



## CAMP

Many of us have played the imaginary game of choosing people dead or alive we'd like to invite to a dinner party. Camp is simply an extension of that game, only the imaginary meeting would last a few days as opposed to a few hours.

Everyone can maintain good manners and correct behaviour for a few hours, but a few days is another matter. Imagine the conversation after little sleep, partying, and camp food? Surely everyone's personal failings would soon come to the fore.

The guests: Joseph Beuys, Dawn French, Princess Anne, Tame Iti, Rosemary McLeod, Oscar Wilde, and my great grandparents Eleanor and Richard Caton Woodville. These are people I find intriguing for various reasons - their lives, their personalities, the way they would stand out in a crowd. I like people who buck the system, which they all did or do.

Devising Camp, a grown-up version of making huts as children, using blankets and sticks, I positioned myself as Camp Mother, inspired by the wonderful Topp Twins. My goal was to go quietly about my hostess duties and chores, watching, learning, and listening like a fly on the wall. What exchanges would take place with so many strong personalities in one place? I wish I could be there.

My practice consists of upcycling cloth into utilitarian objects that provide warmth, shelter and protection. I've really enjoyed making 'Camp' as I am a keen camper and the thought of what might happen at 'Camp' has been an amusing thought throughout its creation.

I'd like viewers to let their minds wander, imagine various scenarios amongst the campers, and write them down with the materials provided. Anything would do, from a duty roster to a robust political debate. Maybe you could write a short script with yourself as central character, draw an illustration or just share your own experience of camping. Books written about and by the guests could aid your imagination, and google is never far away if you need to check facts.

Katherine Morrison 2016

**Rosemary McLeod**, b previously

Rosemary McLeod is a NZ writer, journalist, cartoonist, author and columnist. She became prominent in the 1970s when she wrote and illustrated a column for The Listener, satirising social mores of the period, while working as a newspaper reporter. This led to comedy writing for the Australian Broadcasting Commission in Sydney, and writing comedy for local television. She also wrote scripts for Close To Home, The Seekers, and Country GP. She was deviser, story liner and writer for the cult TV series Gloss in the 1980s, which won the best drama category of the NZ TV awards in 1987. Her book A Girl Like I won the PEN Best First Book of Prose award in 1976, she has won numerous journalism awards, and her book Thrift to Fantasy won the history category of the NZ book awards in 2006.

McLeod is also a textile artist and major collector of women's domestic textile work from the 1930s-1950s. Her collection was exhibited at the Dowse Art Museum in 2002/3 and viewed by 40,000 people. The show was extended because of its popularity, and proved to be the catalyst for the book. I think the book will become a classic.

Her most recent book is With Bold Needle and Thread. Along with its publication an exhibition of the contents of the book, and her growing collection, toured nationally in art galleries and museums for two to three years.

She continues to write newspaper columns for a number of newspapers around the country, originating from The Dominion Post. She writes bravely - some say with acerbic wit - about current issues in a way that many of us agree with, but are too timid to express ourselves.

Rosemary is a day visitor only to Camp, as she abhors the very idea. However she will be assigned the bringing of fresh baking daily, along with the morning newspaper. While the other guests are supplied with beds, she has a chair embroidered with her chosen personal motto, the national motto of Scotland. Nemo Me Impune Lacesset means 'no-one touches me with impunity.'

**Dawn French**, b 1957

Dawn French is an actress, writer and comedian has been one of Britain's best loved comedians for over 30 years. Early on she won a debating scholarship that led to her studying at the prestigious Spence School in New York. She went on to study at the Central School of Speech and Drama where she met her future comedy partner, Jennifer Saunders.

French and Saunders first came to public attention as members of the Comic Strip, part of the alternative comedy scene in the early 1980s. French then found greater fame as the star (Geraldine Boadicea Granger) of the BBC sitcom, Vicar of Dibley. French has been nominated for seven British Academy TV awards, and has won a BAFTA fellowship with Saunders.

French claims her self-confidence and self-belief stems from her father. "He taught me to value myself. He told me that I was beautiful and the most precious thing in his life." French toured NZ in March with a one-woman show called Thirty Million Minutes, an expose of her life tinged with pathos as well as humour.

Dawn would lead games of charades in the evening, around the camp fire.

**Princess Anne, b 1950**

Princess Anne is 12<sup>th</sup> in line to the English throne. She is known for her charitable work, is patron of more than 200 organisations, and carries out over 500 royal engagements a year. Will she have time to go camping? I hope so.

She is reported to be the most down-to earth of all the Queen's children.

Anne has ridden in the British Equestrian Team and was European Cross-Country Equestrian Champion in 1972. She is the first member of the British royal family to compete at the Olympic Games. She was president of the Fédération Equestre Internationale from 1986-1994, and is currently a member of the International Olympic Committee.

Competing in cross-country and show jumping at such a high level takes talent, courage, and nerves of steel. Although she no longer competes at an international level she remains ensconced in the horsey world. Such is her love of animals, especially horses, of which she once wryly said, "When I appear in public people expect me to neigh, paw the ground and swish my tail - none of which is easy."

In 1974 Anne was the target of a kidnapping attempt in Pall Mall, when a deranged man tried to bundle her into a car and hold her for ransom. Her reply to him was, "Not bloody likely."

Anne chose not to give her children titles. They say, "Whenever we may have got slightly above our station she'd be the first one to bring us down to earth." Once asked about her habit of recycling her outfits she said, "Economy was bred into me." She will be most impressed that her coat for Camp is recycled from a 1950s curtains.

Anne's duty on camp will be guarding the perimeter with a shotgun.

**Tame Iti**, b 1952.

Tame Iti is a controversial Maori activist brought up by his grandparents in Ruatoki, Te Urewera. He says his childhood felt privileged as there was plenty of kai, space and family. Ruatoki was his universe. From a young age he learnt about his whanau's land injustices, and was deeply shocked by the racism he experienced as a young man. Feelings of anger stemming from those injustices built up in him and he began protesting in the 1960s.

Iti's ability to court controversy, and his full facial moko, make him instantly recognisable. He admits to being an extremist, and styles himself as a Maori activist battling for the soul of his nation, hapu and iwi. To quote the late Dr Ranginui Walker, "Tame uses theatre to get his point across, which is consistent with Maori culture."

As well as being an activist, Iti is an actor and artist, thoughtful, creative and expressive.

If we run out of food or become marooned on camp Tame's hunting and bush survival skills will come in handy. He can lend Anne a gun for guard duty.

**Oscar Wilde, 1854-1900**

Oscar Wilde was an Irish playwright, novelist, essayist and poet. Known for his biting wit, flamboyant dress sense - a hairdresser waved his hair daily, and he smoked gold-tipped cigarettes - and his glittering conversation, Wilde became one of the best-known personalities of his day.

"Do you want to know the great drama of my life?" he asked fellow writer Andre Gide. "It's that I have put my genius into my life. All I've put into my work is my talent." He is remembered for his epigrams, his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, his plays, especially *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and the circumstances of his imprisonment and death.

Wilde, unlike other great monologists, reportedly didn't exclude others from conversation, but few would have dared to interrupt; It would have been like playing tennis against Rafael Nadal. The best of his sayings were known as Oscariana.

Even after he married and fathered two children one critic observed that for all Wilde's genius his emotional life never progressed much further than that of an adolescent. Wilde's homosexuality challenged the hypocrisy of Victorian sexual attitudes, and the consequences were fatal for him. He was found guilty of homosexual acts and jailed. His *Ballad of Reading Jail* was written there when he was an inmate.

It's said that while dying from alcohol poisoning he is said to have remarked that he was dying beyond his means, and many of his witticisms survive. As Dorothy Parker wrote,

"If with the literate I am  
Impelled to try an epigram,  
I never seek to take the credit;  
We all assume that Oscar said it."

Wilde's role on camp will be to read aloud his famous children's story, *The Happy Prince*.

**Katherine Morrison** (a.k.a. Blanket Queen), b 1956

While nursing in the 1970s I learned how to suture (stitch) in a proficient manner. This was excellent training for becoming a quilter.

I began quilt making 30 years ago as a creative outlet while caring for small children. Eventually I began using old woollen blankets in my work, and for the past 15 years all my work has been executed in pre-used textiles. The ethics and pragmatism associated with the history of quilt making appealed to me, and so did the sense of identity of the object inherent in NZ blankets that once graced the nation's beds.

Using blankets with their stains, tears and holes still apparent is a way of acknowledging the story of their human involvement, and the visibly obvious repairing of signs of deterioration is a metaphor for me of care and preservation. I feel that in repurposing old blankets I give them a sense of permanence in spite of the visible passing of time.

For the past decade I have created narratives around my exhibited work, focussing on life cycles - birth, death, healing - and domesticity, which I contend is not valued enough for its crucial role in our everyday lives.

My work is in private collections around the world, and in the Australian National Wool Museum in Geelong. I have won a number of awards.

As Camp Mother my duties will include first aid for those campers who end up in fisticuffs.

## **Joseph Beuys, 1942-1986**

Joseph Beuys was a German artist working in Europe and the United States from the 1950s to the 1980s. He came to be associated with that period's international proto-conceptual art movement, Fluxus. Beuys studied the teachings of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century mystic Rudolph Steiner, founder of the International Anthroposophy movement in 1947. Those ideas informed his work.

Beuys' diverse body of work ranges from the traditional drawing, painting and sculpture to process-orientated or time-based "action art". He also used found and everyday objects, dead and living animals, in his work.

As Beuys put it, "My art cannot be understood primarily by thinking. My art touches people who are in tune with my mode of thinking. But it is clear that people cannot understand my art by intellectual process alone, because no art can be experienced in that way."

He is especially famous for works incorporating fat and felt. According to Beuys a pivotal (and unverifiable) event changed his life in 1944 when his warplane was shot down over the Crimean Front in the Ukraine. He claims to have been rescued by a nomadic tribe of Tartars, who saved his life by greasing his bruised and battered body with animal fat, before wrapping his entire body in felt. Whether this is fact or fiction, Beuys' tale of heroic rescue is referenced in much of his work.

Beuys' original and controversial theatrical style, his practice of "social sculpture" attempted to make art more democratic by collapsing the space between life and art. Recurring motifs he employed suggested that art, common materials and everyday life are inseparable. His art had strong political implications.

"Even the act of peeling a potato can be an artistic act if it is consciously done." - Joseph Beuys.

Guess what job he may get on camp?

## **Eleanor & Richard Woodville**

Eleanor Caton Woodville (1870-1956) and Richard Caton Woodville (1856-1927). These are my great-grandparents.

Eleanor (Nell) came from a London Quaker family. She met Richard while she was a demi-monde in Paris during the 1890s. They married and had one daughter, Lily, in 1896, but their marriage didn't last long as his painting and drinking through the night drove her to distraction. She left him, and while on a boat intending to emigrate to America she met a Dutchman, went back to Holland with him, and they married. After he died she ended her days in an Italian hotel.

Back to Richard: he was an artist, reporter, writer and illustrator, best known for being a prolific painter of battle scenes in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He spent much of his career working for the Illustrated London News.

Richard was born in America and brought up in Russia, or rather, as he put it, "dragged up." He studied painting in Germany, Russia and France. His interest in painting war scenes may have been sparked by his experience reporting on the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878. He also painted landscapes and portraits. He painted members of the British royal family many times, and has been called the best artist of his genre.

A very wild, naughty, entertaining man, Richard's book *Random Collections* gives some insight into his life. During his lifetime he enjoyed immense popularity and moved in a louche-sounding social circle that included Oscar Wilde's brother, Billy.

Richard's work is still exhibited in the British National Army Museum, the Tate and the Royal Academy. But despite all his success he died destitute by his own hand.

I think Nell and Richard would entertain us all with scandalous stories, possibly to equal Oscar's.

## **Wool processing**

The first woollen mills opened in the 1870s to spin and weave the wool from New Zealand's large number of sheep. They made fabric for clothes and blankets, and yarn for knitting.

Mills employed many workers, mostly young women. They worked long hours and were paid much less than men.

During the first and second world wars the factories were very busy making khaki fabric for army uniforms. They worked 24 hours a day and could not get enough staff.

From the 1980s more fabrics and yarn were imported, and many factories closed.

## **Camp Katherine for Northland school**

Tell the story about Katherine's work and the 'Game' she is playing.

Talk about her values underlying her work and the technology's inherent.

Share camping experiences with a focus on games played when camping such as charades, cards, hide and seek, board games, knuckle bones. Leave a lot of our conventional toys at home.

Offer the stitching activity with a focus on creating toys e.g. stuffed toys, blankets for teddies, bags for marbles.

Encourage co-operation, perseverance and independence

<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/agricultural-processing-industries/page-3>