

A TRIP TO THE BEACH

Pam Brewer

“It was such a happy day”

Our summer holidays were spent at home as life revolved around our farm in Mid Canterbury. The highlight of the summer would be the family trip to the beach. There would be much discussion and planning the few days before New Year’s Day as this was our only possible day for the trip to the beach in between the harvesting of grain and hay making on the farm.

Mum would prepare a picnic. Folding chairs, picnic rug, swimsuits, towels, sunscreen and warm jackets would be packed in the boot of the car and we would set off for Akaroa or Caroline Bay. It was such a happy day. Mum wearing her sunfrock, Dad wearing a cotton shirt and long cotton trousers. He may have also pulled his trusty leather sandals out of the back of the wardrobe



but most likely he’d be in wool socks and shoes!

Fish and chips on the beach would be the final treat for the day, and by now we probably needed the warm jackets. Feeling quite exhausted we would have a quiet trip home with the memories of our annual day at the beach.

SHE'LL BE RIGHT

Hilaire Field



As we lived on a farm in Central Otago, going to the beach for our annual holidays was very special and so enjoyed. We always went to Brighton Beach, just out of Dunedin. We got up to all the normal kids stuff, rowing on the river leading to the sea. No life jackets and none of us could swim as being from the country we had no access to suitable swimming water. No parental supervision for the three or four of us in the row boats but no one drowned! We'd also prise paua with pocket knives off the rocks ankle deep in water. No diving for them back then.

“We got up to all the normal kids stuff, rowing on the river leading to the sea.”

CROWDED HOUSE

Linden Hoverd



My mum (Jillian Easto) was only 28 when she finished having us four kids, quite typical in the '60s I believe. I was born in 1963. I remember her wearing this swimsuit when we were little.

We used to holiday for two weeks just after Christmas every year at Paihia with my mum's parents and her maternal grandmother as well. Often other family members and friends would come up too.

I vividly remember loving all the activity, oblivious as kids normally are to what the strains of accommodating all these people must have been. We all remember such fun and laughter—the fishing, being

“I remember her wearing this swimsuit when we were little.”

rowed around in a dinghy by Dad or Pop, visiting rock pools and famous historical sites, seeing the big game fish coming in and being weighed and, of course, the beach. Back home in Auckland it was usually Dad who would take us to the beach, but on holiday Mum would come too. However, she had a great aversion to cold water and rarely swam, so we all agree that this swimsuit was unlikely to have ever been in the sea!



“Mum
was a great
fisherwoman
and cook.”

FISHING FOR A COMPLIMENT

Anna Macindoe

In 1970 Mum (Janet Macindoe, nee Lornie) and Dad (Bill Macindoe) bought a bare beachfront section in Vivian Bay on Kawau Island and had a small Lockwood bach built there in 1974. This was their paradise, Dad being well aware of the sandy bay from his sailing days. He was an avid yachtsman and owned a racing yacht in the '50s.

Mum and Dad would spend about two months there in summer, and most long weekends

and public holiday weekends. Mum was a great fisher woman and cook—no one can cook fresh snapper like Mum did!

We all dragged the net for piper—to be eaten and used for bait. Mum spent hours on the beach chopping the heads of the piper, gutting and cleaning them to get the 'black' out of them. She always did this down on the beach in front of the bach and always in her bathing suit.

ALL ABOUT EVA

Rachelle McCormack



This swimming costume belonged to my great-aunt Eva Tilsley, whom I only met once. She was a member of the Waitemata Amateur Swimming Club, which became the Waitemata Ladies Swimming and Surf Life Saving Club in 1932, and she was club captain. The swimming club was first based at Albert Street Baths then the Tepid Baths and when the WLS&SLSC was formed it was also allotted Mission Bay and Kohimarama to patrol. Although the club is no longer in existence, it formed the basis of many of our current Auckland Surf Life Saving clubs.

Between the wars Eva represented Auckland in swimming, diving and water

polo, earning many national championships. In 1951 she chaperoned the NZ women's swimming team on tour of Australia and in 1958 she travelled with the NZ diving team to the Cardiff Commonwealth Games as coach.

Among the numerous committees she was on, she became the registrar of the Waitemata Surf Life Saving Club and perhaps it was her job to supply costumes. I believe this one dates to the 1930s and was possibly too small to fit any of the life savers, hence it is still brand new.

Eva never married (her fiancé died in 1944), she died in 1984 aged 87, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease.



“Mum never bought another swimsuit – she only ever owned two.”

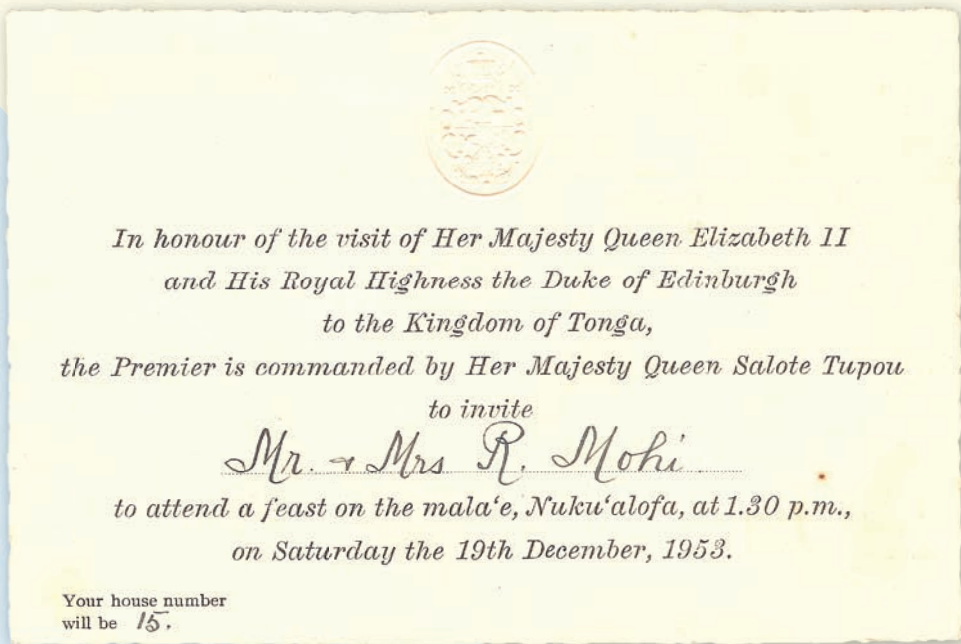
SHIRRED TO LAST

Sandy Hall

My mum (Molly Hall) bought this swimsuit in Whakatane in 1960 when they first came to New Zealand and lived on Ohope Beach. It was a bargain, she said, and it replaced the blue and cream one that she had brought over from the UK. She wore it for the rest of her life, it lasted so well. She used to swim daily when she was pregnant with me in 1960 – the shirring allowed it to stretch. It only started to give as her own body did in her seventies. It was our joke that the shirring was giving out in sympathy with her skin.

My daughter Samara Pepperell has lovingly replaced the shirring elastic since then.

The swimsuit survived several cross-Atlantic voyages and lots of mucking about in boats. We were always out on the various boats Dad owned, and there are heaps of photos of Mum in this suit looking very glamorous. Her favourite thing was to paddle, and she would always wear this suit even to paddle in, offset with a white large brim sunhat with pink flowers.



ROYAL RUMOURS

Adele Mohi McGovern

My mum (Margaret Mohi) wore this swimsuit when she went to Tonga to visit her sister Maxine and brother-in-law Reverend John Tamahori in 1953-1954 during the Royal Tour. Rumour has it that Margaret went swimming with the Duke of Edinburgh in this swimsuit.

When Mum was in her late teens living in Rotorua, a movie producer came to town and wanted to take Mum back to Hollywood. Mum and her sister and cousin Nora appeared in several publicity photos for Rotorua and Mum was also on the cover of a cruise ship itinerary in 1939. In the photo from the late '50s Mum is wearing a



ball frock at the museum. Yep, she was a stunner—it was her killer smile—and never short of a partner at the local tennis club apparently.



“WEAR” IT STARTED

Dianne Ludwig
co-curator of *At the Beach*

Growing up my favourite times were spent on holiday at Waikanae, Orewa and Mount Maunganui beaches. For Mum and Dad it was the getting away that was the holiday, neither of them or my older sister were beach lovers, and rarely swam. However, I made up for that. My entire day was spent swimming and tanning on the beach.

As a teenager our beach holiday became even more exciting as it invariably involved boys and summer romances. Getting the tan and having a great bikini was all part of looking good. My fashion heroes back then were American models like Cheryl Tiegs, who was sunkissed and

always in the latest swimwear. It's no wonder I baked myself to golden brown, and my love of swimwear developed.

By the time I was earning my own money, holidays saw me pack at least 10 swimsuits and bikinis, a number of which would get worn on high rotate throughout the day. Going for a swim and getting wet was a great excuse to change togs. Sadly, all the dozens of great suits and bikinis I had have been worn out; lycra doesn't survive too many seasons. The only reason this Moontide one-piece has survived is that it seemed a bit too glam for the beach.



LOW BACK, HIGH FASHION

Anita Arlov

This black swimsuit was worn one time at a Canterbury University extravaganza, probably during orientation week in 1977 or '78, when I teamed it up with a long black ruffled skirt. My friend Belinda also wore togs with a skirt. It was a real mission to have a pee—did you take the whole outfit off or just pull the crotch to

one side? I wasn't worried about the bodice being revealing in the dark—I didn't always wear a bra in those days.

Togs gave your outfit a very low back, quite glamorous, which I'm sure was the look we were after. Necessity is the mother of invention!

“Togs gave your outfit a very low back, quite glamorous, which I'm sure was the look we were after.”

HOLLYWOOD DREAMING

Cecilie Geary

Dress and image from Zambesi

“Not only is swimwear inspired by evening wear, but the same has happened in reverse.”

In 2008, Zambesi's Elisabeth Findlay used a gold vintage Rose Marie Reid swimsuit as inspiration for an intricately cut stretch dress in her collection. Alluding to the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer movie studio, home of the Hollywood musical in the 1940s and '50s, she called it M.G.M.



COURTING COUPLE

Courtesy of Lesley Melody
(Grand daughter of Gwen and Eric)



Gwenyth (Gwen) Wilson was 20 years old in 1925 and from the Wanganui district where she worked as a saleswoman. Her father was a farm manager and the family moved around the area but they spent a lot of time in Ohui on her grandparent's farm.

Eric Melody, 26, worked for a Wanganui stock firm but his true passion was music. He played cornet for Queen Alexander's Own Band and also the Dixieland Jazz Orchestra.

Eric was a good swimmer and competed in the Wanganui Bridge to Bridge race for a number of years. Perhaps his prowess as a swimmer was what impressed Gwen on this day at Castlecliff Beach. They were married the following year.

“Perhaps his prowess as a swimmer was what impressed Gwen on this day at Castlecliff Beach.”

MUTTON SANDWICHES FOR TEA

Gwenda Hansen
(nee Robinson)



I wore this suit in the late 1940s on many holidays, including Alexandra, Timaru, Queenstown and Kaka Point. They were all good, but Timaru especially so as we spent a lot of time at Caroline Bay and attended the Bay Concert each afternoon in the soundshell and danced late into the night or early hours of the morning.

I grew up on a farm in Moneymore, five miles out of Milton in South Otago. Mum and Dad would take us to the beach for the day. Sometimes it was to Bull Creek or Toko Mouth.

There used to be a gala at Kaka Point on New Year's Day. We'd join the children's running races and win a penny if we were fast runners.

Bull Creek was our favourite beach. Mum would have arranged for us to stay at Aunty Lottie's crib. On a Sunday Dad would drive Mum and us four children the 15 miles there, and then come pick us up the next Sunday. It seemed to be the crib furthest away from the beach. It was a long walk there and back with all the gear we'd need for a picnic day—jerseys, coats, towels and food. Mum always took plenty of food on holiday. She'd be cooking for days beforehand. She would cook a big leg of mutton and it was wrapped in a tea towel and put into the safe in the crib ready for meals and sandwiches. There was no electricity for lights or stoves, but that was as it was at home too.

“Nanny swam right beside us in the sea making sure we were safe.”

CARAVAN OF LOVE

Robyn Tate (nee Eliason)

This playsuit belonged to Nanny (Evelyn Eliason, nee Williamson), who loved all things about summer. Nanny and Pop bought a caravan in the early '70s, which gave her the ultimate excuse to spend summers at the beach. Most of the grandchildren had turns staying with them. Pop wasn't as keen on the whole beach thing as Nanny was, so it was usually her that kept us entertained. She would take the boys fishing and would curse and swear when the lines went into 'birds' nests' as she called it. She would then spend hours trying to untangle them. We would explore rock pools and collect shells off the beach. Nanny swam right beside us in the sea making sure we were safe. I can remember so vividly coming home along the coast



towing the caravan from Oakura Beach after spending a weekend there. Looking out to sea, the sun wasn't far off setting and I had a little transistor radio that was playing Fleetwood Mac's Albatross. Every time I hear that song it reminds me of that, one of my favourite memories of my grandparents.

SINK OR SWIM

Verna Collins



My mother (Ngairé Dakers, nee Kerr-Taylor) lived north of Auckland all her married life. Married to a schoolteacher, we had five homes by the time I was 12. During the war my mother took over teaching at the sole charge Kerikeri Inlet School till Dad returned. She was a good swimmer and would have swum

in the inlet, and at Paihia where we had holidays. And also at Ninety Mile Beach where Dad taught the high school pupils at Te Kau. We had holidays in Waimauku and swam at Muriwai. Mum was probably thrown in the farm creek, like we were by her father, and left to swim to the bank!



DRINKS AT THE SAILING CLUB

Anna Macindoe

Mum (Janet Macindoe, nee Lornie) and Dad (Bill Macindoe) bought a bach in Manly in 1959 and we spent six weeks there every summer holidays. Here is Mum with a group of friends at

“The good sunfrocks came out and elegant flat sandals were worn.”

Army Bay, Whangaparoa. Manly Sailing Club was strong in the '60s and '70s. As kids we would either be sailing (in P Class and later Lasers) or out with all the fathers on their runabouts. Races

took place every Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday during the school holidays.

The mums would meet on the beach for the start of racing at 2pm, and would sit in their bathing suits, chatting on their straw mats and beach chairs till we all came back about 4.30. Then they would go and prepare dinner and/or get ready for yet another 'drinks party' at another family's bach. The good sunfrocks came out and elegant flat sandals were worn. These drinks parties seemed to take place most nights. The food used to be chips and onion dip, cheese and pineapple on toothpicks, peanuts and homemade pate on Snax crackers.

FAUX FABULOUS

Courtesy of Beryl Hindle

Beryl Hindle immigrated with her husband to Auckland from London in 1952. She was 21 years old and their first baby was six weeks old when they sailed. Going to the beach in New Zealand was quite a novelty. Both during and in the aftermath of World War II beaches in the UK had been off limits. When they first arrived they lived in Auckland city and could walk to Judges Bay, but if anyone had a car they would go further afield to St Heliers or Mission Bay. By the late 1950s and early 1960s when Beryl wore this leopard-print fur bikini she had had three of her four children and they were living in Howick. The family enjoyed taking a rug down and sitting on Howick Beach and if it was warm enough heading in for a swim.



“Going to the beach in New Zealand was quite a novelty.”

“Mum and I sang in the talent quest at the Riverton Carnival every year and often won”

RETRO NOW

Courtesy of Jan Eggleton



This yellow Jantzen swimsuit was bought by Dallas Eggleton for his bride, Maryanne McKinnon (Mae for short), and is now worn by daughter Jan Eggleton. Dallas and Mae married on 22 December 1941, just before Dallas left for war. Dallas returned four years later, and met their son Billy for the first time. Jan's memories of family holidays in the lower South Island include Riverton, Kingston at Lake Wakaitipu and Lake Waihola. "Mum and I sang in the talent quest at the Riverton Carnival every year and often won", says Jan.

FANCY PHYLLIS

Sera Mitchinson



My grandma (Phyllis Leitch) certainly enjoyed a jaunt to the beach in her coordinated outfits! I know she loved Days Bay in Lower Hutt, and I remember her losing an expensive earring in the surf when we lived in Fiji – goodness knows why she didn't take them off for swimming.

In the late '50s when my mother was 11 or 12 they used to live in Masterton. My grandparents would take her, two brothers and a sister to Days Bay for day trips and annual holidays were at Mahy Reserve Camp Ground at Ohope Beach. They would pile all four kids into the back of their Holden, towing a caravan, and my grandparents would both be smoking cigarettes in the front.

Upon arrival, Grandpa Des (Desmond Godfrey Leitch) would busy himself with the setting up and Grandma Phyl would pull out her lounge chair, put on her swimsuit and cork-heeled espadrilles and lie under the sun,

“My grandma was a lively soul and I loved how authentic she was in herself.”

completely unfazed by other campers and passers-by. My mum and her younger siblings were shooed away and left to their own devices and exploring for hours on end while she sun baked. She would trot around in her espadrilles with her swimsuit or short shorts on, while everyone else was in bare feet. She also used to love catching a wave on her boogie board.

My grandma was a lively soul and I loved how authentic she was in herself. She was in the New Zealand Ballet prior to marrying and having a family and missed the stage, so she liked to be the centre of attention.

BEACH BABES

Kim Smith



“Rosi was blonde
and gorgeous, with pouty lips
like Brigitte Bardot’s”

The Ada bikini my sister Rosi is wearing is from the summer of 1968-69. Every summer we used to go as a family to Pataua, beyond the Whangarei Heads. Rosi was blonde and gorgeous, with pouty lips like Brigitte Bardot’s and had a lot of admirers among the surfers. I remember watching

her and her ‘boyfriends’ from the vantage point of the sand dunes while they sat and chatted on the beach. Every so often I would leap out and giggle. I was a pain in the neck, hanging around and getting in the way, but Rosi was a good sister and put up with me.



BIKINI BOOGIE

Jeanette de Heer

Wearing my Expozay bikini riding my boogie board in the surf at Pauanui was summer holiday happiness for me in the 1980s. I had a wash'n'wear perm that turned my straight hair into a curly mop, which I scrunched back into a pony tail when I went swimming. If I didn't remember to attach the halter strap of my bikini before

going into the water my bikini top could end up where it wasn't meant to be. One time in very boisterous surf my top ended up round my waist. Another time the top came right off and I just managed to grab it before it was washed away. No problem: I just put the top back on and looked for another wave to ride.



“It didn’t take me long to fall in love with the ocean.”

SURFER BOY

Marc Moore

designer/co-founder Stolen Girlfriends

This photo is from around 1989 [aged 14]. I learnt surf in 1984 when my mother moved me to Raglan for a bit of a lifestyle change. I was a kid that was wearing Stubbies so the surf thing was pretty exciting for me! It didn’t take me long to fall in love with the ocean. I won quite a few of the Raglan boardriders events and most years would finish in the top 10 New Zealand rankings. My best national results were 3rd and 4th place.

When I was on the T & C New Zealand surf team the boss really

liked my aesthetic and asked for my input in their collections. These board shorts were the first garment I ever designed.

Surfing has kept me so humble throughout the invention and rise of our brand. It always keeps me level-headed and a great escape when things are getting a bit heavy. I owe a lot to surfing—the places I’ve travelled and people I’ve met and all the amazing experiences around my hometown of Raglan. I was a lucky bugger growing up there.

CLOTHING OPTIONAL

Angela Te Wiata



At Bland Bay there would be no one else around. Not even a road to get there until my grandparents helped get money to put one in. My mother would say, 'What do you need clothes for?' It was definitely convenient. You wouldn't have to get sand out of your togs, not wearing any.

**“What do you
need clothes for?”**



SUMMER LOVING

Doreen Caulton

We could sleep four comfortably in the caravan, and with stretchers and bunks in the awning the numbers always swelled. One New Year's after returning from a party we couldn't even get into the caravan with people sleeping everywhere. Our caravan was a short distance from the ablution block, so my husband brought back a small folding bike from LA, quite a novelty at the time. Sometimes other people would ask if they could borrow the bike. They used all sorts of excuses to ride it, often it ended up with several people wobbling along the very rough track to the loos,

or the shop. Over the years we got water pistols and then hoses and buckets, and there were a lot of water fights. Sometimes we would be attacked in the caravan and would retaliate with pots of water; hoses were sometimes put through the skylight in the van which ended up in all out warfare. Adult caravaners around us could often see the signs of trouble and locked themselves in their caravans, but the young ones joined in. One father forbade his daughter to go outside, but after about three years she rebelled and joined the melee.

HONEYMOON WITH THE FAMILY

Trish Bartleet

This photo is from December 1973 when we went on a camping trip up north for my honeymoon. My sister and her family, my brother and his wife and my mother all came along!

The caravan ended up with a flat tyre, so while it was being repaired we changed into our togs on the side of the road and went for a swim. Mum was quite a prude so taking a photo of her getting changed was quite a giggle.



“Mum was quite a prude so taking a photo of her getting changed was quite a giggle.”

“Beaches are the most relaxing place to be”



BIKE FRIENDLY

Dan Ahwa
fashion editor

This is me on my bike at Mission Bay. As a child we also used to drive to Long Bay or Wenderholm and pitch a tent. In 5th form we went on a leadership camp at Pakiri Beach. I remember riding a horse for the first time along that beach and thinking how special that moment was.

The West Coast beaches are another favourite, simply because there's nowhere else like it in the world. Some of my favourite memories are my 6th form art trips to Muriwai to sketch the gannet colony and my first photo shoot at Bethell's with Richard

Orjis and models dressed like Amish folk. Another shoot with Russ Flatt in Piha mixed traditional Maori clothing with English military uniforms, all set to the background of black sand and rugged terrain.

Not only is the beach a source of creative inspiration, but beaches are the most relaxing place to be and is somewhere where you'll always find peace of mind. It gives your brain time to think and when coming up with ideas every day is part of your job, the beach offers welcome respite.