

Manzanillo

March 2016

SUN

Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine



Freda Vickery (Rumford)

May 24, 1934 - February 27, 2016

Special Memorial Issue

Dear Manzanillo Sun reader,

We are pleased to present to you this special **tribute edition** of the **Manzanillo Sun**, in honour of our founder and Editor-in-Chief, **Freda Vickery Rumford**. We lost our friend on February 27, 2016 but we have our memories of Freda to keep us smiling.



May 24, 1934 - February 27, 2016

Many of you have sent very heartfelt thoughts and words for the family and we appreciate it very much. Some of those words are in this edition of the magazine.

A number of stories written by Freda, some about her life in Manzanillo and Mexico and stories of other contexts and times in her life, are included here. We know you will enjoy them all.

Kirby, her husband, has been working on curating Freda's collection of stories and Ian has been working hard on getting all of these to all of you. It's been a tough couple of weeks for the whole family but this was important to do. We hope more of Freda's writings will come back to visit in future editions as well.

For many of you, you spent time with Freda and Nigel and Ian and got to know them in years past. All were the better for it. And all will miss Freda's greetings and witty conversation. We hope that this edition will bring a smile to you as you remember your interactions with the family over the years.

If you would like to leave words for the family, please consider signing the guestbook. The link is below.

Thank you for sharing this edition with us and for thinking of your friend, Freda. We hope that the many good memories bring you more comfort than sadness. She was a lady that left her mark on her many family members, friends and the communities in which she lived. We will miss her dearly! For now, we leave you with words about and by Freda.

Farewell dear Freda,
Dana Parkinson

For Freda's guestbook, [follow this link](http://newsite.manzanillosun.com/guestbook-posts/).
<http://newsite.manzanillosun.com/guestbook-posts/>

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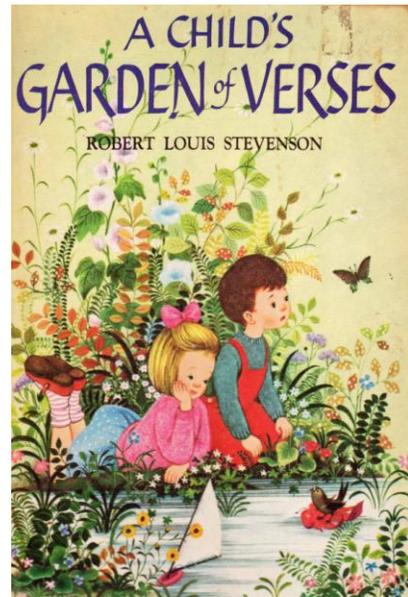
CENSORSHIP



FREDA A. RUMFORD

BY

I was four when I taught myself to read. By five, I was reading stories and books designated for much older children and thoroughly enjoying them. My uncle's "Boy's Own" and "Hotspur" were favourites because each week there were exciting serials.



Childhood in England in the '40's was difficult, as it was in every evolved country. Toys and games hard to obtain and young imaginations needed to be diverted from the world outside. Thank goodness for books; they helped me through many lonely and frightening times.

I had many best friends to keep me company. I would curl up in bed with my book and flashlight ("black-out" being in force) and when my light was finally confiscated, I read by moonlight.

Over the years, my love of reading has not diminished. As a teen-ager, when washing-up was to be done, I was in the bathroom with my beloved book. Later whilst pots boiled over and cakes burned, I could be found, a million miles away with the latest Dennis Wheatley thriller and maybe an apple.

As my children grew, I read to them constantly. Robert Louis Stevenson's "A Child's Garden of Verses" was the all time favourite.

Imagine then my shock, when trying to find "The Land of The Faraway Tree" for my young daughter, to discover that the author had been banned from all libraries and quality book shops. It seemed that this consummate weaver of stories and developer

of imaginations was an unfit writer. Her vocabulary below the acceptable educational standard. But what of the pictures that she had drawn in my mind, for what seemed, forever?

Apparently, children reading such works, could quite possibly be emotionally stunted and never progress to any worthwhile and more "suitable" reading.

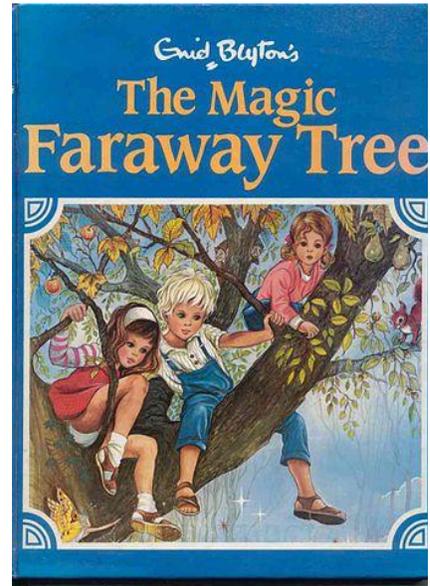
Had these so called "pundits" been with me on those dark cold evenings spent in the Anderson Shelter when the bombs were dropping fast and furious and I was locked in oblivion with "Biggles" or "Worrals" or "The twins at St. Claires?" Was I really literally deprived? Had my extraordinary imagination really been stunted? I, who had read and enjoyed "War and Peace" in my teens (before it was fashionable to do so), mentally illiterate?

I confess! I had been guilty for years of reading books that should have been banned or burnt! How could I possibly be searching for the same trash for my own children?

Incidentally the author has since been re-written and reinstated and my grandchildren have enjoyed the books denied my children.

My love of reading had been fanned by this remarkable woman author. My lively imagination set rampaging by stories of mystery and adventure as I ran on lonely islands looking for treasure or to evade capture from spies as very real bombs or doodlebugs hailed around me night after night during the blitz.

Really, who cares!! Who is anyone, other than an individual or a parent, to decide what is suitable or unsuitable reading? When I look at some of the gruesome stories available



now, I shudder. I buy them for my grandson as he enjoys them and his parents have vetted the books, plus it keeps him reading. That, after all, is the whole purpose. Enjoyment of a good book cannot be beaten at any age.

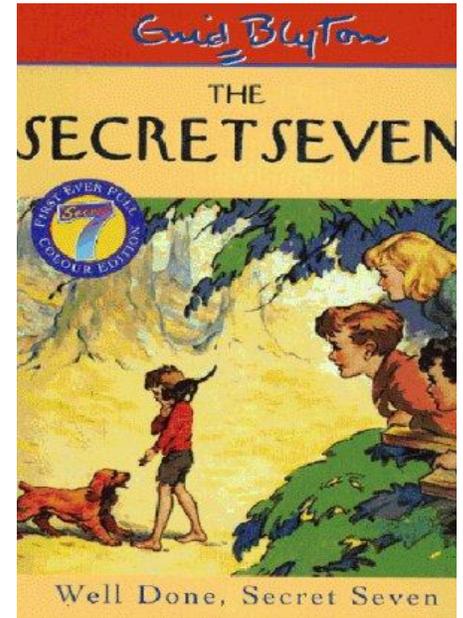
I have read just about everything from Alberto Moravio, George Elliot, Tolstoy, Shakespeare and Homer to the telephone directory, all with a great deal of enthusiasm. I have read real pornography as well as The Bible. With this wide variety of reading, I know which books I enjoy, which I will buy or read and it is not for others to make that decision for me or mine.

There are authors that I will never buy. Not necessarily because of what they say, but why they say it. I have a self-imposed censorship, for example, on "Diana in Love." Not because I, a rampant monarchist, am disinterested in the Princess of Wales, but because the author is a cad, a bounder and an opportunist. If others wish to read it, that is their prerogative.

Who has the right to decide what others shall or shall not read, what is right and what is wrong? There was a tremendous hue and cry in the democratic world when Hitler burnt thousands of valuable books and manuscripts. Are the critics not as bad when they ban my own childhood favourites?

The author, Enid Blyton, I'm sure that this simple woman and children's story teller extraordinaire, never expected to join the ranks of Tennessee Williams, D. H. Lawrence and Salman Rushdie.

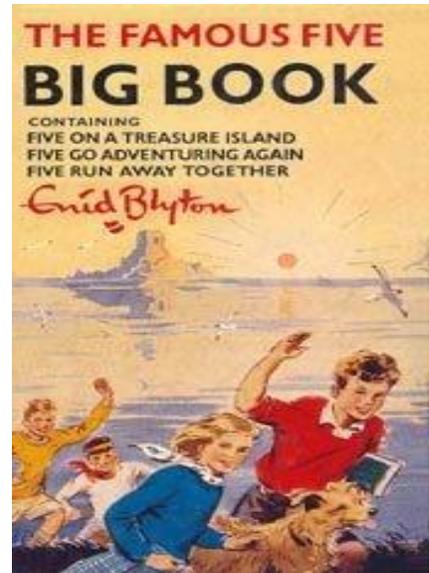
Certainly I agree with a certain amount of censorship and that all things should not be available for all ages. But reading material should be categorized and placed accordingly. If young are not



ready, they cannot interpret or comprehend what has been written. The “Treasure Island” that I read at eight years of age was vastly different than that I read at fifteen.

All books should not be available in school libraries but with so many thousands of new books being printed daily, how can the occasional “bad” book be caught except by a diligent, intelligent and informed librarian who uses good judgment.

In all things there must be moderation. Children must learn how to censor their own material. If there is never a book to object to, how can that lesson be learnt? Guidance is required but please let it be sane. And, please, leave Enid Blyton and Noddy alone!



Enid Mary Blyton (11 August 1897 – 28 November 1968) was an English children's writer whose books have been among the world's best-sellers since the 1930s, selling more than 600 million copies. Blyton's books are still enormously popular, and have been translated into almost 90 languages;



What's in a name?

By Freda Rumford
(June 2012)

I have had many, many names in my lifetime as have we all. Daughter, granddaughter, niece, cousin, friend, girlfriend, fiancé, bride, wife, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, mummy, Mum, mother-in-law, auntie, grandmother, great grandmother, plus many too rude for this article to mention and the latest one which I like least of all, widow.

It is astonishing that all of these names apply to the same person and the one using that title to address one, perceives the individual in a different light to one using another title, and even how a person being addressed responds even a little differently to each.

Being a Gemini, I am constantly changing anyway but after a while it can become a bit confusing. But not nearly so irritating as when I call family members by the wrong name because just for that moment I have what my son calls a 'brain fart!' The children, for some inexplicable reason, really did not like me calling them by the other gender's name. Ian did not like being called Claire and Claire does not like being called Matthew. Even as I am writing I am remembering all the other titles I could add to the list but this is long enough and too much for my mind to tackle.

Along with those names and titles, also comes a code of ethics or defined and expected behavioural pattern. As 'Mum,' I am supposed to be strict (to a point) and loving, as a grandmother - dotting, as wife and lover - a lady in public and an animal in the bedroom.

On contemplating my current situation, I found it a total mystery. In years gone by, I would have just sat in a rocking chair with my mob cap on, knitting shawls, or socks, or even doing the family darning and not expected to be anything but there and quiet, only speaking when spoken to! These days, in the words of the King of Siam: "Tis a puzzlement!"

What is even stranger is that when I spoke of my quandary, I got a completely unanimous chorus in reply. What did I say? "I don't know how to behave now!" The response from every other woman in the room where I made this statement, "Neither do I!"



In days gone by as we aged, styles, patterns, behaviours changed and people became old either gradually or slowly depending on who they were. In this day and age, when 50 is the new 30 and 60 becomes the new 40, it is incredible how 70 has now become the new 45 or 50. I absolutely cannot imagine my grandmother running around in my shorts and T shirts. She would have worn a dress, with sleeves, buttoned up to the neck even on the beach. Wear a bathing suit? For goodness sake, of what do you speak?

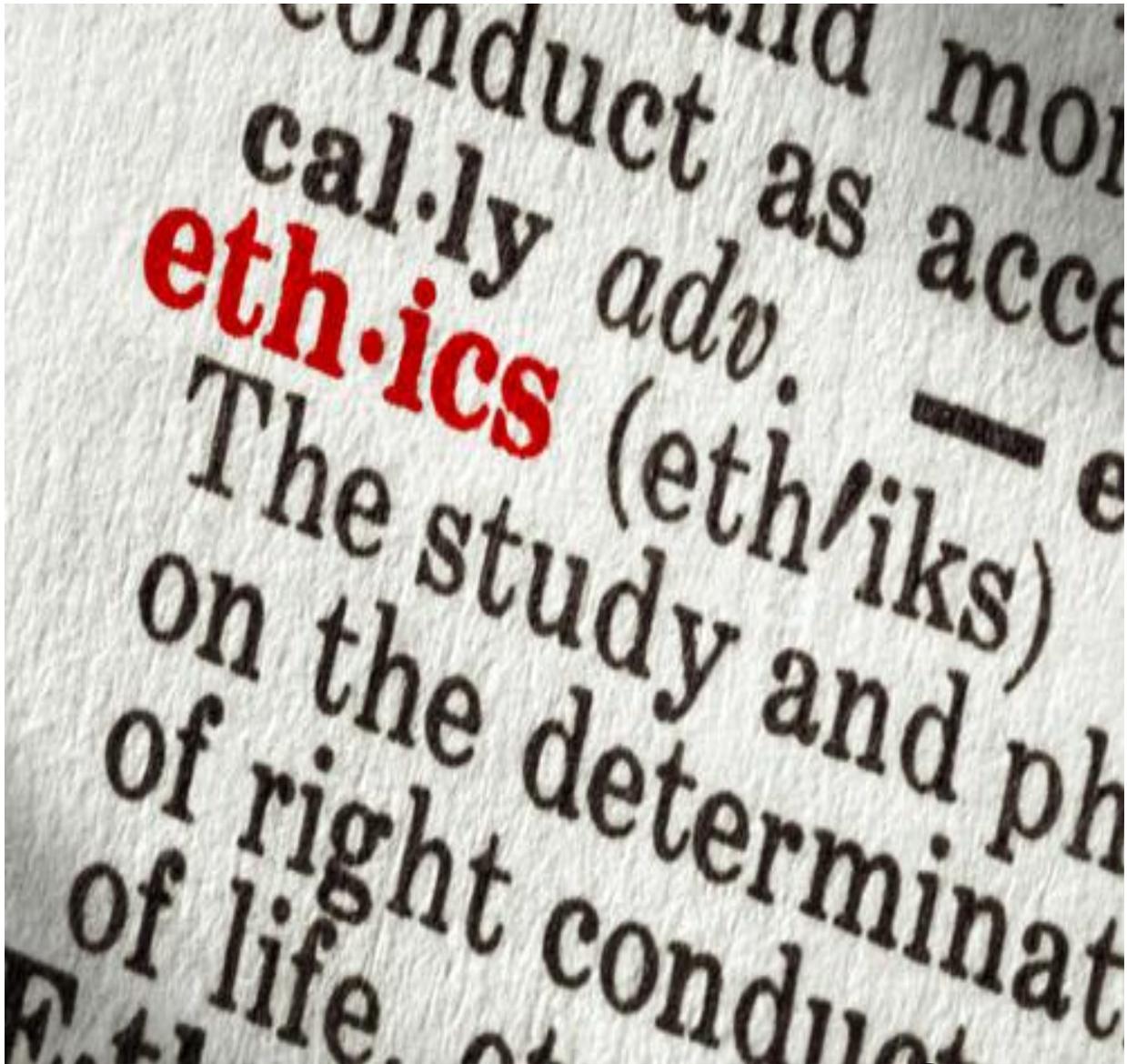
How times have changed and how our expectations have changed along with it. It is no longer possible for the aging person to consider themselves "old" because indeed they are not. For those of us in the "Forgotten generation" it is no longer possible to absolutely define what one is to become in each categorisation and probably it will be more difficult still as the "baby boomers" reach the dizzy heights of becoming 70 +. Will the retirement plans be the same?

As each successive generation becomes of that "certain age" what do they do then? They are mentally and physically so much younger than those of generations past; will they want to give up their life's work if it has been enjoyed and then scurry every day to the golf course or to the gym? Let's face it, having children has come later and later and people in their forties are now contemplating whether they wish to have a family or not. Previously it was in the 20's that the family expansion began.

With the decline of our population, probably retirement will not happen in the same way as it appears that pension funds are dwindling and perhaps it is as well that these up and coming old people are still able to work.

All I know for sure is, I am absolutely not ready yet to reach for my walking stick and the rocking chair. Yet, I still do not know how to behave!!

SOMETHING TO SAY



FREDA A. RUMFORD

I made a startling discovery recently. Looking through the new S.A.I.T. (Southern Alberta Institute of Technology) calendar, trying to find a course that would aid in combating my Killer Computer was a heading that I never expected to see, "MEDIA ETHICS." Is there really a code of ethics for the media?

I was of the opinion that the old law banning the "Peeping Tom" (enacted in the days of Lady Godiva) was now truly in the past and although I confess in being "entertained" by reports such as "Fergie and her financial advisor," were not the photographs obtained by the very king of Nosey Parkers? Where were his ethics? Was this a news item of vital importance?

What is the public's "right to know?" I find it abhorrent that a person (or persons) unknown, has the right to report on any closet skeletons that they can pry out. Where does it end, with a real "Big Brother" ?

Of course we should know if something is happening that will affect our world or environment but was that story, of such a randy pair, really any of our business? The shock waves that emanated around the world concerning the private lives of eminent persons over the past few years have lead for many discussions on where the line should be drawn in the search for "news," but with no noticeable change.

In Holland, the Dutch Royal's privacy is protected by law. Perhaps similar laws should be enacted elsewhere. "Newsworthy" people should be able to conduct their lives behind closed doors without worrying if there is a bogeyman in the closet or the bushes.

Is privacy too much to expect in these days of computers and satellite dishes? When a secret kiss at noon can be seen by the entire world at five after.



Manzanillo Chose Me

Freda Vickery

We first came to Manzanillo in 1996. After a long and very eventful journey by car, full of surprises and much laughter along the way, we arrived in town at about 3.30 p.m. Eventually we ended up in Las Brisas, a small community at the southern part of the Hotel district.

It was late in the afternoon; the sun was low but not yet set as we asked in Bungalows Angelica for the price of their rooms. A very pleasant gentleman greeted us and we were dismayed to learn that it was still too expensive for us to consider.

Next door was Suites New York so taking a deep breath I entered the office and was greeted by a lady called Ana. There we were lucky. They had one suite available over Christmas which would be 1200 pesos for the month. At that time the peso was 4.8 to the Canadian dollar which translated into \$250 for the month. The room wasn't bad, although very small, with a tiny kitchen. It would have to do as everywhere had been solidly booked en-route.

We should have realized there were going to be problems, and there were many: We found a dirty diaper in the bathroom, no clean towels, and dubiously clean bed linen. Ana had the maid come in to clean the bathroom and replace towels, but the bed was slept on top of that night as we decided it did not suit us.

Next day it was cleaned properly and linens replaced. We were then comfortable enough until Nigel was awakened the next two nights by cucarachas running over him. We were to find many such over the next four weeks. Naturally we were delighted to discover that next door, in Bungalows Angelica, there would be a completely refurbished suite available for the same price as we were now paying for the month, from January 1st.

Hotel pricing was quickly learned as we did not know previously that in Mexico there were daily, weekly and monthly rates which gave very definite price discounts. For longer stays the prices dropped even further. But now we were settled and happily so. As promised our suite was ready for us although we had to wait another day for a full gas oven. We had a range top on a table which would do admirably until the proprietors could get the correct one delivered. Our twin beds we pushed together which made a great king sized bed and all was right with our world.

Over the next few months we became fast friends with the family who owned the property and eventually those months stretched into eight years. The bungalows were old and in disrepair but Manolo and Coty, the owners, worked ceaselessly that first year to make the buildings more appealing. Nigel did his part in helping with what

he could do and was absolutely in his element as he played the part of Mr. Knock-'em-down Builder. With precious few tools available he did what could and vowed to return next year with more tools of his own.

The years passed by at Angelica with the same group of people renting regularly. We added to our little band until after 3 years all bungalows were booked solid for the full winter season every year and the entire group became fast friends. It was fun to see people arrive each year like long lost cousins or family returning from an outing. It was not complete until we were all at home and nestled into our usual apartments and the greetings with the maids Ana, Rosa or Emma were made along with those of Pancho and old Miguel (the handy men around the place).

It took John Kerwin to note that we were a very special group of people. He was a bachelor and to his amusement he observed that the entire group was formed by people with long marriages. The 'newlyweds' were Frank & Barbara Stewart, who although the oldest, did not marry until their middle years (I believe he was 52 and she 43 at that time) and they had been married for only 25 years. The others were Ernie and Lorna, Frank and Margaret, Pat & Joy, Jack and Elizabeth, Wally and Doreen, Lewis and Rose, Ken and Lilian, Greg and Jan, Karol and Suzanna, Jim and Wendy, Bob and Louise plus ourselves --- Nigel and Freda.

Those of us arriving before Christmas had a great time with our festivities on a patio overlooking the sea. Always we invited our hosts Manolo & Coty Cordera and other friends we had made, Art and Lydia, Wayne and his daughter and Bob and Ian to join us. We dressed up to the nines, had memorable food and played silly games but always remembered absent friends and family.

Occasionally we invited friends to join us for Pot Luck suppers or to coffee mornings. These we had around the pool and that was when we would discuss what we had each done during the past week. Always something had happened to cause much hilarity. If anything was going on the next week, we would make plans to go together or even just have an evening out at a local restaurant or Botanas bars. All in all it was very nice and comfortable, family-like relationships were building and friendships for life were forged.

Obviously it could not continue forever. In 2003 the big earthquake shook the buildings to their very foundations. Most of them had to be pulled down and the



Inside Bungalow #2 after the earthquake.

hard work that had been spent renovating over the years was lost. The pool which had been the centre of our 'Koffee Klatch' and pot luck suppers was badly damaged and people had to move away to find alternative accommodations.

Nevertheless the friendships, although now severely challenged, as we were all going in different directions, continued as the magic of Manzanillo pulled us back every year. Unfortunately many of our group have now passed on. Those remaining look back with the fondest memories of the years spent with great people, in a lovely atmosphere in a beautiful town.

Greatly missed but certainly not forgotten are Frank and Barbara, Elizabeth, Jan, Karol and Nigel. We still chuckle at the memory of Nigel calling "Swim time" every day as the six or so hardy swimmers headed for the ocean before the winds of 1 p.m. would churn the sea into a roller coaster; or the bellow of Frank as he yelled at Barbara for some minor infraction or other; or at the memory of Wally asking everyone for happy hour, serving Coronitas and then telling them it was time to leave he wanted his dinner!

Those indeed were the days.

COOKING AROUND THE WORLD

by Freda Rumford

I grew up in England during the Second World War when all foods were severely rationed and housewives cooking skills were challenged to the nth degree. There were no Kentucky Fried Chicken take-outs, Pizza Houses and nor any Chinese restaurants to alleviate what could have become a very boring culinary experience. There were no packaged foods in the freezer, no pre-packaged cake mixes or bread dough's available. Everything had to be made from scratch with whatever ingredients could be found on that day. My mother spent an inordinate amount of time each day planning, shopping, queuing, gardening, trading this for that and finally preparing a meal that was fit for her family to enjoy.

My paternal grandmother was an incredible cook and never, ever did we visit her without there being a fresh cake for tea or a lovely tasty dinner bubbling away on the hob. If extra people turned up, then just add a couple of potatoes, slice the meat a little thinner and add a suet or Yorkshire pudding. She taught my father and aunt to cook and then extended those lessons to include my mother.

Their skills in turn were passed on to me. Or rather my grandmother's and my father's skills were (my mother always said she could do it quicker herself than explain it to me). Even so I became a very good pastry cook. Not just desserts but savoury pies, tarts and puddings. Later I could also make almost anything in the dessert line due mainly to an old Good Housekeeping cookbook, that my husband-to-be, bought for my 20th birthday. I would study that book and try things I had never heard of or tasted previously while venturing into fascinating worlds of taste and delicacies. You name it, I would make it even though it took all day. I remember making some Eccles cakes from scratch. The puff pastry was started in the morning and all day I was folding, rolling and letting the precious pastry rest. The results were absolutely incredible. So much so that my entire day's offerings that had taken eight hours to make were gone in fifteen minutes. I never would make them again!

Eventually, we moved to Canada, settled in, got the house set up, then I began to make my specialties! What an absolute disappointment and fiasco. The pies and tarts that were always so light and airy were now



as tough as old sea or dog biscuits. I could not get the ingredients I was used to and the flour was entirely different. Nothing worked no matter how hard I tried. Sadly I tried pastry recipes calling for eggs and vinegar along with many others but nothing worked. My whole cooking repertoire was in a shamble. I could no longer cook any of my favourite and show-off things. I did learn lots of new things but the old ones just had to be shelved for the time being at least. I discovered the wonderful Canadian squares, that were so immensely popular such as the unbeatable Nanaimo bar, but I could not make a decent jam tart.

One lucky day for me, we were talking about this problem at work. I was sadly lamenting my lost skill when one of my work mates chipped in with "I can give you an incredible pastry recipe that will always work!" When I heard what it was I could hardly believe my ears! This would actually work? It was too simple to be true but well worth trying.

Luckily the next day was my day off. So off to the store I went to get my ingredients. Getting home as quickly as I could, I tried her famous "Always Works" recipe. Would you believe it? It really did. I had a pastry recipe that made sufficient dough for three nine inch pastry top and

bottom pies. I made pies and tarts happily all day, completely ignoring the rest of my usually scheduled tasks. My husband was thrilled. We had a keeper! I could cook all of my old favourites again.

A few years later this skill came into full force when I was talked into making pies for some bachelors and working people who did not have the time to bake. At one time I was making as many as 100 different pies a week, from steak and kidney, to pot pies and quiches. There were about 10 different choices and our freezer was always full of pies ready for the growing clientele.

Going forward to Mexico several years later. We had decided to make the move in retiring to the sun along with many other snowbirds from Canada. We enjoyed the move immensely and settled into a new routine and a new way and style of cooking that was quite different from the past. We did not need the heavy roasts and puddings that we were used to but really longed occasionally for a nice meat pie or Beef Wellington (the latter being a request for a special birthday meal for a friend). Again, I hit the proverbially brick wall with the lack of availability of my "new" recipe ingredients. My pastry was passable as the markets of Manzanillo only

sold lard or pork fat. There wasn't any shortening anywhere. It became an ongoing request to people travelling into Ajijic to go shopping for me at the SuperLake Supermarket. The prices were atrocious but at least I could continue to bake our beloved pies.

Now I can occasionally find what I need at the Bahia Deli in Las or La Vianda at Club Santiago who sell Cristal (a shortening) in a solid form. I have found that the two butchers in the Mercado in Las Garzas will occasionally have beef kidney. Soriana has it from time to time but it is extremely strong tasting and I am now discounted buying from there. The flour, again, is the biggest problem and I try to get anyone going Stateside to bring some back for me. This I will keep in the refrigerator to keep the bugs at bay.

I have now lived and cooked, English style, in three countries. Never in my wildest dream would I ever have expected that flour wasn't flour everywhere, or shortening and margarine wasn't the same the world around.

Oh! The recipe you ask? As it was given so freely to me, I have passed it on to many people and will gladly do so again. My entire family use it and all have the same success as I.

~~~~~

### Anna's Shortcrust Pastry

Sufficient for 3 x 9" pie top and bottoms  
Freezes well and will keep in the refrigerator for 2 or 3 days before use.

- 5 cups All purpose Flour
- 1 lb regular Crisco
- Pinch salt
- 8 -10 oz Seven up

Ingredients can be mixed by hand, pastry cutter, mixer or feet. No real care required.

It should be slightly tacky when mixed.

If too dry, the pastry will be crumbly and difficult to roll out.

Roll out to be about 1/8" or slightly thicker.

Cook at 400\* for about 30 minutes'

Enjoy, Freda

## Returning from Mexico with a Mexican Cat

Freda Vickery

A couple or so years ago I remember there being pandemonium amongst the foreign population as all of a sudden, without any prior notification, as is their wont, the Mexican Government decided that no more pets could be flown in Mexican airspace. Many visitors who had been bringing their pet with them when coming to Manzanillo for several months were caught completely unawares. They were horrified to find that, at the beginning or even middle of the journey (for either direction), their pet was not allowed to be taken on board their flight as expected. Although paid for travel, either in cabin or in the pressurized hold, the airline could no longer transport them.

Some people, in midst of their flight had to reroute, or make other plans on the spot. Many pets then became "Service" animals, regardless of size or type. Even a Chihuahua or cat, all of a sudden, was promoted to being 'necessary' for the mental health of their human! That was the only leeway available.

This was a matter of extreme urgency and airlines were forced to make immediate steps to rectify this situation with the Mexican government. Already in a state of flux because of enormous rises in the price of gas, the airlines were suffering desperately. If all the pet owners decided to either not visit Mexico, or to drive instead, that could mean major losses in revenue. The pet owners had been paying \$100 for each pet and now that service was not available to them!

Several years have now passed and I was requested this past February by my son, Ian, who had been babysitting my Siamese cat for over a year, to please claim him and take him back to Canada or the USA with me. Remembering the difficulties of pet owners and not being cognizant of the eventual outcome, I went into a state of mental shock as I worried as to what on earth I was going to have to go through to affect this transference of a native Mexican cat to the harsh rigors of the Pacific Northwest, let alone have him in a cage in an unfriendly and noisy hold with no sun basking for more than a day! With Ian, he had been allowed to come and go at will with a door open at all times. Cuddling up to his "Mummy", a male golden retriever named Jasper, at night or siesta time, he hardly even knew the humans who were about to claim him as theirs.



Ming

Having mentioned plaintively that I would really love to have a little dog, I was delighted when my husband agreed that a small dog, which did not have a tendency to yap, would be perfectly alright. I should perhaps mention that he was already owned by a Tuxedo feline by the name of Blossom. She is queen of cats.

Down to WAIF on Whidbey Island we went to see what little dogs were requiring a home. They did not have any dogs that were suitable although we both were very drawn to a Rottweiler-Pitbull cross who just knew that we had come for him. Heavy hearted we turned away and were then directed to the "cattery" where many cats mewed instantly upon seeing their perhaps "forever people". Again we were drawn to the most unsuitable animal for people who lived in the confines of an RV, a three legged cat. I have related this story previously and readers by now know that we ended up with a different Tuxedo cat, an unfriendly young miss whom we named "Sunny". That is definitely not her nature however and we had been seriously considering returning her as she was not happy in her existence with us.

Now we were being asked to add Ming to the family. We really already knew but had hoped it would not happen. We would be living in the near future in a capsule, approximately 12 feet wide by 33 feet long. Two people and three cats!!!! Help! There is absolutely no possibility of swinging even the smallest of the cats.



But to get back to the problem closest at hand which was to bring the 'moggy' (*English slang: Cat*) back to the United States. Firstly, we had to buy a specified-size crate and then arrange to have the medical files to prove all vaccinations and health were copasetic. Naturally, the day we chose to do all of this was one of Mexico's holidays. No vets were available but fortunately we managed to halt Dr. Alejandro in his tracks. He could do the examination, but the letter concerning vaccinations had to be given by Dr. Gaby, tomorrow!! In the meantime, I bought and paid for Ming's transportation via Alaska Airlines, deciding that, as he most definitely would not fit into a 7" high crate, he had to go below!!

Hooray – he passed the test. He was fit and able to travel. Did he like his temporary home? No! He talked to us, incessantly complaining that he could not get out and just what was this?

On Wednesday, we left for the airport. Ming was still yelling and we were relieved that he was going in the hold where our neighboring passengers were not assailed by his constant wails! He has always been the most talkative cat. We had to be there a little earlier, as stated by Alaska Airlines, but in Manzanillo it was really not necessary, so long as all papers were in order.

Now, you may ask, "what about all of the problems with the transporting part?" Worry no more! All has been rescinded and pets have been relieved of being service animals. They can now travel. What I did not mention earlier, and should have done, is to tell you of the wonderful advice given me by June Evans. She travels all the time with her little companion, Buddy. As we had to go back to Seattle via the LAX airport, she said I should request wheelchair service. I have come to bless that advice heartily. It was absolutely incredible. The young man fairly galloped down passages and back ways through the airport avoiding crowds and endless queues everywhere, with my husband desperately trying and managing somehow to keep up. I would never have made the flight if I had had to walk that distance. In case you are wondering, I am in somewhat delicate health and, although I will never admit to anyone, would probably have collapsed en route to the required terminal. This young man was worth penny of the \$18 (all that I had) that we tipped him.

However, we all made it through the long flight. Ming is now residing on Whidbey Island and his first day out of the RV was last week when the sun peeked out of the clouds for a few minutes. He didn't find his way back that night and I was almost panic stricken that he would freeze to death. However after nearly 36 hours he showed back up at the door asking to come in and, apart from wanting to sleep almost instantly, seemed none the worse for wear. He has mixed in well with the neighboring cats. Blossom mostly ignores him and Sunny, our problem child, has almost turned over a new leaf in her insistence that she was here first and should be petted and given treats when she returns from her own outings. I have to add here that we had been afraid to let her out for over six months, fearing that she would take off and not find her way home. Ming has changed all that. All three sleep on the bed with us. We now have the three of them sitting on the bed waiting for one or other of us to make the fifth member of the party before they all settle down and cuddle up for the night.

Will I ever get my little dog? It seems most unlikely as our feline population does seem to fit in very well with our current mode of living. In the future? Who knows! But he or she will most certainly be put in their place by the pussy cats.



Folks, meet Daisy, a Cairn Terrier, the new addition to the Vickery clan. She is the "little dog" my mother had always wished for.



## Our First New Year's Celebration in Manzanillo

By Freda Vickery



We had celebrated New Year in Mexico in 1983 when we had our introduction to Mexico. Then Nigel and I, with our friend Hilary, journeyed to Acapulco to take over somebody's time share. There we had our first intimation that all was not going to be well on this trip. Arriving at the Best Western hotel at the edge of town, we were shown to our room which had been reserved for three people a few weeks prior. Ha! It had one double bed! "Not suitable" was the refrain from all of us in harmony to the consternation of the maid who spoke little English. Back to the reception desk we went with her, explained that we had booked and required a room with 2 beds and were then promptly shown a somewhat grubby but two bedded room. Well, it was only for one night and it was New Year's Eve so would suffice.

We were tired after a long two-day journey via Dallas where we had spent the night en route. Although we had asked for an early call in order to catch an early bus to the airport, the hotel had omitted to call us. Fortunately, I awoke to realize that it was 6.55 and we had just five minutes to catch the bus to the airport at seven a.m. With no time to do anything but scramble into our clothes, we made it to the lobby and the plane in the very nick of time.

When we arrived at Acapulco, all of us were dying for a refreshing shower. One look in the bathroom and we groaned. The only towels available were two skinny threadbare pieces of cloth which may have been towels at one time. Back to the reception desk we trooped to get

at least one more towel. Mission accomplished, we returned to the room and a lovely shower in COLD, cold water! No matter, we were on holiday and would get dressed and go out for a nice dinner.

Not so fast, fair travelers! This was New Year's Eve and the restaurant in the hotel was now closed to enable the staff to have the evening off, as were all of the nearby restaurants. It was 7 p.m. and all was certainly not well. I cannot remember what we ate that evening. I think one of the other guests in the hotel who joined us at the pool found some cookies and we opened our Duty-free liquor. With our new-found friends we sat and chatted the evening away until midnight. Then after wishing and kissing everyone nearby, we headed groggily to bed. From that ominous starting point, matters went from bad to worse and when we finally left Mexico 20 days later, we vowed never to return!

Fast forward fifteen years and time finds us in Mexico once again, but this time in Manzanillo. We had made many friends in Las Brisas when we were living at Bungalows Angelica amongst the Canadians and Americans who lived in Manzanillo during the winter months. New Year's Eve was fast approaching and we all wanted to go out for a nice evening together. Not knowing where to go, Nigel consulted with Coty and Manolo Cordera, our hosts, for a low down on what was available. As they had not heard of anything that year, they checked with friends who were owners of the Colonial Hotel in Downtown Manzanillo.



Initially not intending to open on New Year's Eve, once the owners learned that there was a fairly large party wishing to celebrate, they rapidly changed their minds and not only offered a full meal but hired a band for dancing. Word of this party spread and, when we arrived at the hotel at the specified hour, we found it bursting at the seams with revelers. The dining room was sold out for the evening. Our party had increased as we finally booked for 26 people. Two did not arrive without offering explanation and it was just as well as the table we were given was a very tight squeeze for the twenty four of us who arrived ready to 'Partay' the night away!

We had a great evening. The band played what was deemed to be Mexican Cowboy music and we jigged the night away. It was a huge amount of fun. It was the first time that we had seen Mexican people dancing and having fun along with us and that alone was worth going to the Colonial for. Our dinner was... well... fair to middling: Not particularly well cooked, and as we found out later; to be the norm, half cold. It was edible, however, and we were in good company. That was all that mattered. The big hitch came when we came to pay the bill at the end of the evening. Everyone was given their own bill but Nigel and I had an extra bill. It was for the two people who had not shown up. Although we had added to the party by four additional people, they had us registered now for twenty six and twenty six must be paid for.

There was quite an argument about this and eventually we went to Manolo Cordera and told him what was happening. Aghast, he immediately went to his friend, the owner, and was in conference with him for a good ten minutes. What was going on we did not know. There was lots of gesticulations and talking back and forth.

After much waving hands in the air there was finally a shaking of hands and a couple of back slaps and Manolo returned to the table smiling. It was settled. In fact it had been settled almost immediately and the balance of the conversation had been nothing but story and joke telling. Trying to get back home at the end of the evening was another fun experience. Because we knew we would be drinking, only two cars had designated drivers, whilst the rest of our party had come to the hotel by taxi. That was a real trial for them now as there were absolutely no taxis to be found. Almost all of the available cabs had been



Hotel Colonial en El Centro, Manzanillo

previously booked. Eventually, we came to the conclusion that the two cars we had would be ferrying people back and forth but we would all finally meet together at Art and Lydia's apartment for a final good night drink.

Fortunately, as we arrived at their residence, we were followed by two or three cabs who discharged the remainder of our party. The cabs had returned to the downtown sector almost as we had left, so they were fortunate enough to have nabbed them prior to others who now had to wait longer. As always, the evening ended on a high note and we eventually went our merry way after having a great night cap to follow the fun-filled evening. Next year, we would know the ropes and be prepared!

The next year we had other problems arise, but that is another story. The problem mostly encountered here is that very little has advanced planning. Manzanillo people do most things at the last minute and then there is a mad scramble. One thing about Mexico is a certainty however, do not think that you can anticipate and prepare for all eventualities! It changes every time! Nothing is so constant as change!

Happy New Year to all of our friends in Manzanillo and to all the friends we haven't yet met.

## "SOME OF OUR WRITERS REMINISCE"

Hasta Luego Freda,

Dear brave and wonderful Freda. It's been over five years since I submitted my first article to you. Since that time your encouragement and friendship has meant a great deal to me. Although we had few opportunities to hang out together face to face, we became 'pen pals' and shared our thoughts and feelings through our writing to each other. I know that you have accomplished a lot throughout your lifetime and envy the many people who knew you for many years and who recollect what a 'pistol' of a woman you were. I also know that it wasn't always an easy life but you kept on moving forward. I wish I could have spent more time with you. We will miss your positive influence and truly admire the battle you waged against the horrors of cancer. For those who loved you, I know it meant a great deal to them, that you never gave up. That is truly inspirational. Adios Amiga.

Suzanne

### ...“it was the twinkle in her eyes that drew you in”

A few years ago .... Hurricane Jova was fast approaching gaining momentum and threatening to wreak disaster all along the coast of Central Mexico ... wind whistled through unseen passages around my doors and windows...shadows of the 50 ft palm trees outside the window danced on my bedroom walls... there was a loud pop followed by the crashing of glass as it slammed into the parking lot of our building ... and then the transformer across the street exploded and the lights went out....

I was on my cell phone with my friend Freda, who had recently lost her husband Nigel. We laughed, we cried and we talked about life and we engaged, as we were often wont to do, in repartee...

I first met Freda in 2009 when I moved to Manzanillo, she and Nigel were the hosts of a weekly gathering technically known as Manzamigos, but often referred to as "Thirsty Thursdays." I was immediately drawn to her , first by her delightful English accent and charming manner, and eventually by our mutual respect for the written word.

We worked on the online magazine " Manzanillo Sun" together. She was a exacting and demanding taskmaster who managed the delicate egos of the various contributors with a precision that I attributed to her " British" sensibilities. She was a sensitive and passionate wordsmith, but as editor she oftentimes deferred to our work rather than publish a piece she had written personally.

But, most of all it was the twinkle in her eyes that drew you in and made you want to listen to every word and engage this wonderful spirited lady. I was fortunate to have Freda as a friend, she was too short here and too soon gone, but while with us she certainly left a indelible mark on everyone she touched... especially me. I miss you Freda !!

J. Evans

I remember one of the first Manzamigo's Dinners I attended back in 2009. It was at El Tableau and there was another big event going on so attendance was very light. I shared a long table with Freda and Nigel Rumford and a few other Manzamigos. Freda was delightful and enthusiastic. I went on to work with her as a Manzamigos Board Member and as a writer for the Manzanillo Sun. Between Manzamigos and the Sun Magazine I participated in regular planning sessions, status meetings and Freda led the way. Freda was a founding member of the Manzamigos. She also wrote for the Guadalajara Reporter as well as the Manzamigos Messenger. She was outgoing and positive with an infectious attitude. Freda will be missed.

~Terry Sovil



"For Patty and me, there is no singular incident that comes to mind when thinking of our pal Freda. But all of our remembered experiences with her are ones of love, fun and trust. These she brought to an exquisite art form and more. She was a lady of class, couth and decorum. She was a true and trusted colleague, acquaintance and comrade to many. She was a professional of depth and experience. She was our friend will be greatly missed by many."

Tommy & Patty Clarkson

### Finally... from her husband, Kirby Vickery

Brain and Lung cancer put my Freda to sleep today for the last time after a long, long battle. Over the past few weeks she slowly lost her way in our world to settle into one of her own. As lines of consciousness slowly lifted from her like a thin gossamer veil, during her moments of reality, she was constantly reminded of how well she was doing and never had to face her demise.

Her intelligence, smile, wit, humor, English accent, her touch, feel, presence, and her very being will forever be remembered and cherished. Today, for the first time in sixteen months, our honored Freda is free of restrictions on her movement.

She's free of pain and of having to deal with three cancers which at first took her kidney, then her vitality and finally her conscious mind. She is finally free from the pain of dealing with a broken hip which was replaced and then dislocated twice.

She is free from being confused as to where she is and who is talking with her. She is also free from having to obey her "Hip Protocol" which made her wear the much hated with a passion Zimmerman brace that prohibited her from sleeping on her side.

She's free from having to take the wrong medicine because of a faulty diagnosis, mishandled samples, malformed meals, and above all, the pseudo professionalism of some with holes in their training and attitude problems.



I like to think that Nigel has come for her and they are soaring free together, probably in Mexico somewhere. So our physical time with her is temporarily finished and she can live with her grace in our memories.

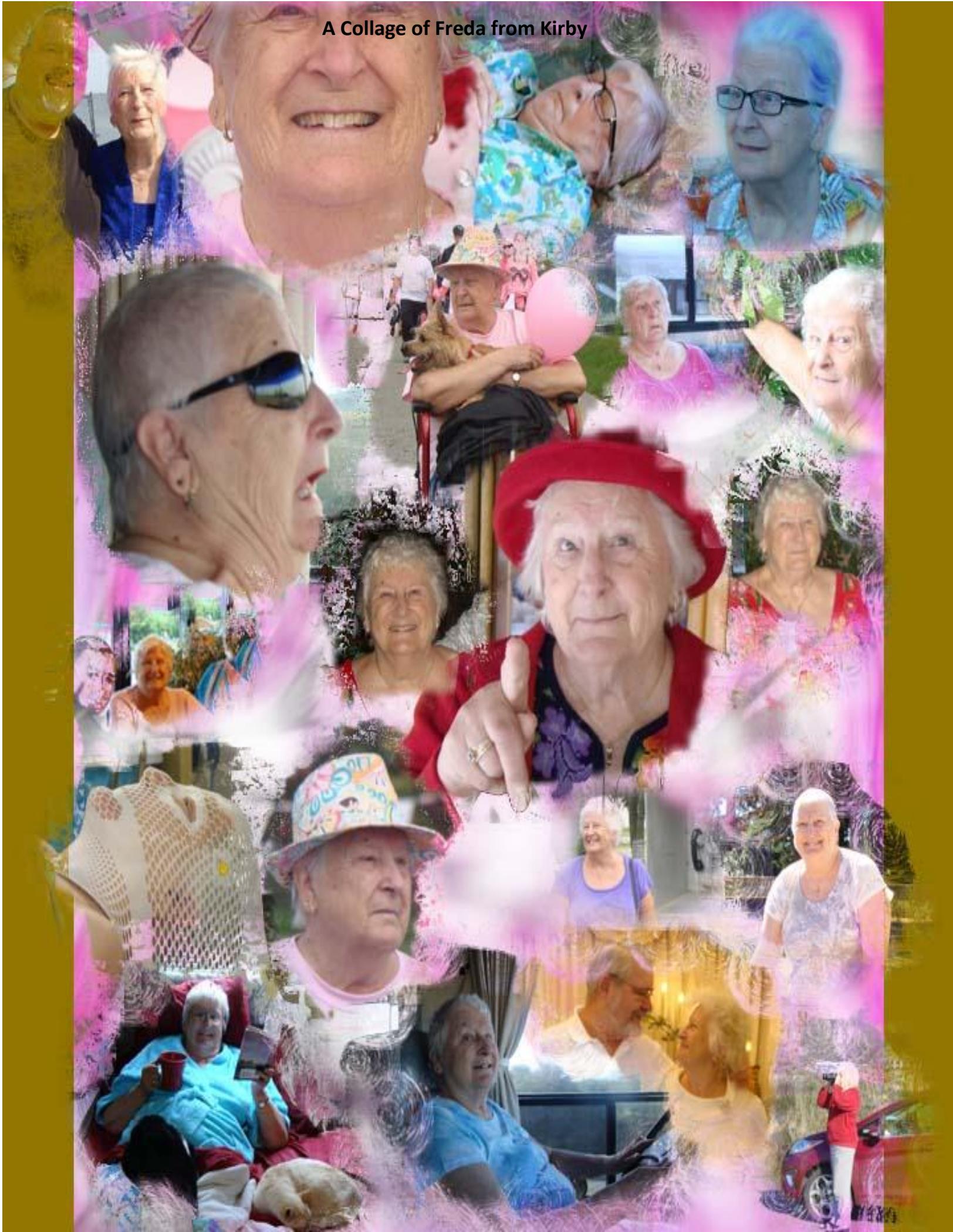


My Freda was taken from us today. She shall be missed.

Kirby Vickery



A Collage of Freda from Kirby





The hardest part of dreaming  
about someone you love,  
is waking up to see that person gone.  
You know it, it takes seconds to say hello.  
It takes forever to say goodbye.  
Moving on is easy,  
but what you leave behind  
Is what makes it hard.

We will miss you ALWAYS!!!