

Musical talent is generational gift

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Jocelyn Smith's father couldn't afford to buy her a piano - it was the Great Depression.

So when she had daughters of her own, Jocelyn made sure they were given the very best opportunities.

And it's paid off.

The 85-year-old from New Plymouth will watch her daughter Brenda, a doctor in Upper Hutt, perform in the New Zealand Doctors' Orchestra this Sunday.

Jocelyn's three daughters and her late husband Murray all had a musical inclination - Murray's organ still sits in the living room.

"I wanted to be, but we were born in the Depression," Jocelyn says.

"I wanted them to get the opportunity to prove themselves because I never did."

So her three daughters got piano and elocution lessons.

"They don't say 'yeah' like Mum does."

Proceeds from the performance at the TSB Showplace will go to Hospice Taranaki - where Jocelyn worked voluntarily for 20 years.

When hospice first arrived in Taranaki, she and Murray went along to a presentation about what it did, and decided they wanted to be involved with it.

"I could write a book about it.

"They were just great, those early days," she said.

Part of Jocelyn's volunteering duties included cooking a hot meal on Wednesday nights for hospice patients around the district, mostly cancer patients.

A thank-you card from Hospice Taranaki's Kevin Nielsen says a defining memory of Jocelyn is the jars and jars of preserves she produced.

Chutneys, jams, marmalade - Jocelyn did them all with fruit delivered to her by people around the district.

"People brought in sugar, jars, we had grapefruit for miles.

"Murray and I used to stand there for hours chopping them all up.

"It was a hit all right."

The people she worked with at the hospice shared a bond, she says. "Everybody had lost somebody and wanted to do something for everybody else."

And being there as long as Jocelyn was, people got to know your face.

"It's funny, you walk down the street and somebody smiles and says, 'Hello'."

Brenda is the second of Jocelyn's three daughters, born and educated in Upper Hutt before moving to Auckland to do a physiotherapy course.

In 1976 she decided to switch to medicine, so she moved to Dunedin, then back to Lower Hutt, where she now has a private practice and plays in the Hutt Valley Orchestra.

"She always wanted to be a doctor," Jocelyn recalls.

"Our local doctor in Upper Hutt tried to talk her out of it because it was no life for a woman - the long hours and being on call."

It will be the first time Brenda has played in the Doctor's Orchestra, Jocelyn says.

"It's wonderful.

"I hope plenty of people turn up."

The New Zealand Doctors' Orchestra concert, 2pm Sunday, June 29, at Theatre Royal, New Plymouth. General admission \$25, contact Ticketmaster 0800 111 999.

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