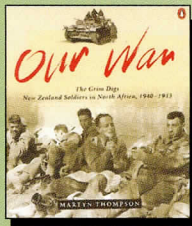


# In Print

NEW ZEALAND MEMORIES  
ISSUE # 53 APRIL/MAY 2005



## Our War

The Grim Digs - New Zealand Soldiers in North Africa, 1940-1943

The author has drawn on the experiences of eighty veterans who served their country in the 1940-1943 North African campaign and the Greece and Crete actions of 1941. The quotes from these New Zealanders are explicit and bring home the full force of the tragedy of war. Intertwined is the soldiers' inevitable humour, sustaining them through another day; "Next was another order to prepare to retreat. I remember Roy Gibbs saying, 'I think we should put *Backwards* on our caps instead of *Onward*'". With full credit to Martyn, the mammoth task of interviewing, compiling and presenting the memoirs on the written page pays tribute to the ordinary soldier and records eyewitness accounts for future generations. A narrative of the events accompanies these personal experiences plus a superb collection of photographs, many from private collections, effectively illustrates the book. Martyn has a genuine regard for these veterans and was instrumental in setting up the *Owen Gatman Memorial Trust* (under the auspices of the RSA) designed to provide special needs funding for veterans and their families. In the words of the publisher, "these personal memoirs build a vivid, sometimes visceral, portrait of men at war – the fear, the boredom, the adventure, the humour, the pain, the comradeship, the bravery, the everyday realities of the ordinary soldier".

### Our War

Martyn Thompson

312 pages

Available from all good bookshops

**\$39.95**



## Thrift to Fantasy

Home Textile Crafts of the 1930s - 1950s

Rosemary examines items of handcraft that offer the reader a glimpse into women's art and creativity during the years encompassing the Depression, the war years and into the settled decade of the '50s. This comprehensive book reflects an era when money was tight and women were expected to sew to clothe the family and provide cheery touches to make a house a home. It required ingenuity. Even with the loosening of purse strings in the 1950s, women still prided themselves on domestic abilities which, in turn, impacted upon their social circles. Formal morning and afternoon tea parties were an event. "The hostess of a tea party would wear a smart dress, stockings and high-heeled shoes, and be fully made up and corseted even if she was also wearing a frilly apron".

*Thrift to Fantasy* is a fine study of women of this period, reflecting their dreams and aspirations. The entire book is rich in colour with hundreds of illustration from Rosemary's collection of handcraft: patchwork quilts, tea cosies, embroidered tray cloths, topsy-turvy dolls, sacking aprons, handbags, rag rugs – a treasury of memories.

The publisher comments, "Objects made by our mothers and grandmothers are so familiar to us that we rarely take the time to consider what they represent". After reading this gem of a book, I will look at the rarely used, handcrafted items in my linen cupboard with renewed appreciation.

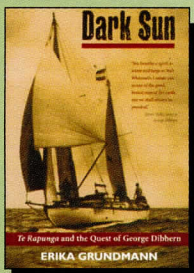
### Thrift to Fantasy

Rosemary McLeod

268 pages

Available through  
*New Zealand Memories*  
(See back inside cover for details)

**\$59.95** (plus \$3 p/p)



## Dark Sun

Te Rapunga and the Quest of George Dibbern

Many readers will remember Erika's excellent articles on George Dibbern and his exploits on the ketch *Te Rapunga* published in earlier issues of *New Zealand Memories*. George himself declared, "My life is one with the sea. We respect each other and I have no other master". Indeed George lived by this statement, spending thirty years sailing the Pacific, punctuated only by his confinement at Wellington's Somes Island during World War I and II.

During her extensive research for *Dark Sun*, Erika has corresponded with family and friends of George Dibbern dotted throughout the world; people upon whom the man left his mark. Dibbern's own book *Quest* and his idealistic claim as a 'citizen of the world' won him admiration from some quarters, including key literary figure Henry Miller, and condemnation from others. The media was often scathing of his adventures and nationality.

The author has included in the narrative, letters written to and from Dibbern giving insight into his unique personality and the set of beliefs that dictated his life. For those who want more of the exploits of 'German George', *Dark Sun* is a must.

### Dark Sun

Erika Grundmann

477 pages

Available at all good bookshops

**\$49.99**