wills, licences, and legal documents. No one was ever turned away. If Mum didn't know how to do it, she found out. Discretion was also a top priority and people knew Mum could be spoken to in complete confidence. Mum would often be found in the Post Office after hours catching up on anything that needed to be done despite her pay packet covering only the hours 9:00am to 5:00pm.

On one occasion, being so busy, Mum had called to Dad that someone had left him a bottle of blueberry wine. Forgetting she had told him about the wine, she rushed out to dilute some ink concentrate, but before finishing,

she had to rush back into the Post Office. You guessed it! Dad had poured himself a little glass of ink and the air turned a little blue, for a bit. The wine was at the other end of the bench. Poor Dad.

The Post Office was also a hub for people to gather, collect mail, pensions, etc., and catch up with all the happenings.



The following incident shows how seriously Mum took her role.

When I was eight years old, my four year old sister and I went to Paeroa with Mum and Dad and a friend of Dad's. Just on dusk, as we made the 35 mile journey home on the metal road and rounded a big bend, we met a car coming towards us. The driver skidded on the loose metal and rammed us into the bank.

While Dad was letting the driver know what he would do if one of his kids was hurt, Mum got us all out of our van. We were all okay. Mum wasn't. She had been sitting behind Dad and, without a seatbelt, she went over his shoulder and split her head on the steering wheel. I can still see the blood pouring down her face. Unaware of this, her only concern was my sister and myself.

The nearest farmer had seen the accident and had rung the doctor, before coming down to help. The doctor, on arriving, said Mum needed to be in hospital. The next car that came along was a couple



Whangamatā (1948)

continued ➤

◀ *continued.*

unknown to us who were asked to take my sister and me to friends for the night and to let my brother *Dillon* know of the accident. He was the only one home at the time, so he would have to do the milking and the milk run the next day.

The couple kindly did what was asked of them, but my sister and I hadn't stayed with this woman before, although we did know her, but not terribly well. She decided it would be best if we shared her double bed as we were in a bit of shock. This was fine, but her three prize terriers also shared the bed! In our house the dog was very much loved, but slept outside.

Mum came home with a partly shaved head and a cross stitched on the crown about three inches both ways. She was back working in the Post Office two days later. *The mail must go out.*

Mum suffered violent headaches for some time after this, but it never interfered with her duties. Today she would have been hospitalised. She is a hard act to follow.



The Post Office also included the telephone exchange. A switchboard was set up and all calls to Whangamatā came there, then Mum would switch the caller through to the appropriate number or family.

These were also the days when most people were on "party lines", where two to four families shared the same line distinguished by the number of rings – 2 short and a

long; 3 short; long, short, long; etc. There were the odd private lines, but not too many. On party lines, sometimes you would lift the receiver to make a call then realise someone was already using it. If it was an urgent call you needed to make you would announce it and all concerned were very obliging.

You could ring others on your party line, but otherwise you had to go through to the Post Office and be put through to your required number. The system in all small areas couldn't support one line per household so party lines were necessary, although not everyone wanted or needed a phone.

People who didn't have phones would book their calls to come through to the Post Office at a certain time and come there to take them. If they were overseas calls, this was often at inconvenient times, but Mum would never hesitate to oblige – she loved to know she was a service to anyone who needed it.



In about 1951, Mum and Dad were thinking of moving to Auckland because my older siblings were boarding there for work opportunities. Then *New Zealand Post* started building a new Post Office, which is still operating today, further down the Port.



Mum started training up a *Mrs Jones* to take over from her when the new building was completed.

Thus a new era began.

This was still the period where if you wanted power, you had to have your own generator. No roads were sealed, no Kopu Road through to Thames, no Causeway, and still a two-roomed school.

We as a family have always kept up a very fond association with Whangamatā.

Sharon Peters

Written in memory of my Mum, daughter of *Dillon* and *Lena Shaw* and granddaughter of *James* and *Martha Shaw*.

*I want to be a teddy bear
in my next life.*

**Everybody loves them,
nobody cares if they're fat,
and the older they get, the more they're worth!**





One Flaw in Women

By the time the *Lord* made woman, he was into his sixth day of working overtime. An angel appeared and said, "Why are you spending so much time on this one?"

And the *Lord* answered, "Have you seen my spec. sheet on her? She has to be completely washable, but not plastic, have over 200 moveable parts, all replaceable, be able to run on coffee and left-overs, have a lap that can hold four children at a time, have a kiss that can cure anything from a scraped knee to a broken heart ... and she will do everything with only two hands."

The angel was astounded at the requirements. "Only two hands!? No way! And that's just on the standard model? That's too much work for one day. Wait until tomorrow to finish."

"But I won't," the *Lord* protested. "I am so close to finishing this creation that is close to my heart. She already heals herself when she is sick **AND** can work 18 hour days. Not only will she be able to think, she will be able to reason and negotiate."

The angel then noticed something, and reaching out, touched the woman's cheek. "Oops, it looks like you have a leak in this model. I told you you were trying to put too much into this one."

"That's not a leak," the *Lord* corrected. "That's a tear!"

"What's the tear for?" The angel asked.

The *Lord* said, "The tear is her way of expressing joy, her sorrow, her pain, her disappointment, her love, her loneliness, her grief, and her pride."

The angel was impressed. "You are a genius, *Lord*. You thought of everything. Woman is truly amazing!"

And she is ...

Women have strengths that amaze men. They bear hardships and they carry burdens, but they hold happiness, love, and joy. They smile when they want to scream. They sing when they want to cry. They cry when they are happy and laugh when they are nervous. They fight for what they believe in. They stand up for injustice. They don't take "no" for an answer when they believe there is a better solution. They go without so their family can have.

They go to the doctor with a frightened friend. They love unconditionally. They cry when their children excel and cheer when their friends get awards. They are happy when they hear about a birth or a wedding. Their heart breaks when a friend dies. They grieve at the loss of a family member, yet they are strong when they think there is no strength left. They know that a hug and a kiss can heal a broken heart.

Women come in all shapes, sizes, and colours. They'll drive, walk, run, phone, or email you to show how much they care about you. The heart of a woman is what makes the world keep turning. They bring joy, hope and love. They have compassion and ideals. They give moral support to their family and friends. Women have vital things to say and everything to give.

However, if there is one flaw in women, it is that ...

THEY FORGET THEIR WORTH!



**I may not be perfect,
but parts of me are pretty awesome.**

In the Japanese art of kintsugi, broken objects are often repaired with gold. The flaws are seen as a unique part of the object's history, which adds to its beauty. Consider this whenever you feel a little broken.



Those Were the Days



Ray and I first met at *Hallensteins'* company head office where we both had office jobs. One of the girls who worked with us, got us together by asking us to make up a foursome for a show. The company had a longer than usual lunchtime of one and a half hours, and we'd go often through the back entrance and across the road to *First Church*, where many people used the lawns on sunny days. One day we went behind the church where there was a gardener's shed among some longer than usual grass, quite isolated from where others were, and lay down for a kiss and cuddle.

We were enjoying ourselves when suddenly an indignant voice from behind the wire fence that separated us from a manicured lawn, addressed us! The actual words are lost to time, but went something like, "Would you two people get up and leave here at once! I'm trying to have a decent luncheon with my lady friends at the *Manse* and all we can see from the window is the disgraceful exhibition of your behaviour!"

Of course we did as we were told, rather shamefacedly. We hadn't realised that the somewhat distanced house even was the *Manse*! Now of course we can imagine the scandalized women who were probably having a laugh behind their hands and enjoying themselves while pretending to be shocked. It was 1960 and we were actually only having a kiss and a cuddle! The most we would have been doing would have been Ray with his hand down the front of my dress. Shocking!

Margaret

OWN Writing for Future Generations (Beach Haven)



OWN's Kitchen

Recipe supplied by Judy Brocherie



Biscoff Lemon Curd Cheesecake



Ingredients

Base

- 250g packet of *Biscoff* biscuits
- 85g butter (melted)

Filling

- 250g cream cheese (not lite)
- 100g white chocolate
- 250g jar of lemon curd

Method

1. Crush the biscuits and mix with the melted butter.
2. Grease a rectangular slice tin 37cm x 11cm with removable base.
3. Spread the biscuit mixture over the base of the tin. Refrigerate while preparing filling.
4. Soften the white chocolate and cream cheese. Beat together with an electric mixer.
5. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ jar of lemon curd, saving the remainder for the top. Mix well.
6. Pour the cream cheese mixture over the base.
7. Drizzle some of the remaining lemon curd over the top.
8. Refrigerate until set.
9. Serving: If frozen slightly, the slice is easier to cut.



The Best Laid Plans ...

I was so looking forward to Christmas, 2024. It was our 21st Tree Trimming Party. *Imogen* was bringing home lots of English food shopping, but most importantly all of our girls would be under one roof, something that wouldn't be guaranteed going forward as they all spread their wings to far corners of the globe.

Imogen did not disappoint and off-loaded pretty much a full *Tesco* shopping cart of our favourite foods – 10 boxes of Shredded Wheat, Bisto Gravy, Chestnuts, Cadbury Fruit and Nut, and a huge refill pack of Quality Street chocolates to fill the tin we've been carrying around for most of our married life! She also brought back a 5kg letter box to replace the one that had pretty much disintegrated outside our house. Because of all of these demands on her luggage allowance, she selflessly came back with just a few kilos of clothes for herself, knowing she had the wardrobes of two sisters to borrow from, and she could just buy toiletries here. Mission accomplished!

The 22 December came around and we had 40 people drop in for some homemade Christmas food, mulled

wine, and a "can do" attitude for making Christmas decorations. It went off without a hitch and two of my work friends were the last to leave so we settled down with a nice cup of tea to have a more in-depth catch-up. We'd been chatting out on our deck for about 15 minutes when I suddenly felt incredibly nauseous. I put it down to just overdoing it on the Christmas cake and loosened the belt on my dress. I carried on chatting, but started eyeing up the side of the deck in case I had to make a run for it!

We walked my friends to the gate and as it shut, I turned to the family and confessed just how awful I felt. They were sympathetic, but as this sudden development of symptoms coincided with the massive clean up operation, I know there were sceptics among the troops!

I got upstairs collapsed on the sofa and within minutes had a 39.4° temperature, sore throat, and a cough! We immediately enlisted the big guns otherwise known as "Thera-flu", an American flu remedy filled with more ingredients and E numbers than you could imagine, but by God it works and I slept like a baby.

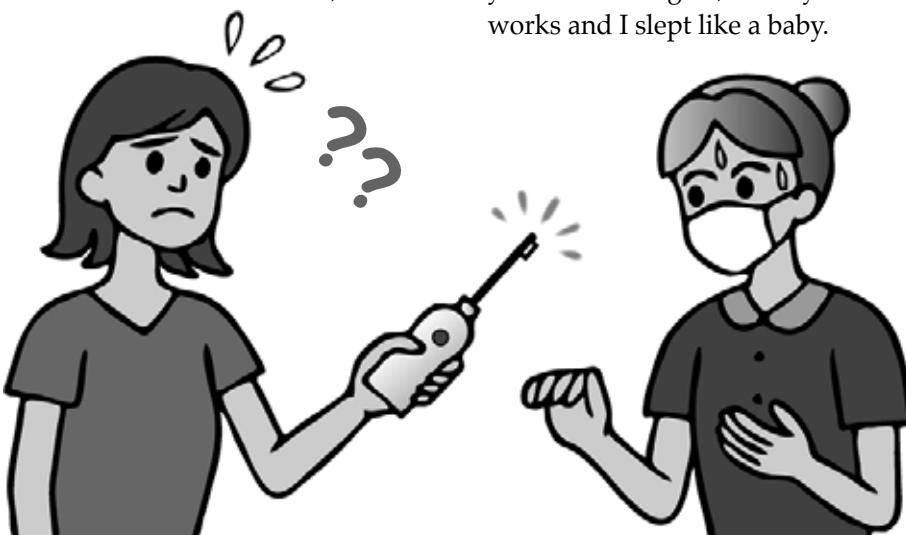
Completely restored in the morning, now 23 December, we got on with more cleaning and headed to the mall for last minute shopping in the afternoon. As the car park was so full, we parked up the hill so we could avoid the traffic. We were in and out the mall, but as I started climbing the steps to reach the car I became very breathless and commented that I hadn't felt like this since I'd had Covid a few years back.

As the day went on, I thought, 'Gosh, *Imogen* starts musical auditions as soon as she gets back to London, so I probably should do a Covid test, but still assumed it was overeating and a lack of fitness that were the probable cause of my condition. You guessed it, as soon as the liquid hit the test kit, it turned black. To say I was shocked was an understatement!

First thoughts were, stay away from *Imogen*. She has worked too hard to be taken out at the start line. I immediately masked up and stayed completely out of her way. Then slowly the realisation that I had hugged and kissed all 40 people who came to the party the day before dawned. What to do, what to do? Do I tell them and ruin their Christmas plans or just hope for the best? After I'd done the mental arithmetic on who would be seeing elderly relatives or young children I decided to take my chances, but had everything crossed. I thought I would come clean as and when.

My symptoms eased by Christmas and we had a lovely day, but I still

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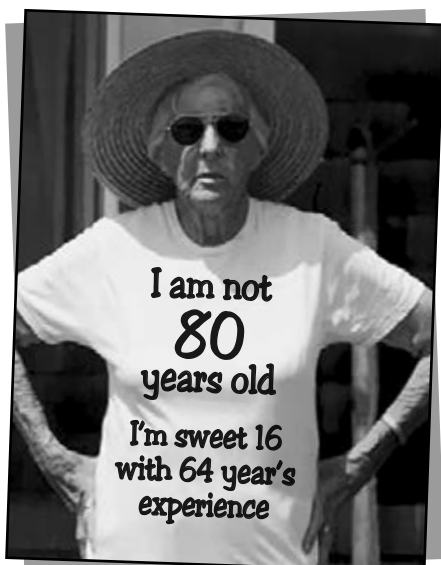
spent the festive period masked up and stayed away from *Imogen*. I checked in with all the party goers and no one caught it, so it must have been one weird strain!

I thought we were out of the woods until about five days after I tested positive, *Imogen* came into the kitchen exclaiming, "Who's been using my toothbrush?"

I was, "What do you mean?", fairly confident we were all big enough and ugly enough to keep track of our own toothbrushes. Well, it turns out, because we had made such demands on her luggage allowance, she had only brought the head of her electric toothbrush to New Zealand and would nip downstairs into our bathroom to use the base of my electric toothbrush. So, all of the mask wearing and keeping her at the other end of the dining table was completely unnecessary as we'd been using the same toothbrush for a week!!!

Thankfully she didn't get it, but talk about the best laid plans ...

Natalie Harwood



Saturday Market



Market day was every Saturday in the summer in our town in Denmark. Fridays were spent cutting flowers in our nursery and tying them into bunches with raffia. We all helped when we were old enough. There were many buckets full of flowers to take in the big cart that my father used for transporting produce to the market. He had boxes of plants as well.

We got up early in order to get to town in good time to get a good space to display our wares. Father took the horses to a stable in the next street, while Mother looked after the plants and the flowers. We were free to wander around to look at other people's wares or to walk around the shops. We were sent to buy wholemeal bread at a special bakery. Our family were vegetarians and keen on avoiding white bread. White bread had become a treat for Sundays only in our family.

One year, Father had looked ahead and had potted lots of daffodil bulbs and had got them growing early in his hot-house. He took them to the market when they were in bud and made a big profit that day as they were the first daffodils out. People were queuing up to buy them. Our uncle, *Hans Jørgen* had made a similar success one year. Being a gardener too, he had potted some strawberry plants and got them to flower and fruit in his hot-house. People were happy to buy his potted strawberry plants with nearly ripe strawberries on them.

When it was time to go home after spending most of the day at the market, we were always keen to accompany Father to the stables to collect the two horses. It was quite a good time of the day when we were all seated on the cart – our parents and usually us two daughters, the horses clip-clopping along, homeward bound. Mother had no difficulty spending the profit made that day.

Betty Vaotogo

