

LINKing

's and Hands

Wildflowers growing along the highways in Texas



My story of my Dinner set

By Margaret Carver

Many years ago one of the lovely gifts we were given as a wedding present was a dinner set.

My aunt and uncle gave us a Noritaki dinner set with settings for six people. A light blue edging with a raised fine wreath of flowers circled each one, outlined by a silver border. It was a very delicate and attractive dinner set, with not only the standard dinner plates, side plates, cups and saucers, but dessert dishes, entree plates and soup bowls. This dinner set was destined to travel the many roads of our missionary life.

In 1973 when we were packing our goods to go to Papua New Guinea as missionaries, I decided to leave



The dinner set in use today

the dinner set in storage at home, along with various other sentimental items. I had been told we were going to a very remote and primitive part of the country. I had viewed an 8mm film of the dangerous roads high in the

mountains of the Chimbu Province and I felt my decision to leave the Noritaki dinner set behind, was a wise decision.

Sure enough, just as I had seen on the film, the village we went to was isolated and the roads were not conducive to such delicate items. After a few years of living in the native village I began to dream how nice it

would be to have my dinner set. It was probably a matter of loneliness and longing for something familiar with the society I had left far behind. I had been raised with fine china and a mother who loved to use such things.



Our little house in the village in Papua New Guinea

Our small woven reed house perched on the edge of a hillside in a remote village in the highlands of Papua New Guinea, and it was not really the place to be using such a dinner set. But homesickness prevailed. We decided to ship the dinner set, along with a few other items we thought we wanted.

At that time the method of shipping was in forty four gallon drums, secured with a bolt. The dinner set was wrapped and placed in the drum and then shipped the many miles by boat and transported by truck to the final destination of the little woven reed house in the village. When carefully unpacked I was disappointed to see a few pieces of the dinner set had broken in journey and had to be thrown away.

In the years that followed in Papua New Guinea I was happy to be able to use the dinner set on special occasions. Life seemed a little more normal when I opened the cabinet door and saw the pretty blue and silver dinner set there. We did not have many guests in those days, but when we did, the dinner set was used. In the years that followed the dinner set was in

Welcome

This newsletter is certainly not as regular as I would like it to be! However our travels in the USA have been demanding and I find the moving from place to place does not help my desire to keep up with a newsletter. But it has given me time away from the everyday routine and I found myself thinking back on many of our early years in missionary work. The story I have written about here is a result of such thoughts.

I wanted you to see these grandchildren of ours! **Far right is Matthew and Ryan** who are growing up so fast! They took a trip to Sydney (the big city!) and that is Australia Square behind them—the large tower. **To the right is sweet Laura and Timothy.** Don't you love the no- shoes look on Timothy?



and out of china cabinets when we located in a town, renting various homes.

Fifteen years later we finally left Papua New Guinea and the dinner set was once again packed carefully. It was now to find a home to New Zealand, where for the following four years it decorated the table for Christmas and birthday celebrations.

Once again the dinner set was packed and shipped. This time it was to Fiji and on arrival I was disappointed to see that more of the dinner set had broken in transit. This time cups and saucers and soup bowls added to the missing items. It was becoming a little more awkward to use the setting on special occasions where there was more than four of us. However it came out on the table for birthdays and Christmas, mostly with a substitute dinner setting to make up the number of necessary settings. During these ten years in Fiji one or two more items in the dinner set were broken. By the time it was packed and shipped home to Australia I had decided it could not be used any more as there were too many pieces missing.

Now it was to grace the large oak corner cabinet left to me by my mother. Sadly it was no longer in use.

We came to the USA for our furlough in 2001. My daughter, who also loves fine china, instructed me to go on a web site she had found and to order the missing pieces. As we traveled I kept promising myself I would do this. Why not have the complete dinner set once again? Now and again my daughter would ask if I had ordered the missing items but each time I had to confess I had just not got around to doing it.

During our furlough we were scheduled to be with the Jenkins in Toledo, Illinois. We looked forward to this time as we had made their acquaintance some years before and our children had spent time with them during School of Missions. They kindly had us stay with them in their home and we enjoyed some good relaxing days. During preparation for dinner one evening, Sister Jenkins was telling me how much she would like a new dinner set. She had seen a set and had it in mind, but first she wanted to clear her cabinet of a dinner set she had owned for many years. She was reticent about giving the set away as she said how pretty it was. However she wanted the cabinet space for a new set.

I began to tell her I also had a dinner set stored away in a cabinet and I had not used it for years because so many pieces were missing. I proceeded to describe the delicate blue and silver patterned Noritaki dinner set. I told her the story of how I

had shipped it to Papua New Guinea and how pieces had been broken in shipping. Then the same fate befell it on the journey to Fiji.

At this juncture she flung open her cabinet and said "Is this your Noritaki set?" There before my eyes was a cabinet full of my blue and silver Noritaki dinner set! Not only were there the regular place settings, but there were serving dishes, soup tureens, platters, a coffee pot, salt and pepper, butter dish, creamer and sugar bowl. The plates were for a twelve piece setting!

In unbelief I stared at the dinner set before me. Sister Jenkins saw my astonishment and without having to ask, she offered for me to take the set with me! This would mean a more than complete



The dinner set at Sister Jenkins home, getting ready to be packed

dinner set! How thankful I was for her kindness as she would not have known what this meant to me. As we wrapped each item I could not help but be amazed at how the Lord is aware of every detail of our labors for Him. Nothing goes unnoticed in His eyes.

Together we spent time wrapping each item. From here it was shipped back to Australia with no damage, where once again it graces the family table for birthdays and Christmas. The setting is ample for our family of four grandchildren, daughter and son in law, daughter in law and son!

I often look at the dinner set when I have put it all in its place on the table and think back to the early days of its life as it graced the table in the little woven reed house. Like me, the dinner set had traveled many places and lived in many homes.

For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love.....Hebrews 6:10

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AUSTRALIA

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