

Bette Thompson



I was born and raised in New Zealand, in the Far North, near Kaitaia. My family were dairy farmers and I was the youngest of three children. Part of our genealogy includes a Maori Chief's daughter, married to an English, Jewish, lawyer...my 2 tribes.

I attended a two-roomed schoolhouse for grade school, went to Boarding school at 11, back to Kaitaia College at 15 for the next few years of High School. In 1959, I won an AFS scholarship that sent me to live with an American family in Detroit where I completed grade 12 at Redford High School.

Returning to NZ, I completed a Physiotherapy diploma and after a few years of working and saving, set off for two years of travel including time in Asia, Europe and a year on Kibbutz Rosh Hanikra in Israel, 1967-68. I arrived in Vancouver in the mid 70's. I worked in the fields of Arthritis, Orthopaedics and eventually Geriatrics. At the same time, I completed a B.Sc and an M.Ed attending night classes at UBC and was also a solo parent to a daughter.

In the late 80's and early 90's I was involved in acting, some TV, three Fringe Festivals and various other stage performances.

I found Or Shalom in the mid 90's and have been here ever since. Since then, I have done a lot of schlepping/ setting up /pulling down for the High Holidays, putting up / taking down the Sukkah. I also produced the Black books that we

use in services, organised the Greeters, carved the sign at the back door, leyned and led Pesukei d'Zimra over the years. I had my Bat Mitzvah in amongst this activity.

I loved travelling, also enjoyed most sports...learned to ski and skate, played tennis, swimming, squash, cricket.. and (yes, David B.)...rugby! For some time I made custom designed Tallisim. A joyful time for me, creating designs and color schemes with so many individuals... and even some for Or Shalom.

Ask me about canoeing down the Squamish in Spring thaw or driving a chuck wagon team to victory...