



# Otago Girls' High School Alumni Association

## Happy 150th Birthday Otago Girls' High School



Hello Alumni

Greetings to all our Alumni wherever you reside. I hope those of you in New Zealand (and Australia) are managing in your lock-down and that it is not too stressful for you.

I thought I would make the most of the lock-down to put together a brief Alumni Newsletter. With our acting Principal Bridget Davidson busy with running the school remotely I thought I would write the column on this occasion.

We are looking forward to seeing many of you at Labour Weekend at our 150th Jubilee. We know it is an unsettling time for everyone with the current lock-down and we have had a number of emails asking about whether the Jubilee will go ahead on 22 October. The Committee are working hard to prepare for this event and at the time of writing it is still going ahead. We will however need to keep reviewing the situation in line with the lock-down restrictions. We are all set to go at Labour Weekend - so fingers crossed!

With my retirement from Otago Girls' High School at the end of the school year fast approaching I thought I would take the opportunity to reflect on the pleasure I have had in producing these newsletters since 2013. I remember Principal Linda Miller asking me if I could produce a newsletter to send to Alumni members. I don't think I asked her what she had in mind but the format of the newsletters quickly evolved.



*Jane Smallfield*

Produced quarterly, these newsletters were primarily initiated to enable members to reconnect with their Alma Mater and to bring together a community of ex-students. It has become clear to me that these newsletters have succeeded in doing this. Many ex-students have emailed me to say how much they look forward to receiving them. Often they have found peers from their school days profiled in the newsletters or they have spotted themselves or a friend in a photograph. In many cases I have been able to put classmates back in touch with others after decades of no contact. What a good feeling that is.

Thanks to those of you who have been willing to be profiled, have provided feedback on the newsletter, sent in photographs, and in particular have called in to visit us at Otago Girls'. It always makes my day when an Alumni member in Dunedin (or visiting Dunedin) will call in at the school. We love to make a fuss of these guests especially when it is 70 or 80 years since some of them were last in the school. The highlight for many of these visitors is having a cup of tea in the Principal's office!

Over the eight years that I have been producing these newsletters many of you have gifted us some precious archives in response to newsletter articles. These gifts include an extensive collection of embroidery worked from the 1930s to the 1980s. All these gifts are valued additions to our school archives.

I will send out a pictorial newsletter after the Jubilee but this will be the last official one from me. Thank you for your support over the years.

I am sure that the school will appreciate how these newsletters have connected the school with its community of ex-students, and will find someone passionate about the Alumni Association to produce them. I will hand over the mailing list to the school!

**Jane Smallfield**, Alumni Secretary







In 2007 Kelly Brazier was playing rugby in Year 13 at a Otago Girls' - on 31 July she won gold in Rugby 7s at the Tokyo Olympics. We are so proud of Kelly and she will always hold a special place in our school's history. Kelly is the school's 13th Olympian and the second ex-student to win an Olympic gold medal for New Zealand after Yvette Williams.



When we post about our Kapa Haka group Wairua Pūho on social media we often get posts from ex-students who were in the original Wairua Pūho established in 1999. How this group has grown and developed over the past twenty two years! This photo taken recently shows how wonderful the students look in their performance dress. We are so proud of the work ethic and dedication that Wairua Pūho displays and thank them for the sense of occasion they bring to so many school events.

## Central Otago Ex-Girls Branch celebrates its 60th Birthday.

On Monday 9 August Principal Linda Miller and myself joined the Central Otago Branch of Ex-Girls for their 60th Birthday celebrations. It was great to see such a good number present reflecting the fact that this Branch is one of the most active Otago Girls' Ex-Girl branches existing throughout the country.

Esther Mackay, President of the Branch, convened the celebrations which included the reading of the names of the Foundation members from 1961. These names are reproduced here. The minutes of the first meeting of the Branch held on 8 August 1961 were also read. Principal Linda Miller also spoke about some of the changes at the school during her nearly ten years as Principal.

There were three foundation members present at the 60th birthday celebrations, and they are pictured (centre right on the opposite page) cutting the cake - Dawn Becker (née Mayall), Hazel Elder (née Murie), and Dawn Townsend (née Bartlett). Dawn Becker also made the beautiful birthday cake.

After a celebratory lunch, local knitting guru Daphne Randle, creator of "Fernzwear" spoke about her knitting process and a number of young women modeled her incredible garments. "Fernzwear" is a knitting style developed by Daphne where garments are knitted in a number of blocks which are knitted together as the work develops. The style means there is no sewing up at the end of the process. We were all inspired and our own knitting prowess faded into insignificance!!

Thanks Alexandra Branch for a lovely afternoon and a big thanks for the \$700 you donated to the 150th Jubilee Sculpture Project.

## Central Otago Ex-Girls Branch foundation members.

Dorothy Hern (née Ramsay) 1918-1920  
Shirley Smith (née Parker) 1945-1948  
Helen Sutherland (née Lane) 1924-1927  
Joyce Cantwell (née Beadle) 1929-1931  
Hazel Elder (née Murie) 1952-1956  
Joyce Paul 1945-1949  
Vicky Nevell (née Haig) 1926-1930  
Frances Joyce (née Gaudin) 1949-1951  
Ruth Stewart (née Wither) 1929-1933  
Caren Smith (née Wildey) 1926-1930  
Doreen Weaver (née Sherriff) 1939-1941  
Enid Knewstubb (née Sontagg) 1940-1944  
Elaine Iversen (née Rive) 1951-1954  
Julia Hawley (née Jewiss) 1949-1951  
Tat Campbell (née Mutimer) 1935-1936  
Nancy Lopdell (née Glasson) 1928-1931  
Judith Long 1953-1956  
Tui Gordon (née Knewstubb) 1923-1927  
Dawn Becker (née Mayall) 1951-1952  
Gillian McKnight (née McDonald) 1950-1953  
Margaret Child (née Allan) 1945-1948  
Valerie Hamilton (née Walker) 1943-1946  
Jean Roxburgh (née Miller) 1939-1942  
Margaret Brooks (née Palmer) 1937-1939  
Ruth Hubbard (née Dyer) 1944-1947  
Pat Thomson (née Knewstubb) 1943-1944  
Joan Tubman (née Chetwin) 1933-1934  
Margaret Stewart 1955, 1958-1959  
Natalie Louhgman (née Johnson) 1942-1943  
Alice Bodkin 1911-1914  
Muriel E Paine (née Catter) 1910-1912  
Verna Morris (née Walcott) 1943-1946  
Marie Tosh (née Bosworth) 1944-1947  
Alwyne Pole (née Woods) 1944-1947  
Janet E Fenwick (née Mirams) 1949-1953  
Maureen Beel (née Gordon) 1949-1950  
Bettie Lawson (née Fairmaid) 1941-1944  
Morna McStay (née Falconer) 1934-1936  
Margaret Lambert (née Russell) 1948-1952  
Margaret Jarvie (née McDonald) 1949  
Lynley Barker (née Sutherland) 1954-1955  
Dawn Townsend (née Bartlett) 1945-1948  
Doreen Harper  
Mary Sanders (née Holmes)  
Win Pearce (née Allan) 1935-1939  
Chris Weaver (née Thompson) 1939-1940







## Thanks to our House Managers



Over the past 38 years these three hard working women have kept our school clean and tidy in their role as House Manager! They worked/work like Trojans! Joan Hobson (centre) had this role from 1983-2003. She was followed by Gail Shand (left) from 2003-2019, and Sera Katuke followed Gail starting in 2020.

These three women all played/play a big part in making OGHS what it is today and it was lovely to have the three of them together at OGHS recently.

Many of our recent Alumni members will remember them.

## Welcome back Rachel Brooking



Two of our Year 9 Social Studies classes were very lucky to have a visit from Labour MP and ex-OGHS student Rachel Brooking. It was great timing with students learning about the Government, creating laws and making their own political parties and policies.

Rachel talked about different aspects of Government, what her role as an MP involves, what a typical week of an MP looks like, MMP, what subjects and extracurricular activities are beneficial for a career in politics and of course, told us what Jacinda Ardern was like in real life!

Students also learnt how important your social media presence is and to be careful about what you put on your social media accounts!

Staff and students were grateful that Rachel could make time in her busy schedule to visit.

We believe that Rachel is probably the first OGHS ex-girl to become a Member of Parliament. If you know otherwise please let me know.



## Farewell to New Zealand's oldest Olympian and ex-girl Ngaire Galloway (née Lane) (OGHS 1938-1940)

Sadly one of our most prominent ex-girls Ngaire Galloway (née Lane) passed away in Nelson on 8 July aged 95. Ngaire was New Zealand's oldest living Olympian attending the 1948 London Olympics as a member of the swim team.

Born in Cambridge in 1925 and educated at Otago Girls' High School from 1938 to 1940, Ngaire was a standout swimmer from an early age – in 1940 becoming the New Zealand junior champion for the 50 and 100 yards freestyle and 50 yards backstroke. Ngaire's family said that she always treasured her year at Otago Girls' and had very happy memories of her time there.

Ngaire last visited Otago Girls' High School in 2009 for the unveiling of the gym Olympic Honours Board and what a joy she was to have at this event. It was a real privilege to get to know this inspiring woman whom I picked up from the airport for this event. Aged in her mid 80s then, she was clearly a very independent woman and I remember being very impressed by her skill with her phone and iPad! We hit it off and kept in touch over the years. I visited her a couple of times when I was in Nelson. On both occasions it was real delight to hear her talk about her Olympic experiences and her time at Otago Girls'. She recalled how training was very limited on her voyage to the Olympics in London (obviously by ship) but a canvas pool was created on deck to assist with her this.

Ngaire will always hold a special place in the history of Otago Girls', and flowers from the school, marking the respect we have for Ngaire, were sent to her family on her passing.

### Jane Smallfield



*Ngaire Galloway (née Lane) and Yvette Corlett (née Williams) DNZM at Otago Girls' High School in 2009..*





## School Uniform

### - have you still got your gym frock?

The gym frock, hat and blazer is the iconic Otago Girls' High School uniform, long associated with the history of the school from 1926 to 1982.

Current students enjoy being able to wear the uniforms whenever an occasion arises and many say they would prefer them to a kilt!

We would love to add some more of these items to our archive. If you have your gymfrock and/or a hat or blazer and don't know what to do with them, consider donating them back to the school. We would also love some more summer uniforms from the 1960s and 1970s and I would like nothing more than to find a pair of our original red shoes!

Please email me on [sd@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:sd@otagogirls.school.nz) if you would like to make a donation.

The top image (at left) shows 150th Prefect Jemma Tutty wearing a uniform from our archives, as is our mannequin "Bianca". It took me months to not to get a fright every time I saw Bianca standing in the library!

The lower image shows Jemma with Becky de la Harpe (Deputy Head Prefect on left) and Jemma Wilson (Head Prefect on right).

#### 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.



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