

Readings for Rita

"Every once in a while there is a moment when time stands still that happened when I met you. You Rita were the epitome of grace, love and beauty. Our incredible wedding stood for a new life together for change and hope for the future. Thank you for being the perfect picture of all things good. Norris

Diane

Be careful who you marry

Be careful who you marry, because they will raise your children

They will teach your children words and how to speak of others

They will teach your children kindness and how to be a brother and sister

They will teach your children curiosity and how to explore the world

They will teach your children how to pick themselves up and try again.

They will teach your children how to raise your grandchildren

Thank you mum for the many things you have taught me; How to talk, how to be kind, how to be a sister, and a daughter, how to be a wife, how to explore the world, the value of persistence and academic effort, and how to love my family.

Remembrance from DAVID

My mother was an amazing woman that gave me so many wonderful memories.

She was an inspiration to her children and to her grandchildren.

Mum was keen on sports and performing in her youth and she made sure that Diane and I had all the opportunities to broaden our horizons. Like all great Mums she supported our activities, driving us to gymnastics, dancing, music lessons, orchestra and choir practices around Hawkes Bay and beyond. I remember being woken in the early hours on winter mornings, bundled into the back of the family station wagon with a sleeping bag and pillow and driven to gymnastics competitions in Palmerston North, Taupo, Tauranga, Wanganui and Wellington. It was never too much trouble and she loved to watch us perform and grow.

Mum was a popular relieving teacher in Hawkes Bay and regularly taught at Hastings Boys, Karamu, Hastings Girls and even Havelock High where Diane and I attended. It was not uncommon to see her around school and my fellow pupils made the odd joke about being the 'teacher's pet' whenever Mum took a class I was in. I didn't mind at all. I was very proud of her. However, she really surprised me one day

when I was setting up my lathe in school's Engineering Workshop and in she marched to supervise the metalwork class. Mum was always up for a challenge. Mum loved to travel and experience new sights. As a teenager, we travelled to the South Island to see the spectacular scenery of Queenstown and the Southern Alps. I was really keen to climb the Franz Joseph glacier and somehow managed to convince Mum that we had do this. We donned our spiked climbing boots and heavy thermal jackets and followed a guide on a narrow trail up the glacier. It got real interesting when the trail disappeared, washed out by rain, and the guide had to cut footsteps with an ice axe to make it up the steep slope to the vantage point. It was slippery and dangerous, but Mum was there beside me, all the way.

But the most memorable family holiday we had together was much more recent. It was the celebration of Mum and Dad's 50th Wedding Anniversary in 2012 when they brought us together on the Sunshine Coast at Twin Waters resort. With all seven grandchildren, we had a wonderful time, sailing on catamarans and kayaks, fishing off the pier, taking walks in the bush to seek out wild kangaroos and even a fox. The youngest of our children, Kayley, was only three at the time and remembers little of this marvellous holiday. However, she was literally leaping off the furniture and dancing with joy when Dad mentioned that he wants to bring the family together at Twin Waters again next year. This is exactly what Mum would have wanted. Mum and Dad's good friend and long-standing neighbour Margaret Walmsley told me something wonderful the other day that really resonated with me. She said a funeral is the dead's gift to the living. An event that brings families together and where we celebrate what has been. Thank you, Mum, you have given us so much to celebrate.

[Katie and Adam](#)

[Life Goes On by Joyce Grenfell](#)

If I should go before the rest of you
Break not a flower
Nor inscribe a stone
Nor when I am gone
Speak in a Sunday voice
But be the usual selves
That I have known
Weep if you must
Parting is hell
But life goes on
So sing as well

Grandmother and Child – Ruth Dallas

The waves that danced about the rock have gone,
The tide has stolen the rock as time has stolen

The quiet old lady who waited beneath the trees
That moved with a sad sea-sound in the summer wind.
When death was as near as the wind among the leaves,
Troubling the waking fear in the heart of the child
As the wind was troubling the shadows on the sunlit lawn
The grandmother seemed as frail as the frailest leaf.

But she sat so still in the shade of the summer trees
With the wind of death on her cheeks and her folded hands,
Her strength seemed large and cool, as the rock in the sea
Seemed large and cool in the green and restless waves.

As the rock remains in the sea, deep down and strong,
The rock-like strength of the lady beneath the trees
Remains in the mind of the child, more real than death,
To challenge the child's strength in the hour of fear

Dear Norris and family

I felt extremely sad to hear that your dear Rita had died. I have such fond memories of you both over your time at Hastings Girls' High School and always admired the ever present love and respect you had for one another. Her love for her family was without question and I well remember her joy when the grandchildren came along. We would often chat about the special times spent with them all.

Rita will be greatly missed. May the lifetime of beautiful memories you have of her be yours to treasure always and be of great comfort to you all.

Softly the leaves of memory fall

Gently I gather and treasure them all

Unseen, unheard,

You are always near,

So missed, so loved, so very dear.

With love and deepest sympathy

Cath and David Hughes

Rita had a lovely smile and was always elegant and fashionable with a lovely smile and she will be a lasting memory. I had nothing but admiration and respect for Rita as a teacher. *Amanda Greville*

Rira made an unforgettable impression on me. It seemed to me that for Rita everyone was precious. That is a rare gift. *Mary McCann.*