



OWN

News & Views



Winter 2025

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

There is a solemn wind tonight

*There is a solemn wind tonight
That sings of solemn rain
The trees that have been quiet so long
Flutter and start again*

*The slender trees – the heavy trees
The fruit trees laden and proud
Lift up their branches to the wind
That cries to them so loud*

*The little bushes and the plants
Bow to the solemn sound
And every tiniest weed and grass
Shakes on the quiet ground*



Katherine Mansfield

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 the OWN AGM, 12 April, 2025

Since early 2024, we have noticed there has been a decline in membership. This seems to be for a variety of reasons – members are ageing, health issues, and shifting into retirement villages which cater well for the older age group.

Any events the OWN Committee try to arrange are not very well supported, which is very disappointing. The events which seem popular are the quarterly **OWN Lunches** at *The Bays Club* and the monthly **OWN Browns Bay Coffee Group** mornings at *Sugar n Cup Café* in Browns Bay. Another event which caused much enjoyment and hilarity for the few attendees was the *OWN Games Day* held in August 2024 – another one will be arranged in the coming months.

The **OWN Writing for Future Generations** groups at Browns Bay and Beach Haven continue to be the backbone of *Our Women's Network*. These groups meet monthly and enjoy the camaraderie and companionship.

With the declining membership it is up to us, the remaining members to support the events arranged so it is worthwhile to continue with OWN as an organisation.

I would like to thank *Lennie Crawford* our tireless Secretary, *Anita Knape* our Treasurer who keeps the finances in order, and our loyal OWN Committee members: *Patsy Aagesen, Val Bird, Pat Bish, and Dale Everiss*.

To *Jos Coburn* who each quarter tirelessly puts together our wonderful magazine **News&Views**. I know I always look forward to receiving mine. It is a pleasure to read. Thank you *Jos*.

Thanks to *Patricia Russell* and *Anne Mutu* who competently run the two **OWN Writing for Future Generations** groups. Also thanks to *Anne* and her band of merry helpers who distribute the magazine **News&Views**.

Next time you see an event organised, support it. Without the support our organisation will cease to exist.

Take care and look out for each other.

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



An Irish Wish

May there always be work
for your hands to do,
May your purse always
hold a coin or two,
May the sun always shine
on your window pane,
May a rainbow be certain
to follow each rain,
May the hand of a friend
always be near you,
and
May God fill your heart
with gladness to cheer you.



Chaos, Charm, & Cows

Sometimes all at once

It's been a while since I last set foot in India, and the thought of returning gives me a delightful little emotional rollercoaster.

On one side of my brain is this warm fuzzy image of God's own country, Kerala. Thinking of the serene backwaters, spicy foods that could make your taste buds linger, swaying palms of the coconut trees, comfortable houseboats, and beaches where the sun is so picturesque.

But, there are also more people, more honking, and more traffic that goes on unceasingly all with different communication strategies. It is a 24-hour, non-stop motion, with some sudden stunts from the tuk-tuk drivers.

Yes, Indian roads, where time stands still due to the organized chaos of the traffic. It is like a very entertaining reality show – buses, trucks, motorbikes, cycle rickshaws, pedestrians, cows, and dogs, all co-existing and moving to their destinations. It all seems not to be stressed, except to a visitor to India after a long time away, like me, sitting in the back seat and wondering at the never-ending chaotic magic.

Now, if Kerala roads are this eventful, imagine a big city like Mumbai, a city I visited twice nearly 25 years ago. It takes two hours to cover a short distance of 12 kilometres, and from the back seat it will be like a theatre show. It will be hilarious watching bulls tethered to a side pole and chewing cud peacefully, with traffic flowing

around them, traffic cops doing their best (or worst, occasionally pocketing a bribe from someone who technically didn't do anything wrong) in this chaos, a family of four on a single motorbike – it's like watching a circus show. The driver who stops his vehicle in the middle of the road to fix his flat tyre, with help from an unknown good Samaritan who just gets out of his car to help his brother amid this honking, and the loud music piercing the ears everywhere around. The drivers who squeeze into parking spots with millimetres to spare?

It makes me wonder why it is so easy to get a driver's license in India, and with a 20 year validity.

What about the aroma from the different spices piercing the nostrils from the street vendors?

Imagine a place like Mumbai, where there are skyscrapers on one side of the street and slums on the other, with Bollywood stars and cricket stars on one side, and slum kids kicking the ball on the other side. I become a little more philosophical thinking about the paradox of this little world.

What about the trucks over-loaded with cargo wobbling past? It is a paradox buffet ... but it works well!

All this confusion led me to make the decision to skip Mumbai and move to a smaller city, like Kochi or Trivandrum, where the chaos is a little bit less and makes me more optimistic. Then, what about the motorcycle riding in the pedestrian lanes and asking me with hand gestures why I was walking on these not-meant-for-walking paths?

But you know what? Forget the traffic. I want to think about the calm waters, floating houseboats, reconnecting with family, tasting delicious food, visiting the parks and churches, and shopping for those sparkly things I probably don't need, but want.

India is madness, yes, but it is also magic. A land of sensory overload and heart-warming charm.

If you are visiting India, my advice is don't fight the chaos – just sit back, relax, trust the driver, and enjoy the ride.

Susy Oomen



The Walking Grannies



I enjoy three exercise days each week. Sit Fit on Mondays in a lovely little church meeting room with about 10 others, including one or two men; Yoga on Wednesdays with 14 other women; and a walking group on Thursdays with five lady friends, two of them also being part of the Yoga mob.

We call ourselves "The Walking Grannies" and we do the *Hātea Loop* (4.2kms, in Whangārei), which is a lovely, easy walking area by the Hātea River, including two bridges. Our walk takes us about an hour, and then we go to the *Riverside Café* for a coffee and sometimes a snack as well. The Walking Grannies group are *Frances, Judith, Linda, Elizabeth, Deane*, and myself. We have all sorts of discussions with our morning tea, and generally come up with all the possible solutions for a troubled world! It is my favourite exercise group.

For some years now we have met up briefly with some very special friends on our walk. The first two were *Brinsley* and *Sonny*. *Sonny* is *Brinsley's* caregiver, and accompanies him on several walks every week. *Brinsley* is a huge man with a loud voice and a most delightful, happy nature. He used to pass us and call out "Hello Ladies" every time, and one day *Frances* decided to stop and have a chat with him and introduce herself to him and his carer. *Sonny* told us



his name. The next week he saw us from a distance and when we met he said, "Hello, *Frances*. I knew it was you!" *Sonny* was very impressed with the interchange. Every week after that another one of us introduced ourselves, and after a few weeks he remembered all our names. Whoever he spotted first he would greet with the right name, a huge smile and a very loud, "I knew it was you!" After a few weeks we began exchanging bits of news and *Brinsley* would remember what we told him. *Sonny* was amazed at his progress.

Sometime later there was another younger man accompanying them, and *Sonny* introduced us to *Martin*, who has Downs Syndrome and is non-verbal. At first when we said, "Hi, *Martin*", he would simply look straight ahead while the rest of us had a quick chat. One day I told him I loved his name because my name used to be *Martin*. A couple of weeks later he started looking at us, and then a few weeks later he would give us a little wave whenever we said hello.

We all feel blessed to have these special, innocent friends and we hope we can continue to meet many many more times while us *Walking Grannies* are still this side of the grass!

Patsy Philips







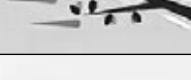


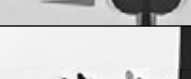

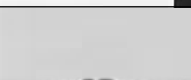



Windy Today?



Ever wondered when there is a wind warning, what it's all about?

In 1805, *Francis Beaufort* of the British Royal Navy devised a way of estimating the wind speed according to the appearance of the sea and on land, mainly in the movement in trees. As a result of his great work, he was promoted to the navy rank of Rear Admiral and received a knighthood. Locations like the Beaufort Sea near the Arctic and Beaufort Island in the Antarctic were also named after him. He continued to pursue his passion until 1855 when he finally retired. He died in 1857.

The Beaufort Scale

| Wind Force | | Wind Speed | Land Conditions | Sea Conditions | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|---|---|---|
| 0 | Calm | < 2km/h | Smoke rises vertically, no wind | Flat sea |  |
| 1 | Light Air | 2-5km/h | Direction of wind shown by smoke drifts, not wind vanes | Ripples on water |  |
| 2 | Light Breeze | 6-11km/h | Wind felt on face, leaves rustle, vanes moved by the wind | Small wavelets |  |
| 3 | Gentle Breeze | 12-19km/h | Leaves and small twigs in constant motion, wind extends light flag | Large wavelets |  |
| 4 | Moderate Breeze | 20-28km/h | Dust and small paper scatters, flags wave, small branches move | Small waves |  |
| 5 | Fresh Breeze | 29-38km/h | Small trees in leaf begin to sway, crested wavelets form on inland waters | Moderate waves |  |
| 6 | Strong Breeze | 39-49km/h | Large tree branches move, umbrellas difficult to use, whistling heard on overhead wires | Large waves |  |
| 7 | High Wind, Moderate Gale, Near Gale | 50-61km/h | Whole trees in motion. Trees sway. Walking becomes difficult against the wind | Sea stacks up and white foam from breaking waves begins to be blown |  |
| 8 | Gale, Fresh Gale | 62-74km/h | Twigs and branches break off. Impedes progress | Moderately high waves |  |
| 9 | Strong Gale, Severe Gale | 75-88km/h | Roof tiles uplifted, slight structural damage occurs | High waves |  |
| 10 | Storm, Whole Gale | 89-102km/h | Trees uprooted, widespread damage, visibility reduced | Very high waves |  |
| 11 | Violent Storm | 103-117km/h | Widespread damage, nearly no visibility | Exceptionally high waves |  |
| 12 | Hurricane Force | >118km/h | Widespread destruction, life-threatening | Exceptionally high waves, sea is completely white |  |

Community Spirit



A friend, recently moved to the country, remarked on the community spirit there, people helping other people. It sparked quite a few memories of growing up as a child in the country.

1950. It was dark; the phone rang for Mum, the local postmistress. It was the publican and his wife to say their eldest son, *Don*, a 28 year old, was coming home, through the bush, from Thames to Whangamatā (no Kopu Road back then). He had expected it to take him, at the most, three days. It was then the end of the third day and no sign of him.

The rescue squad sprung into action. The Publican and Mum split the phone book (probably 800 residents at this time), each person they rang was given five more to ring. "Please, all who can, meet at daybreak at the hotel."

This, as always brought a large response. The men split into groups to gradually cover and comb the area. Thames people volunteered to do the same at their end. The women cooked in shifts for everyone at the hotel, taking it in turns to take care of those at home.

Us four younger ones, aged four to 12, were left with a 15 year old sister. Our older brother and sister feeling most superior at being included to help in this ordeal, went off with Mum and Dad. No cell phones or walkie-talkies in these times.

Weather was causing a bit of a problem, slowing things down. By the end of the third day, two of *Don's* pig dogs were found, dead. The feelings weren't good, but all kept a bright face. Then, on the fourth day the third dog was found dead beside a dead boar and *Don's* spent rifle.

Many days went by, people were looking haggard, no sleep, milking couldn't wait, it all had to be fitted in.

It was dark. We at home had had our dinner, not quite the same without Mum and Dad. They did keep in touch, frequently. We were probably feeling a little nervous, although we would not have understood

the feeling – our neighbours were half a kilometre away.

There was a knock on the door. A haggard, bearded, torn and dirty man was there. He couldn't talk, but even as an eight year old I remember he let us know we had nothing to fear. He indicated he was hungry and *Ann* fed him. We all were aware that this was *Don*. He ate hungrily and went on his way. Mum and Dad came in about midnight telling us *Don* was found a mile up the road from us, heading towards the hotel.

There was much rejoicing next day, the publican driving a truck with kegs on board, all around the district, thanking everyone for their generosity of time, food, and love. *Don* was delirious for many days, but thankfully made a full recovery.

It was more than ten years later when all the family was talking about *Don* lost in the bush and Mum was remarking about the fact that despite all those days he wasn't hungry. "Well, of course not," we said. "We fed him."

Until our parents died, we know they thought we must have had a delusion. Why didn't we ring the hotel when he arrived? Well, he appeared to know what he was doing. The phone was for emergencies and I don't suppose *Ann* had ever made a call on it. Though, of course she would have answered it. And of course, we thought he'd have said he ate at our place, he knew the family. And us, though we hadn't recognised him, we knew who he was. Instinct. He was picked up by one of the people involved in the search. By the time he got to the hotel they said he was delirious, and of course wouldn't have remembered. The boar had attacked him and his dogs.

Sharon Peters

Postscript:

After writing this, my sister Ann told me that he had a dead piglet over his shoulder, which he put in an outside shed. She said he also had a kip on the long couch in our kitchen. Then he went off, taking the piglet with him. Ann said she had tried to ring the hotel, but the line was engaged all the time.





Judy's Kitchen

Recipe supplied
by Judy Brocherie



Chicken Hand Pies

Ingredients (makes four pies)

- 250g cooked chicken, shredded
- 1 packet cheese sauce
- 2 sheets flaky or puff pastry
- 1 egg, beaten (for glaze)

Method

1. Make up the cheese sauce according to instructions on the packet, but using less liquid – you don't want a thin sauce. Let it cool.
2. Add the shredded chicken.
3. Cut the pastry sheets in half – each sheet will make two pies.
4. Fold each half-sheet in half (to make a double-layered rectangle). Dampen the edges.
5. On one end of each piece of pastry, place a generous amount of the chicken mixture in the centre, leaving 2cms as an edge. (Pies can be folded to either square or triangular shape.)
6. Fold the empty pastry end over the top and seal the edges and crimp with a fork. Make slits on top of the pastry.
7. Glaze with the beaten egg.
8. Cook at 200° for 30 minutes.



Enjoy!

My Cheesecake Disaster



We were living in our first home in Glenfield. *Angie* was a toddler and I was working full time. Generally, *Rod* picked me up from work at 5:00pm and then we collected *Angie* from the sitter. As *Angie* was on a strict dairy-free diet, I usually prepared her a special meal and lunch for the following day while I cooked dinner, so time was always at a premium.

On this particular occasion, *Rod* had been taking a business associate from New York City around to see various companies in Auckland, and he invited his associate to dinner for the following evening.

I knew I would have little time the next day, so did as much pre-preparation for the following evening as possible. I prepared a lot of the food in advance and had made my famous German cheesecake, which finally went into the oven quite late. Then I washed the kitchen floor, vacuumed the lounge, and set the dining table. Finally, exhausted, and now past midnight, I went to take the cooled down cheesecake out of the oven to put into the fridge. Just as I lifted the pan out, I lost grip and it dropped onto the floor. I burst into tears. *Rod* and *Angie* had been asleep for a long time and I was desperately tired. However, I had the presence of mind to think. The floor is clean. The cake is cooked and nearly set. I found our beautiful hand-cut led crystal parfait dishes that *Rod* had won at golf before we were even married and scooped some of the mixture into each of them and set them into the fridge to cool.

The next day I got some fresh berries and whipped cream to top the dessert – the perfect completion of the dish. That evening, while the guys were in the lounge enjoying the aperitifs and appetizers, I fed

Angie, cooked the meal, and then put *Angie* to bed. As the hostess with the 'mostess', I then put all onto the beautifully set table and we enjoyed a lovely dinner, followed by my cheesecake disaster.



All proclaimed that the dessert was delicious!

Rosemarie Carr

When you are **STRESSED** you eat
ice cream, cake, chocolate, and sweets,
because stressed spelt backwards is **DESSERTS**.





The Liberty Bodice & Other Intimate Apparel



My liberty bodice is a work of art
How can I begin to describe it?
It has buttons and seams and suspenders
All made for a perfect fit

It's very stiff, my liberty bodice
A bit like a suit of armour
Protecting my chest – over my vest
Donning it is quite a drama

The buttons are soft and rubbery
And fastening them is a pain
Especially when they get flat and mis-shapen
'Cos they've been through the wringer yet again!

This thick white cotton contraption
Is a "must" in my mother's book
She won't take "No" for an answer
No matter how pleading I look

She buys them from the Co-op
I really wish she'd desist
Will I still be wearing them in my teens?
Will boys find me easy to resist?

The suspenders dangle forlornly
With no stockings on which to attach
They really are quite useless
And none of them even match

At long last, winter is over
And I can abandon this garment of mine
Oh, please let this be the last time
Now that I'm almost nine

I desperately want to be grown up
Looking all frilly and fancy
But my mother has other ideas
That's typical of my mum, Nancy

When can I start wearing panties
Instead of industrial strength "britches"?
They're big and ugly and fleecy
No wonder part of me itches!

Oh, how I yearn for frivolous things –
A vest with some nice lace trimming?
I've seen them in Marks & Spencers
And they only cost seven shilling

It really makes no difference
I can beg 'til I'm blue in the face
I know deep down that I can only dream
Of wearing frills, silk and lace

These garments of torture I'm doomed to accept
They'll be washed and worn and mended
The elastic will loosen, the edges will fray
How long before my childhood is ended?

Then, I'll go to the nearest shop in town
That sells "lingerie" – and not "underwear"
I'll buy the frilliest, laciest items they have
And, if I catch a chill? Well, I really don't care!

Patricia Russell



“A smile is the shortest distance between two people.”

Victor Borge (Danish-American actor, comedian, and pianist)



No More Sob Stories

Looking back over the last 15 months since my surgery in February 2024, it seems like I've had nothing but accident after accident. The stories in my writing folder definitely confirm this. It seems that I am 'an accident waiting to happen.' I decided, 'no more sob stories ever again'!

Just before we headed off on our last cruise, *Natalie* cautioned me "No more falls". I laughed and agreed! Famous last words! But I am sticking to my guns. No more sob stories.

Our cruise was great. All the Viking advertisements we are bombarded with on TV are 100% correct. Smaller ships, no casinos, no kids under 18, delicious food, great staff, amazing ports, and the best lecturers. Not to forget they also have the best spa compared to any of the other cruise lines. We had a lot more sea days crossing the southern Atlantic than any other cruises we've been on. For me that was great as I spent a lot of time in the spa nursing my wounds.

Although I loved the week in Barcelona at the beginning and another in Buenos Aires at the end of our trip, they were exhausting. The three days we had in Iguazú, viewing the waterfalls from both the Brazilian and Argentinian sides was spectacular, even better than expected, but it also involved the most walking which was hard. I should have done that when I was younger and fitter, but I did it! Finally, I have crossed it off my 'bucket list'.

If it weren't for our two four-legged fur babies, I'd happily sell the house and book a cruise around the world, or maybe several back-to-back ones.

Shore excursions were excellent, with options from strenuous, moderate, to easy. Very knowledgeable guides explained the highlights of historical places and beautiful landscapes. Touring in luxurious, air-conditioned coaches driven by expert drivers who go out of their way to help you in or out if you are in any way handicapped or having difficulty. This was always done with dignity and respect. Nobody was ever made to feel a burden.

To not have a life of worries, but to be waited on hand and foot. Not have to cook the same boring meals, but to be offered different gastronomical delights cooked by world-class chefs, **and** never have to do dishes or clean house ever again. Also, there is **no** garden work, which leaves me frustrated because I am no longer able to manage it. One never gets bored with the many choices of things to do at sea and one even meets some interesting people from all over the world. To be treated kindly and with respect by lovely staff members and crew is wonderful.

To top it off, all this, even over some years would cost a lot less than an apartment with a sea view in *The Sands* retirement village here in Browns Bay by the beach, or one of those beautiful smaller places on Takapuna beach or on the eastern beaches of Auckland.

I have decided home is the most dangerous place for me to be – the kitchen being the absolute worst! So now I've mapped out my plan for the future!

Rosemarie Carr



Winter Fun

The recent scenes shown on TV and in the newspapers of the snow (covered mountains and some impassable roads) reminded me of winters in my childhood and made me a little nostalgic. It always looked so pretty with snow on the branches, glistening in the sun and the icicles which would eventually form. I'm sure it's not just wishful thinking that winters were cold with lots of snow and frosty mornings, and summers being hot and sunny, although temperatures have changed now considerably worldwide. We always wished for a white Christmas, and very often people would bet on it.

I remember the back garden being covered in snow, with a large snowman in the centre of the lawn, and being wrapped up in warm clothes, boots, hats, and scarves to go out to play. There was always a snowball fight, a game of catch, or tag, and it being played with much laughter. I was quite small and all the other children were much taller, so in a game of tag, I found it hard to catch anyone, especially one year when the snow came up to the top of my Wellingtons, preventing me from being able to run. I don't think I was too happy then.

Tobogganing was always a great way to enjoy the snow at a place called Bugs Bottom. There was a fairly steep, grassy hill where lots of children, and some adults too, would trudge up the hill, pulling toboggans to whizz down to the bottom at quite a speed, then repeat the performance again and

again. One year, when I was old enough to know better, my friend *Susan* and I bought ice creams from the corner shop at the top of Oakley Hill, sat on our toboggans and slid our way to the bottom,



which was a crossroads, over which we zoomed until we came to a stop when the ground started to rise again. Fortunately, we didn't collide into any cars.

In later years, Oakley Hill and Priest Hill were ones to avoid in a car. Cars would get halfway up these hills, only to come to a stop and slide back down. Driving down those hills, many drivers

lost control — I watched one zooming down only to skid at the bottom, then spinning around to end up facing in the opposite direction.

The worst year for snow was later, about 1962 or 1963, when snow lay on the ground in outlying areas from Boxing Day until Easter, underground water pipes froze, and water tankers delivered fresh water to those affected every day. We escaped by a short distance, but my mother's house had no water. We were snowed in which wasn't much fun with four small boys under three. I remember slithering and sliding my way to my mother's house with the twins, who stayed with their grandma for a couple of weeks to give me a bit of a break.

I can't remember which year it was, but the Thames at Caversham froze over and people were able to skate on it, including my father.

My mother used to take my children down to Bugs Bottom and along the lane to see the animals. Sadly, Bugs Bottom was developed and houses now cover our toboggan run.

*From the book of stories
by the late Mary Martin.*

“Ever since it started snowing, my husband has been standing in front of the window and watching. If the snow gets much worse, I might let him inside the house.”



Tangihanga (Funeral Rites)



Some of the protocols I experienced while attending the tangihanga for *Chaddy Te Poa*, one of our extended whānau (family), held at Naumai, 15kms south of Dargaville.

After arriving at Naumai Marae, we parked up and went to the seats provided at the entrance, some 30 metres from the front entrance of the marae. You wait there until they are ready to receive you. A woman will then karanga (call) you to come. You proceed slowly. Usually a woman, among those being called onto the marae, will also karanga an answering call. You remove your shoes before entering the marae and proceed slowly up to the slightly raised stage where the open coffin is, surrounded by the close family. You then bend down and press noses or kiss the deceased, and maybe speak to him or her. (I have to omit this part these days as I can't get up again.) You then greet and hug all the family there and then all the other people assembled before going and sitting on the seats provided.

A speaker from the local people will then speak to you and welcome you on this sad occasion. Sometimes two other men will greet you also. After that, some



man or men from your party will get up and reply. Refreshments are then served in the dining room, next to the marae, and you are then free to mix and mingle with everyone present.

It is customary that on the last night before the burial, there is a walking stick passed around and if it is given to you, you get up and share a memory you have of the deceased, or sing a song if you are musical

Continues ➤

Bunion's Lament

My feet have grown – now my shoes are tight
So it's time, says Mum, to put that right
We'll find something smart, but not too "spivvy"
We'll go to the Co-op, so I'll get my "divvy".**

On the bus, I dream of shoes fine and fancy
Just like my friend Joan's – all pointy and "dancy"
They're red and shiny, with a cute velvet bow
Perhaps mine could be pink with a little peep toe?

Oh, how wrong can I be! My reverie is broken
The choice is not mine. My mother has spoken
"We want something sensible, sturdy, and strong
They mustn't be flimsy, as they won't last long."

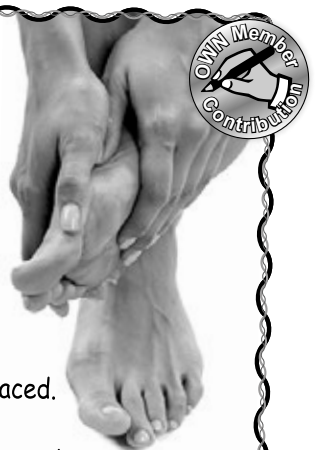
The assistant measures with care and precision
My foot all round, then makes her decision
"I've got just what you need, so don't go away
They're the latest thing, just arrived today!"

My heart soared. For a moment
I believed
My dreams had come true – but was
I deceived!
I hold back the tears as my feet are
embraced
In shoes that are sturdy, sensible, and laced.

Finally, those days become a thing of the past
I can buy what I want. I am free at last
To wear high heels, of any colour I chose
And strut down the street in five inch stilettos!

Now, I suffer for those shoes so pointy and high
I stare at my bunions and heave a sigh
At my sensible footwear, so plain and round
But the price of long-ago vanity was worth every pound!

Patricia Russell



** "divvy" = dividend

◀ continued.

or play a tune on your guitar. So, after dinner, everyone went back to the marae and settled down on the mattresses provided, to await this part of the proceedings. There was many a story told and lots of singing, as this was a musical family. When *Chaddy* was just a baby, the family had their own band and young *Chaddy* played the drums since he was just two years old – a natural musician.

This is a very nice part of the proceedings. You hear very interesting and often very funny stories as Māori are great storytellers. I also stood up to speak of my memories of *Chaddy* and the family. Eventually it was time to sleep as we had to get up early to prepare the marae for the 10:00am service. In former days, the speeches would go on all night, but nowadays they close off the speeches and turn off the lights so we have a bit of sleep before a very busy day of burial.

On this marae, they have three beds for older or disabled people who are unable to get up off the floor, and I am in that category. As the beds were already occupied, they put three mattresses, one on top of the other, for me. They proved very comfortable and I slept well on them.

Early next morning, the bell was rung and it was time to get up, have breakfast and then back to the marae to store the mattresses and tidy up and to bring in the bench seats in preparation for the service. Three Rātana pastors arrived and a very lively and reasonably short service followed. Then it was time for the journey to the cemetery for burial. It was a beautiful day, but very hot in the sun.

After the burial it was back to the marae, the final speeches and then it was time for the hākari (feast), a sumptuous meal with all the best food the marae can offer. Seafood, raw fish and kina (sea urchins), and mussels. Plus of course, chicken and meat dishes, and a lovely dessert, steamed pudding with custard and cream, jellies and pavlova ... lovely!

Then there is time to catch up with family you might not have seen for a while and gradually those who are going home start to leave, but some stay another night before leaving for wherever home might be.

Anne Mutu

The Waiting Room

Herded into a room
seated next to complete strangers
awaiting our turn.

Fearing what might be told
to us later

We sit and stare
nonchalantly at you
as you move around
slowly but with intent
to search for food.

Back and forth you go
lulling us into a state
of calm and tranquillity
while we wait
enabling us to forget
momentarily our fears
as we are mesmerised
by your antics in the
fish tank.



Thank you to Patsy Aagesen



*The prettiest
thing you
can wear
is a*

SMILE

