

Pancakes fly in Plimmerton

VIRGINIA FALLON

The showdown took place on Plimmerton's main street just before noon.

As crowds gathered, competitors armed themselves and eyed their opponents, their weapons - a frypan and a pancake - at the ready.

Although most of us are told not to play with our food, an annual pancake flipping competition in the Porirua suburb, north of Wellington, encourages people to do just that.

Shrove Tuesday is the day before Lent starts, where people fast in preparation for Easter.

Traditionally rich food was used up before the beginning of the Lent fast and pancakes used up the eggs and butter.

The flipping tradition was said to have started in the 1400s in Olney, Buckinghamshire, England, when a housewife was so busy cooking pancakes that she lost track of time.

Hearing the church bells ringing, signalling the start of Shrove Tuesday, she ran to church, still flipping her pancakes in the pan.

Hundreds of years later the housewife's dash is recreated across the world - including in Porirua.

In New Zealand, Lent has also come to represent the waning of summer, which is the opposite in the northern hemisphere.



Melissa Bunn and daughter Sienna get ready to compete.

PHOTO: VIRGINIA FALLON/FAIRFAX NZ

On Tuesday, teams from across the region gathered under a blazing sky to compete to be the best tosser.

The races, hosted by St Andrew's Church had teams compete in relays on the footpath in Steyne Ave.

Local businesses, churches and Summeret Retirement Village entered teams.

Organiser Glenis Rutledge said

the Pauatahanui Anglicans had run the event for about 25 years.

"It started on a much smaller scale at the back of the church before it was moved to the footpath."

This year competitors were aged from 15 months to 95 years and the winner was decided by less than a second.

The Wood Choppers took out first place with a time of 23.5

seconds, followed by St Theresa's Girls and The Clergy with 24.1sec and 24.2sec respectively.

Flippers made a donation to enter, which would go towards a new screen for the church.

Winners received a chocolate fish and a certificate.

The custom of the pancake race takes place on Shrove Tuesday in Britain, Ireland, Australia, India and New Zealand.

Rotary gives dictionaries to Arohata

STAFF REPORTER

Arohata Prison has received a bumper supply of dictionaries, thanks to Tawa Rotary.

The club donated 32 Usborne Illustrated Dictionaries to the women's prison earlier this week.

Tawa Rotary president Andrew Watson said the donation was part of the club's many community projects as well as Rotary International's.

"Arohata is one of the largest institutions in our community and the dictionaries may help improve prisoner literacy.

"As it happens, improving literacy is one of Rotary International's key objectives."

Prison director Chris Burns said the prison was grateful for the dictionaries and they would be put to good use.

"The illustrated dictionaries are another useful tool in increasing the women's literacy as well as their general knowledge."

"For those who aren't confident readers, the illustrations will help with understanding the subject."

More than 100 women will have the opportunity to benefit from the dictionaries which will be distributed around the prison so as many prisoners as possible have access to them.



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