

The Storyline

Magazine of The New Zealand Guild of Storytellers Nga Kaikorero Purakau O Aotearoa



DECEMBER 2017



Editorial

As the year comes to an end and the special time of sharing, giving, family and friends is upon us story is big in my heart.

Most of my family is not physically within reach but the stories never go away.

The same with so many of my friends. They are all over the world and some no longer alive. But their stories are so rich.

Sometimes it seems my shelves are cluttered with things and books and my walls with pictures but all of them have stories.

All remind me of what my life has been about and, I hope, still is about.

My body gets older and less speedy, but my heart and mind are vibrant – all because of story.

What about you?

Is story really a key part of your life and do you truly believe we should do all we can to ensure the life around us doesn't lose this absolutely essential part of our human-ness?

Because sometimes I wonder how long before we really start using technology only as a tool and returning to the person to person sharing.

Another year goes by and we haven't increased the membership which is quite sad.

It seems to me that it is very difficult to grow the Guild in this long skinny land but we should, if we believe in our art, be trying to add membership in our own areas.

I have said before that even if each one of us added one member we would double.

The magazine only comes out 4 times a year so if each of you sent a contribution twice a year that would make quite a good range of articles and reports.



There are two people, down here, who will always come to the rescue but it is a narrow pool for me to draw upon.

I need to know what you each believe about storytelling and its importance in our lives.

Or are Tania and I trying to push a dead issue?

If it is important in your area could you let us have a report on what is happening? Each quarter?

I do know a little about one or two areas but only through hearsay.

I do believe there are people out there telling and sharing but we don't get the reports.

There are people who don't belong to the Guild who are telling and if you know them perhaps you could persuade them.

"At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person.

Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us."

Albert Schweitzer

Liz Miller,
Editor
lizm@outlook.co.nz

President's Report

December 2017

As I sit here pondering what to put on this blank page and reflecting on what I have put in these reports over the past few years, I realize that there have been few major changes. There have, however, been lots of little changes that are easy to overlook but add together to make our organization just a little bit better each year.

We continue to be a very small (but dedicated) group – just over 30 members. We have lost some members over the year, and gained some new ones. We extend a very warm welcome to all our new members. Our aim is to provide a means of communication between all our members and the promotion of storytelling within Aotearoa New Zealand.

We have once again produced four magazines throughout the year, and these are mailed out in hard-copy as well as being put on the website for those that would prefer to read on-line. We have also been asked to provide this as an MP3 but have decided that the two current options should meet the needs of our small membership. As always, please keep sending in your contributions for this magazine – it is for you and by you, only collated by Liz, so the more you contribute the better it will be, the better we will know what is happening in your area, and the stronger our links with each other will be.

Our website is still being visited by people looking for tellers for events – I have received several enquiries due to my profile on there. If you have not yet put your details on or have not updated them recently, I suggest you do so. If you have any difficulties, contact the wonderful Hemi and he will be happy to help you.



New Zealand's small, diverse and widely-dispersed population has contributed to the difficulties we, as a Guild, have with growing the profile of storytelling, but we are by no means alone in this. Other countries with larger populations experience the same problems we do – storytelling is not seen to be important, especially for adults, and yet we know it really, really is. And so, we keep trying to grow the Guild, to raise the profile of storytelling in our local community and New Zealand-wide.

I would like to once again take this opportunity to thank Liz Miller, for all her many, many hours of work on behalf of the Guild. She is our able secretary, treasurer, magazine editor and major cheerleader. She is known and respected around the world and we are blessed indeed to have her experience, knowledge and passion supporting our organization – sincere thanks to you, Liz. Also, thanks go to each and every member of the Guild, for your support of the vision we have to promote the art of storytelling in New Zealand.

Happy telling, all.

Tania Faulkner-McKenzie
andrewtania@hotmail.com



Secretary Report

We have 30 individual members. 2 live in the USA. 4 group memberships. This means 34 memberships.

There are three members who are half a year late.

There are 4 members who now owe two years subscription so if it isn't paid we will stop sending the magazine.

Our AGM was held 3rd December.
8:00pm – 8:17pm

We had 2 present on the phone and a number present by proxy:

Margaret Dockrill, Barbara Rhodes, Heather Perriam, Sharon Moreham, Mary Sheddan, Gaye Sutton, Lethea Erz, Lesley Dowding, Moira Wairama, Antoinette Everts, Margaret Blay, Miriam McCaleb, Neville Guthrie of Storyspinners in Timaru.

We do thank these members for their positive responses and support.

Some of them had also made nominations.

Treasurer's report:

The audited balance sheet was forwarded earlier. I can report the taxes were nil and the Incorporation is up to date. We had \$6,679.14 when the audit was complete. We had \$6,966.33 at mid-November.

It was agreed that subscriptions remain as at present which is \$25 for individuals and \$30 for groups and international.

Election of officers and committee

President: Tania Faulkner-McKenzie
Antoinette Everts, Moira Wairama & others.

Vice-President: Antoinette Everts
Keith Levy, Margaret Blay & others

Secretary/Treasurer: Liz Miller
Antoinette Everts, Barbara Rhodes & others

Committee	
Mary Sheddan	<i>Tania F.M/Liz Miller</i>
Gaye Sutton	<i>Liz Miller/Sharon Moreham</i>
Lesley Dowding	<i>Tania F.M/Antoinette Everts</i>

Moved that the nominations all be accepted.
Liz Miller/Tania Faulkner-McKenzie

Liz will continue as editor unless someone else offers.

We were sad that one of our members tried to join the call and somehow did not get through. (Remember this phone call is free to members)

We decided to investigate the possibility of a Skype Conference call for the AGM in 2018.

If anyone has good information about this please let us know.

If it is not possible we need to remind members that this is only a very short meeting each year.

Meeting closed at 8.17pm.

Editor's Report

DEADLINE for next issue is **MID-MARCH** for April issue.



Prayer of the Donkey

O God, who made me
to trudge along the road
always,
to carry heavy loads
always,
and to be beaten
always!

Give me great courage and gentleness.
One day let somebody understand me –
that I may no longer want to weep
because I can never say what I mean
and they make fun of me.

Let me find a juicy thistle –
and make them give me time to pick it.
And, Lord, one day, let me find again
my little brother of the Christmas crib.
Amen.

From "Prayers from the Ark" by Carmen Bernos de Gasztold and translated by Rumer Godden

Sent in by Mary Sheddan



Website Matters

Remember all members have a personal code for our website so you can just go in and use it.

If you are unsure how to add your profile, an event or anything else you can send it to our webmaster, Hemi, and he will do it.

Hemi has added all the past copies of the Storyline (back to July 2013 which is all he had available) and will keep each issue as a new one is published in that file.

Things you can do on the website:

- Create a storytelling profile to advertise your storytelling services.
- Add your profile as a member interested in this amazing art.
- Post ideas, news and stories.
- Post upcoming events.

To login go to storytelling.org.nz and click the yellow "Member Login" button in the bottom right corner of the website.

We also have a more direct login – www.storytelling.nz

Then follow the instructions. If you have forgotten your password click the request for a new one.

Have a question or need help? Simply email the site administrator at: hemi.ruatoto@gmail.com

A web-site is only as effective as the members make it. We cannot make up things to add to it.

Some of our members have not posted their profile at all. Why?

Even just your name and what and where you tell or listen will at least let people know we don't only have the few members listed.

A new story on the web-site would be good.



Happenings Down South

We are in the busy stage of planning for the visit of these two tellers and we know they will make a deep and wonderful impression on all ages here in Southland. Some of our members have made it here at the festival time to hear the tellers we bring each year so it is something for you to dream about for 2018.

Experience the magic that is storytelling presented by two international masters of the genre. Diane Ferlatte and Anna Jarrett.



www.dianeferlatte.com

Grammy nominated storyteller Diane Ferlatte, is an award winning, dynamic performer. She's been researching, collecting and telling stories for over thirty years. She believes that telling and listening to each other's stories enables us to both learn about each other and understand each other better. She views storytelling as a traditional art form that can promote literacy, imagination, and values in the young. "Diane Ferlatte's charismatic personality sets the stage on fire. Her storytelling is so powerful that the stories she tells become part of you." Hindu newspaper, Bengaluru, India



www.travellingstoryteller.com.au

Anna Jarrett is an internationally acclaimed professional storyteller and musician with 25 years' experience, and a passion for storytelling, travel and adventure.

Anna's eclectic approach and deep understanding of story, is inspired by her world travels, and a deep personal connection to her home by the sea. Anna also frequently tours to outback NSW, storytelling with those who are living in remote towns.

At the heart of Anna's creative story work is the belief that everyone has a story to tell, a voice to sing and an ability to play.

"The music and your soul touched stories were beautiful and unforgettable." Anna Cheng, Commonwealth Carelink Respite Centre.

But before May arrives we will be promoting storytelling in the Heritage Month over March.


Here is the invitation from Heritage South's Cathy McFie:

"We should be so pleased if you were able to share a family story or memory at the Family/Whanau storytelling programme on Saturday 24 March from 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon at the Invercargill Public Library's Learning and Activities Space. The event is organised by

Heritage South and celebrates the importance of storytelling to bring our heritage to life. In addition to four adult storytellers, we hope to have up to 5 young people providing a youthful perspective of their own family/whanau.

Heritage South will provide follow-up information in the new year, to the invited children. Storytellers Liz Miller and Tania Faulkner-McKenzie will be available to offer support and advice to these children. They might also be interested in the storytelling workshop that is being held for school children (Years 6, 7, and 8) at the same venue on Wednesday 14 March from 1 – 2.30 p.m. This could be a good opportunity for them to practice their story!

Cathy McFie.



IT'S NOT
WHAT'S UNDER THE
TREE
THAT
MATTERS
IT'S WHO'S
gathered
AROUND IT

Lexophilia

**How does Moses make tea?
Hebrews it.**

**Venison for dinner again?
Oh deer!**

**I stayed up to see where the sun went,
and then it dawned on me.**

**England has no kidney bank,
but it does have a Liverpool.**

**I tried to catch some fog,
but I mist.**

**This girl said she recognised me
from the vegetarian club,
but I'd never met herbivore.**



Contributions

THE MAGIC LANTERN

Bring an object from home to tell a story about it... said Judith at a meeting of Southern Storytellers.

Home is "Mosswood", home of the Sheddan family, a farm that is the "family roots" for the descendants of three brothers, David, James and Robert, who all came to Tapanui from Scotland in 1863. David and his wife Anne had thirteen children and built a home at Mosswood. Life was hard, and Anne was a very demanding matriarch. The children were brought up with a very strong work ethic. In their book *Toys of New Zealand*, Peggy Armstrong and Denise Jackson write:

The children who were first generation New Zealanders seldom rate a mention in history books, but they were usually the unpaid slaves of parents who, of necessity, exploited them to the full... it was perhaps a long time before some of these children knew the joy of owning such a useless object as a real toy. So it was with the Sheddan children.

This toy Magic Lantern is a Mosswood artifact. It is a tin toy from Germany, made in Nuremberg by the firm of Ernst Plank. According to my father-in-law, Bert, it was brought to New Zealand by a relative who came out from Scotland. As far as we ascertain, it must have been about 1890, the time Bert was born. Bert spoke with a distinctive burr and when reminiscing, he always started with I mind the time... His parents he always called mater and pater.

I mind the times we got to see it, he would say. "Twas only on special occasions. Mater would hang a white sheet on the wall and Pater would put the slides through. We childer weren't allowed to touch it. Then it all got wrapped up and put back on the top shelf of the bathroom cupboard.

The bathroom cupboard is where my husband remembers it. When he was a child, his father

brought it out, his mother hung a white sheet, and he and his sister watched the slide show. And when they played with it and broke some of the slides, they incurred the wrath of his father, who was slow to anger.

And when our three children were small, on special occasions, I put up a portable screen and my husband showed the slides, but, remembering his father's wrath, they did not get to play with it as a toy.

Our grandchildren too, have watched the slide show, and I hope, appreciate that it is a family heirloom and respect it as such. I know Bridget does. When she was sixteen she visited Te Papa. She looked incredulously at the people queueing up to enter the household goods section. But Grandpa's got all that stuff at home she told her mother. So, when she wanted to take photographs of old stuff for a photography assignment it was to Grandpa she came, and he obligingly showed her a lot more of the accumulation of pioneer and vintage paraphernalia that David and Anne Sheddan and their descendants have left behind them.

Of all that Mosswood retains of the past, the Magic Lantern is special to me, as I mind the time I watched the look on the face of an old grandfather reliving the wonder of his childhood memories, as he shared something of his childhood with his grandchildren. I have seen that look too, on my husband's face, as he showed the slides to his grandchildren. And I hope the wonder of this toy of the past will be appreciated by the next generation, and those yet to come.

*Mary Priscilla
Sheddan*



Quotes

Jay O'Callahan

I learned that I have to do the emotional work that a story demands. The emotional work may be tears, laughter, shouting, pacing, dreaming, singing or pounding on a pillow. I use a journal. I draw images. I go for walks and fume or cry or shout to the sea. I work with rehearsal buddies. The important thing is I want to face the emotions in each story, not evade them

Many of my personal stories were created to heal old wounds.

Old wounds can be the fire that makes a story live. We all have these wounds. The artist has the good fortune of being able to make something beautiful from these wounds

Personal stories have the potential to heal and the potential to hurt.

One of the best ways to understand history is to create a personal story.

If we go deep enough into a personal story, it becomes universal. We are, after all, all human. We grow, we have illusions, we dare, we get afraid, we love, we hate, we struggle and we grow. We do all of these things at particular places and with particular people and therein lies richness, mystery, and beauty.

Diane Ferlatte

This is what it's all about--the little moment that lasts forever in one's memory: that time of intimate connection with the listener, even someone you hardly know. When we tell stories, especially personal stories where we open ourselves up to whoever is listening, there is often for the listener a value to be learned, or encouragement to be gained, knowing that others before them have conquered fears and challenges similar to their own. For some, the right story at the right time will enrich their day, and even make the world a little better place. That's why I really love to tell stories.

Every life is a story like a thread that interweaves with myriads of others to form the tapestry of humanity. (author unknown)

People are hungry for stories. It is part of our very being. Storytelling is a form of history, of immortality too. It goes from one generation to another. (Studs Terkel)

Mary Priscilla Sheddan sent these quotes as gifts to us all.

REMEMBER THE FIVE SIMPLE RULES TO BE HAPPY...

1. **Free your heart from hatred.**
 2. **Free your mind from worries.**
 3. **Live simply.**
 4. **Give more.**
 5. **Expect less.**
- Not always easy.**



12 countries in one month.

Heather Perriam

My good friend Faye had packed her bag three weeks before we left. As is usual with me I packed the night before we left. We left Invercargill bound for Dubai and Copenhagen on a cold May morning. 25 hours flying from Auckland landed us in Dubai bleary eyed and vague with 3 hours to find our connecting flight. Dubai airport is very big. It took us two and a half of those three hours to find our gate. Before we boarded I had to visit the toilet. A very interesting affair. A hole in the ground. I was very glad I was not yet 80 and was fit enough to adopt the odd position required to relieve tension in the nether regions. Six more long hours of no sleep and we landed in Copenhagen. It was 2pm their time and by now we had had 3 breakfasts in a row. It was too early to go to bed, so we had lunch and kept each other awake till 7pm when we toppled into bed and slept for 12 hours.

The next day we did the hop/on hop off the bus thing around the city to get to know the place a bit. One of the buses was going to the zoo but I didn't know which bus. However Fay climbed confidently onto a blue bus and said, "We are going to the Zoo." I said, "How do you know?"

She said, "The first clue was the bus driver saying it was going to the zoo."

At that point I decided all important decisions would be left to her and I would just go with the flow. Over the next three days we were lost more often than not, but the locals always stopped when they saw us looking at a map and sorted us out and really it didn't matter whether we were lost or not because even if we weren't lost we had no idea where we were. Copenhagen is a land of bikes with their own bike lane and more often than not we were on it instead of the footpath. We came to expect bike bells ringing in our ears and to be scrambling madly out of the way.

Day three of our holiday we boarded the Norwegian Star to tour the Baltic for 10 days. This ship was so big that even on the 5th day we were still getting lost.

On board were people from everywhere in the world and no Kiwis. I had the distinct impression that by the time I got off it I would be speaking English with an accent.

A Dutch lady who spoke no English became my new best friend. I spoke no Dutch and we spent hilarious hours trying to understand each other.

Our first stop was St Petersburg, in Russia. I would describe the city as austere and flashy. I thought that everything that glitters is not gold. Their churches were magnificent, but their people lived in drab 6 story apartments with no elevators. Furniture had to be lifted by crane and put in through the windows and everything else carried up the stairs. Wild dogs roamed the back streets and would attack if they thought you had food. However, the night at the ballet was wonderful and the dancers were amazing.

The next day as we pulled into Helsinki in Finland the Captain said over the intercom, "Finland was the first country in the world to allow women the vote." Then in an almost whisper he added, "Except NZ."

We don't exist in the rest of the world. People would say "Where do you come from?" and when we said NZ they would look puzzled then their faces would light up and they would say "Oh, go the All Blacks!"

This was our only wet day so on one of the endless church visits I stayed back and talked to the bus driver. He told me that during the 2nd world war, when the Russians were coming to bomb Helsinki, the city set up a whole heap of street lights away from the city on open ground. They then turned all the city lights off. When the Russians came they bombed the open ground and the only bombs to fall on the city were those that missed their target. He also said that it was against the law to have a building in the city without a bomb shelter under it. They are sure the Russians will come again. He took me and showed me a bomb shelter. It was so deep underground it was scary.

Estonia was our next stop and I'm sure this is where Danny Kaye was filmed doing the movie of Hans Christian Anderson. Little windy cobbled streets and tall buildings with small windows. Washing hanging out of upstairs windows. Happy people with a big town square with a stage where dancing and singing was always going on. A wonderful place that made you feel you were in a fairy tale. The town had a huge wall round it and they were also sure the Russians or

the Germans will come again. We are so lucky to live in NZ.

This guide told me his grandmother had a farm and she had 4 sheeps. Sheeps???? Yes, they call them sheeps.

In Sweden we missed the bus to take us to town. Not our fault. It left the ship 2 hours before we had been told it would pick us up, so we were given ferry tickets to take us to town and there we found the hop on hop off bus. We thought we'd do a loop and decide after that where we would get off and explore. At stop 1 the bus driver got off for a cigarette break and we all waited. Half an hour later he carried on. The traffic was unbelievable, and we soon realized we would miss our ship leaving if we even went one round with him, so we got off at the stop nearest to our ferry. Just a 5 minute walk through the old part of town the bus driver told us, right past the palace. Well I haven't seen the palace yet. We stopped for a coffee and toilet break. All coffee bars have toilets, there are no public ones. Much refreshed we continued our 5 minute walk. Half an hour later we arrived on the waterfront. But not where we had got off the ferry and we had no idea which way to go. It was a case of "eenymeenymynymo" and we went left. Another half an hour later whollah! We found our ferry stop and a couple off the ship. But, they had been waiting for an hour for the ferry and none had stopped to pick them up. By now it was 3 pm and our ship was leaving at 3.30. Finally, we got picked up and, "Oh no!" the ferry is taking us sightseeing. At 29 mins past three we got back to the ship. Running like idiots from the ferry stop to the ship. Stockholm was beautiful. If only we had had time to see it.

Our cruise ended in Denmark again and we took a fast taxi to the airport to catch our flight to Spain. It was cancelled. Of course, it was. Why were we surprised? We were re-routed through Switzerland to Zurich on Swiss Air. That of course was not without incident. There was a huge thunderstorm above Zurich so it was very similar to a windy Wellington landing and then we had to sit in the plane till the storm passed over so they could bring the weigh bridge thingy over to get us off the plane.

Another Swiss Air plane to Spain and we finally arrived but of course our shuttle bus didn't come to pick us up.

They had found out our original flight was cancelled so didn't come. We tried to phone them but no one

answering the phone spoke English and we didn't speak Spanish. We finally found a taxi driver who spoke English and he rang our resort and translated back and forth between us. Our shuttle was not coming so we took a taxi to our resort.

The man who had been in contact with Faye over our bookings over the weeks prior to our arrival phoned our unit to tell us there was a festival in Marbella the next day. It was half an hour drive away, but he would send the shuttle to take us to the bus stop.

At 9am the shuttle did just that and we arrived in Marbella on the bus to the sight of lovely Spanish horses pulling carts and carriages and all the women dressed in flamenco dresses. We took a carriage ride which was supposed to be half an hour, but the driver liked us so much we were with him an hour. Then we went to a café for lunch. We couldn't read the menu, the waitress couldn't understand us, but we ended up with food and it was nice. We spent the afternoon in the town square watching the dancers and singers and enjoyed it so much we missed the bus home. We finally found a taxi driver who spoke a leetle English and told him we were at the Costa del Sol resort. To our astonishment he said, "Which one?" We had no clue. We didn't know there were 4. Each in a different town. He asked did we know the name of the town. Faye said she thought it started with D. Oh yes, he knew that one and off we went. Of course, when we arrived it wasn't the right one. Oh dear!!!! He turned his meter off and asked did we know any landmarks at all. I said "Yes." We had had dinner at Rosey's Bar and did he know that place and yes he did. He never turned his meter back on bless him and once at Rosey's Bar I knew exactly where we lived.

The next day we went on a bus trip to the Rock of Gibraltar. What an amazing place. The only bit that wasn't part of the rock was reclaimed land from the sea. Our guide told us that Gibraltar was settled in the 700's by the Boers from Africa.

The rock was all limestone but as hard as granite and houses and apartments clung to its steep sides. There were more tunnels than open roads on it.

Our guide told us that in the 1700s Admiral Horatio Nelson died there. As he was a war hero who had never lost a fight the British wanted to take him home to Britain for a burial suited to his status. In those days it took 28 days by sea to get to Britain and Horatio would be in a very sad state after that amount of time so they put him in a barrel filled with cognac, that

being the strongest alcohol available. On the trip back to England the sailors discovered there was a barrel of cognac on board and promptly put a tap in the bottom of it. By the time they got to England the barrel was empty aside from the pickled body of Admiral Nelson. No one knows the condition of the sailors' health.

Faye did some shopping there while I sat under a tree. It was 53 degrees at 4pm and any way I don't do shopping.

Our resort was absolutely beautiful and we breakfasted on our deck every morning overlooking the swimming pool. Each morning a grandma, granddad, mum, dad and a wee guy who had just learned to walk would come out of the unit below us and head to the pool. Here the wee guy would be dressed in blue togs down to his little chubby knees, a blue sun hat and water wings were attached to his upper arms. We named him Water Wings. They would then take him to the side of the adults' pool and he would jump in chuckling and laughing. His swimming ability was amazing. He would dog paddle the length of the pool and back again while his older family swam around him. When they thought he'd had enough Dad would lift him onto the side of the pool and then climb out by which time Water Wings would have jumped back in and be giggling his way back up the pool. I would have liked to take him home. Such a happy wee guy.

The next day we took a bus trip up into the mountains to a town called Ronda. This place was first settled in the 12th century. We left our resort at 9am in 30 degrees and when we all piled out of the bus in the mountains in our short sleeves and light clothes we got an awful shock. It was 13 degrees. We all shivered. An amazing place with all its old buildings.

On the way home, a Scottish lady on the bus looked over the side as we wound our way down the mountain and commented she should put her seat belt on incase we went over the side. As it was a drop of over a kilometre before we would hit anything. I tended to think a parachute might have been of more use.

Faye and I had got lost in Ronda but as we did that everywhere I won't dwell on it.

After a wonderful week on the coast we took the fast train to Madrid for three days. 300 miles an hour the train went but you wouldn't have known. The countryside was mostly brown grass and olive trees.

Madrid was a madhouse. I thought of it as maggots on a dead sheep.

We checked into our hotel and went out for dinner.

I tried to explain to 4 waiters, who did their best to understand me, I wanted veal, mashed potatoes and salad. I got very rare rump steak, mashed potatoes so runny you needed a spoon to eat them and no salad.

We went to a Vodofone shop the next day to get a card to ring home. It took 3 hours. In Spain people do things slowly. They get up slowly and late. No one is around till 10 am then they start appearing out of the wood work. By lunch time the streets are full of people going nowhere in particular. They seem to live on tapas and alcohol. Drinking and eating tapas starts about 2 pm and continues from café to café and bar to bar till long after midnight. A proper Kiwi type meal is almost impossible to get. and everything has garlic in it, even the fries.

However, all is not lost. We found a chocolate shop that sold liquid hot chocolate. Very sweet and rich Fay loved it. Me not so much BUT upstairs they had a restaurant and there I got a plain grilled flounder, no garlic, salad also no garlic and fries. Oh, what bliss to my assaulted tummy to eat a plain meal without the usual adornments on it.

The next day we spent the morning in the Turkish baths. Oh, what luxury, up to our necks in scented warm water. We were pulled out after half an hour to drink some odd tasting tea and pick an essence for the lovely massage that was to follow, then it was back to the warm water to doze and dream the morning away.

That night we went on a guided tapa tour. We should not have had dinner first.

We tasted the oddest things on that tour, drank much wine and walked for miles. My over fed tummy groaned in protest at the influx of sweet breads, octopus and other delicacies that were shoved into it.

An exhausting way to finish our time in this lovely country.

The next day we flew out to Dubai arriving there at 1am in the middle of Rammadan. A time when there is no eating or drinking between sunrise and sunset and the temperature was always over 50 degrees.

We had a guided tour the next day around the city and we were allowed to drink water but only in the bus.

The following evening we went on a desert safari. We were picked up by a 4 wheel drive at 4.30 when it was cooler, 53 degrees, and driven to the desert where our driver along with 6 other 4 wheel drives let their tyres down a bit and proceeded to race over the sandhills, sliding sideways, forwards and backwards. For the first time since I was a child I felt car sick. Every so often he would stop for us to get out in this crushing heat and take photos. I felt hotter and sicker with each passing moment. I had no desire or camera to take photos, I don't need photos of a sandhill, and I just wanted water.

Finally, we came to the camp where we were to have a BBQ and watch the locals dancing. We were supplied with, and allowed to drink water, in the 4 wheel drive. I poured endless amounts over my head and drank more water in the next hour than I would generally drink in a month. I came to the conclusion that I had heat stroke in addition to my car sickness. Finally, the sun went down and eating began. The food was a nice plain BBQ with heaps of water and I finally started to feel more like myself. The dancing was done

by a man in a wide flaring skirt and was really quite amazing.

I was glad to return to our hotel for a nice coffee, a shower and a sleep.

I drifted off quite convinced I would never visit Dubai again.

Our holiday was over and now we had to look forward to the long, long flight home. We left Dubai at 2pm on Thursday afternoon and we arrived in Auckland on Sunday with a 4 hour wait for our flight to Christchurch. We tumbled off the plane there knowing in a couple of hours and one short flight we would be home. But Invercargill airport was closed with fog, Faye's bag was missing and nothing changes with us does it? But the airline put us up in a hotel and we finally got home the next morning where I slept on and off for the next 2 days.

A brilliant holiday. Faye is already dreaming of a new adventure.

Christmas Quilt

By: Chester Carl Ambrose

Snow had come in time to make it a white Christmas in the small village of Barrington, Vermont.

In fact, it had snowed on and off for the last three days prior to Christmas Eve. Snow was deep. It was blown into snowdrifts four to five feet high. The village looked like a picture postcard of an idyllic Christmas scene. But there was a problem, the heavy snow on the roads to come to a stop. Children of the village were worried. How could Mr. Nathan Jackson, the storyteller, make it to the village's Christmas Eve celebration?

It was a grand night, full of traditions. The village Christmas tree was selected from the ample pine forest that covered the hillsides surrounding this picturesque village. The tradition was that the sixth grade pupils would be the ones who selected the tree. Their families would set up the tree on the stage in the large community hall. The tree was decorated each year with special ornaments. These ornaments had special meaning to the villagers because they demonstrated stories told by Mr. Nathan Jackson.

Christmas Eve the community hall was full. Grown-ups had gathered to the rear of the hall, while the children took up their customary positions in front of the stage. Many of them on the floor with pillows, blankets or just heavy jackets to soften their seats on the hardwood floor.

The children were all hopeful that Mr. Jackson would make it to the Christmas Eve celebration. He hadn't missed a year since he started story telling in 1969.

Children and adults all had the storyteller on their minds. Conversations throughout the great hall centered on stories that were told in past years. Everyone had a favorite. When groups of people agreed on a particular story they would share their remembrances by saying, "Do you remember when he told the story about...yes, it was 1969 when he first told the special story about the Christmas tree, -he called it the 'tree of life'."

"...And do you remember how he told the story about the star window in our church? The star was just an

ordinary clear glass but it turned magically into a gold star on the Christmas Eve in 1987.”

“Oh yes, my favorite story was the one about the train that overcame many problems to bring us Christmas gifts from distant relatives. That was the year story of 1974 or ‘75...whatever...it was a good story... and don’t forget the funny one that told us how Santa Claus’ beard had grown so long.”

The telephone on the wall of the community center rang. All talking stopped so that Mrs. Anderson could answer it.

“Oh no!” said Mrs. Anderson. “That is too bad,” she continued.

“You did! They’re on their way? All right...our best to Mr. Jackson. Thank you.”

She hung up the phone.

“What was that all about?” asked the town mayor.

Mrs. Anderson said the call was Mrs. Jackson, Nathan’s wife. She said he was too ill to make the trip. However, she said that she made something for us. It will be a story gift for the year.

“What is it?” asked the mayor.

“She didn’t say.” answered Mrs. Anderson. “She said their son and nephew are bringing it.”

One of the children spoke up. “How will they get here? The roads are all covered with snow!”

Mrs. Anderson turned to the questioning child and said, “Christopher, they will be coming by a horse drawn sled and they are already on their way.” Suddenly sleigh bells were heard outside! It sounds like they were here! The son and the nephew walked to the front of the hall, up the steps to the stage.

They unfolded the quilt. The son pointed out the tree of life... the church’s golden star.... Santa’s long beard.

The son then spoke, “I don’t think that my father will be telling any more stories. But he did want my mother to include other patches in the Christmas quilt--- of untold stories: so that in the future years the quilt can be hung for all to see. Old remembered stories could be retold. Imagination could be used to tell new stories. Mrs. Anderson... could you tell me the story about your favorite cookie jar. Mr. Johnson, how about your wood shop and the rocking horse you made for your granddaughter and grandson. And you Mr.

Mayor...about the year we had no Christmas snow. You made snowmen out of straw and bed sheets.”

Turning to the crowd the son continued. “Do you see your story in my mother’s Christmas quilt? Close your eyes and think about it!”

To this day the stories in Barrington, Vermont have a special meaning to all who hear them.

I now charge you parents to gather your family on Christmas Eve... share your traditions...your love... but also His love---- who came to us as an ordinary baby so many years ago. And that is the end of my story.

Author Information:

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Merry
Christmas

Storytelling Groups/Contacts

REGIONAL CONTACTS

The person nearest to you should be happy to talk to you or help you arrange an occasion or start a group or just talk storytelling! If there is no one in your area perhaps YOU would be the regional contact. Let us know.

NORTHLAND/ FAR NORTH		Keith Levy The Roaming Rhymester	027 477 0211 keith@keithlevy.com
AUCKLAND	7:30pm 1st Thursday of month	Margaret Blay (09) 630 6774	40 Croyden Street Mount Eden, 1024 margaretblay@gmail.com
CENTRAL HAWKES BAY	Phone for details	Mary Kippenberger (06) 856 8367	212 Argyll Road, RD1 Otane marykipp@hotmail.com
WAIRARAPA	Email for details gaye@storyweaver.co.nz	Gaye Sutton	Gaye Sutton, Te Pukeko Chester Road, RD1
WELLINGTON		Tony Hopkins (04) 381 3307 TXT 027 737 3185	blackcherokee@actrix.co.nz
CANTERBURY		Sharon Moreham (03) 967 7888 022 121 3648	thestorycollectivechch@gmail.com
TIMARU	3:30pm last Tuesday of month in Timaru Library	027 292 5270	dockrill@xtra.co.nz
INVERCARGILL	7:30pm 4th Tuesday of month	Heather Perriam 021 180 6090	hrp@xtra.co.nz
OKATO	7:00pm 1st Thursday of the month. Step into Story	Lesley Dowding (06) 772 4545	lezley@xtra.co.nz

If there are any changes, please let me know.

Sender
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