

# The Journeys of Life

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October 2016

## INTRODUCTION

# THE JOURNEYS OF LIFE

By

## 48ers WHO HAVE ACHIEVED O.B.E. STATUS

We have all been travelling this journey of life.

When asked to share memories and events there were mumbled phrases, that translated to “oh, I didn’t do anything much”.

Well, maybe so in your eyes but there are different ways in which we have all managed our journeys as we travelled the path.

It’s a long road, there are little lanes and byways to attract the traveller, some are explored and enrich the life of those who dare to be side tracked, and then return to the main road. Others may choose to stay in familiar surroundings, content to follow conventional patterns.

And for some, the course of their life is determined by people or happenings that have provided a foundation which has carried the traveller along from time frame to time frame allowing little opportunity for freedom to stop and explore.

The nature of the events are overshadowed by the experiences that open our thinking, to enrich our minds, to teach us that there is always something to gain from any situation that appears on the landscape.

So while our O B E landmark signals a status we once considered to be “ancient”, it also gives us a reason to rejoice. We have lived through THE BEST TIMES as the term goes, gathering our life skills from the age of simple living where picnics by the river, Mardi Gras on the Marine Parade at Christmas, H B Spring Show, playing tennis or other chosen sport, biking to Bay View and back, were much more rewarding and sociable than sitting in front of a screen or fiddling with a cell phone as a means of communication.

We were never taught how to grow old. It is something you drift into as you accept body changes that occur, that affect ones sight (diminishing), mobility (can’t climb the ladder/ fence as once was taken for granted). Family learn to speak slower and turn their faces to address you, more frequent visits to Dr and Dentist, engaging a Podiatrists skills, and while the hairdresser applies a colour rinse you eventually gracefully agree that the natural is really quite becoming with its distinct elegance. Laugh-lines become wrinkles.

Inevitably, we have managed to keep abreast with the “New Technology”, some of us better than others through necessity, and grudgingly admitted that the efficiency and time saving has been amazingly convenient. We grew up with no phones moved to party lines, from private phone line to mobile phones and now it’s a touch of a button to take selfies and instantly send them round the world! We are fortunate to be surrounded by young active minds that encourage us to keep up with the trend.

Our comfortable state of life no longer commands that we rush off in a frenzy of competitive activity. “Been there, done that” is the motto now. We can view life from a non-judgemental stage and appreciate the efforts contained in daily activities.

The stories presented to you in this collection are each one, unique and precious. Please, No Speed reading, take each story, consider the writer and appreciate the memories they share with you.

You might even imagine yourself alongside them as they take you on their journey.

Now that should bring a smile to your lips!!

Snippets:

Russell Spiller taking photos on Marine Parade Christmas and New Year

Napier Frivolity Minstrels, Operatic Society. Constance and May MacDonald, Ivena Pothan

Napier Lions Club Market Day in Emerson Street

Making an outfit to wear to the Spring Show when at Napier Intermediate School Sewing class

Blossom Week train ride Napier to Hastings

Becoming a member of a service organisation or School Committee

Kite days at Anderson Park, Skating on Marine Parade skating rink

Easter Competitions at Municipal Theatre

Art Deco Walks and Art Deco Dinners

Hukarere Marching Girls / St. Josephs Marching Girls

Rush Munro Ice Cream, Fish and Chips from Paxies

Emerson Street On Friday night

Building bonfires for Guy Fawkes

Gaiety theatre, Mayfair theatre, State theatre

Adams Bruce dark chocolate marshmallow filling. Readings Cake Shop, Brown Owl Cake Shop

Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, Esther Williams, Doris Day, Jane Russell

Show Boat, Desert Song, the Merry Widow,

Weekly News: write ups of weddings and debutante balls. Ahuriri School Ball.

Reading to the kids at bedtime: Enid Blyton. Dr Seuss

Bottling peaches, the Fruit bowl of New Zealand, Watties canneries.

Brownies, Girl Guides. Scouts, Sea scouts. Weka and Omatua

And the list goes on,-----as we pause to share our memories, treasures of the past.

Oh so many happy times that belong to us - because WE LIVED THEM!

# Lorraine Jepson

Born : 06.09.1934  
At: McHardy Home in Napier  
Parents: James and Ivy Kirby  
Living: at 4 Chaucer Road in Napier



I clearly remember when I was four years old moving to our new State home at 5 Nuffield Ave, Marewa - all dirt roads- no fences but my parents were so excited and they lived there all of their lives.

I had a happy childhood- I remember Dad taking me on his bike for rides on a Sunday afternoon- getting my own bike when I started Napier Intermediate- we did not have much but we were content.

My father worked at Williams & Creagh as a Truck Driver until his retirement

He would push bike from Nuffield Ave. to the Port each day in all weathers.

I attended Nelson Park School at 5 years old and had 1 year at the brand new Marewa School in Standard 1.

I then attended Napier Intermediate School then to the Napier Girls High School.

On this journey I made many friends some of them life-long friends e.g. Maureen Price (Shuker) Margaret Lowe (Holder) Beverley Gilchrist (Chapman Taylor)

I enjoyed my school years although I did not excel in anything- I used to love the wet lunch days at the Girls High we used to dance in the hall and Shirley Painter played the Piano

We had wonderful carefree teenage years going to local dances etc and being able to walk home at night without any fear of being attacked.

During the war years I remember the Ration books. I made at School for my Mother's ration book which she used until rationing ended, also the lining up in queues for older girls stockings - lollies etc.

I started work as a 15 year old as an Office Junior at Jack Snaddons Men's Outfitter - Jack Snaddon and his family were Napier Identities- he owned 3 shops and at that time I thought he was the richest person I had ever known, because him and his wife went to England by ship .

I did enjoy this first job I was paid £1.20. per week and was over the moon.

I then went on to work at Marewa Drycleaners behind the counter (more money) and from there to Jack Gunn who was an accountant in Dalton Street.

All of these experiences formed friendships and life's lessons

At the age of 18 years I became engaged to Merv. Batt (now deceased) and that lasted for two years.

I married Graham in 1957- we got the 3% mortgage for our house and paid \$28.00 per month for the whole of the 25 year period.

We had three children Kerry- Gregory and Andrew who all did well at school

We lost Gregory in an accident in 1980 which was the most unbearable period of our lives.

Our daughter lives in Melbourne

My brother Vern went to the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War and after the war married Val who was wonderful Cook and dressmaker. She died in 1998

I had my big Europe OE at the age of 47 and was away for 2 months which included a 21 day bus trip through many countries.

We had a holiday in Tahiti in 1976 which I won in a raffle at a reunion (sold by Nellie Sang)

I did not have the sufficient money required for the ticket and Margaret Holder lent me the short fall.

I also had many trips to Perth where Maureen Price (Shuker) lived until she died in 2007

Graham is an Engineer and has his own business and I have and still work with him.

My father died in 1999, and my mother died in 2004 aged 100 years 11 days.

I have been blessed by a wonderful family and friends, some who are no longer with us.

I think we grew up in a great era. Sure, we had no cell phones or computers or even T.V's

But we all could get a cheap loan for a house - could leave it unlocked if we went out- could feel safe in our streets- had simple pleasures like round the table family discussions or playing cards

Yes I think we were the lucky generation.

[Pages 7 and 8 withheld]

## **VALERIE BAYLIS (nee ANDERSON)**

I was born in Timaru on 18 February 1933.

When I was 10 years old my Father got a job working on the railways in Napier.

He was actually a dentist by trade, and his father worked in the coal mines and would always come home sooty grimed and dirty. My Grandmother wanted a better life for my Dad and sent him to learn dentistry. They lived in Australia and Dad opted to ply his trade in the outbacks. He would arrive at the aborigine settlements his small bag of tools in hand and set to work.



There were always extractions to be done and since there was no anaesthetics the natives would dance and chant themselves into an hypnotic trance that would render them oblivious to the pain of the forthcoming extraction.

Dad still hankered after becoming a blacksmith and decided to come to New Zealand, and settled in Timaru where he was able to learn the art of working with heated metal. When he undertook the post at Napier Railways it was his responsibility to service and maintain the buffers that were the links between the carriages.

We went to live in Vigor Brown Street and from there I made great and lasting friendships. I went to Nelson Park School and loved my time there.

If I cut through the park I would arrive at the back gate and if I arrived early enough I was sometimes allowed to ring the bell!!! What a special treat that was and how important I felt as I stretched up on my toes to grab the thick rope and swung on it.

The Hunter girls lived nearby and sometimes I would go to play. I did enjoy watching them do their Highland dancing and thought I could dance like that too.

Napier Intermediate School was also fun because we all progressed together and friendships formed at Primary School continued.

Napier Girls High School was another link in the chain of growing up that I also valued. It was a time where there were changes in friendships and classmates, old friendships strengthened, and our perspectives on life were developing.

Sadly, I had to leave High School when I was 16. My brothers were still overseas in post war times, my sister had married and left home, so it was my turn to go into the workforce and start earning money

I was a late baby with brothers Lloyd 22, Ted 20, and my sister 14, when I was 6 years old.

When they left home in their adult years it seemed like I was an only child and my Dad certainly was very protective of his little Janey, as he called me (My full name is Valerie Jane).

When we lived in Timaru we frequently went to Pukekohe during our 6 weeks summer holiday break to visit my Grandparents. My Mum came from a big family so it was a joy to



be enveloped in this big big family where there were a number of cousins, Aunties and Uncles as we all gathered at the family farm.

Our journey from the South Island was a marathon compared to today's travel. We would take the Timaru Express and because my Dad was able to get staff discounts we travelled on quarter fares. Arriving at Christchurch we boarded the boat at Lyttleton travelling overnight to arrive in Wellington. We then hopped on the train which would take us to Palmerston North where we changed trains to take the overnight express. When we came to the Spiral another engine would hook up to provide the extra energy to take us up. We would arrive at Pukekohe about 4 am and were met and taken to the farm where we tumbled into bed, surfacing about mid-morning to eagerly involve ourselves in the much anticipated adventures waiting for us. What happy memories there are of the large extended family, the personalities and fun and laughter.

During those teenage years there were other activities that were fun and so popular, the most favoured were the dances of course. My mother had taught me to sew and so it was not uncommon for me to be "running up" a gown on Saturday to be worn that evening.

When we had a chook for Sunday dinner it wasn't a matter of going to Kentucky Fry or Hot Chick, or even buying a rotisserie cooked chicken from the supermarket. Mum would go to McGlashans the Auctioneers and after studying them carefully would choose the plumpest bird. I would have to pick it up at lunch-time from my workplace and bike home with it before returning to work. As my place of employment was the French Glove House I was dressed according to what one would expect from such a class of shop. Just imagine, I had to pick up not just one, generally two chooks which had their legs tied and the birds had been put into a sugar bag.

I slung this over my handle bars and road home. As the birds were still very much alive and probably very uncomfortable they wriggled around in the bag. Mum would take them and chop their heads off, clean and pluck them and in time we would be sitting down to a delicious meal.

I must say, I just loved Basketball (I was in the "A" team!). Every Saturday morning we would go up to Marine Parade to the courts and play against teams from other schools.

On the way home from basketball we would go to Walkers Milk Bar and have a milk shake, and this was where we met the boys and admired their motorbikes.

The only part about High School I didn't like was having to walk up Shakespeare Road in the cold, and I still hate the cold! It was ok after school when I could run down the hill and catch the bus. I was bus monitor - everyone had to behave on the bus or I would kick them off!

When my brothers came back from the war, they wanted me to have a new push bike. We went to Etheridges Bike Shop in Emerson Street and I was told I could choose which one I liked!! I couldn't believe this was happening to me. I saw one that stood out from the rest and decided that was the one for me. I rode miles and miles on it, even riding out to Hastings to go to Rush Munros to buy an ice cream.

One night during the war years when there were total blackouts at night, Mum decided she wanted to go to play cards, 500, with her friends. She asked me to double her there. I had no carrier. She was a little lady and very light, so she sat on the mudguard. I was a little horrified at that but you did as your mother asked, so off we went. On the way home, riding down Kennedy Road we were going along well in spite of the fact that I couldn't really see where I was going in the pitch black. Mum was riding side saddle. Suddenly I rode straight into a palm tree and we both fell off with shrieks that quickly

became peals of laughter. At that moment a cop came along and called out “are you alright there, girls?” That set us off again! He offered to escort us home after that.

Now this is the best part, I met my husband, Richard at a dance, and no doubt a number of my contemporaries met their partners/husbands in similar circumstances. We had lots of fun going dancing and our courting time was lovely. We married, had two lovely sons, Lance the older, and Russell the younger. I also adopted my sister’s baby after my sister passed away. After raising my children, I have been blessed with many grandchildren and great grandchildren who give me so much joy.

We started a well drilling business which went from strength to strength. It took us from Cape Reinga to the Bluff.

On a business trip to Hawaii Richard spotted a Harley, and had to have it. At that time you were not allowed to import items from overseas, so I had two years in which to contemplate it. When it finally arrived, I had become used to the idea and was easily persuaded to jump on the back, which we did every weekend. I loved it, and would not hesitate to do it all over again.

## The Life of Joy Hamilton

I was born into a family of 5, 4 boys and me on 29th May 1934, which makes me a Gemini.

The old house is still there on the corner of Burness and Guppy Road, Taradale.

My schools were Greenmeadows, Taradale, Napier Intermediate and N.G.H.S.

I left the day before I was 15 to start a job with Hurst's photographers in Emerson Street, where I was set to work colouring in by stencil, postcards of scenes of Napier. Boring, so soon I moved on to Shepherd's photographers where I learned to develop and print etc.. David Morgan started out on his own, photographing weddings etc so I joined him and did all his developing and printing work.

Our Saturday nights of fun and relaxation were at the R.S.A. and at St, Pats. It was there I met Norman McGregor and married him at just 18 .

We worked on farms for a year or so until our relationship broke down and we divorced.

I then moved to Tauranga and worked for Hartleys in Sales then came home again a year or so later, and was fortunate to be able to be back working for David Morgan.

At 22 years I met and married Ron Boddy who had arrived from Devon England about two years ago.

Our first job was milking cows etc in Waikanae. We then moved to Wellington Boys Institute in Reikorangi and were running camps for the Island boys. We had a lovely old home in the hills and this is where our two beautiful children were born, Diana and Malcolm. Schooling was not an option there so we returned to Napier and built a home opposite the race course in Greenmeadows (now Anderson Park). Ron worked back in his trade as Toolmaker. Although he was working long hours one wage was hard going so we managed to get Peter Pan Ice Cream to finance us into a business in Wairoa, the Nikau Dairy in North Clyde. We spent 8 wonderful years here and did well. It was a great place to bring up the kids

In 1972 Ron got itchy feet we (with some reluctance on my part at the thought of leaving the peaceful existence in which we were living) sold up all and ventured to Rhodesia Africa (now Zimbabwe)

Although we missed NZ and our families, we all loved it. Ian Smith, Rhodesia's Prime Minister was doing a fantastic job building a great country and I was proud to be a part of it .

We spent 20 years there. Our son, Malcolm did 2 years in the terrorist war on reaching 18 and then trained as a telephone technician. Diana, our daughter trained in secretarial college.

I started off managing small dress shops, a later move was to an African credit store with 10 African staff in a compound of Rothmans Tobacco Company. Next move was to join a fashion store part of a chain of 30 shops called Truworths (a subsidiary of Selfridges, England) with this firm and their good management training I was promoted from their smallest store to their Flagship with 32 staff.

Ron and I divorced in 1979. I remained single returning to New Zealand to settle back twice in the next 10 years working in Auckland and Rotorua. I also had a year in Durban, South Africa, returning 3 times to Zimbabwe and my job back with Truworths There is no doubt that Africa gets in your blood it was so hard to leave but not a very safe place to be by this



time. I spent my last 5 years in Harare, Zimbabwe in my own business, a boutique fashion shop with a small factory attached where we made our own styles, a successful and fun business.

I travelled while at this stage of my life to Greece, Rome England, Scotland, South Africa, and Mozambique and did a 3 week drive in America from Boston to California taking in Casbad caves, the Grand canyon, Death Valley, and included a day in Mexico, a long but great trip.

In 1992 I left Zimbabwe for good and settled in Perth, West Australia where Diana had already settled a year before.

I bought a health food shop in Mandurah a lovely spot just 1 hours drive south from Perth. This proved to be another great learning curve for me, I spent 5 years working long hours and gaining much knowledge on health cures.

After selling this shop I retired and met and married Don Edwards.

For 8 years I volunteered with Alzheimers and facilitated their Carers group in Mandurah learning much about this horrific disease. I developed breast cancer in 1999, had the breast removed and preferred to take the health cures of which I had learnt so much, instead of

subjecting my body to Chemo and radiation which maybe why I am still here today 17 years later!!!!

Unfortunately Don developed Alzheimers. Over a stretch of 12 years I watched this lovely man deteriorate as this awful disease progressed. Having had 15 years in Mandurah, I sold up once again and we came back to beautiful New Zealand buying a home in Westshore. Don died a year later after contracting cancer as well.

Settling back in Napier has proved to be the best move of my life. I have my daughter in Bay View, made lovely new friends, have renewed friendships with some of my old friends and discovered that as a 48 er from N.G.H.S I can claim the status of OBE.alongside former classmates.

I have had a very fulfilling and happy life which still continues today.

What a fortunate GIRL I am.

Thanks to all who read this for being a part of this -- MY LIFE.

## Ruth Malcolm (Prebensen)

Eighty years is a long, long time to revisit and reflect on and try to think about where it all went. Mostly the time has just floated by in a repetition of small things and I guess that's true of most human experience.

As long as I can remember I've had a strong vocation for teaching so for this writing I'm focussing only on that aspect of my life. That's why I first left Napier and lived in Wellington, studying for four years. With a Master's degree in English Literature I spent the next year with the Post Grad teacher training course in Auckland which didn't prepare me at all for the reality of the average NZ classroom. I became aware of how many of my students were struggling with secondary education and struggled myself to help them on an individual basis, which was the only thing that moved them on. Lunch hours weren't nearly enough for the big classes I had.



Then marriage and the children. Someone told me that having a child would be a bit like having a broken leg. I'd be able to do most things but it would be more awkward. I ended up with six broken legs - much loved and enjoyed! I kept in touch with textbooks and curricular changes by tutoring in the evenings at our dining room table, the current baby going to sleep on my knee. It was during those years that I learnt how to help students to actually learn and succeed. I enjoyed the company, the successes and the friendships.

When our youngest started at Kindy I offered to tutor at the local Prison. To everyone's surprise my students passed secondary exams and I was given some paid hours on the teaching staff. Seven years later I was senior education officer responsible for up to 96 individualised programmes for very damaged people and a teaching staff of 16 part-time tutors who looked after different specialised aspects of skills education, for example literacy and numeracy, homecraft, Maori language and culture, and crafts through 8 evening classes.

When I began teaching in the Prison I was so on my own. No one I knew did the same kind of teaching, or even understood what I was trying to do. I could find few remedial resources suitable to adult education. The best had been written for unemployed Jamaicans and revised in Australia for Australian use. Taps were 'faucets', the reading comprehension passages were based on such topics as the Pilgrim Fathers. The revised Australian version added stories of boomerangs and goannas to the mix.

Janet Frame was an enormous help to me in her 'Faces on the Water' writing about the mental hospital, Cliffhaven: "You had to provide your own bandages from within yourself to bind wounds that could not be seen or measured."

So I wrote my own reading/writing resources, with a kiwi adult-oriented vocabulary, starting with hearing and identifying short and long vowels, moving through filling in forms, accessing a telephone directory, reference books and road maps and other practical topics, offered as a 'Choice List' that students could choose from. Most students worked through most of the topics in the order of their own choice.

Complementing this were the homecraft classes - cooking and serving meals and sewing, and basic calculating (hardly 'Maths') to decimals and straight into budgeting. My favourite budgeting advice was to advocate the old 'bulldog-clip-on-a-nail-and-pay-it-all-at-the-end-of-every-month-before-other-spending' method.

As well, in my time we offered a wide range of evening classes and transformed the dull Library, promoting reading, not only for information, but as a pastime.

“Why do they have to come into prison before they can lay hold of a systematic basic education,” I asked in despair. The answer of course lies in the word ‘systematic’.

The biggest difficulty was self-confidence. Sadly, good intentions formed in Prison didn't always survive under the pressures of the environment our young women returned to. I don't walk away from their need because they're too damaged to heal. I'm committed to realising as much as possible of the potential that we're born with. I believe that sooner or later my students will reach back and utilise something of what they've learnt.

“I just floated across the playground from time to time to see what was going on,” confided one of the young women.

“The last sewing class I was in, I got fed up with waiting for the teacher to take some notice of me so I threw my sewing machine at her and walked out,” another told us. My mild response (with an underlying steely intention) - “I hope you won't throw your sewing machine at my teacher!” She learnt how to sew for herself and her children, making over anything that came to hand - sounds dull, but she showed a flair for fashion and the results surprised and delighted her!

“Don't worry about me,” laughed another. “Just don't hang anything outside on your clothesline for a few nights after I'm on the outside.”

“Just wait till the local traffic cop sees me,” boasted another. “I've been driving for seven years without a licence.” Rural, she'd taken her children to school (and driven goodness knows where else!) Now she'd passed her theory with 100% - no one was allowed to sit till 100% was achieved in three practice sessions. A non-reader, she'd learnt her theory by listening countless times to our taped aural copy, and being drilled by our teacher, a drill laced with a huge dollop of driving / alcohol education. Her practical was passed on the institution car, with permission granted by the Prison Superintendent who believed, as I did, that she and other road users would be safer if thoroughly grounded in sound driving practice. No problem with knowing how to handle the car!

“I never thought I'd see myself behind a desk again,” said another as she settled her large frame comfortably behind my little workdesk in the library. “I've come to get some brains.”

She knew more than she believed. Her biggest difficulty was to finish a topic and achieve success. Some simply gave up before they were in danger of failure. Others, as soon as it became apparent that they would succeed and success would bring with it responsibility, sank themselves by some bizarre behaviour meriting the safety of an extended sentence or time out in Secure. Others, once up and walking, continued to walk right out of the Prison door on release and into a life where they were better equipped to cope, and where a basic qualification could open up an opportunity for self-sufficiency and even employment. Some realised some of their damaged potential. Others foundered again.

“I'm going to forget everything you've taught me,” was the ungrateful farewell speech from yet another.

“I'm not so sure,” I grinned. “Think about it. I've taught you how to do things and you can't forget how to do something any more than you can forget how to ride a bike.” My smile widened and became more sweet. “And understanding something isn't the same as collecting up a few facts about it.”

Yes, of course there were also prisoners who'd already achieved a good standard of education. The best way I can describe what I tried to do for them is by sharing Joy's thankyou card: She quoted the words of E E Cummings. ‘We do not believe in ourselves

until someone reveals that, deep inside us something is valuable, worth listening to, worthy of our trust, sacred to our touch. Once we believe in ourselves we can risk curiosity, wonder, spontaneous delight or any experience that reveals the human spirit.' For this I thank you - Joy.

Actually - that's what I was trying to do for all of my students.

Why do people still come into prison before they learn life survival skills? And what of the damage the recidivists perpetuate? There was much talk of attitudinal change, but that must come from within, and how to enable that? Education is only a small part of the answer, but has a key role in opening a way forward.

In 1983 our education unit piloted one of the earliest NZ courses in computer-assisted learning. My assessment report finished with:

'Students should be able to control selection and vary content for themselves.

Computer practice reinforcement is useful but for skills to be assimilated learning needed to be supported by pencil and paper exercises with teacher support.

This is a powerful teaching tool when used by an experienced, competent teacher. It is not a complete substitute for effective personal teaching communication. To stay beside a student, feed their learning, encourage, pressurise if necessary, and allow oneself to be the 'end of the baths from which the student kicks off to swim free at last', is a self-effacing role for a teacher. It is rooted and grounded in a belief in the student's own worth and the value of each individual's efforts.'

AND I suggested that the Prison could explore the use of computers to manage prison administration and record keeping.

Then, with my husband Wilf's work, we lived in Hamilton and I worked with the long-term unemployed, being responsible for putting in a basic Literacy / Numeracy programme in the Government schemes throughout the Waikato, King Country and Hauraki districts, visiting, training and writing resources for tutors who lived and belonged in the communities of small towns and remote rural communities.

And another shift, this time in 1994 to Omokoroa on the Tauranga harbour:  
I'm NEVER going to crawl through undergraduate hoops again.

Not that these were undergraduate - I'd enrolled for the RSA/Cambridge CTEFLA course (Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign language to Adults). All the others on the course were practising ESOL teachers and were either in the early, ambitious years of their career, or were very bright graduate students who showed such promise that they were accepted on the course.

I'd applied because when we'd moved from Hamilton to live in Omokoroa we were hoping to live overseas, where we didn't know, but if we did it was clear that there would be no prisons I could have access into to teach, and, after my work in Hamilton, no great numbers of unemployed waiting for me to make literate. Also, I'd talked with one of the staff of the Language Institute about my interest in using ESOL methods of teaching in my basic education work. I argued that, having failed to acquire English language adequate to engage with print by reading and in written expression, my students might benefit by learning English language as if it was not their Mother Tongue and they were acquiring the language as a second or other language.

On the course I struggled. I struggled with the daily routine, sheltering in the home of our son, Gordon. I struggled with the lack of sleep as the intensive routine wore on, and most of all I struggled with learning. The philosophy was new and different from anything I'd met in teacher training and experience, or in subsequent reading. Try conscientiously as I did, I couldn't satisfy the lecturer who assessed my teaching. Failure stared me in the face, and it wasn't any use telling myself that we understand our students' failure experience better if we share it. I'd never failed anything in my life, and I didn't intend to



have the experience now. I fretted. I worked harder. It still eluded me. I was told I was guilty of TTT (Too much Teacher Talk), I needed to monitor more, then my monitoring was intrusive, I stood up when I should have leaned back in my chair and looked relaxed, and so the litany of critique went on.

Then, I was scheduled to take the last lesson of the course. Everyone else had finished. I alone had to spend that last night preparing carefully. Then, and I don't know how or why, I stared at my lesson, tore it up and with real confidence wrote a lesson plan that worked from the students' perspective. It was like a conversion experience. I focussed on my students and adapted myself to their learning. Elicit, elicit, elicit.

I got a cautious pass, but it was sufficient for me to practise as one of a staff among more experienced ESOL teachers, and I grew in confidence as I wove the 'new' approach into my accumulated store of handwritten resources and experience. I guess a teacher keeps learning during a whole lifetime of teaching experience.

For three years in Brunei I enjoyed my senior O Level courses, my junior Courses and my adult classes, but when I was called in to teach a small group of business adults who had dropped out of the bottom of the testing procedures, I was in my element. We gained in confidence. We progressed as well as could be expected in the time, and we became such good friends as we bumbled around the classroom trying our telephone and reception skills on each other - and I was part of the laughter! That's the concept I'd struggled so hard to adjust to.

And then we returned to New Zealand, and I made the connection back into my special brand of education with seven years' part-time voluntary primary teaching in Omokoroa at the school across the road, scooping up the whole gamut of teaching practice from extension of the brightest to emotionally distressed children and everyone in between.

Now in Auckland I'm revisiting the years I spent at my dining room table when our children were babies, tutoring and untangling another generation. There'll always be someone! The common thread throughout all of this teaching has been my belief in the value of every individual no matter how unprepossessing and a desire to help my students move towards realising their individual potential.

Now we live close to some of our adult family and we're experiencing the love and support of the 6, now with significant others in their lives. Our family is hard to total. I travel, rather than arrive. I enjoy reading books, listening to music, being outside, and two-way conversation, all learning for me! My mother said not to mistake the shadow for the substance in life. It took a long time to work out what she meant by that and since I've made a Christian commitment I've tried to understand life in the context of Christian living. In any future left to me I probably most want/need to understand about the concept of God. Who / what is He, She, It, They?

## **Rosemary Semple (nee Sorrell)**

After I left school, I worked at the Inland Revenue with my friend Margaret Dine (nee Rickard). We had attended Bluff Hill School in Thompson Road together, and her family moved to Priestley Terrace where I lived. We moved on to Central School in Napier Terrace when we were 9. At Napier Intermediate, then progressing on to Napier Girls High School, we continued our school days and remained best of friends since those early childhood years

In January 1953 we started our Nursing Training at Napier Public Hospital where we graduated in 1956. We then did our Maternity Training and Marg thought Hutt Hospital was the place to go.

So down we went to the big city travelling in the unit and feeling very smartly dressed with our hats and heels completing our outfits!

I experienced for the first time buying garments on lay by. It was for two Pringle twin sets, and my coat cost £15 from Regent Gowns. I have just a couple of years ago gifted this coat to Sarah to wear as she watches her son play Rugby in Plimmerton, where their home is. Not bad for a 1957 coat!

We went to coffee places in Wellington, two of which were just opening --Casa Fontana, and Mexicalli. We shopped at James Smiths or DIC- Kirkaldies not often as it was a bit too expensive

On returning to Napier, we were presented with our veils and became Sisters in the wards. Margaret got married in 1958, and I continued working at Napier Public Hospital until the end of 1960.

I then worked in three Private Hospitals --Maraenui, in Elizabeth Road, (where I met my future husband Jack, a Physiotherapist, over a patient's leg!) Royston and Sherwood.

Jack and I married in 1963.

Our son Charles was born in 1964, and daughter Sarah was born in 1966.

When the children started school I was able to work as Jack's receptionist.

We had half shares in a bach at Ocean Beach-crayfish for lunch, barbecues for tea, and swimming in between- happy days!

We then built a holiday home at Taupo, near the Waipahihi Gardens-lovely walks among Camellias and Rhododendrons-and easy day trips to Whakatane, Tauranga, Rotorua, Te Awamutu etc.

Jack died in 2005, after a prolonged and painful death with Cancer. I was lucky enough to nurse him at home with the help of other carers and support from Cranford Hospice.

Sarah comes back to Napier every year for the anniversary of Jack's death day and takes me and my niece out to a Winery for a posh lunch.

I sold our place in Taupo in 2006.

Our son Charles is a Professor of Mathematics at Canterbury University, specialising in Matroids and Phylogenetics. He has had a number of overseas trips with his job, including four with his family to Montpellier, Oxford (twice) and Cambridge.

He and his wife Brigitte have three children, two boys and a girl. The eldest was born in 1999. He was very premature at 23 weeks and 5 days gestation. He weighed 650 grams. He has just passed his NCEA1-a real miracle baby.

Our daughter Sarah who incidentally was a fourth generation pupil of the school, was Head Girl, and winner of the Shand Cup in 1983 at N G H S.

She got a B.A. in Education and Psychology at Auckland University. She worked for I.B.M. and in London she was an I.T. Consultancy Coordinator. She has published a number of Genealogy Books, including one on Edwardian Napier using my Grandfather's postcards, which I have helped to proof.

Sarah is married to Paul, an Australian. He has his own Consultancy Company and works predominantly in the banking sector advising and assisting banks to take advantage of the latest security for their credit and debit cards.

They have a son and a daughter and are currently living in Kuala Lumpur. Their son was born in London on what would have been my Father's 100th birthday.

In 2010 I was washing the coffee dishes after first service in the Church kitchen when I suddenly felt most extremely unwell. I was experiencing a subarachnoid haemorrhage. Apparently I was driven home, an ambulance was called and I was taken to Hastings Hospital and then flown to Wellington. Two days later the aneurism was coiled through my groin.



I don't remember the trip down, but I do remember the helicopter ride back! I have been fine since then, but now have a good excuse when my memory fails me!

If this procedure had failed, they would have cut my head open! I was in hospital for about 10 days. The family were again amazing.

I have done a lot of volunteering work and was on the Committee for the N G H S Centenary Celebrations in 1984.

I am presently helping at Knox Op Shop and I am also a member of the catering team for funerals and other functions at my church St Paul's. The catering team is made up from the ladies in the church who are willing and available when rung to help. They are good to work with and there are days when we never know who will be there. It can be fun in the kitchen, sorrow in the Church!

The same system operates during the yearly Art Deco Fete.

I enjoy making cards, gardening and love where I live above the waterfall with easy walking distance to the parade and town.

I have been watching with much intrigue as the building of the new viewing platform on the beach front has taken place. Now, it seems to always have someone walking on it.

I also enjoy watching old movies, Dr Who and adaptations of Charles Dicken's works on TV.

My favourite books are Alice in Wonderland and The Secret Garden, and I love Snoopy! I guess I have never really grown up! I enjoy listening to Katherine Jenkins and music from the 30s, 40s, and 50s,

I am very fortunate in having such caring friends and relations. When the family leave after a visit I find that a CD of Connie Francis turned up very loudly is a great comfort!

I got this off Charles' blog, or whatever it is called:

*Phylogenetics is the reconstruction and analysis of phylogenetic (revolutionary) trees and network based on herited characteristics, while Matroids are exactly the structures that underlie the solutions of many combinatorial optimization problems.*

I will lend you one of the books he wrote if you like. Jack and I only understood his name. But doesn't it look impressive!! It is also connected with biology and Darwin, she said vaguely!

**“On being O B E.”**

**Pat Prebensen (nee Ellis)**



I was a country child before global warming and pollution overtook us. Safety wasn't an issue either so I was free to roam the countryside, sometimes with friends but more often alone. There were rules but like the Ten Commandments I never thought of breaking them or overstepping the boundaries set by my parents. I read a lot and had a special affinity with Anne of Green Gables.

We both had red hair and freckles to start with. Life began to get serious when I went to N.G.H.S.

I was eleven and a half years old having gone through primary school ahead of schedule. I was there for five years.

My real life began when I was sixteen and met the boy I was to spend the rest of my life with. We have always worked together as a unit, neither of us pursuing our ambitions if they cut across what the other wanted. I am not of an adventurous nature so David led and I followed putting on the brakes along the way. Consequently I have had some great experiences I would never have had left to my own devices and he has probably been saved from self-destruction.

I was married at nineteen and my three children were born before I was twenty seven. I immediately set about becoming the perfect mother. In spite of this they all grew up to be quite normal.

Our daughter teaches at Clive School and our older son became an architect but changed his career path to secondary school teaching and is now Head of Technology at Taradale High School.

Our younger son has just returned after twenty years in Australia and is currently working in security.

They gave us six grandchildren who are the most amazingly intelligent, innovative and clever young people that have ever existed. That's all really. That is my only contribution to the world unless you count some pieces of mediocre embroidery which may possibly be handed down a generation or two.

We went into making plastic pipe. It wasn't our first attempt at earning our living independently but it was the most successful. David built the machinery himself and I handled the staff and the despatch of the finished pipe and fittings. We employed women to pack and despatch. Long haul trucks would come to carry the pipes away. As the men we employed were working in the engineering workshop at the back of the factory the only visible male was the forklift operator. The women could be seen making fittings and stacking pipes. I supervised the loading of the pipes as, although immensely strong, they were prone to surface damage.

It was at this point that I achieved recognition for my work in equality for women. It came back to me from a reliable source that down at the trucking yard a truckie said, “Have any of you been down to Prebensen's yard lately. It's worth a look. The whole place is run by bloody women.”

In my perfect mother's days I expanded my mind to keep up with my children's developing minds, by going to night classes. One of these was a class teaching Russian. It was taken by a Polish immigrant who had gone into exile from his homeland when it was taken over by Russia. He spoke seven languages. I learnt very little Russian but a lot about how to get out of my country if it was invaded by a foreign power. I can still recognise the Russian language among the long list of foreign languages on the instruction sheets for household appliances. Unfortunately, there is not much call on these for phrases such as the mother loves the child or the dog is in the kennel.

I went on to teach English Second Language. This was done by volunteers on a one to one basis before the government provided paid qualified staff.

I was allocated two young Chinese men who worked a market garden at Bayview. They came to lessons at my place bringing gifts of freshly picked vegetables. The older brother rapidly became quite proficient. He could speak some English before he came but was having trouble with our colloquialisms. The younger brother didn't seem to be making much progress. After six months we were still conversing in a form of charades. This was hilarious at times but a little concerning. "No concern," explained the older brother. "He talk Chinese no good too." After a year they left confident that they were now real New Zealanders. "Can now take day off," he said. "Can hang out in town." We were greatly honoured when some months later we were invited to his wedding. It was a Chinese wedding and David and I were the only non-Chinese there.

David, who had entered local body politics some years previously, was successful in his bid for the mayoralty of Napier. At first I was rather diffident. While weeding the front garden an old man came shuffling along on his daily walk. "So you're going to be the First Lady now" he said. "Well sort of" I muttered. "I don't know how it will go." "Don't you worry, girl," he said. "Just put on yer high heels and yer jools and you'll be all right." So I did and it was all right.

The highlight of the next six years had to be lunch with the Queen. We dined on Fillet of Beef Colbert with a terrine of veal, pork and fresh herbs for entree and slices of Hawkes Bay fruit for dessert - all chosen by Buckingham Palace from alternative menus. Her Majesty was most gracious and easy to talk with, the Duke not so easy. The Queen repaired her make-up at the table before she left. It was a bit of a waste really as the Council had completely restored the powder room at the War Memorial Hall for her benefit. It was with relief we waved the Royal entourage off. Nothing untoward had happened in Napier's patch.

Socially, all was downhill after this but we did have some wonderful experiences over the six years David was in office. The most memorable was the official visit to Napier's sister city Tomakomai in northern Japan. We danced in the streets behind the Mayor and city officials leading a great procession celebrating their annual Port Festival. For this we had special lessons and were dressed in Japanese costume. We were taken to places not open to the ordinary tourist and generally treated like royalty.

Somewhere along the way I have been on numerous committees – not my favourite pastime but all the same an experience worth having if only to appreciate the work done by those

dedicated to their cause. I spent 15 years working as a volunteer at the Art Deco shop. It was great to be part of a team so enthusiastic about a vision.

David & I now run the Faraday Centre. We are part of a group of volunteers who care for and exhibit old museum items. Thirty years ago we bought a farm in Puketitiri Rd. It was the realisation of our dream to work on our own land and provide a haven for the family in times of stress. These two retirement projects will keep us busy for the next decade or two. When it is all over I don't think I'll be skidding up to the Pearly Gates shouting "What a ride!" I'll be driving up, switching off the engine and saying "That was pretty good. What's next?"

## **LIFE AFTER N.G.H.S.**

### **Sheena Beaton**

After leaving NGHS I was lucky to travel to England, Scotland and a few places in Europe with my parents over a period of 10 months. An amazing way to experience the culture, history and geography of these wonderful places.



Highlights were Paris, Lucerne, Edinburgh and a very black dirty London due to the aftermath of the war.

Tennis, marching and basketball (nine aside) were my interests and each Saturday in winter cycled to the Marine Parade to play in the competition. Fish and chips or an ice cream at Walkers was a must before cycling home.

Worked in the office of my father's hardware and gardening shop in Taradale before opening my own gift, toy and book shop which I had for 13 years, changing to decimal currency during that time. My husband Bill joined my father in the business and together we have three sons who carry on our business interests today.

Bill and I married in 1956, built a home and like most people worked hard breaking in the ground and putting together a garden.

By the 1960's our hardware store had included self-service groceries so the next big step was moving to a "cash" only business. After several sleepless nights the transition went smoothly.

During the 70's technology changed the way we shopped with computerised checkouts giving itemised grocery slips followed by scanning of items.

I worked part time organising the uniforms for the staff and was general dog's body for a number of years, playing golf and tennis in between. Relaxing in the garden is a pastime I enjoy.

A large part of my life has been playing the organ at St. Columba's. I have now 'retired' but still help out on occasions.

Following the achievements of our boys, and now the seven grandchildren who are now beginning their careers is always exciting. The opportunities seem endless and it is good to see them taking up the challenges.

Bill and I travelled to many places around the globe and in New Zealand and I have been very fortunate that I have been able to do that.



## The Tapestry by Moyna Scott (Griffen)

Napier Girls High School. Different strokes, for different folks. Where to begin? I fully remember my beginning there... Enrolment interview. I desperately wanted to be enrolled as a 'Commercial.' Neither parents nor staff listened so 'Professional' it became for me. My primary years were spent in a wee 30 pupil school with all ages and stages of learning thrown in together at the Hydro village of Tuai, I was SO sure I would be completely out of my depth at a High School, particularly maturity wise. Time, proved me wrong.

The arms of Napier Girls High School wrapped themselves around me and at the age of 12 ½ years, helping me to realise after 4 years spent within its walls, that there actually was a lot more to a shy, gauche, 'Kid from the country', than she had ever felt there was. Those very real and deep learning curves during my years at Napier Girl's High could, by some, be called 'The glue' that held me together while trying to walk that often precarious road of early teenage years with its many potholes. I prefer to call them threads, a little tangled at times; the tentative beginnings of my life's tapestry. No two lives can ever be exactly the same therefore the meaning of life has different interpretations for each individual. I see colours of life as textures of experience, strength, sadness, beauty, all woven into a tapestry as you become the person you were meant to be. For me, high school was the chrysalis from which a teenager emerged, who was truly shattered when it came time to leave those walls.

### **The first tenuous adult' thread - Leaving school.**

My Dad had wanted me to leave at the end of my third year. I understand the reason now, but at that time I absolutely loved all that high school encompassed, and begged to stay another year, which I was allowed to do. At the Municipal Theatre, on the evening of my final day at N.G.H.S. I burst into tears on the way home, and wept for days. My poor Dad never did understand 'Why', as he had managed to get me a job at the National Bank. Thus, I earned enough to buy a new two wheeler bike, attaching the second thread to the tapestry's edge - Independence.

### **Interesting word that -Independence.**

Then I thought it meant I was free to go anywhere, anytime, with anyone, on my new trusty steed - the New Bike. To a degree it did, except my parents firmly believed in another word beginning with an A - ask first. I still reckon a sight to behold back then was my Mum on the carrier, holding my skates in an old flagon case, me in a short skating dress, peddling our way early evening up to the Marine Parade skating rink!?! There certainly was another form of freedom then that I wish was still here today. You truly could go anywhere, anyway, anyday, anytime, and feel safe.

Each of us who have walked the independence road knows that it dissolves SO rapidly as many lives become dependent on you, and you start to wonder what the word really means as 'independence' quickly morphs and flies away out the window, and another thread attaches itself - **'Family'**.

More often than not, threads of marriage, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, became the natural progression. Along the way there are 'events', for want of a better word, that change our thinking on that 'Natural Progression.' For me, woven in along the way are several very important ones, each with a direct connection to my years at Napier Girl's. In middle age, as family ties loosened, I was lucky enough to work as an Aide at Arohaina, the Maternity Unit of the hospital, a place I truly adored working in for several years until my mother in law had a stroke. I left, and she came to live with us for the next 7 years.

One day while still at Arohaina, I saw Dawn Duley while walking in the common corridor of the hospital one day. She was now Dawn Mayo, in her early 50's. I remembered her from our Napier Girl's High days, as a lovely girl with a very gentle soul. She was walking in the other direction hugging the wall as she did so. It threw me right back in time as my heart went out to her, but also very specially, to her daughters, as Dawn was in early stages of Alzheimers Disease. I knew first hand the road her family were now going to have to tread, but I also knew that now there were excellent places to care for them. My Mum, my best ever friend, had succumbed to that dreadful disease, also only in her late 50's and at that time there were no rest homes that catered for such sad cases. She came to live with us when our 4 children ranged from 18 months to 6.

To try to describe those years would not begin to even outline what I call 'Feelings in the heart', but they did shape the characters of the whole family over the next four years, as even the children who had to grow up fast had chores to do to enable us to still function as a family unit. Eventually, after 4 years struggling to get through the days and nights, our Doctor refused to listen to anymore protesting from me, insisted that if I did not try to make other care arrangements for Mum, our 4 children would soon be orphans.

I signed the necessary papers, and Mum was sent down to Porirua, definitely taking a piece of my heart with her.

Now for a bit of humour. I had always thought I would just love to have the gift of musical talent as I felt then you could give others so much enjoyment too. As all N.G.H.S. girls know, Assembly was very important. Most times it began with singing. One day after swimming sports the day before, I happened to be standing right beside the seat at the edge of the aisle our music teacher was walking along. I was singing with great gusto. She stopped. As she came right up alongside me I heard - "OH how I WISH you could SING the way you SWIM". B - A - N - G!!!!.... went my musical ambitions, and the 'giving pleasure to others' bit took wings. To this

day I play discs of favourite musical artists every chance I get, joining in with Johnny Denver, Simon and Garfunkel, Isla Grant in a singalong to beat all singalongs... again to the chagrin of those around me as they are replayed often... but NOT quietly, and I can be heard singing along to them to my heart's content. Music, though not a talent of mine, weaves beautiful strong threads of colours into my life, especially when clouds of very dark grey hang menacingly over it.

One of the many threads that brought colour into my life in more ways than one was artwork. Our lovely teacher Miss Pallot inspired that by asking some of us to come to her home and paint, always encouraging, not just criticising. Once leaving school, artwork lay dormant within me for quite some years, then once there was a little bit of cash for other than 'total necessities' - if there was any spare it had to go on more bread, milk, and so on - I bought an artist pad, a few tubes of paint, set up a corner in our garage, and began painting like someone possessed. I put the finished works around the garage walls, and when anyone arrived who said 'I'd like that one', the mantra that had become my reply - "You can have it for the price of another tube of paint" - echoed through the garage. I deeply regret now not keeping some of them, but the faster they went out of our garage, the more tubes I bought. A husband of an artist

friend made me a palette, which I treasure to this day, so over the next years that friend and I spent many lovely hours trying to capture nature's beauty in all its forms. It was most interesting to see our finished works lying together, total opposites in form and texture, but each depicting our own 'view' that has allowed the observers mind to decipher. Some time later I decided to go to an art class on



using pastels that was advertised on a board on the streets of Taradale. From that, I achieved a pastel drawing of a red hibiscus. It hangs framed on our lounge wall to this day, and that teacher will never know how chuffed I was she thought mine good enough to frame. I remember my thoughts then kept going back to Miss Pallot. My deep love of art in all its forms definitely goes back to her.

A talent I apparently did have, all be it hidden from even myself and emerging in the late 1970's, was the ability to write poetry. Thus many coloured and varied threads attached to my tapestry very strongly. I had always thought joggers were 'nuts', but one day, when a daughter who was home from Auckland called out as she saw me passing the lounge in shorts and T. shirt, 'Where are you going'? I replied, 'I am off for a jog'. She gave me the raised eyebrow look only daughters can bestow on mothers, and away I went. While jogging, the strangest thing

happened to me - my head began to fill with words of a poem. I wondered if I was 'Losing it', I truly did.

On returning home, I had to pass the doorway where said daughter was reading. She asked how the jog had gone. My reply of - 'Great. Now I am going to write a poem' brought a look that said - Mum's **definitely** losing it - I am off back to Auckland - she went next day.

Maybe somewhere back in those days on the hill, someone touched a chord in my mind re poetry. Why did one fill my head that day? Why was I able to pen it straight away? I titled the poem 'Mad Runners in the Rain'. It sits in a folder with over 100 poems that I wrote during the two years following that particular day. I have had fun making some into wee poetry books and dedicating one to Bill, my beloved brother and friend, called 'Thoughts and Feelings', one called 'Nature's Treasure' to my lovely Mum, who sowed during my childhood love of nature seeds, and one in memory of time spent with friends, called 'Philosophy and Flowers.'

Another thread, **Sports**, is something you simply cannot have, particularly team sport, in a country village with only 30 odd students ranging from 5 to 15. With the chance to experience them at High School I latched on to every one I could, but NOT hockey or cricket. I so admired the students who did so as I was really afraid of the hard balls involved, and in awe of those who played it with such expertise. My life has definitely been enriched by our sports mistress's enthusiasm and patience back then.

Along life's road I have learnt that hearts can suffer many gaping cracks without actually breaking in two. I have absolutely no doubt at all that my years at Napier Girls High School, and the teachers whose classes I was lucky enough to be in, definitely had a huge part to play in all of the above. Threads, woven together over those years, began the formation of my life's tapestry, and along the way helped shape me into who I am today...someone who has had to come to terms with the realities of life, and truly is now very happy in her own skin.

Life is the threads of the tapestry.

Time is the weaver.

The pattern revealed depends on whether you are on the outside looking in...or on the inside looking out.

## Mary Duncan's Story

When I started work at the Bank of New Zealand in 1951, little did I know that it was the beginning of technology there. Up till that time all work was done manually, I was just one of ten juniors who started that year. The staff was huge compared with the staff in banks today. Besides the juniors there were at least twenty others of varying ages. Each morning the senior woman had all the girls line up so she would inspect our stockings for runs and that our seams were straight!



My first job was to sit on a high stool at huge sloping desk with enormous ledgers to complete customer's passbooks up to the date the machines were installed to produce the new bank statements.

The new machines were hilarious - just glorified adding machines with typewriters all in one. All the mechanisms were visible and completely unguarded. (OSH would have had a heyday if they had been in existence then). The Funniest part was that year wool prices went crazy and wool sold for a pound per pound and the machines blew their brains when the total reached one million pounds. The only mechanic was in Hastings and had to rush over to fix them! We started taking turns on the machines and loved it as we got an extra ten shillings a week on it.

Gordon and I married in 1953 and Anthony arrived in 1954. In 1955 we balloted for a section that was in a group that the Borough Council was selling, on Kennedy Road and we got it for £297 and built a 1000 sq. ft. house for £2500. By 1956 Pam and Rod had arrived. We soon decided to leave Napier to get a better paying job in a less desirable place and ended up in 1958 managing the Pharmacy in Mangakino - a hydro town on the Waikato River.

Mangakino was run by the Ministry of Works which was Government built. It was well supplied with numerous halls and a good number of shops and picture theatre. The busy maternity hospital had a large outpatients Department. with several Doctors working there. There were no appointments, you just turned up and waited your turn.

The town was laid out with separate streets for engineers, doctors, teachers, shopkeepers, truckies and workers etc. Early on I met up with Helen Simpson whose husband was the Presbyterian Minister and also Barbara Deverell who some will remember from Nelson Park days. The local school was a District High School and was huge. All our children started there.

Mangakino is on the shore of Lake Maraetai. In summer it was well used for swimming, boating and water skiing, but over the Christmas holidays the town was dead as most of the workers had bought sections and built at Papamoa, as they were well paid and had cheap rent at home. There was a lot of bad fog in winter

and when the wind came in one direction the dreadful smell from Kinleith Paper Mill wafted across the lake.

After three years we decided to buy our own business and decided on the Lake Dispensary in Taupo, shifting there in December 1961 and rented a house nearby. We were lucky to have just been connected to the new municipal water supply, but we spent our first week in business with the front door closed as Heuheu Street was being sealed for the first time. We employed two ladies, and the children went to the nearby Taupo School.

Two years later we bought a section in Tui Street and built a home there. Over the years the shop was very successful and we were able to enlarge it and take on more staff and introduce computers. I qualified as a technician and helped with dispensing, but spent a lot of time in the office fighting the paper war.

In 1977 Gordon had a bad heart attack. In 1981 he was put on the waiting list for bypass surgery but it was five months before he got it. During that year both Rod and Jan and then Pam and Chris were married so it was a very stressful year for all. In 1988 Anthony and Denise were married. Gordon managed reasonably well for 3 or 4 years and then went downhill and died in 1989 aged 59.

In 1992 I sold the business and bought a section in Havelock North and built a lovely house for myself and my sister, Jean, who was also a widow. We loved it but by 1999 Jean had a bad shoulder and I needed a hip replacement so I sold the house and we got a villa each at St Luke's Close.

Late in 1993 Anthony and Denise together with their 2 year old daughter decided to holiday in England and invited me to go with them. In order to make it less unsettling for Caitlin it was decided to spend one week at each place and do day trips for sightseeing.

We stayed in London, Kent, Cornwall, the Cotswolds, Edinburgh and Paris. This was my first overseas trip, except to Sydney when they lived there. I absolutely loved it and took lots of photos. While over there Anthony went to Germany for a conference and then Denise went to one in Warwick.

It is great living back in Hawkes Bay again and enjoying lots of fruit from Pam and Chris' orchard, and I have some lovely friends. I really enjoy living and socialising with all the other residents of St Luke's Close. I belong to U3A, St Luke's Op Shop, Anglican Women's Group, choir, The Order of St Luke's the Physician, help with church fair, and NGHS Old Girls.

My children are all still happily married and I have six grandchildren and three lovely great grandchildren.

Life is good.

## MARGARET DINE (nee Rickard)

I was born in Hawera, Taranaki in 1934. When I was 18 months old my family moved to Napier where my father took up the position of Manager of Anderson and Hansen, the Austin Car franchise.

We lived in Seapoint Road where we enjoyed a big garden with lots of places to play and explore.

Growing up during the war and the Depression years were sobering times and a cause of great anxiety for the adults.

My father was very involved in the Home Guard. I recall him and my brother digging up the vegetable garden to build our air raid shelter and the windows in the house were covered with black paper during the war.

At the age of nine my world fell apart with the loss of Dad to Cancer. It was a struggle for our Mother both emotionally and financially so we duly moved to a smaller site in Priestly Road.

The move to Priestly Road brought me near Ro Semple (nee Sorrell) with whom I had started education at a little private school in Thompson Road run by Mrs Stainton. When the school closed due to lack of students Ro and I moved on to Central School, and eventually to Napier Intermediate.

My brother had been down at Medical School during this time. In 1949, Donald, having qualified and aged 23 years, died suddenly from a haemorrhaging duodenal ulcer while on the operating table in Dunedin. It was such a traumatic time! Betty, my sister, was nursing in Waipukurau and I was 15 years old and at High School.

After a short stint awaiting the age of acceptance Ro and I started our nursing careers at Napier Hospital. Then followed a further six months maternity training. Our friendship has taken us through our years of schooling and still continues today

Meantime Betty had extended her qualifications and became the very highly respected and much loved Ward Sister of Shrimpton Ward (paediatrics), a position she held for eight years till she retired to marry local Vet. Courtney St George.

We had been having medical students working as house surgeons over long holiday periods which was where I first encountered Owen. By 1957 he was on the permanent staff. These boys were a bright lot but being senior to us, they fraternised mainly with the Ward Sisters. Betty sometimes brought them home for an outing and Mother's home cooking.

I was working in men's surgical, Midgely Ward at the time, and was helping Owen one day deal with a troublesome catheter when he suddenly asked me if I would like to go to a movie with him. How romantic is that!!! By then Ro was in charge of a ward and I became afternoon supervisor.

Owen and I became engaged in December and we married the following year in May, 1958.

I think this decision came about because if Owen didn't find a wife he would have to resort to his maiden aunt to care for him!!

He was very keen to start his own practise. We bought a section at Westshore where Owen and a friend built a surgery on the front. It was ready for business by December 1958. The house was a fisherman's cottage, 100 years old which had been moved up and down the

section a few times. After 7 years, and the arrival of our first two children the house was demolished except for 3 rooms and a two storied addition was added.

Life as a Doctor's wife was very hectic. There were stressful times for me when Owen was out on calls with one man dying on our front doorstep with a heart attack. There were several unsuccessful CPR's, one due to a child drowning on a farm, and the drug addicts who came were a trial and very demanding. The surgery was broken into twice.

When Owen wasn't in the surgery I always had to be home to take the phone calls, cope with emergencies and give advice. No Mobile phones!!!

I also attended our clinics at Omahanui Salvation Army Rest Home on Wednesdays. I also relieved for the nurse and receptionist we employed in our practise during their various holidays and was also in attendance at our Saturday morning surgery.

My voluntary work was limited to driving for Meals on Wheels for many years and assisting with collecting for Charities. We only had one car so I could only get out to shop when surgery was in progress. In our early days at Westshore it was a very under developed suburb. The embankment road was still functioning which meant trips to town were a mad dash.

By 1970 we had two more children added to the family.

The case load became very busy and by 1969 an average of 60 patients had to be seen rising to a maximum of 100 per day. Then there were deliveries every 2 - 3 days. There were the house calls to Tutira, Tongoio, and Petane. Each day there were three consultation sessions and no appointments booked. The queue sat patiently on the fence and the "bon homie" and merriment prevailed, especially in the evening sessions which sometimes went on till 11 pm

Then of course there was the bookwork and accounts to be sent. While the surgery was on our home section I was involved with all these happenings.

A number of our patients struggled financially, so often their accounts never got sent out. A barter system seemed to establish itself. We didn't complain as a case of peaches, a bag of apples, or a cabbage, etc. were always appreciated.

During the '70s a new surgery was built across the road. Owen's meals had to be heated over a pot of water as he was seldom around at our mealtimes. No microwave of course!!

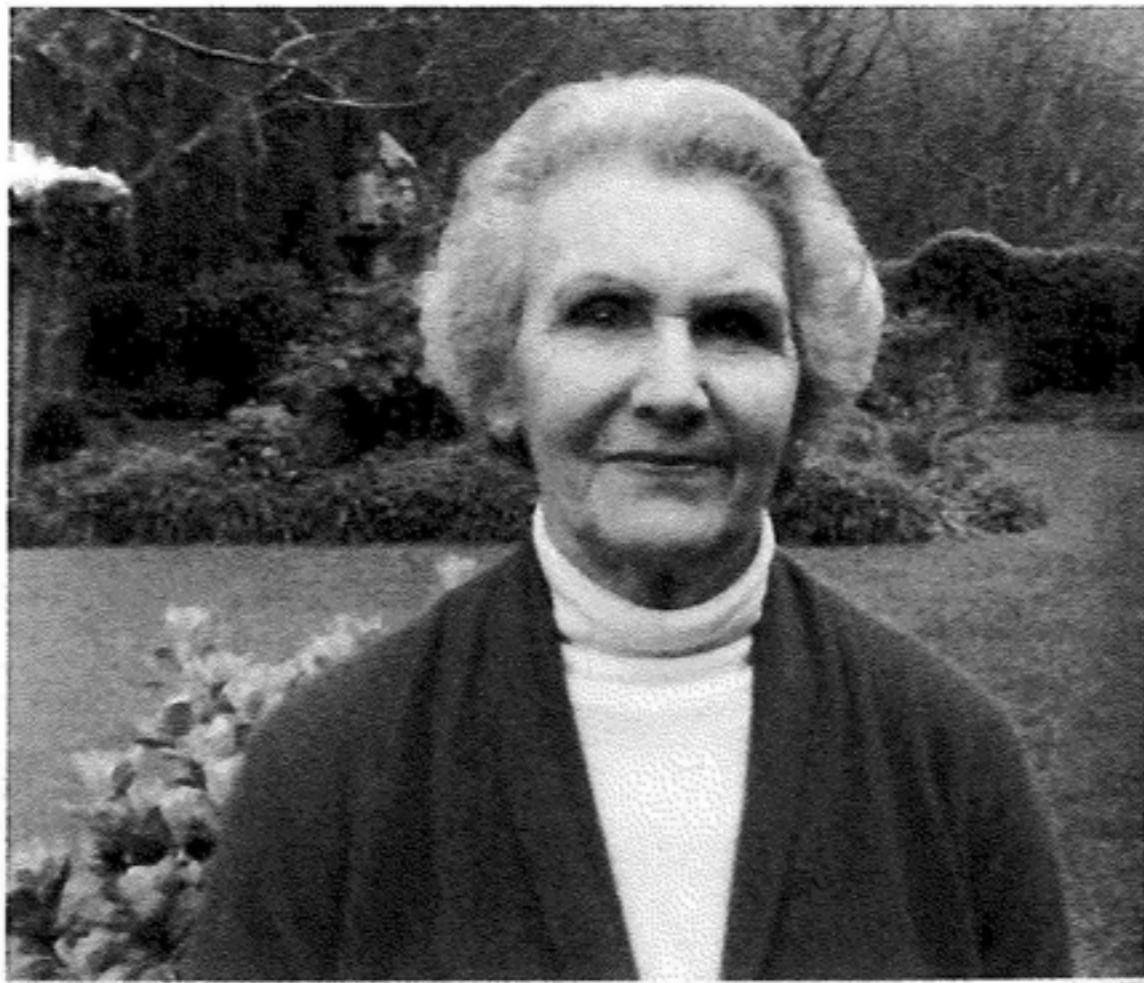
Locums were hard to come by but we usually managed to get away at least once a year when we would have the luxury of touring the country and educating the family. The children were thrilled to have their father to themselves. We only managed one OE when the family were all safely out of the nest. For three and a half months, together with our son who was in England at the time, we "did" a fair bit of the continent, England and Scotland in a motley old campervan. Malcolm did all the driving as he was the only one who understood the vehicle. We travelled like gypsies and it was the most wonderful experience.

In 1993 Owen had quadruple bypass surgery at Greenlane Hospital. It was a very anxious time for us all. In his usual quiet manner he just got on with his recuperation without a word of complaint and was soon back at work again. He retired in 2001, and had the next 8 years completely absorbed in writing his book "Petane" - a history of the area he loved north of Napier. He was an historian and collected great masses of memorabilia. Owen died suddenly in 2009 the work not quite ready to edit. The family and I couldn't leave his work, a dedication, go unfinished and it was with great relief and gratitude that Judy Sears became known to us and agreed to take the process through to publication in 2011.



Our family of four have been and are, my great joy. They have sacrificed a lot with an absent Father but what they missed out on they gained in the great example of love, work ethics, empathy, loyalty and respect. All are happily married and have provided me with 12 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren and the next one due in September.

I have been very blessed to share my life with Owen and his example of devotion and dedication to his patients.



A few snippets noted by the nurse and receptionist over the years:

Erotic inhaler requested.

Request for a tube of Aristocratic ointment

Hearing test - told she had something between her ears

Nervous contentions in gut

We don't charge exuberant prices, do we?

Patient dilated with results of blood test

I have no money, no clothes, - the clergy call regularly

Beneficiary: "if I cannot get more money I will have to live an immortal life "

Mother: "I object to being called illiterate - my husband and I married one week before his birth"

Claims: "No affection from his pills"

## **Judy Treseder**

### **Early Recollections:**

**Living in Church Road, Taradale 1934-47** Our Farm included Sugar Loaf Hill

The butcher came in a van regularly with his produce

The postman delivered the mail, riding on his bicycle and whenever he put some mail in the letterbox he blew his whistle so we knew there was mail there.

Walked a mile on shingle road to get to Taradale School. There were 5 classrooms, and we had a swimming pool.

Miss Castles was the infant Mistress and we who passed through her hands had the advantage of being cared for by a motherly person who knew just how to coax us from the comfort and familiarity of home life to the structured regime of school. Mr. Harvey was used to dealing with the difficult personalities that came through the school. I experienced having the strap from him more than once! Mr. Gilligan was the headmaster.

Having a swimming pool in the school grounds was possibly a fact which we didn't appreciate enough, after all not many schools could boast a swimming pool. It certainly gave us, the pupils, a chance to develop any tendency to become proficient swimmers a head start.

In the village of Taradale, Yeo's and Cassin's were the grocery stores on opposite corners being situated on the corners of Gloucester and Puketapu Roads.

Martins the butcher, Watsons Shoe Store and Charlie Cawston the Blacksmith, were also memories of that time. The cottages that were part of the scenery then, told the tale of where the first residents had settled, and as the township developed they would eventually give way to the shops and business premises we know today.

Nearby there was a large pipe constantly flowing with water from the artesian well on which it was sited.

There are many childhood memories of carefree days at our bach at Westshore, summer holidays sand, sunshine, and the sea.

### **Napier Girls High School:**

Catching the bus to and fro placed me in with a group labelled "Bus Girls", and on arrival at the bottom of the hill we walked up Shakespeare Road.

I was no "great shakes" as a scholar, I took Commercial Course and managed to get my School Certificate on the 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt.

There was a popular saying "School days are the happiest of your life".

I remember thinking --"if this is as good as it gets, I'm not impressed!"

Car engines had to be run for a while before the car would function and crank handles were a highly valued tool.

Radios had to be turned on to "warm up".

When I left school I worked at Alan Grant Pharmacy doing office duties.

My big OE was 7 months in Australia during which I did office work in Melbourne. I had relations living there so it was home away from home, in the sense that there was “family” there.

On my return I worked at Rainbow and Hobbs Accountancy Office till 1959, when I got married and joined Ken to live in Crownthorpe on the farm which had belonged in the family for two generations.

During this period we had three lovely children, one girl and two boys.

Farm life was busy but a happy lifestyle with involvement in country activities and strong community links through Country Women’s Institute, School, church, local drama club and playing golf. We had our own 9-hole golf course and a club house in Crownthorpe. The club house had multi uses sometimes being the venue for gatherings such as birthdays, family dinners, and any get together that required a bit of space.

Looking back on those days I realise how fortunate we were to have been part of this environment which sadly is receding.

In 1987, aged 53, I went back to work, taking a position at the National Bank. This turned out to be quite a culture shock.

Once I settled in I enjoyed working with staff members much younger than I was, and their presence was refreshing as well as a challenge, as were the duties for which I was responsible.

Although there was quite an age difference among us I made lasting friendships and I must say that the experience was well worthwhile. I retired 9 years later.

In 1992 we moved off the farm to settle in Havelock North.

I am enjoying retirement. Some days will find me managing St. Luke’s Op Shop. I keep contact with the many friends I have gathered along the way, and I have become an enthusiastic Bridge player.



## **Class of 48**

### **Joan Cockburn (nee Shephard)**

What a wonderful sense of freedom it was to start as a junior clerk at the Land & Deeds Department at the end of 1951. It was just a small office, on the top floor of the Post Office building, but quite unique as many of the original land titles had been destroyed in the 1931 Hawke's Bay earthquake and subsequent fire, so all the following new titles were prefixed with HB. It was quite an event when a solicitor brought in an original parchment document.

In the summer my lunchtime was spent on the Marine Parade beach swimming with a group of other office workers. Change into my togs and old frock in the lunch room, dash up to the beach via Albion Street, have a swim, eat my lunch while drying off, dash back to change into my decent clothes again ready for work, all within the hour.

Winter months I played Netball (on the Marine Parade Courts) and Basketball (in the old Army Drill hall in Coote Road) making the HB team for 4 years with Basketball. It was quite normal to have to sweep the stones off the Netball Courts before a game because of high seas.

My first holiday after a year of work was with Lesley Surridge (Thacker) in Picton, crossing Cook Strait in the old "Tamahine". We felt we were very "with it" when we flew back home from Blenheim.

After 5 years of office work I married a farmer and that put paid to any sporting ambitions as we lived 30 miles north-west of Napier on a narrow winding dirt road. I loved the farming life with all the animals, changing seasons, and at times, hard work. I was often called upon to drive any of the farm vehicles from a 2 ton Bedford truck to the little Trekka but I drew the line at the crawler tractors! However I was only asked once to help with feeding out the hay to the cattle as I managed to bump my husband off the back of the Landrover where he landed, along with the hay, into the middle of the feeding cattle. I'm not sure who got the biggest fright, the cattle or hubby!

With four children, Country Women's Institute, Red Cross, and much later golf, the days were very full with the wonderful community spirit binding us all together. Of course everyone got involved with whatever was taking place in the district. As is probably typical of all farming areas, especially in the 1950s, positions of responsibility were rotated through the membership so a term as President or Secretary was the norm. With usually 10 on a party-line operated through a manual exchange, no TV and often no power, life was always a challenge.

As the children grew older, went off to boarding school, and then further afield, there was time for me to become involved in somethings outside the farming world.

Joining Pania Toastmasters as a foundation member was a good wake-up call which saved me from becoming a real country bumpkin. The skills I learnt then were to stand me in good

stead as I progressed through the ranks of Red Cross, the Justice of the Peace Association, Power Trustee, Marriage Celebrant, and Civil Union Celebrant.

Hawke's Bay has always had a strong Red Cross due in part to the 1931 earthquake and I was very fortunate to have several stalwarts supporting me as I became more and more involved at the governance level. 1982 saw me elected to the National Executive (now National Board) and 4 years later I was elected National President of New Zealand Red Cross in a four way vote, becoming only the second woman to hold that position with Helen Lowry being the first, 50 years previous.

The next six years were to see me heading delegations to International Meetings in Geneva, Rio de Janeiro, and Budapest, as well as official visits to China and Hong Kong. Each has its own story. At the Geneva Meetings the South African Government Representative was expelled (the first and only time this has happened). Headlines around the world! In Rio our bus driver got lost having taken a wrong turn to the Turkish Ambassador's Reception making everyone late. Such extremes of poverty and riches in a beautiful city. One has not lived until one has been to a soccer match in Rio. The Budapest meetings were held at the time of the collapse of Communism in Romania which resulted in hoards of refugees pouring across the border into Hungary. In Hong Kong I visited two separate Refugee Camps for Vietnamese Boat People - one on a disused airstrip under canvas and the other a specially built facility of concrete and barbwire. Neither was a pretty sight. The visit to China was 6 months after the Tiananmen Square riots so there was still plenty of tension in Beijing. Working through interpreters slows any conversation down but also gives time to formulate one's thoughts into a diplomatic reply.

During those six years in office I travelled the length and breadth of the country meeting so many interesting and dedicated people. We had moved off the big farm to a much smaller block in Te Awanga at this stage so I was no longer needed as a farm hand which meant I could spread my wings serving an organisation that has my utmost respect. Needless to say Red Cross still fills my days although my role is now a much quieter one.

In 1987 I was appointed a Justice of the Peace and eventually served on the HBJP Assn Council becoming President for 2 years and assisting with the long overdue first rewrite of the Constitution which was to introduce gender free language. Sitting on the Bench brought the worst of Napier society to my attention and some of the stories told were really in the realms of fantasy. The details of some of the cases remain with me to this day. Being one of the first females in Napier to qualify for a Bench position meant some of the chaps moved into the 20<sup>th</sup> century faster than they expected.

My years as a Marriage Celebrant and later as a Civil Union Celebrant took me to many beautiful gardens, both public and private, in Napier and Hastings. It was a privilege to take a service for these young couples and sometimes not so young couples. I became a dab hand at calming a nervous bridegroom if his bride was running late but the Civil Union couples were always on time which was greatly appreciated.

The early 1990s were not the best of times as our son developed Aids and was given 3 months to live. With the help of our daughters we were able to extend that time to 23 months making the last months of his life as happy and comfortable as possible. Our home became a

bit like a bus-stop with friends and family calling in at all times of the day or night. I was never quite sure who, or how many, would surface for breakfast each morning. My husband's heart problems meant another move, this time to a town house in Taradale where he was to last only a few months before passing away.

Having thought my travelling days were over, there was great excitement when friends invited me to join them for a trip on the Trans Siberian Railway. This was just as the Soviet Union was falling apart and Russia was holding their first elections in decades. History in the making!

A daughter living in London, then Frankfurt, and now Toronto has meant that for many years there was a base for me to visit many places around the globe, staying with the family for a couple of weeks before disappearing again joining a tour going somewhere different. One of the very early delights was to catch up with Shirley Pink (Nightingale) and Carine Jackson (Mayhew) in London enjoying a lunch together before we all went on to a show.

After approx 30 years of on and off travelling visiting many exciting and interesting places the body has decided that enough is enough so my days now are taken up with local activities such as Red Cross, Old Girls, and U3A.



11/190 AVENDALE RD,  
TARA DALE.

## Carine Mayhew nee Jackson

So what have I done since I left the "Blue and White School" on the Hill?

Being the first in my Class to leave School, I was given a surprise gift of a Cup, Saucer and Plate - which I still have today!

I had intended to finish my Sixth Form year but was fortunate enough to be offered a good position with the N.Z. Shipping Co. Ltd at Ahuriri as a Junior Shorthand Typist.

It was an interesting position dealing with shipping documents for Wool and Meat being sent on overseas ships mostly to Britain. Sometimes it meant going back in the evenings to complete documents for sailings the next day.

I stayed there 8 years, saving "my pennies" as I had always wanted to travel overseas - "to see the world"!

I had become aware that I was keen to travel, visiting places that I had read about, and I appreciated the desire to travel had partly been fuelled by the enthusiasm that Miss Clark had shared in the lessons she taught us.

My best friend and I were to have left in January 1959 but she decided to become engaged, happily, and I found another girl who wanted to travel and was happy to join me.

After a six-week fun-filled journey, we disembarked in Britain and took the train to London Station! What a mass of people!

Our first task was to find the Overseas Visitors' Club in Earls Court - where all Commonwealth travellers go - "sorting ourselves out", getting accommodation and eventually finding work.

We had a wonderful experience there doing 'temporary Office work' where we could come and go between travelling around England, Scotland and Europe hitchhiking, staying at Youth Hostels.

After almost 2 years I came back to Napier and found another position with N.Z. National Airways.

I enjoyed Old Time Dancing and one night I met a very nice man, Allan, whom I eventually married - at the ripe old age of 47! We spent 16 happy years together before Allan passed away.

I'm now enjoying life in a 26 Unit Retirement Village in a two-bedroomed Flat with all facilities, a Village not too big where we can get know everyone.

I work as a volunteer at the Art Deco shop when I am rostered on.

This is something I really enjoy since I get to meet people from all sorts of places both from within New Zealand and tourists from overseas countries. If I hear they are from a country in which I have travelled I have the greatest pleasure in engaging them in conversations that bring to mind all the eventful things I experienced in their home country.



In our first year at Intermediate School our Form Teacher was Miss Hane who was from Eastbourne in England and she suggested we might like to write to the pupils from her Class there and become Penfriends - I still write to Joyce Simpson - and in fact when I went to England I met up with her which was exciting but we now keep in touch by telephone!

It's the same with my Australian Penfriend whom I started writing to at the same time. Val Stephens lived then in Melbourne and through another friend we began corresponding. She now lives on a Citrus Orchard in Mildura, N.S.W., and I've been fortunate to have met her also.

Nowadays we keep in touch by telephone but still correspond for Birthdays and Christmas.

They have been wonderful friendships.



## Beth Northe, nee Hunter.

I have happy memories of my childhood living with my Mother, Father and two sisters, at Kennedy Road, Napier. My parents owned a small dairy and Dad operated a milk run. My sisters and I helped serve in the dairy arguing sometimes whose turn it was to serve our customers. We had no refrigeration but a big trough was in the nearby shed with cold water keeping big cans of milk at cold temperatures and a metal dipper to measure milk into the customer's billy.

Once Dad took our family out in the truck to see flooded roads in 1938- I remember sitting on my mother's knee as we passed through flooded roads.

I also remember Dad carrying me on his shoulders to see the Mardi Gras at the Marine Parade, probably a Xmas treat.

A happy memory of war years was playing with my friend Edith a close neighbour, in her generous-sized air raid shelter built I presume by her Father. Edith and I ate ripe Doris Plums from their orchard.

In our early teen years my sisters and I all did holiday tomato and fruit picking and were usually picked up by Peter Shirley in the family truck, outside Byford's Store. In those days we could sit in the back tray and away we'd go out to Bay View to earn a bit of spending money!

Like most girls in that neighbourhood we attended Nelson Park School and from there to Napier Intermediate School and in later years we biked to the bottom of Shakespeare Road where we parked our bicycles and then trudged up the hill to attend Napier Girls High School.

As we grew older we were allowed to attend St Pat's Dance Hall off Dalton Street on Friday Nights but had to be home by a certain time.

My two sisters both went nursing up on the Napier Hill but I went to Training College in Kelburn, Wellington. We boarded at 282 The Terrace Wellington with approximately 40 other girls. We walked daily to Kelburn and sometimes used our satchel to try not to keep getting too soaked by the odd showers. We attended dancing and started romances. I sang in a nearby church choir and flirted with a handsome lad but it did not last.

And so eventually I returned to Napier and began my teaching years. I had two and a half years beginning to learn my trade at Te Awa, Maraekakaho, and Marewa Schools.

My girlfriends and I decided to go overseas and ended up travelling on the Rangitoto going from Wellington to Southampton. Janice's Mother insisted Janice take her 21st Birthday Cake with her! What fun we had on board. We six girls sat together at a table and dined as we'd never done before attended by smartly dressed stewards and were even invited to the Captain's table. We six performed on stage at night as a Marching team and also sang Maori Songs with actions we'd learnt at Training College, Wellington.

In London with the help of our cousin Neil we bought a Vauxhall 39 and began our travels around the UK. Both Nancy and Janice had driver's licences but Janice was too petite to see over the bonnet! We left the car with some Geordie friends for repairs and began a hitch hiking tour of Ireland. Janice's Cake at last had its day when we reached Moneyvart Youth Hostel in Cushendall with the Hostel warden providing a neat tablecloth and decorating the breadknife for cake cutting by Janice. What a feast we had!

Back in London Nancy managed to get a nursing job in Windsor, Ali had work as a typist at the Automobile Association, Beryl too found commercial work and Pam, Janice and I did



relieving teaching based from Baker Street, London. Usually relieving jobs lasted only a day or two. When we relieving teachers entered a staffroom for morning break, nobody ever spoke to us. But one day a young man talked to me - I could hardly believe it AND he came from my home town! Wow I had even heard of his father who was the head of a school in Napier! After several months we headed for Aberdeen Scotland, meeting up with my grandparents and my three petite Aunties (who my cousin called The Three Blind Mice - this after seeing the three of them in fur coats).



We six girls had started to go our various ways some heading for Newcastle and Manchester. Ali my sister met up again with the love of her life a Scotsman from Boat of Garten - the two of them marrying at St Nicholas Church in Union Street Aberdeen, and me wondering about the saying "Always a Bridesmaid". Pam, Janice and I all did relieving jobs in Aberdeen schools but we headed off in different directions too. I managed to get several longer term relieving positions but I too hankered for my parents in Napier and for the lovely warmth of summer there.

I returned to New Zealand first by boat to Australia- it was mainly an immigrant ship. And then I boarded a boat to Wellington and eventually home to Sunny Napier.

Before long I met the man of my dreams at a party in Napier. Soon we were courting and later married. Barrie was in partnership building mainly in Napier and I managed to get teaching positions at Central School and later at Greenmeadows and finally at Nelson Park. During this time we had three adorable sons and was helped by a delightful lady called Joy. She was absolutely remarkable. The last two schools were my favourites learning so much from Senior Staff and enjoying the children too.

At one stage my three sons and I attended the same school, Greenmeadows.

My boys had their adventures too, with Gregory at three and a half walking all the way from Alamein Crescent, Onekawa to my mother's home on the corner of Kennedy Road and Vigor Brown Street, Napier South and I hadn't noticed he'd gone!

Gregory's next adventure was when he was about seven and holidaying with relatives at Tutira. He and his cousin Stephen were hunting a rat which cunningly hid behind a mattress standing against an outdoor wall. Stephen grabbed a gun and shot at the rat BUT unfortunately hit Greg's hand. Greg ended up in the Napier Hospital and when I went to visit him Greg was standing on a high window ledge. And of course his room was on the fourth floor!

Barrie and I went on a tour to the east including Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore and Manila. In Japan whilst walking along a hotel corridor two dainty Japanese ladies gave a tinkling laugh and finally told us we were dressed wrongly, Barrie in the ladies gown and me in the man's!

On our return home we found out that Lawrence had been to Hospital with a severely sprained ankle and it was their second visit there! Cousin Iain had been injured by my son Warwick- I think a gun was used too But enough said of that!

Now at 80 plus I sometimes reminisce over my happy life, and every Saturday I still go out to lunch with my sister Ali and Pam making us three of the six who travelled to the UK in 1956!

# So Many Memories

## Edna (nee Bryan) Robertson

When I left school I went to work at Ellison & Duncan's, a wholesale merchant at Port Ahuriri.

My job was shorthand typist and book-keeping machinist. One day taking out orders for the store a workmate said to me - "Come and see my Brother - Norman!" He had just come down from Tutira and was SINGLE. When Albert told me that Norman worked in the country, I said "that was no good to me", as he did not come into town that often.



I joined the Athletics Club and played indoor basketball for Williams and Kettle at the Drill Hall. One year later I was lucky enough to be chosen to play for the Hawkes Bay Team and went to the New Zealand Championships. That was a great time of my life going to the city of Hamilton for the event.

A couple of years later I went to a 21<sup>st</sup> birthday party with a friend from the Athletics Club. At this 21<sup>st</sup> I met a guy called Norman Robertson. It turned out to be Albert's brother.

We had a number of dances together, but the friend I went with was not very happy with me.

The next day Norman and I had arranged to meet. We found we had a great attraction for each other and 2 months later we became engaged and married a year later.

I went to live in a caravan as Norman was an Agriculture Contractor.

We lived where the work was, but it had to be near clean water.

We carried our water in Kerosene tins and collected firewood for our cute little coal range. It was green with a white fleck and stood on 4 legs. It was a great little stove, it warmed the caravan in the winter, cooked all our meals and even baked cakes in the oven.

Time marched on and one year later our first son Larry was born. What a night! It had been raining for over a week and the track was very greasy. It was midnight and I woke Norman to say it was time to head for the McHardy Maternity Home. Well, the Austin A40 truck could not get up the track. Norman rushed back and brought the crawler tractor. Hello, no tow rope! Back he goes again and cuts down my clothes line. By this stage the truck had spun around and was facing the wrong way. Norman coupled the tractor to the truck and I had to steer the truck going backwards, but we finally got to the back road. Of course in those days the back roads were just metal and I think we struck every pot hole. We arrived in

Napier at Mum and Dad's at breakfast time. We stayed until about 12 noon and then went to the Nursing home. Larry was born soon after, healthy and well, none the wiser of what had gone on before.

One day it blew a gale and the lean-to of the caravan came off it's foundation. Over went the chemical toilet! What a mess to clean up. We had a galvanized bath tub and whenever we could we had a bath, outside of course.

We lived in the caravan until Larry was about 1 year old and built a small house at Tutira. We had a bath, a copper, tubs and a room for our chemical toilet. We had a very large living area, a small passage and into the caravan, which we turned into the bedroom.

The electric power came through just after we built. It would have been somewhere around mid-1950's and what excitement, after having used candles and the old kerosene lamp for lighting.

We bought an electric stove and a washing machine, which fell over on the back of the truck and chipped off some of the enamel.

We had a kerosene fridge and coming home one day the wick in the fridge had gone haywire and our ceiling was covered in soot that looked like cobwebs. The next trip to town we bought a fridge-freezer.

We were at last able to bring out and use the electric toaster which had been a wedding present

We used to visit a lot of people in the area and one day a farmer's wife was icing a wedding cake. I was very interested in this type of such fine work. It made me twiddle a lot with icing.

We were now having our 2<sup>nd</sup> son Ian (We lost Ian at the age of 20 years.

He was a beaut person who was taken too early in his life).

Norman now sold his business and we shifted to Waikoau where we built a house and bought 40 head of cattle, 200 breeding ewes, we had a pig, 2 cows, chooks and geese. This was a great life. We made our own butter and had a huge vegetable garden that was self-contained.

We had a big vegetable garden at Tutira as well. We fed lambs and calves from time to time. After the calves grew to about a year old, one being a bull, he got out of the paddock and bailed the children up in the bus shed. We managed to get him back in the paddock and telling Norman about it later, he said what a lot of nonsense. On the Saturday morning Norman was clearing some blackberry out of the dam paddock. The bull came rushing at him, his eyes red. There was one only tree in this area and guess who made a new record climbing it! On Monday morning it was a trip to the works.

The school bus service was stopped at this time and by now Ian had started school. We bought a lovely horse called Tip Toes and the boys rode the 2 miles to school

each day and home again at night. At the top of the hills near our house was a heap of saw dust. Each night the boys had to make a quick jump off, as Tip Toes would have a roll in it.

On going back over the years I forgot to mention when I was at the Napier Intermediate School some of us chose to have a pen-pal from Australia. My pen-pal was called Merle Wardle (her maiden name) and we are still writing today. It has now been 69 years. Merle and her husband Russell Steinhardt came over to New Zealand and it was great to meet them. A few years later we went over to their wheat farm in Australia and that made us even closer. Merle calls me her New Zealand sister.

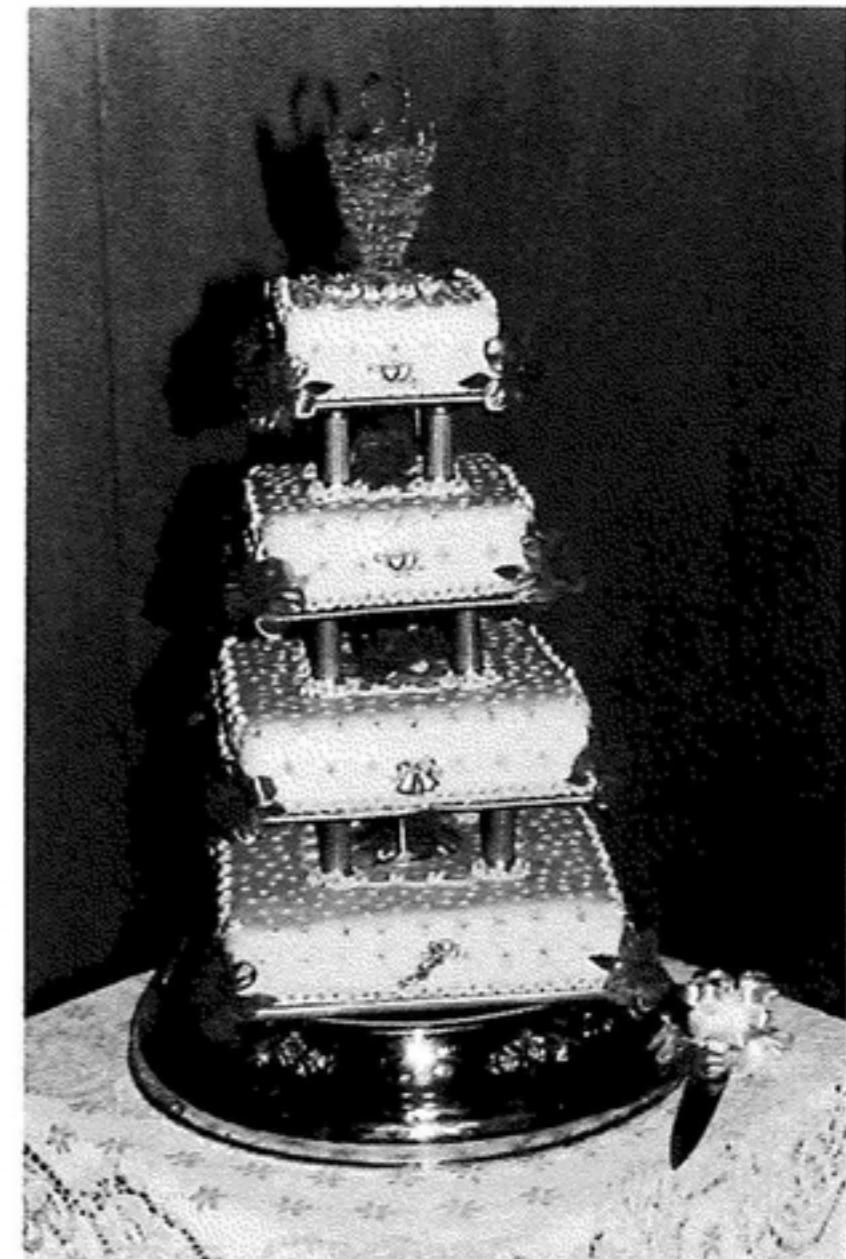
I took in sewing and made dresses for farmers' wives and their daughters too. Even a wedding dress for a friend. Dianne, our daughter was born about 8 months before we left Waikoau. Norman hurt his back, so we sold up once more and bought the Bay View General Store. The boys were still bus boys. Larry going to Napier Boys' High School, and Ian to Westshore Primary School. It was hard work at the shop, and I was still trying my hand at making and icing cakes, plus working full time in the shop. At long weekends the baker would come at about midnight with a van full of bread. We then stayed up and did all the Country Peoples' bread orders. The next morning the trucks came and picked it up for their destination.

After 5 years we once more sold up and came back to Napier. Soon after Norman went back to the bush and bought a Logging business.

I finally took to icing and often baked cakes in my spare time as I was employed full time at Peros Umbrella Factory. I was a Floor Walker, designed and costed rubber dingies, back packs, tote bags etc.

The girls there often got me to ice their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday cakes. Some nights I would be up until after midnight icing. When our son got married I made our daughter-in-laws Wedding Dress and Bridesmaid Dresses.

I did the same for our daughter Dianne. I made all their cakes and iced them too.



(Dianne's beautiful wedding dress and cake pictured)

Sometime after we shifted back to Napier, we bought a bach in Taupo and a new boat we named "Big Norm". We caught many trout over the years of holidaying in Taupo of which we gave away a lot and bottled a lot. One year I won the prize for the best conditioned trout by a female and guess what, my prize was a 3 litre tin of oil for the boat.

The bookwork and men's wages for Norman's business was all done by me. Once Norman retired we knitted for the Red Cross for a few years as Norman had learnt to knit at France House as a young lad. (It was a home for boys without parents). We also bought a Motor Home and for 20 years we did trips all around New Zealand. We did a lot of fishing using a Kon-Tiki, a wind one, an electric one and finally we bought a GPS one.

We caught Gurnard (my favourite fish), Snapper, Kawhai, Red Cod, Shark, Stingrays and lots more. We played golf at the Napier Golf Club for a number of years. Even in our Motor Home we took our golf clubs and played at courses all over New Zealand.

Well our son Larry and his wife Maureen had 4 children and we now have 6 grandchildren. Larry has his own fencing business in Taupo and employs 10 staff, plus runs their 120 hectares of land. Maureen is a practise nurse at Taupo Medical Centre.

My daughter Dianne and her husband Paul had 2 children, but they are a lot younger. Tiffany, their daughter is at Auckland University studying Electrical Engineering and their son Nathan is in the 6<sup>th</sup> form at Napier Boys' High School. Dianne is a Teacher Aide at Taradale Primary School working with Special Needs Children and Paul is the Manager of Electrotech (an electrical contracting firm).

Norman and I are very proud of what our families have achieved. We now live in Taradale and have had 62 wonderful years together.

Memories are forever and no one can take them away from you.  
Edna Robertson

## Diane Rose

### POST N.G.H.S. BIOGRAPHY: DIANE ROSE (MUDGWAY)

On leaving N.G.H.S. I obtained a position as a junior with the ANZ Bank, on the corner of Heretaunga Street & Karamu Road, Hastings.

I spent many happy days as a junior, riding my bicycle, taking the order forms around to the other Banks and Stock & Station firms.

I got to know a great many young people in the other Banks & Firms.

After some time, I was promoted to work on the Burroughs Machines.

This work I did not enjoy.

If we were even one penny out when balancing at the end of the day, we had to stay behind until we found it.

We had very kind Senior Staff, who would help us juniors.

As I didn't want to spend my days inside working on machines, I decided to apply for a Nursing Career.

I knew two school friends who had gone to the Cook Hospital in Gisborne, so I applied and was accepted to go there.

It was far enough away from home for me to be independent, but I could get home by Railcar or Bus, if I was homesick on my day off.

I really loved my three years in Gisborne.

We shed many tears, but had so many laughs and naughty escapades, that more than compensated for the tears.

When we first arrived, we were allocated our own room in "Pros Alley" on the ground floor, next to the Matrons flat.

If we had to report to the Matrons Office, we had to make sure the seams of our stockings were straight and our white shoes were spotless.

To leave the Hospital to go to the Nurses Home for a meal, we were required to change into a Blue Uniform and then put on our White Uniforms when we returned to the Wards.

Our Uniforms were starched so stiffly, they would frequently give us a rash around our neck.

The Hospital Board were so good to us all and permitted us to order in a Taxi to take three or four of us to Waikanae Beach at their cost.

On our day off, the Kitchen Staff would provide us with a packed lunch.

If we wanted to stay out after 11.00 pm we had to get permission.

A few times we would roll up our eiderdowns and stuff them down the bed, then fill a brown paper bag and wrap a scarf around it with a few protruding curlers and hoped we would not be caught out by the Night Sister doing a room check.

Of course, when we arrived home, we were locked out!

We would climb onto the Boiler House roof, then get thru the window of a friends room, on the second floor of the Nurses Home.

We worked really hard six days a week, with sometimes thirty or more patients to a Ward and only three Nurses at the most to care for them all.

After Graduation, I returned home to Hastings and did Private Nursing for a lovely old Lady who had suffered a stroke. She had three Registered Nurses caring for her, one on each shift.

During this period, I married and we lived in a Flat for two years and then moved to a House on 2 acres of land, which my husband planted in Asparagus. It was back breaking work picking it in the season, but we were young, fit and healthy.

In 1963 we adopted twin girls, which kept us busy but gave us many joyful moments. Once they started school, I commenced doing two nights a week nursing, at "Little Sisters of the Poor" and once our girls left home, to do Teacher Training and Nursing I went onto Day Duties. This work with the elderly was heavy work, but very rewarding.

We have been most fortunate that we have been able to do some travelling. In 1991, we spent three Months travelling in England, Scotland & Europe. Our next trip was to Ireland, Wales & Cornwall, and then a month in Italy. We have been to America and travelled through Canada. In between, we have spent time at several of the Pacific Islands and Australia as well as exploring our own beautiful New Zealand's North and South Islands.

We have had several moves within Havelock North. Our final move has been to "Summerset in the Vines" in Havelock North, which we hope will be our last move.





## Joan Upston nee Wacher

My life since leaving N.G. H. S. in 1951

1952 I worked for 6 mths in ANZ bank  
August, I moved to Christchurch to work at  
Ballentynes workroom.

1954 August, I went nursing at Christchurch  
Public Hospital and towards the end of my  
training met my husband. We became engaged  
and prepared to get married, so returned to  
Napier and worked for 3 months at Sherwood  
Hospital



1958 We were married and moved to  
Wanganui where my husband was teaching.

I got a job at Belverdale Private Hospital until we started a family

1961 We moved to Edgecumbe - a small new school in BOP near Whakatane.  
Teachers had to complete country service for a period or they reached a salary bar).  
We stayed there 9!! (I had a job for a short time in a underwear factory).  
A very happy time there with 3 children).

1971 Brian was awarded a Woolf Fisher Study Award to Australia so he studied aspects of  
Schools with a group of others teachers.

Wives were lucky to go too!

We then travelled to Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney, Mackay, (for cruise) then Brisbane.

1971 We moved again back to Wanganui as deputy principal of his old school Wanganui  
Boys College. --- (another happy time).

I then worked at Wanganui Collegiate College in the Sanitorium for 2 days a week.

1975 Brian was appointed Principal of Taupo- Nui-a- Tia College.

We moved that school holidays and have been there ever since.

I had a small job in the school library.

1991. Saw Brian awarded another Woolf Study Award this time for 3 months, so we were lucky to travel to Canada, Toronto, New York, Sweden and England (so we were able to visit our son there) He looked at schools in Cambridge, Devon. Hong Kong and Singapore on our way back to N Z.

1995. My husband retired and we have stayed here.

We have returned lots of times to BOP as we still have friends and love the sea.

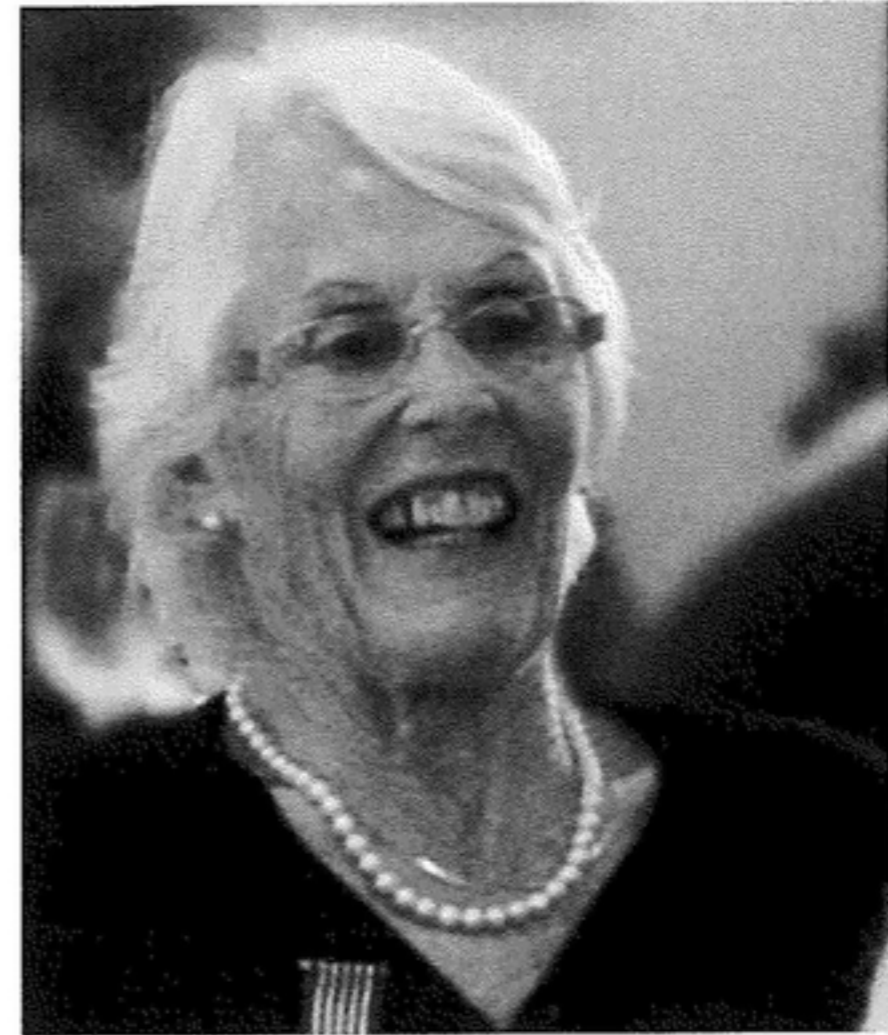
We have played tennis Golf, squash and joined Lions Clubs, Probus, church groups and I have done and still do lots of handcrafts but mostly Patchwork and Quilting now.

I have been so lucky to have lots of trips and have a very generous husband.

## HOW ONE 1948 GIRL HEADED FROM N.G.H.S. - TO HAVE A WONDERFUL AND SATISFYING LIFE

I fear there may have been one Headmistress who heaved a sigh of relief when at the end of 1951 I left the Hostel, as did my two equally young and feisty compatriots, although one completed the following year as a day girl.

My Father had made arrangements for me to have an interview at the Waipawa Bank of New Zealand, and I was taken on as "The Junior". For a "Professional" student, having done Maths and Latin, this was an eye opener as I did not know a debit from a credit. So what a contrast to things as they are today - my Father made arrangements and I was more than happy, in fact grateful, to have gainful employment. After a couple of years the bank said that if I learned to type, they would create a typist position for me. So with a Pitman's folder I put my head down in the lunch hours and learnt. NO looking!



I had started "dating" my future husband, but I had also made arrangements to travel overseas with three other girls.

My beau said "Go, and make the most of it". Shortly after I turned 21 this incredible trip began, with a sea voyage from Wellington to Liverpool, four girls in a small cabin, and much fun on board. From Liverpool we travelled to London where we split into twos and stayed separately with friends. Then it was off to Edinburgh on the Flying Scotsman for the festival. We all stayed with a lady who got rid of her family for this period and took in paying overseas folk patronising the shows. 10/6 - B & B. !!

After the week, we purchased a car and travelled round Scotland, Ireland, down through Wales and back to London.

There we took up rented residence in a private house in Lewisham (south, and probably "Non-U") and proceeded to settle in with jobs for the winter months. My newly acquired typing skills stood me in good stead and I was employed by an agency and later brought into the Agency, which also ran its own typing pool. There, with six other typists in a small room, I learnt to use a Dictaphone and loved it. My basic Latin learning was a great help to having a good knowledge of English.

During the winter months we joined a group of young men who were from all over the Commonwealth doing advanced training at the English Electric company, and by bus travelled to Austria and a fortnight's skiing holiday. Quite sublime.

My employers gave me the time off and one of the bosses even gave me some skiing clothes to keep.

There were two trips to the Continent in our trusty Edinburgh purchase - "Fred" the old V8 Pilot. By this time one girl had returned to N.Z. so the fourth place was taken by a young

Englishman met on the boat, who later married the older of the sisters I was with. It was great to have a male with us through the Latin countries. We stayed in Youth Hostels or sometimes in our pup tent (four of us!) erected in some very strange places.

A second trip took us through the Scandinavian countries.

Once back in London we joined the parents of the sisters in their very smart Chelsea abode and at that time each of the sisters became engaged.

I flew home to my special man, a job awaiting me at an accountancy office in Waipawa (where the boss had the first Dictaphone in H.B.!) and in the next year an engagement, a wedding and the purchase of our first home, an old villa close to Havelock North on Middle Road. I had difficulty getting a job (with hefty mortgages at more than double the interest rates of today, this was a necessity), but eventually became a typist out at the Whakatu Meat Co.

In 1960 our first daughter was born, and 1962 a second daughter, then 1965 our son. So our family was complete. We had 12 years in the Middle Road home and knew we had done all the upgrading, inside and out, which was practical. So we went on the market and sold and had a nest egg to make the next move. We purchased a section (certainly not what I had imagined we would do) and proceeded to build a solid concrete block home on this lovely piece of land, which backed on to Hereworth and had no fences down to Te Mata Road. Like living in the country. We rented whilst the building took place and during that time, with both building costs and interest rates climbing, I started part time work at McCulloch Butler and Spence in Hastings.

We loved our George Place home and both worked very hard to make it into something special. At one stage the children were dragooned into helping their Father cart spoil from a large mound at the bottom of the gully to be back fill in the terrace edge he was building - ~child slave labour," they grumbled. However, I think the work they did gave them an ownership of the place and they loved it dearly until the day we left.

As children grew (not without the usual problems and challenges I can assure you!) and then left the nest, we had three healthy young folk, a lovely home and each of us enjoyed being very involved in Village life: Rotary, St Luke's Church, golf at Bridge Pa and before that tennis for me and badminton for Tigger.

By this time I had left McCullochs and was Secretary to Alf Dixon, Financial Consultant, in Havelock North. In fact I actually did another 25 years with him, only finishing when the 70th birthday came by. This was a great job.

We celebrated our 50th Wedding Anniversary at George Place and later Tigger's 80th birthday. As his health was failing he was keen to sell the property as he was no longer able to do the physical things needed to keep it - and did not enjoy watching me quite happily do so much garden maintenance. So we sold in November 2009 although we did not need to

vacate until January 2010. This gave us the opportunity to gather for Christmas one more time - and what an absolutely wonderful spell of weather we were blessed with.

Then the family all bucked in and helped with advance packing and cleaning of the home - a garage sale etc. By this time we had settled on a new Villa which was in the process of being built at Mary Doyle. So as the roof was on and the rooms separated - we had a beautiful House Blessing Family service while we were all together.

Tigger's heart gave out at the end of November, but he was happy in our new abode and knew I was in a safe and secure place.

So you see - I have had a very blessed life.

JUDITH KLINGENDER

## **PHYLLIS JANE (NEE FOSTER)**

My story after leaving school, I had not done anything outstanding at high school, pretty uneventful.

In 1948 and 1949 I had worked from end of school year till New Year's Eve at McGruers departmental store, in the toy department and loved it. I didn't have a fulltime job to go to after that. Then I received a letter from management asking me to join the permanent staff I jumped at that and started with a wage of 1 pound, seven and tuppence a week.

Wow how was that and I was in the black dress brigade. I worked through several of the departments and loved them all.

Haberdashery, i.e. Buttons, lace, ribbons, domes, elastic, dressmaking patterns, knitting wool and patterns.

Mrs Mitchel was buyer and Head of Dept. She always instilled in us that if you haven't got black show white which meant show a substitute to customer.

We also made covered buttons, customer would bring in fabric and choose button size then I would cut the rounds of fabric and use the press to form the button which had a shank on for sewing it on. We also sold the lovely printed sets ready to embroider for our glory boxes. The brand was Semco. Hand bags, scarves and gloves were popular items. Remember the little pillbox handbag with a zip around to hold the lid on.

Boy, stocktake time was busy with counting and measuring all the stock.

Nylon stockings were new on the scene and we wore gloves to handle them. They came in flat boxes, 3 pairs to a box each separated by paper. We had to put the lid under the base so as not to mix up the colours or sizes. Nylons laddered easily, so customers could bring them in for repair, we had a lady who had a machine to repair them.

I can remember a lady from up Tutira way, who used to shop with us and commented that she liked me to serve her as I was always able to find something for her. I also remember that when her daughter was choosing lace for her wedding dress I was able to find a very suitable Guipure lace that they were very happy with.

We fitted gloves and the ladies would sit on a high chair with a cushion under their elbow and we would fit the gloves for correct size. They were usually the lovely soft kid ones short or long.

I moved to Cosmetics for a while then to Ladies Lingerie with Mrs Ivy Ritchie as head. I was sent to Berlei school in Auckland for 2 weeks. That was to learn how to measure and fit corsets and bras correctly. Boned lace up the back corsets were the main focus. Later a high



waisted model with a side zip improved the comfort if one had to wear "a hold me in" then there was the panty girdle and that was even better.

The method that was used when payment was made was—we had our own docket book and we would write what we sold and the price, add up, and put the original and carbon and the money from the customer into a cylinder, then in a tube at back of counter. The vacuum took it away to the office which was between the Men's department and the haberdashery. The office staff would check and return the cylinder with change if any and the original docket. This was given to the customer.

Parcels were wrapped in brown paper and the bigger ones were tied with string. Cellotape came into use about 1952 and we had to use it very sparingly.

Does anyone remember the Santa Cave, that was at back of Ladies Outerwear department, down a ramp to the basement?

5 years was my time at McGruers, then I married Colin Jane and we had a daughter and 2 sons. Over the years there were 3 grand daughters, 5 grandsons and 4 great grand daughters.

When we courted Colin would bike in from Guppy Road on shingle roads to our home at the far end of Georges Drive and we would walk to and from the movies.

Sometimes his dad would lend him the Model T truck. We used to love the dances at Taradale Labour Hall.

They were 2 weekly and one was organised by the netball and rugby players and the other one was the players from tennis and cricket. Colin was often the M.C. for the rugby and netball one. Mrs Foote played the piano, there were 2 other band members but I can't remember who they were.

Then there were the Port School balls held in a large woolstore at Ahuriri, and the Cabaret Cabana at Awatoto. All lots of fun.

We have lived in Napier, Colin working as a mechanic at Newmans Coachlines, having served an apprenticeship at Gee Motors up Shakespeare Road.

As he ended up with dermatitis on his hands, a change in occupation was required.

As members of St Peter's Church in Napier we, and another couple were appointed official visitors at the prison. Friday evening was games with the inmates in a special unit designed to help them fit into normal life when released. They had been in and out of prison several times. They worked at the lands and survey farm under guard.

Colin got chatting to the prison officer and eventually joined the service. Gave 11 years to that and we lived at Turangi, Wellington and Upper Hutt. At Turangi I worked part time at a coffee cafe. And at Wellington at a grocer. Having now left prison work we needed to buy our own home and had a second mortgage, so I worked full time for Justice as records clerk and then at Trentham as receptionist at Prison Staff College.

There were several part time jobs later which were all enjoyable experiences, and several more changes of jobs for Colin and that meant changes of addresses as well.

Both Colin and I enjoyed many years of Scottish country dancing, at Upper Hutt, Turangi, Taumarunui, Napier and Hastings.

Unfortunately in 1999 Colin had a stroke. He lost the use of his left arm and leg but after lots of therapy was able to walk again.

However with our determination we had a further 7 ½ years of life together. Our theory was "lets not worry about not being able to do what we used to and get on with what we can" we could still go out with friends for meals and shows and even some holidays. I became the permanent driver and we qualified for respite so I did get my breaks. Colin was always happy to go to the resthome and get spoilt.

He had developed epilepsy and that was the cause of his death in 2007.

Love to all Phyllis Jane, nee Foster



## NURSING 1953 - SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

But the camaraderie was terrific and that got us through. There was always somebody to share the bad times with and vice versa the good times - friends made for life - similar interests, similar hurdles, all prepared to help each other. So one of the biggest tragedies of the shift in training to polytechnics in my opinion was the demise of the nurses home. Whose shoulder would you cry on.

We worked 6 x 8 hour days a week so to get the weekend off you could work 13 days at a stretch and then another 13 days after that if your day off was at the end of the following week. But it was worth it. That weekend at home was nectar.

Training was done in blocks of 4-6 weeks with tutor sisters, 5 days of lessons, 1 day in the wards, probably 6-8 blocks in all (can't remember). Of the 12 nurses I commenced with only 2 of us qualified.

But we were well looked after under the eagle eye of the home sister. A picnic lunch could be ordered from the diet kitchen on our day off- taxis to the beach would be provided by the hospital board if we made up a full load (Cook Hospital, Gisborne was quite a distance from the beach).

Room inspections at 11.30 pm to make sure we were all where we should be. A few dummies were manufactured.

The district really supported the hospital. I can remember when we staged a concert at the town hall nurses choir drama group etc, pretty amateur really but no trouble filling seats. Basketball teams, nurses ball, nurses floats, concerts when the superintendent, matron, tutor, sisters left all run by the nurses how could we not enjoy our training days.

Fast forward : My first thought when I heard that the training was moving to the polytechnic was we shall be getting a health system we can't afford. Are the girls better equipped ? Certainly knowledge wise, no to time management. However they are buddied in the wards these days until they feel competent, so those terrible days we experienced when we were given responsibility far beyond our knowledge base should not happen to them. Disposable everything was introduced. We reported to the matron if we broke a thermometer. Time is still critical today for a nurse as it was for us - there is never enough time and they are still often rushed off their feet so that factor has never changed in the 60 years I have been involved. Watched the many changes.

Primary care was introduced - nurses became responsible for individual patients and it was their duty to make sure all factors of their care were covered. No longer wards of patients



covered by a junior, middle, senior nurse. Documentation and paperwork is huge today and takes up a lot of time. In my training days a few words unless very sick or an emergency situation. Control of infection is a constant worry, no longer just a case of good hand washing. Different rooms in a ward are allocated to different infections (hence both genders in together) Gowns, gloves, masks changed between each patient, disposable gowns introduced. Huge expense - so hot for nurses in the summer months. How often now do you hear the Dr say" we'll send you home safer there than in hospital". Nothing stays the same change is constant- all in the name of progress.

It is still and always will be a wonderful profession.

Helen Mackay (nee McBeath)

BARBARA ATKINSON (NEE BRENCHLEY)



I left school on my 15<sup>th</sup> birthday and started work in an office the next day where I worked for nearly 3 years as an office junior, banking, posting, etc.

In the winter months I played basketball for pirates and in the summer months I was in marching teams.

On 8.7.52 my life changed. I met my boyfriend at the pictures and after when we were cycling to my parents home a car ~~came~~ coming behind knocked us both off our bikes. Derek was knocked into a puddle and badly injured his back and I hit the edge of the footpath with my head and was unconscious for ten days. I was in hospital for six weeks.



As the visiting at the hospital was so tight in those days and with two young sisters it wasn't easy for my parents to be able to see me as they had to rely on me. Visiting was only 1 hour on Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday afternoons and 1/2 hour on Tuesday & Friday nights. Sylvia Innes was one of my nurses.

Derek and I were married a few months later and I had son Allan 9 months to the day from the accident.

Since then I had three more children Barry, Sheryl, and Kevin and now have nine grandchildren & 14 great & great grandchildren. Sheryl works at an underwear shop at Inverdale part time. Allan is in Wellington area. Barry is in London and Kevin is in Perth.



## SYLVIA FRAME MNZM

Basically I was just an ordinary Taradale kid who had a dream to be a nurse so  
“I could look after people for free.”

I grew up in the country with two older brothers and a younger sister during the tough 1930s and '40s.

At the age of 10, to enhance my dream, I joined the Taradale Division of St. John as a cadet and gained the Venerable Order of the Hospital St. John Grand Prior Award and moved up into the Women's Nursing Division. It was at St. Johns that I learnt the value of service to others through voluntary work and I vowed to include this always in my life.



At the age of 17 I was accepted to commence training at Napier Hospital, graduating in 1955.

Nursing was to take me to Australia, working in N.S.W., Tasmania and Victoria. I experienced helicopter rescue and learned the importance of occupational health, did voluntary work with the Flying Doctors Service and completed a 12 month Midwifery Training course while at Broken Hill.

A return to New Zealand took me to Reefton but soon I was on my way to Britain, en route we passed through Sri Lanka where I was absolutely shocked as I witnessed the poverty and saw the leprosy sufferers, their begging and the hopelessness of their lives. This vision remained etched in my memory and I have supported the Leprosy Mission ever since.

While nursing in London I was appointed by Pfizer's Drug Company to be Sister in Charge of a huge mobile unit complete with well-equipped clinics to carry out a massive Polio Immunisation programme in liaison with individual Councils and their Health Departments throughout England and Wales.

A period of illness meant I could not follow a plan to join Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Corp as the physician under whose care I was, recommended I return to N.Z. The five week sea voyage did much to assist in my recuperation.

One afternoon while doing my shift as afternoon supervisor at Napier Hospital I saw three women arrive to attend a conference. They were Nursing Corp Officers I was told on enquiry so next day I went to the Army Drill Hall to sign up.

By 1961 I was a commissioned officer in the RNZ Nursing Corps and the system allowed that as such I could be seconded to the other services, wearing the appropriate rank. I was to serve in all three Armed Services worldwide during my time.

I was to hold positions in the rank of Flying Officer and Flight Lieutenant as Sister in Charge with the RNZAF at base hospitals in Ohakea, Hobsonville and Wigram and on completion of an aviation medicine course and a few hair raising dinghy drills, I was appointed to the position of Flight Sister at Whenuapai with No 40 Transport Squadron within three months of my commission because I fortunately had Midwifery qualifications obligatory to the job.

It was military policy that a Flight Sister accompanied every flight as a crew member, no matter what the cargo, because the aircraft was often diverted for medical emergencies. An overall responsibility was the care and health of crew and passengers. A Flight Sister is on her own with no Doctor or medical team. I saw service transporting troops, families, equipment and supplies in and out of the war zones, and medical and casualty evacuation in liaison with the Royal Air Force Far East Asia Command based in Changi, Singapore, and the RAAF and USA Forces.

I was to serve in many places round the world in support roles, South East Asia in particular during the conflicts in Malaya, Indonesia, Singapore, South Vietnam and Borneo. In the 1960s they were not the tourist paradises of today, but were riddled with disease, poverty and filth, and we were not Boeing 747s being flown in, but draughty, noisy uncomfortable military aircraft.

As New Zealand was part of the SEATO pact the Squadron played a large and crucial role in the movement of military commanders, V.I.Ps. Prime Ministers of SEATO pact countries and their diplomats. It was an absolute privilege to have trusted to my care Mr. Lee Kwan Yu, the man who had the vision to transform Singapore into the vibrant clean and wealthy country of today. And an honour to accompany and care for the Victoria Cross recipients from both Australia and New Zealand who while not in great health were attending a reunion with Her Majesty the Queen at Buckingham Palace.

I remember the military terminal at Hickman Base in Honolulu packed with conscripted soldiers en route to Vietnam: all just kids, silent, so scared, just sitting and staring. I, who had volunteered to serve, was able to walk among them, sit listen and talk with them trying to give them some hope and courage.

After quite a long term of duty with No 40 Transport Squadron I was posted to Fiji and became involved in emergency mercy missions known as "Dumbos" which involved retrieving of, and caring for sick and injured, and transporting them back to Suva.

Eventually on my return to New Zealand I was selected by the Army to complete a Post Grad Nursing Diploma, then considered the highest N Z qualification in nursing. I was to attend the N Z Post Grad School in Wellington and major in Nursing Management and Administration, and attend Victoria University to complete Psychology and Sociology papers. I also chose to undertake additional optional post grad programmes on Public and Occupational Health. Considering I had never sat or attained School Certificate I was justly proud to finish the courses with flying colours.

There followed an appointment to be Charge Tutor at the Medical Depot, Burnham Army Military Camp. Ranked as Captain my role encompassed instruction of basic medical subjects to Regular, Territorial and National servicemen, but in particular, instruction of junior and senior men and women of the Medical Corps, including SEATO forces.

Following on I was posted to the HMNZS Philomel as Sister in Charge at the RNZ Navy Hospital in the Navy rank of Lieutenant. While there, I was recalled by the Air Force to No 40 Transport Squadron to undertake, over some weeks, a transporting mission of top secret level.

Once these were completed I was contacted - not email, by telephone, that I had been promoted to Squadron Leader in the position of Matron RNZAF Nursing Services at Ministry of Defence HQ in Wellington. This was the highest rank and one of only two positions a woman could attain in the Air Force at that time.

I was to play a key role on the day of the Wahine disaster, setting up a military style triage and casualty clearing station for survivors at the Wellington Railway Station. It was a harrowing day, night and next day for all, but a great example of how the military by their training and preparedness, can immediately act effectively in a civilian disaster.

By now it was almost 1970 and given my parents' poor health I decided to return home. I did remain on the Active Reserve list of Officers, only retiring at the official age for rank of 50, in my Army rank of Major.

Retired Major Morley, with whom I had worked in the Ministry of Defence and Personnel was now personnel officer at Watties Canneries tracked me down and asked me to assist him to organise and install new management systems for the 400 plus female work force.

As a result of that position I was approached by Rothmans to set up an Occupational Health Clinic for their industry .It would be the first of its kind in Napier

My experience in both manufacturing industries was rewarding: the staff on those production lines are simply "salt of the earth" people

In May 1973 I was appointed Matron of the Hawkes Bay Fallen Soldiers Memorial Hospital. It was a time when nurses looked like nurses and Doctors wore white coats.

I remained there for almost 20 years.

Four things struck me when I arrived

The hospital was in memory of fallen soldiers but there was no flag pole on which to fly a flag assuming there was one. Remember I had spent some time in military life. This was soon remedied and to this day the flag is flown at half-mast on the passing of any staff member who works there.

Secondly, I was amazed that there was no helicopter retrieval service. I started things moving along with others to correct this state of affairs.

Of minor note perhaps, but thirdly I realised that the two previous matrons of the Hospital had trained at Napier Hospital, as had I.

The fourth and by far the more serious and far reaching were the winds of change that lay ahead, and I was aware of how difficult my job would be to implement the changes without personally believing in them all.

I started school in Taradale when I was 4 years old, but the first day the teacher kept calling me Sadie and I corrected her, telling her my name was Sylvia. After three or four times of this I decided I should go home and when my mother asked me why, I replied the teacher didn't know who I was and kept calling me Sadie,

A new teacher came to the school and stood in front of the class introducing herself. Since I couldn't see, I walked up to the front of the class and surveyed her, walking solemnly round her without speaking then returned to my desk. Later in the staff room the teacher inquired who I was. When told, she made a comment, "You watch out for that name, she will go places that little girl"

One day when I was Matron at the hospital a staff member told me there was an elderly lady, a patient asking to see me. When I arrived at her bedside she told me the story and had asked if she could speak to the Matron, the little girl, Sylvia Frame, who had come a long way.

One of my jobs as a child was to walk into Taradale after school and pick up the meat that Mother had ordered from the butcher, and also collect the bread. I was handed the meat coupons Mother cut out, and a string bag to put the items in. Meeanee Road was not sealed and the side verges were unmown clumps of weed and anything else that would grow in this uncared for stretch. In the summer time the dust from the passing vehicles, and the spray of shingle added to the discomfort of the heat for a young child struggling with the weight of the parcels. One day when it was extremely hot, and while there wasn't the volume of traffic that there is now, the cars that did drive past swept up the dust in my face and the shingle on my legs, that I was moved to sit down at the roadside. I considered things for a moment or two and then raised my eyes to the heavens and said "God, if you give me a car when I grow up, I promise you I will pick everyone up." There is an interesting sequel that happened some years later.

In 1973 I became Matron at the Hawkes Bay Fallen Soldiers Memorial Hospital

As I was approaching my office I noted there was a group of nurses waiting outside. Presumably they were reporting sick. The usual procedure was for the staff to be seen by the Matron and then having been checked and Matron satisfied of the situation, they were given time off. I eventually installed a procedure where someone was appointed (in this case Marie Burrell) to deal with these situations.



Marie and I were heading to Taupo in my car. I noticed there were three young women with their packs on their backs trudging along so I stopped to give them a ride. After all, I had promised God if he gave me a car I would pick everyone up--- and I was sticking to my side of the bargain

My companion said to me in a muffled voice “these are the girls that reported in sick this morning.”

It was a very quiet drive on and I don’t think they would have been boasting that they had been picked up and given a lift by the Matron of the hospital where they were employed and the Staff Health Supervisor to whom they had reported sick and from whom they had requested time off.

*Footnote: this is only a small glimpse of what Sylvia has done in the years since leaving NGHS. Watch out for more...*

## Nellie Lim, formerly Nell Sang, nee Lum Jack

When I sadly left NGHS I drifted into serving in the fruit and vegie shop which had become part of my life from when I was 9 years old.

The deal was always the same. Serve the customer and add up in your head as you go along, tell them the total, take the money, ring it up on the cash register, count out the change into your hand. Then turn to your customer, count out the change to her/him after which you pick up the parcels to assist them to carry them to the car, which could be parked anywhere down the road and hand the items over. No plastic carry bags nor trolleys in which to put the newspaper wrapped parcels which were not taped with cello tape and the brown paper bags which held the potatoes, onions or peas stayed intact having been deftly flicked over with a twist of the fingers that produced little ears on either side of the bag. The amounts were not added up by a machine and there was nothing to indicate to you how much change to give. Some years later when I did work with a cash register that could instruct you how much change to give, I was quite disorientated and chose to disregard the process preferring to stick to my old ways.

As I grew more confident I would engage the customer who was invariably the “lady of the house” pondering what vegetable she should cook for tea, in a conversation which usually led to suggesting items for the meal with “why not have the lovely fresh spring cabbage stir fried” followed by explaining how to stir fry, and include a suggestion to use some ginger and garlic {add-on sales}. Perhaps we were the forerunners of the TV cooking programs that are constantly played, Nadia Lim or Jamie Oliver. When supermarkets engulfed the family owned fruit shop concepts the biggest loss was that personal service which was so much a part of the way of life.

On the odd occasion I had experienced twinges of envy that I had never finished my High School years instead of leaving after I got my School C, I was envious for a while that I hadn't gone to university, or polytech or Training College, they all sounded so grand and exciting, instead I had just graduated to “work in a shop”, not even an office, which sounded much more professional

Might I have taken sociology—I was good at dealing with people, or psychology -I could deal with tricky situations that involved difficult temperaments—and I was a good listener with the ability to digest the information I was hearing.

When I married Ron I had to learn to serve in a shop with very different products. There were the plants, birds, fish and accessories, flowers and floristry. Not so simple as selling fruit and vegies but a huge change and I had to study hard constantly to learn what the plants were, where and how they would grow and what they needed in soil structure. What a difference that was. A whole new ball game with daily challenges!

I learned the trick of catching fish with a net and flopping the poor fish into a plastic bag already half filled with water. The important thing was not to miss the bag opening and have the fish fall onto the floor.

When catching a canary or budgie one was always aware of being pecked on the hand as the poor bird struggled for freedom.

This was a time when wreaths were the norm at funerals, so it was nothing to have to produce 40 or more wreaths for one funeral, and as there could be two or three funerals in one day we had to be alert to making sure that they were sent to the correct service. Flowers associate with a mix of emotions and there were many sad moments and equally many happy moments.

There was always a lot of pressure on Mother's Day and probably the one that took the prize was when we had a phone call from someone complaining that when the flowers arrived at the house they were not handed to the Mother. It appears that she wasn't the person who answered the knock on the door. We didn't have time to wait around so the instructions to the delivery person was always to hand the flowers over carefully and say these flowers are for Mrs.-----

Out of town orders arrived by phone or telegram, the latter would be phoned through to us from the telegraph office. A universal code was used within the floral industry which told us what the item was, when to be delivered. The code was made up from a series of letters and in order to correctly record the letters it was well known that if a code read MEBCN---etc, it would be recited as -m for Mary, e for Edward, b for Bob, c for Charlie, n for Nellie and so on. If we were sending orders out we used the same method by phoning the telegraph office.

My sister in law, Rosie, sometimes came in to help when she was having a day off. She had a great love of animals, so she would adapt her recitation to suit her love of animals and we would hear her reciting m for Monkey, e for Elephant, b for Buffalo, c for Cockatoo, and so on. We sometimes wondered if it threw the telegraph operators off their seats when they were treated to this

During this time we had been blessed with two boys, Warren and Chris born 15 months apart. Home life, kindergarten, followed by school with camps, end of year functions, beginning of year decisions and programs, prize giving evenings, concerts and so on, were slotted in to the day to day running of our business. As they grew older they learned to perform tasks and served customers.

Learning about trees and shrubs, how they grew and what they needed was and has continued to be a fascinating challenge of which I never tired, and eventually when we shifted from the shop in town to open H B's first drive-in garden centre it was so exciting and our stock expanded so much to cater for the gardening public of the day.

The fundamentals of serving in a shop remained, only the product changed.

Another facet that was all important was advertising and now more than ever it was critical to have words spelt correctly and phrasing had to be carefully written to convey the desired description that was going to bring all the customers in asking for the item or items in question.

Because we struck so many mistakes in our written and recorded advertisements both the radio and newspapers got tired of my complaints and suggested I do them myself. So I would write out word for word, and do the layout space by space, line by line, so that the finished newspaper advertisement read to my satisfaction. The radio advertising became a matter of rushing in to the radio station and recording the advertisement that was to be played next day. My technician was very particular, if I was one or two seconds over the time allowed he would ask me to either delete a word or two or read it faster as we recorded it again.

When Ron passed away I continued to run the garden centre. The boys completed their secondary school education and both went on to University. I recall bawling all the way back from Palmerston North having delivered No. 1 son to Massey University. It wasn't a long drive, just as well, since I was the driver. The following year it was No. 2 son to Auckland.

One Saturday afternoon almost at closing time, there was a young couple looking round the garden centre. Their young child was tearing around, so I went out and asked him in their hearing, to be careful. He could knock something over, or he might fall and do

himself an injury. Well, he succeeded, at knocking over a concrete statue. There was this loud crash (remember it was late afternoon and there were no other customers) followed by silence. I went out and checked that the boy (it had to be a boy) was okay as he stood white faced by the broken statue. I picked it up and took it into the shop and soon after the couple came in quietly subdued and prepared to make their purchase. I told them they would have to pay for the cost that would be incurred for me to replace the statue, there was no argument about that, and I assisted them to load up their car, including the damaged goods. As I walked away I heard the woman say in a frustrated voice, and I don't even like the bloody thing!"

Selling plants led inevitably to helping to plan gardens for clients, so my drawing skills were brought into play. There was huge satisfaction in being able to suggest a sequence of plants that would bring continuing pleasure to the property owner as the colours came and went with the seasonal changes.

After I sold the garden centre there was a bit of a void during which I took people on garden tours and visited many beautiful properties in the middle of the North Island.

When I opened up the shop in the hospital in Hastings I named it Bedside Manners. I was back in a familiar environment of serving the public. The products had changed again but the basic goals were the same.

However I quickly realised that there was another important element to be taken into account, that being one of emotion. There were happy situations, and sad ones too, and many times we were just a listening ear. We considered it a privilege to be entrusted with the private thoughts of many who came through our doors.

There is something that warms your heart when a young man appears and tells you without any bidding that his baby daughter or son, has arrived. And obviously the question you ask is "how long ago?" The young man of slightly dishevelled appearance glances at his watch and as he calculates it tells you very proudly that it was just "56 minutes ago".

One thing that happened periodically was something I found amusing and paradoxically difficult to understand. Adult (generally mother) would appear with youngster in tow, saying "let's get Grandma (Nana, grandad, aunty---or whoever) a balloon. Which one shall we get? You pick one out." Youngsters don't have much trouble with that. With enviable uncluttered minds they stretch out their hand to the item and do not discriminate, but grab the one at nearest eye level.

This is where the fun begins. Adult doesn't agree with the choice, takes it off the child and says "No, not that one, let's get this one." Inevitably a tug of war takes place vocally which sometimes reaches crescendo pitch. I cannot understand why Adult does this. She has invited the child to choose something, then immediately disapproves but doesn't explain why. This is quite a mystery because all the balloons were cheerful brightly coloured items with very appropriate words on them. There were often occasions when child would run off either getting bored with the whole event, or the wrestling would reach alarming vocal levels. Adult, left to complete the transaction has on many an occasion picked out the identical balloon the child has originally chosen, paid for it and gone sheepishly down the hall with grizzling child in tow.

I remember there was a lady who would come every night to visit her adult son. He was in hospital for a long period and her nightly visits would begin with her calling in to buy a magazine or something to take to him. On the way out she would stop in and we would chat, she would tell me how his day had been. Eventually he was discharged and I never saw her again until some four or five years later I was stopped by a lady who identified herself as that same person and thanked me for always being there to talk with her.

When I was walking through Clive Square one morning I heard a rough voice call out, but since it wasn't a familiar voice, I kept walking. The sound came again, so I looked around and there was a man, roughly dressed, Maori, looking at me. "hey, you the lady from the shop at the hospital, aye," said the individual. As I nodded he grinned a toothless grin, "Yeah, I remember you, aye." His face was friendly for all his facial hair, with crinkles round his lively eyes. I thanked him for calling out to me and as I walked away pondered the journey of friendliness, a kind word that goes a long way and doesn't cost us a thing.

I take time to listen, the speaker may be very lonely, live on their own, or perhaps lives with people who no longer acknowledge them and their observations. These people are individuals too, and they deserve to be spoken to and listened to. They are grateful that someone takes the time to stop.



I give praise where it is deserved, especially if I strike a shop assistant who is bright, cheerful and helpful for they need encouragement, their boss might not have heard them, but I have. And so will others who, remembering the friendly personality will return to be assisted by someone who takes an interest in the customer and a pride in herself/himself.

We all have a need to be acknowledged as human beings with feelings, just as we need to recognise others .I guess my philosophy is that everyone needs to know self-worth and for some it lies in the need to be recognised as a worthwhile individual. A shared moment with a listening ear and a friendly smile costs us nothing and for all we know, the words spoken may trigger some worthwhile thoughts that replace self-doubt, lack of confidence and self esteem.

It took me a long time to "be comfortable in my own skin". I had a host of issues to work through, as I grew up a Chinese girl in a western world. The lessons have been many, and my understanding and tolerance have been tested many times.