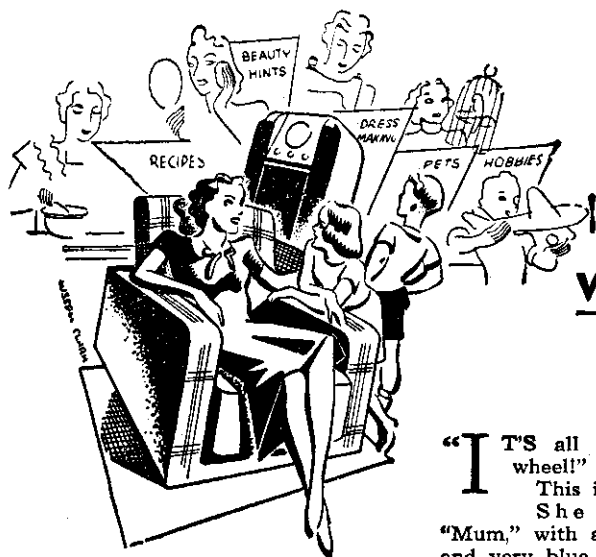


Women and the Home

Radio is the slender wire that brings the world and its affairs into the tiny kitchens and living rooms which hitherto had isolated so many housekeepers in the performance of their duties
—Margaret Bondfield



Weekly Interview

TAXI PLEASE!

"IT'S all right — Mum's at the wheel!"

This is as they know her. She is a youthful-looking "Mum," with a clear, fresh complexion and very blue eyes. If I gave you her name, the editor would say I was advertising her in the news columns.

It seemed fitting that I should interview a regular lady taxi-driver in the little side room of her own Service Station. She has a home, too, of course, a very nice one, where she and her husband manage to spend a few hours a day. But most of her time is spent waiting for calls in the side room of the Service Station. It is littered with motor tools, oil-cans, and various other car accessories—and drifting through the window is the pungent odour of petrol.

For Seven Years

It was here we talked. "Mum" was dressed in her chauffeur's kit — a warm tweed coat, a white silk scarf and a dark felt hat. She looked serviceable and efficient—and her hands were nice.

She laughed a little uncertainly.

"I really don't know what I can say."

"Just talk," I said. "It will work out."

She talked. She told me she has been driving a taxi for seven years—though her interest in cars dates back many years before that.

How She Started

A stroke of bad luck during the depression, a serious accident to her husband in a car smash, and this plucky woman took things into her own hands and became a taxi driver. She has prospered. She is a well known, well liked, and well respected figure in her suburban community. She told me that her clientele is a loyal and a staunch one. Most of them date back to that adventurous day when "Mum" first took her car on a public road. With very few respites, she has been going ever since. Her clients wouldn't let her give up her job if she wanted to—which she doesn't. To them she is something more than just a taxi-driver—she is, in many cases, their friend and their adviser. In addition, she is a bureau for information—she is expected to know a lot—and somehow she manages that, too.

When people ring for a car, it is invariably accompanied by the request that she should drive. Her clients trust her. Mothers get her to call and pick up their children; invalids and cripples rely on her kindness and sturdy strength. Intending brides book her up for their weddings. As a driver, among women, she is perhaps unique. And I have not her

word for that but her husband's, and he does not throw idle bouquets. She can out-drive him—and most other men.

Her Ambition

Her calls take her in all directions, far and near—over difficult tracks and stiff climbs, but they all say, "If 'Mum's' at the wheel — it's all right!"

"Do you really like your work — driving, I mean?"

Her look answered me.

"I think it is the best part of my life. I am really happy when I am behind the wheel. It is something more to me than just a car. I know by the tiniest sound if it is running well or if anything is amiss. I can even sense that in a strange car."

"What kind of car do you drive?"

"I think I've driven every kind — even a lorry. My ambition is to take a turn at the wheel of a big bus — some day I'll do that."

"You must find the life interesting?"

"I do. It's healthy, I think, always being out in the open air, and then there's the human contact. I enjoy that, too. One meets all kinds of people, of course, but in the great majority of cases they are friendly and nice."

"And do you get any time to yourself, at all?"

She smiled.

"Very little. I'm up at 6.30 every morning, and my earliest night is 12.30. Yet I manage to do my own housework, cooking, and washing."

"And drive in between?"

"Of course."

"The Three Wise Monkeys"

Just then the telephone rang for a call. I walked with her to the car.

"It's amazing," I said. "You must have some secret formula to keep you going like this."

"My doctor calls it nervous energy," she said.

"That sounds rather like a motto," I said. "I've heard it before."

She leant forward, smiling above the wheel.

"I have a better one—indispensable for a taxi-driver. Hear nothing — see nothing — say nothing!"

"The three wise monkeys rolled into one?"

"That's me," she laughed back. "Some people call it tact—we need it in this business."

The car moved off. She waved. I stood watching the small red light disappear in the distance.

"STOCKING ECONOMY"

(By L.J.S.)

NOW that there is likely to be a shortage of silk stockings, it is essential, apart from the necessary economy of the times, that we buy correctly and then make our stockings last as long as possible.

Actually it is a saving when buying stockings to get two or three pairs at once of the same shade. It may seem extravagant at the time, but will turn out to be most economical, as when the pairs begin to wear out, the odd stockings match and make a pair. The weight of the stockings depends upon the amount of wear they will be getting, and sheer silk stockings should only be used for the evening. They will not stand up to heavy wear. Semi-sheer are best for special day time occasions, semi-service weight for everyday and service weight for hard going—especially in the country.

If the heels and toes are darned with silk before wearing, it will put off the evil day when holes appear. Cheap stockings which appear shiny on the right side can be turned to the wrong side. Trim off the seam fringes carefully with a pair of scissors, and the result

will be an expensive-looking pair of stockings with a nice dull finish. Wash before wearing, and they will last longer. Also there will be no danger of injury to the feet by dye.

As a matter of fact, all stockings benefit by washing after every wear, but this applies particularly to expensive pairs. The wear of laundering is small compared with the damage done by perspiration. Never rub stockings when washing, but squeeze gently in suds. The water used should be neither very hot nor very cold.

If a ladder should appear when there is little chance of mending it, apply a dab of nail polish, but this should only be used on ladders out of sight, as the polish shows on stockings. Grease from a bicycle chain ruins many stockings, but this may be removed without damaging the silk by rubbing a brass cleaner on the marks, drying, and then washing in the usual way.

When putting on a pair of stockings, turn inside out and insert the toe first, then draw them on over the heels; and when taking off always roll to the ankle. Broken nails and rings cause many ladders, but these can be avoided by forethought.

These Should Interest You:

Talks prepared by the A.C.E., Home Science Tutorial Section, University of Otago:

"Wintry Weather Wear." Monday, April 8, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 2YA 3 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.

"The Show Judge's Comments." Wednesday, April 10, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

"Cakes that Keep." Thursday, April 11, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m., Friday, April 12, 2YA 3 p.m.

"Odd Jobs for Handymen." Friday, April 2, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

"The Value of Physical Education": Mrs. I. G. L. Sutherland. Monday, April 8, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"Ships and Shoes and Sealing Wax": Miss Nelle Scanlan. Tuesday, April 9, and Friday, April 12, 1YA 11 a.m., 2YA 10.45 a.m., 4YA 10.50 a.m.

"Flower Arrangement": President, the Society of New Zealand Professional Florist Artists. Tuesday, April 9, 3YA 11 a.m.

"Still Outside the Pale: Women at Cambridge": Miss Ida Lawson. Thursday, April 11, 3YA 11 a.m.

"Music and Flowers: Flowers in Art": Malcolm Vaughan. Saturday, April 13, 1YA 11 a.m.

"Music and Flowers: The Place for Flowers": Majeska. Saturday, April 13, 2YA 10.45 a.m.

"Music and Flowers: Flowers and Fashions": Miss Peggy Hoyt. Saturday, April 13, 3YA 11 a.m.

"Music and Flowers: The Influence of Flowers": Princess Alexandra Kropotkin. Saturday, April 13, 4YA 10.50 a.m.

"Morning Reflections, by Elsie K. Morton": All ZB Stations 9.45 a.m. Saturday, April 13

"Healthcraft for the Home": 1ZB Auckland, 9.30 a.m. Tuesday, April 9. Thursday, April 11

"Fashion News": 2ZB Wellington, 10.7 a.m. Tuesday, April 9. Thursday, April 11

"The Shopping Reporter's Session," by Grace Green: 3ZB Christchurch, 11.30 a.m. Monday to Fridays, inclusive

"On Wings of Song": 4ZB Dunedin, 7.45 p.m. Thursdays