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Dear Liz,

I am finally sending you some of the guff back. I have been a bit busy since getting back here what with one thing and another. I have no real idea what I owe you so I will add some more money and you can divide it between your various envelopes and piggy banks as you see fit. I have written to various people who are now on my wish list. The photos attached are not private and if you want to copy then please do so. The only exception is the one with the two canoes which is to go to Malcolm Wise, as this is his property. The two photos with the school crest were taken by me on a box brownie on 11th May when the school was opened. I sent these to you as they could be interesting to you. I have a couple of other architectural ones which I will send later as I do not have copies yet.

I spoke to Liz Allen for ages before I left UK and also Pete Mettyear. We stayed in Lewes a couple of years ago! I really could not face trying to see anybody before I left as we had had a rotten time with my mother and I really could not face any more emotional situations.

I have been reading the Margaret and Betty saga with interest. Starting from the beginning here are some extra comments: I don't remember the food being as bad as they all claim - maybe that had something to do with living in Liverpool during the blitz. Ask Margaret the main use to which the armchairs in the prefects' room were put - in her day of course, not mine! ^(in the sofa!) The name "The Starboard Light" will come to mind for some people when talking about eating out of school. I am eternally grateful to Miss Sellars for the love of the English language she passed on to me. Also to Mr. Fletcher for his tales of intelligence operations in France instead of S.C. French, and to Commander Harrison for my knowledge of naval warfare in the Mediterranean and lack of proficiency in Latin! She does not mention the other use for the glass wool - being in long pink silky lengths - from the Churchill Hall roof. One year we had two absolutely beautiful Xmas trees one each side of the stage - all decked with strands of pink "snow" and a lot of us going around scratching. Churchill must have become progressively badly insulated. Talking of the stage, more than a few of us have memories of one of the few private places in the school around the back of the scenery! The first go we had at the sailing club in the blue boats went like this. Who can sail? Right, who wants to crew? Right - off you go - no mention of ability to swim or life jackets in those days. All back - right - who else wants to sail and

take a crew. Up went my hand, having just crewed a boat for the first time in my life! After a rough jibe or two - and I mean rough! I skippered and won the next race. I wonder if the crew ever knew how close they had come to death. Well I remember the day of the "big move". All the boys took their laden chest drawers outside onto the grass while the girls changed floors. Never the twain shall meet etc. Jill Parslow and I changed with Wise and Bunce. There was a large sticky plaster patch on our wall labelled "Do not remove" It was found to contain the biggest live spider we had ever seen! The squash court dances in Co//llingwood with "La Composita and Jealousy" "Too many irons in the fire" "The trumpet version of "Summertime" "Always" and other risqué Victor Sylvester tear jerkers. I watched "Kiss me Kate" and various other films shown to the staff occasionally in Churchill. We always missed the first few minutes and the last few minutes as we had to wait until the staff and navy were all seated before we could sneak into the cloakroom at the back and push up the servery hatch. Ones knees got awfully sore but it was generally considered to be worth it. And if you went up the stairs at the back of the prefects' room and lay on the ground you could both hear and see what went on amongst the staff in their time off. Not a lot of people know that, but some eminent members of school did! No-one in Drake ever opened a window to talk to those above without first opening the top ventilator - too many fire buckets of cold water around. We had to go to the hairdressers to have our hair done in case we got a cold doing it in the house. The hair was dried with hand driers and most of us left with half dry hair in the middle of winter. Slipping while bathing became common. The team bus to Hamburg which overheated. The large chest of tea was poured into the radiator and the boys push started it. And the day that Smitherman came into the hall to display the new school crest. He explained the Phoenix rising from the flames around the town crest of Wilhelmshaven and the Motto - Sapientia ex Igne - Wisdom out of Flames. Inspirational and we were also so very proud of it. Talking of the Duck, who remembers his current affairs lessons on the Partition of India which he was so passionately disappointed about.

I have rambled and rather got off the point, but that is the way it goes. I have heaps of memories but cannot always remember the people involved. I have discovered who chucked me into a dyke full of half frozen water on a hare drive as I was supposedly flirting with someone else - who me? But I can't remember who knocked me between boat and wharf with the boom as we came in to dock. It was a long weekend and the "whites" I was wearing had to last another three days. I ran back to school from the sailing club soaking wet. And who remembers the early days and the craze to run around the "block" at least twice in the evening before tea. No wonder we are now a bunch of survivors. No posh joggers in those days - old plimsolls if you had them. I haven't seen a page-break in this for a while and as I am very largely computer illiterate, I will print this to see what is happening.

I gave up on this last night but will add a finale. We live in a very small community and it is 10 kms to the nearest shop and post office, 30 miles to a small supermarket, and 100 miles to either Auckland or Hamilton our nearest towns. We came up here eight years ago after my husband stopped work to fish, swim, do up the house and, in my case, miss being at work a bit. Beauty and isolation are all very well for a sabbatical leave or long holiday. Still, it is still quite a place to live. We get used to it, but I started a few years ago to entertain tourists (I am a Kiwihost) and they love the place and I have a large bunch of correspondents building up from all over the world who were obviously enchanted with our simple approach to life. So, I will try to put this in the post this afternoon. There are so many people I would like to see again and who I can suddenly put names to from your list, after all these years. I have heard nothing but praise for the way you organised the reunion at Newbury and the way you manage the Association. All seems exceptionally tidy to me. You must have gone to a good school! I was a scholarship girl at Merchant Taylors before I went to Germany at 14. I still have a nasty feeling that my academic education finished at 14 except for the Duck and Miss Sellars but I would not have missed the rest for the world. We developed loyalties and values under Smitherman when we were all at an extremely impressionable age. I have talked to Liz Allen about this and was quite amazed how we look back in such a similar fashion.

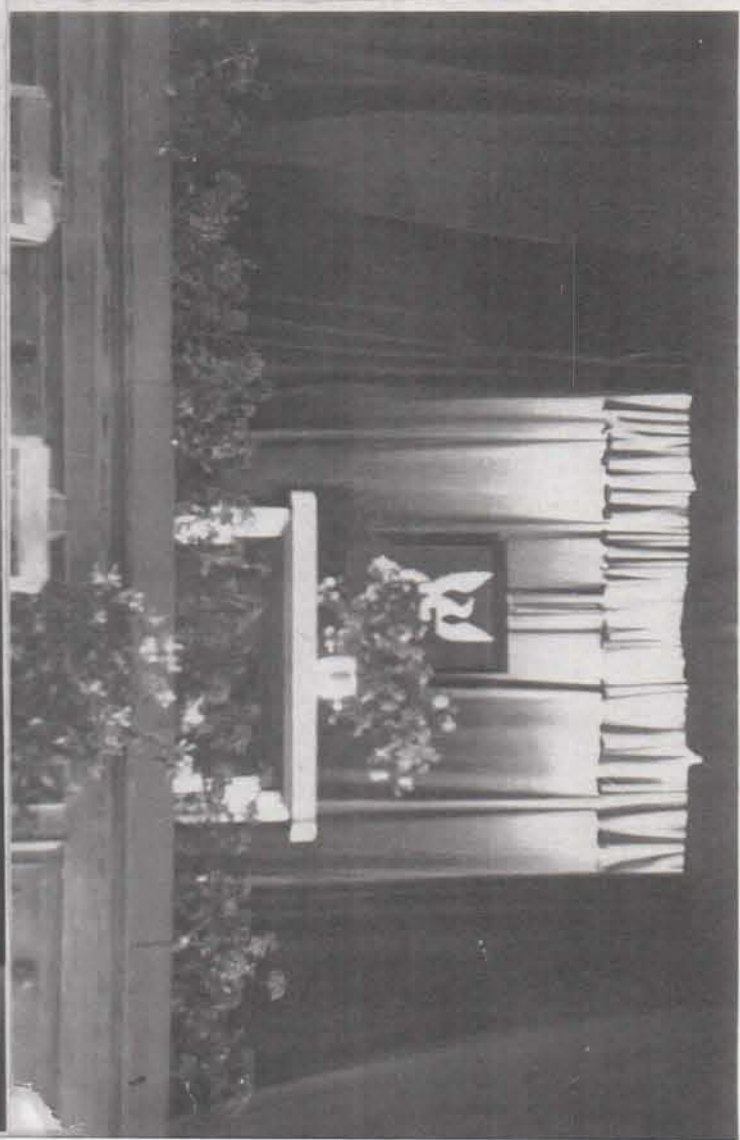
I really have to leave this correspondence for a while as we are frantically trying to catch up on renovations to our accommodation, having unexpectedly been in UK, before our season really starts in three weeks time. We have our first MMP election in two weeks and what a shambles that all is at present. It might just be the single most divisive event that has ever happened to NZ.

All the best - hope to see you sometime.

Heather King
me Maule



11 MAY
OPENING OF SCHOOL
ORIGINAL VERSION OF CREST.



11 MAY OPENING OF
SCHOOL-CHURCH
HOUSE STAGE