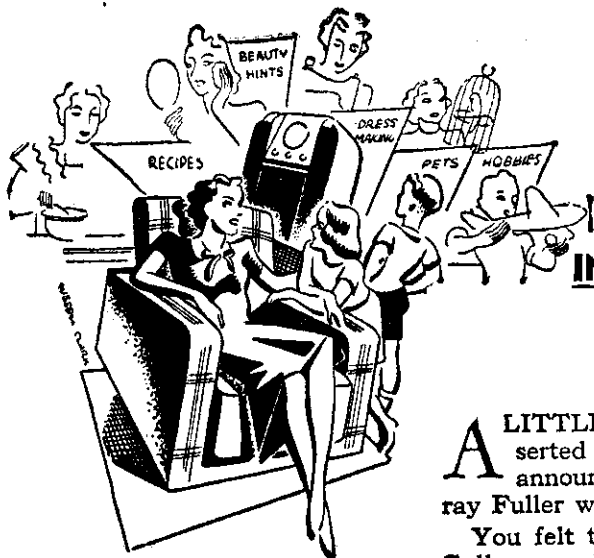


# Women and the Home

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



## INTERVIEW

### A CONTRIBUTION TO ART

#### These Should Interest You:

"Our Natural Heritage and What We Are Doing With It," by "Belinda." Monday, February 3, 2YA, 11 a.m.

Talk by a representative of the Wellington Red Cross Society. Tuesday, February 4, 2YA, 11.30 a.m.

"Fashions," by Ethel Early. Tuesday, February 4, 3YA, 11.15 a.m.

"A Woman's Letters from England," by "Monica." Wednesday, February 5, 2YA, 11 a.m.

"On Tour in Southern Ireland," by Diana Craig. Wednesday, February 5, 1YA, 10.45 a.m.

#### Aunt Daisy On Tour

Aunt Daisy, the Commercial Broadcasting Services' morning personality is making a tour of the South Island early in February. She will fly to Dunedin, and from there will set out to visit many of the smaller provincial towns of Otago and Canterbury, where she aims to meet country women who have listened to her broadcasts but have never had the opportunity of seeing her in person. She will be away from Wellington for approximately a month.

Talks by Major F. H. Lampen, Thursday, February 6:

"Just a Home," 1YA, 10.45 a.m.

"Just London," 2YA, 11 a.m.

"Help for the Home Cook," by Sara McKee. Friday, February 7, 3YA, 11.15 a.m.

"A Few Minutes with Women Novelists," by Margaret Johnston, Saturday, February 8; featuring "Somerville and Ross" from 1YA, 10.45 a.m. and "Jane Austen," from 4YA, 10.40 a.m.

"Some Remarkable Women I Have Met," by Mrs. Vivienne Newson. Saturday, February 8, 3YA, 11 a.m.

A LITTLE white card was inserted above the doorway announcing that Mrs. Murray Fuller was at home.

You felt that the National Art Gallery would be an appropriate setting for one of the leading patrons of art in New Zealand. But Mrs. Fuller was stealing a brief rest between her arduous tour of the Dominion with the present National Exhibition. But of that more in a moment.

At the time I was interested in Mrs. Fuller's charming and artistically designed flat. The blinds were drawn against the sunlight, leaving the lounge room swimming in cool shadow. The predominating shades were beige grey and white; an ideal foil for the brilliant canvases that spaced the walls. A broad white fireplace. At one side a low bookshelf. At the far end a white china cabinet which featured some beautiful pieces of pottery.

"I don't believe," she said, "in things being purely ornamental. This pottery ware is often in practical use. Rather lovely, isn't it? It is the work of a New Zealander, Keith Murray. He is recognised to-day as one of the leading designers in modelled pottery and glassware in Britain."

These words summed up Mrs. Fuller's whole attitude to art in her own country. She is a New Zealander and proud of it, and her unflagging work in the interest of art has always had one objective—the advantages it may bring to art lovers in New Zealand.

"Arty" is a very much abused term. Mrs. Fuller does not look "arty." Tall, slim, with quiet dark eyes, she radiates dignity and charm. Her manner is unhurried. You feel she would bring to her work that same calm, detached judgment.

#### Not Just a Whim

Mrs. Fuller's contribution to art in New Zealand is not just a whim or a hobby. It has become her life work, born of a passionate admiration and a rare understanding of art in its truest form. She admits herself that it has been a long and uphill fight. To know any subject intimately, you have to know and understand its history, and Mrs. Fuller has had to study the long, fascinating history of art.

Her real work began in 1929 when with her husband, himself an artist, she put on their first exhibition in the old Art Gallery in Whitmore Street, Wellington.

Mrs. Fuller and her husband shared the same artistic ideal. They had been

art students together, and it was their dream to bring to New Zealand and Australia works of well known artists overseas.

This was no small enterprise. It meant travelling abroad to interview the artists in person, and to seek permission to exhibit their work on this side of the world. Above all, it meant gaining the confidence, not only of the artists themselves, but of directors of art collections. How well Mrs. Murray Fuller and her husband succeeded is best exemplified in the seven different collections they brought out to the Colonies. We have been the richer for the materialisation of the Murray Fuller dream. Several of the paintings exhibited in



MRS. MURRAY FULLER  
... still on the job

these collections have been purchased by New Zealand and Australia.

When her husband died in 1933, Mrs. Fuller carried gallantly on. And she is still on the job.

#### Selecting Paintings

"I always do my own selecting," she said. "I have never been tempted to choose a picture because it is fashionable or in the mode — only when it makes a direct personal appeal. I am fortunate in possessing a natural flair for hanging pictures. It's remarkable how few people know how to do this. Even some of the artists themselves are quite lost when it comes to the arranging of their pictures. I always see a collection in my mind's eye correctly placed on the walls. When it comes to the actual hanging of the pictures, the work is simplified."

The packing of pictures, she explained to me, is another under-estimated business. In reality, it is an art in itself. Mrs. Fuller has her own special

packers in London, and here in New Zealand, she has a personally trained packer in whom she reposes implicit trust. Her present tour of the Dominion calls for ingenuity in this direction. They carry a valuable collection of pictures, which have often to be displayed at short notice—and very often in halls that bring a wince to Mrs. Fuller's artistic susceptibilities. Still, the show goes on.

"What do you consider your most successful exhibition?" I asked.

"Well, I have arranged exhibitions in various parts of England, South Africa and Australia, but the best, I consider, was last year's Centennial Exhibition. We really had a wonderful collection. It was a highlight in New Zealand's history of art."

Mrs. Fuller speaks highly of the success achieved by New Zealand artists. Amongst several she mentioned Eleanor Hughes, who specialises in water colour; Oswald Birley, the well known portrait painter; Cecil Jamieson, Heber Thompson, and Frances Hodgkins. The last belongs to the modern abstract school of painting. One of her paintings faced me on the wall. It was an extraordinary study of a street scene; fascinating, but a little bewildering.

Mrs. Fuller possesses the happy knack of winning these artists as her friends. She showed me a sheaf of letters just arrived by the English mail. They were all from artist friends with whom at some time she has been associated in her work. Among the signatures were such well known names as Henry Rushbury, Charles Wheeler, Russell Flint, and Margaret Fisher Prout.

She read me excerpts from their letters, describing the war London of to-day. They wrote of the magnificent spirit of the English people under almost intolerable stress. One writer mentioned an incident in an air-raid shelter in the East End. Several women, hearing rumours of an invasion, arrived on the scene armed with carving knives, formidable-looking forks, hammers, and other emergency weapons. They were determined to make a fight for it.

Another artist wrote sadly of the complete destruction of Turner's house in Cheyne Walk. Old Chelsea to-day, was wearing a battered look, but its head was still unbowed. Still another writer described the wanton destruction of the Haig War Memorial. But London could still smile.

I left Mrs. Fuller with her letters—and her memories. She is rich in their possession. For hers is a full, creative life. She prefers to remain personally in the background. But she gets things done.