



Photo/DAVE BARNETT

Celebrating 50 years

Ruth and Art Hall celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary recently at the Goodwood Community Centre. Friends and family gathered at the centre to help the couple celebrate the happy event.

Battle of the bulge is a tough one

Now that winter's officially over, the cumulative effect of that season's rib-sticking, heart-warming comfort food, which doesn't show under layers of clothing, can no longer be ignored.

I used to be able to look down and see my feet, but they've disappeared from view, and that's when I'm lying down. I'm suffering from what Erma Bombeck describes as one sure sign of middle age. According to her, you've arrived at this dubious milestone when you pull your stomach in as you walk by the mirror and nothing moves.

If I can get my jeans to zip up at all without incorporating my skin into the zipper, I can't breathe in them, let alone sit down, and I look as if I'm wearing goalie pads on my hips. So I get onto the scales, the presence of which I've managed to ignore since September, and immediately have to rush to the fridge for a comforting snack to help me recover from the shock.

Being partly Scottish, and therefore frugal, I've never got around to replacing my old British scales, which measure in stones rather than pounds. That means I have to multiply by fourteen to arrive at the unvarnished truth, and even though math is not my forte, I already know from wrestling with my summer clothes that the result will be deeply depressing.

If I want to enjoy the summer, I realize I'll have to take drastic measures now, or risk being asphyxiated by my swimsuit. This particular suit was the perfect fit when my weight was at its lowest, but is not at all forgiving when I try to cram an extra ten pounds into it.

As it is, I'll be forced to wear a towel around my waist and a pained expression on my face as I fervently pray that everything that's meant to be inside the suit



notices the difference if I do manage it. My real incentive is the photograph my daughter took of me, which reveals two eyes, one nose, one mouth and... help... two chins. It puts me in mind of the times I've walked along the street, glanced into a store window and gazed into the eyes of an aging hippy.

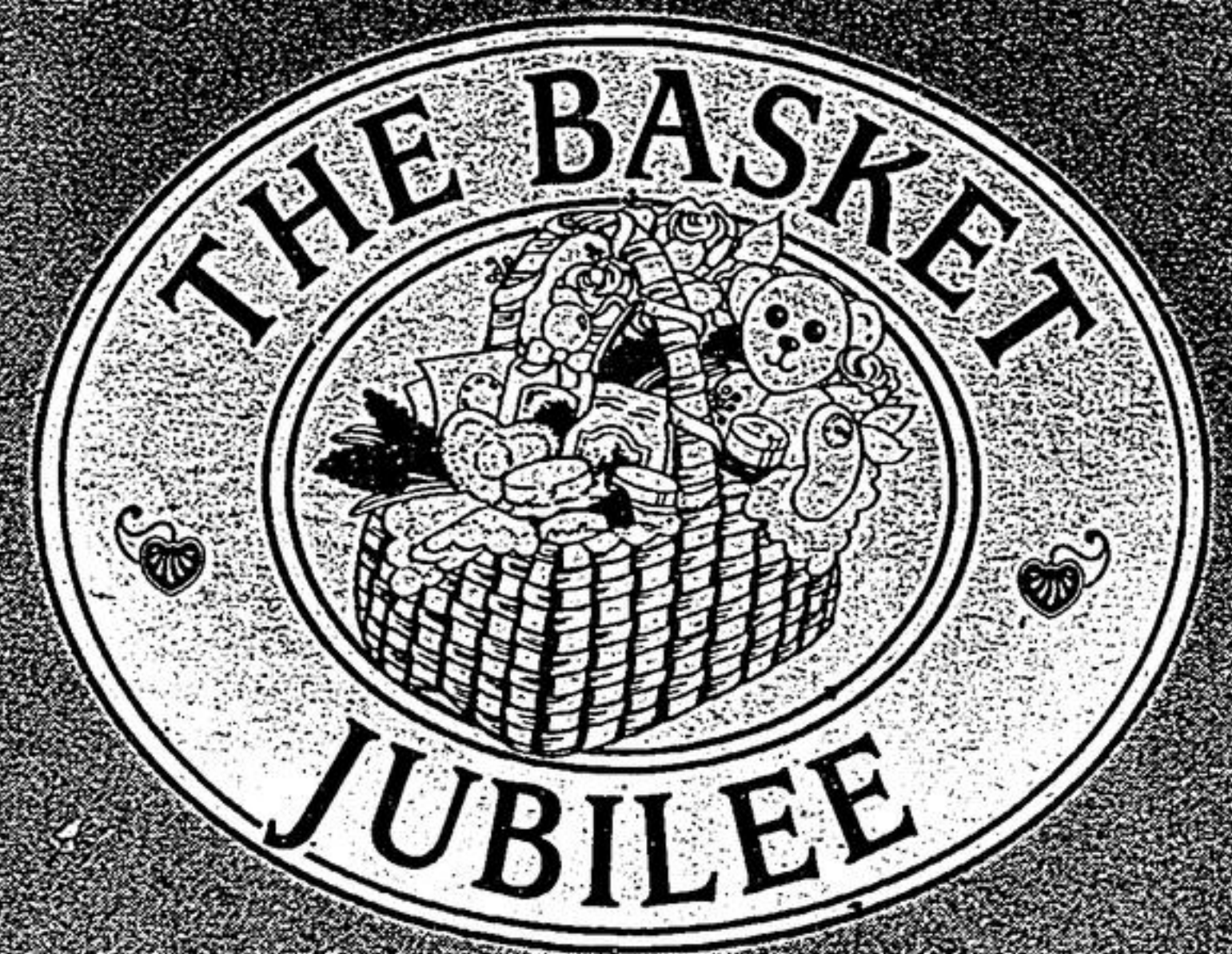
It's several seconds before I realize I'm looking at my own reflection. Forget all that stuff about the inner person being more important than looks. I want to look like Jane Fonda without the sweat. Or Cher without the scaffolding. I want someone to invent make-up which defies gravity and fills in the crevices when the sun shines.

I'd like to be the person who wins the magazine contest for the middle-aged woman who looks at least ten years younger than her age. But she's only got one chin. Lock the fridge and pass the melba toast. I'm going on a diet.

stays there. Experience tells me that fad diets won't help. I look at all those satuesque figures, miraculously transformed into sylph-like nymphs in four weeks, and decide against even trying them.

The answer is simple but unenticing. No more desserts. No more freshly baked rolls with lashings of butter. No more donuts, cheesecake or chocolate bars. In this age of instant gratification, will I be able to hold myself back for an entire two or three weeks in order to see the new, improved me?

The annoying thing is, I'll probably be the only one who



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