

# Otago Girls' High School Alumni Association



# Principal's Report



Kia ora koutou!

What a challenging year it has been for the school and the country as a whole. Covid-19 and the government's response has meant that many of the activities and achievements our students have normally been involved in this year, have simply not been able to happen.

These have included our joint musical production with Otago Boys' High School, our Kapa Haka group's participation in the National Kapa Haka competition and our summer sports teams' tournaments which were all cancelled due to Covid-19. Unfortunately the Year 12 students had their formal cancelled after two attempts to hold it. Many events such as weekly assemblies and Library Day had to be Zoomed throughout the school as we could not have all the students in the school hall at once.

Despite this, many of our students have found ways to shine. From the NCEA results published in January this year, to participation in a range of online competitions, we continue to demonstrate that the education we offer is among the best in the country.

We are delighted that under the current levels the school community has recently come together to celebrate Cultural and Sports Awards. Our longstanding Celebration Service will be held on 3 November at Knox Church. This is always a highlight of the school year along with our Prize-giving which will be held on 8 December.

One of the most important achievements this year has been our success in maintaining programmes of teaching and learning throughout the lock-down period. Our Bring Your Own Device programme and the confidence and competence of our teachers in the use of e-learning meant that we were able to seamlessly and quickly transition from face to face to online learning, and back again, as the alert levels changed. While the technology enabled the transmission of learning material, it was the relationship between students and their teachers that ensured the vast majority of students remained engaged with their learning.

I would like to thank the 150th Jubilee Committee for the work they have done over the year preparing for the Jubilee. I fully support the committee's decision to postpone the event to hopefully more settled times and encourage you all to register for the event. Thank you to all of you who have contacted the organisers expressing your support for the change in date. Students at school will be celebrating the 150th throughout the year and we will cover these event in these Alumni newsletters and on our Facebook page.

**Linda Miller**, Principal



*Library Day being Zoomed throughout the school during Level 2 lock-down.*

## Postponement of OGHS 150th Jubilee

I hope that all of you receiving this newsletter have already received notification that we have postponed the 150th Jubilee until Labour Weekend 2021.

This decision has been made primarily due to the uncertainty of the current Covid situation and the impact this is having on registrations. Many ex-girls had indicated that they were reluctant to enrol until the Covid situation has settled. We are also aware of the number of Australian registrants, who, having registered, looked unlikely to be able to attend the celebrations in February due to border restrictions. We also hope that those who may hope to travel from further afield will be able to do so by our new date.

All those who have currently registered will have all aspects of their registration automatically carried over to the event at Labour Weekend 2021.

Registrations remain open for the new dates. The opening will now be on Friday 22 October at 1pm and events will run over Saturday (23 October) and Sunday (24 October). The programme, times and locations of events remain unchanged. The full programme and the registration site can be accessed at <https://150th.otagogirls.school.nz/event/DNE5BE/>

While the train trip cannot currently go ahead we are hoping that the situation next October may be different. If the train trip does not proceed a full refund will be offered for this event.

If you have any queries with regards this announcement please contact our registration team on [150th@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:150th@otagogirls.school.nz)

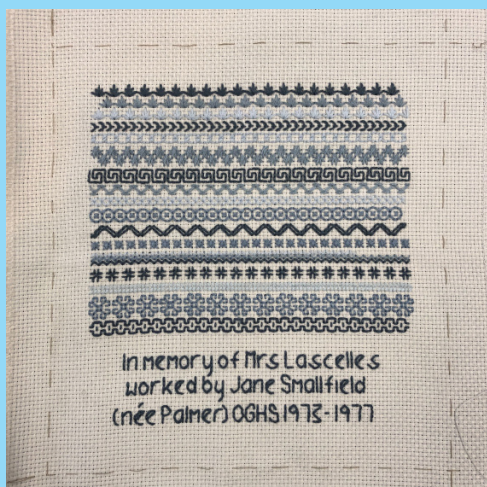
Registrations will close on the 31 July 2021. If you cancel a registration before this date you will be refunded the full amount less 10%. No refunds will be made after 31 July 2021 due to commitments with suppliers.

I would like to thank the many Alumni members who have contacted us expressing their support for this decision. I would also like to acknowledge all our suppliers who have effortlessly transferred their services to Labour Weekend 2021 without hesitation.

**Jane Smallfield**, Convenor 150th Jubilee



## 150th Jubilee Embroidery Project



With the postponement of our Jubilee until Labour Weekend 2021 we are able to extend the opportunity for you to participate in our 150th Embroidery project. We are delighted with the various contributions we have had to this project but would love some more of you to take part.

If any other ex-girls are keen to embroider a 25cm block on either 14 Ct Aida or 28ct Cashel linen please email Jane Smallfield at [sd@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:sd@otagogirls.school.nz) and indicate what fabric you would prefer and what your postal address is. We also ask that you pay \$10 into the 150th Jubilee account (02-0912-0351479-000) to cover the costs incurred in completing this project.

Above is an example of a block already completed - you are free to embroider anything which links to the school in some way. We now need all blocks in by the 30 June 2021.

## A rare addition to the archives



It is always a highlight of an archivist's day when unexpected items arrive in the post. Recently I was delighted to receive this set of form ribbons which belonged to Elizabeth Nichol who attended OGHS from 1969 to 1973. The ribbons, from top to bottom, were for 3S (1969), 4S (1970), 5S (1971), 6S (1972) and Form 7 (1973).

These ribbons are ephemera - items that were originally expected to have only short-term usefulness and I imagine most students disposed of a form ribbon when they replaced it with a new one.

Sadly Elizabeth Nichol didn't provide any contact details when she sent these ribbons along with other items. If any of you are in contact with Elizabeth can you please send her contact details to me at [sd@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:sd@otagogirls.school.nz)



## OGHS community in The Highlights

It is great to see current and past students, current staff and a Board member involved in The Highlights recently held at the Regent.

Back line:  
Charlotte Hayward (Ex-girl and Staff), Cadyne Geary, Anna Thomson, Olive Butler, Summer Johnson, Rowena Monson (BOT), Hayley Lyndom (nee Carrick), Jim Monson (Staff), Lizzie Clark (nee Adams).

Front line (current students):  
Paige Milburn, Ruby Stretch-Treweek, Immy Morey.



## Jean Hurring (nee Stewart) (1930 - 2020) OGHS 1945-1949, Olympic Swimmer



*Jean Stewart centre of the back row in this 1949 Prefects photograph.*



*Jean Stewart at right with Yvette Williams visiting Otago Girls' in 1954.*

We were saddened to hear of the recent passing of ex-girl and Olympian Jean Hurring (nee Stewart) who passed away peacefully on Saturday 8 August 2020, in Auckland, aged 89. Jean Stewart attended Otago Girls' from 1945 to 1949. She won a Bronze medal in the 100m backstroke at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics. This was New Zealand's first Olympic swimming medal and remains the only swimming medal won by a New Zealand woman. At the 1952 Olympics Jean was rooming with one of our other outstanding Olympians Yvette Williams.

Rest in Peace Jean - you will continue to have a special place in the life and history of Otago Girls' High School.

### **Victoria University OGHS graduates between June 2019 and May 2020**

**Amelia Meredith Vaughan**, BAS - Bachelor of Arch Studies, Interior Architecture

**Cleo Gilmour**, BA - Bachelor of Arts, Philosophy

**Cleo Gilmour**, LLB - Bachelor of Laws

**Sarah Tucker**, GDTCPR - GDip Teaching (Primary)

**Ulani Kan**, MEDPSY - Master of Educational Psych, Passed with Distinction



## Helen Pollock (nee Young) and her OGHS connections.

Our talented sculptor for the 150th Jubilee is ex-girl Helen Pollock (nee Young) who has had four generations of her family attend Otago Girls' between 1908 and the present day. Currently her granddaughter Jemma Pollock is the Arts prefect at Otago Girls'.

It is always a highlight for a school archivist to be sent copies of early school photographs by family members and I was delighted to recently receive these three images (amongst others) from Helen.

Helen's aunts (on her father's) side attended Otago Girls' High School in the first two decades of the 1900s. Ella Young attend OGHS from 1908 to December 1914 and was a prefect in her final year. Louise Grace Young (known as Louie) attended from 1916 to 1919 and Elizabeth Nell (Bessie) Young was a pupil from 1918 to 1921.

Helen's mother Jean Stewart Caldow, born 1907, started at Otago Girls' in 1923, and Helen herself was a pupil from 1959 (3R) to 1962.

The photograph of Louise and Bessie interested me in particular. Taken in 1918 (or possibly 1919) it must be one of the earliest informal photographs of girls wearing the gym frock. Introduced in 1915 for physical education it was, on occasion, also worn as the school uniform before its formal adoption in 1925. Although we have a few class photos showing a small number of girls wearing the gym frock in the second half of the 1910s this is the only photograph I have seen from this period showing girls wearing the gymfrock out of school.



Sisters Louise (left) and Elizabeth "Bessie" Young, c1918



Prefects with Ella Young at far right, 1914.



Ella Young, 1913

### Email addresses

Please remember to keep us updated with your current email address. Every time we send this newsletter out we find we have a large number of email addresses that are no longer active.



**Elizabeth Dawn Patchett  
(nee Palmer), MA (Otago), LLB (Auck.)  
1937 - 2020  
(OGHS 1950 - 1954)**

We are sorry to report the passing in January of this year, in Palmerston North, of ex-girl Elizabeth Dawn Patchett (nee Palmer) aged of 82. Dawn enjoyed renewing her connection with the school through receiving these newsletters over recent years and the family shared a photo of Dawn playing hockey for the school in 1954.



*Dawn Palmer playing hockey at the oval for the 'B' team in 1954. Dawn is wearing the goalie pads. The girl directly behind Dawn is Phillipa Chatwin (Dame Elizabeth Hanan collection).*

**Marion Ruth Strang  
(nee Freeman) BSci (Otago)  
1943 - 2020  
(OGHS 1956-1960)**

Peter Strang recently informed us of the passing of his wife Marion Ruth Strang (nee Freeman) who died peacefully on July 22, 2020, at Dunedin Hospital; aged 77 years. Marion attended Otago Girls' from 1956 to 1960.

Peter wrote the following:

*although she was not a great participant in the activities of the association she held the school in high regard and was very proud of its achievements and the education it provided for her leading to a University degree in mathematics. We were living out of Dunedin for some years in PNG, the Solomon Islands, and then Gore. We returned in the late 80's where I was Director of Student Health and Counselling Services at the University of Otago before working for the SDHB in Child Psychiatry. She was very involved in the community with a commitment to wide range of people who needed help. The Opoho Presbyterian Church community and later the Coastal Unity Parish was very important to her. Her skills in hand work, sewing and knitting as well as porcelain doll making, and in music particularly singing were quite exceptional. Her grandchildren and great grandchildren will testify to her skills as a cook and home maker.*

In her last few years Marion had been struggling with illness and more recently Motor Neurone Disease.



*'B' Hockey team, 1954. Dawn Palmer is on the right of the front row and Elizabeth Walsh (now Dame Elizabeth Hanan) is on the left of the back row (Dame Elizabeth Hanan collection).*



# Eileen Wallis (nee Robson) (1928 - 2020) MAHons (Otago) (OGHS 1940 - 1944)

It is with great sadness that we heard of the recent passing of Eileen Wallis who died in Dunedin on 30 September. Eileen's name will be forever associated with Otago Girls' High School particularly as the author of *A Most Rare Vision*, her very comprehensive history of Otago Girls' High School. The first edition was published in 1970 to mark the centenary of the school and this was updated by Eileen in 1995 to mark the 125th Jubilee.



Eileen had a long association with the school having been a pupil from 1940 to 1944, and a prefect in her final year. Awarded the Women's Scholarship she proceeded to the University of Otago where she completed her MA Hons in History. After a year at Auckland Teachers' College and three years teaching elsewhere she returned to Otago

Girls' as a staff member in 1953 and remained there until her marriage in 1956.

Eileen was also involved in large number of voluntary activities connected with genealogy, the Anglican Church, the National Council of Women and the Otago Branch of the Federation of University Women.  
family



Prefects 1944

- Back Row: Meryl Lemin, Margaret Samuel, Claire Prendergast, Joyce King, Merle Whiteside, Judith Wilson
- Front Row: Joyce Leckie, Eileen Robson, Shirley Woodhead (Deputy Head Prefect), Marjorie McPherson (Head Prefect), Joan Robinson, Marjory Gunn, Natalie Black
- Seated on floor: Audrey King, Irene Henderson





In August 1956 Eileen Robson married Allen Wallis at the Holy Cross Church at St Kilda and her form class formed a guard of honour and showered her with confetti (above and left)

Below left: Eileen Wallis with her granddaughter Amy Pollitt who attended Otago Girls' from 2008 to 2012.

Below: Eileen at right of front row in IVS, 1941.





**Molly Anderson, MA (Otago)**  
**(1927 - 2020)**  
**(OGHS 1939 - 1943)**

We were sorry to also hear of the recent passing of Leslie Mary Janet (Molly) Anderson who died at Highview Rest Home on 27 September 2020 aged 93.



Molly was Head Prefect and Dux of Otago Girls' in 1943. She obtained a MA from Otago University and returned to Otago Girls' in 1954 as a staff member for a four year period. She was a Senior language teacher and also an enthusiastic producer of plays for the Drama Club. She left Otago Girls' at the end of 1957 and went on to teach at Alexandra District High School to do her country service. From 1962 to 1972 she taught languages at Bayfield High School and was also heavily involved in the music scene at the school.

On leaving Bayfield High School Molly went to Dunedin Teachers College and worked with teacher trainees doing languages.

Molly had diverse gifts and was a vibrant and energetic supporter

of language teaching. She had a talent for writing and wrote two books including the biography of ex-girl Dame Daphne Purves. She had a passion for her garden, for cats and for the environment.



Above: Form VIA 1943, Lesley Boock, Molly Anderson and Sheila McLean

Below: Prefect photo 1943, with Molly in the centre of the middle row



Otago Girls' High School Alumni Association  
 41 Tennyson Street, Dunedin 9016  
 03 474 0496  
[www.otagogirls.school.nz](http://www.otagogirls.school.nz)



[alumni@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:alumni@otagogirls.school.nz)

*This newsletter was compiled by Jane Smallfield on behalf of the OGHS Alumni Association.*