

# Otago Girls' High School Alumni Association

# Principal's Report

Otago Girls' High School was recently visited by the Education Review Office (ERO). It has been five years since our previous review and much has happened in that time in terms of both how ERO operates and how we as a school function. ERO has published draft School Review Indicators, which are being trialled in South Island schools. Equity and excellence sit at the heart of these evaluation indicators and reflect the challenge facing New Zealand schools as we strive to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body. These indicators identify six key domains that influence school effectiveness and student outcomes and it is the progress we have made in developing the "Educationally powerful connections and relationships" domain that I think is of greatest relevance to you, our Alumni.



In recent years we have implemented a number of initiatives to build these connections and relationships with Alumni, parents and caregivers and the wider local and global community. These initiatives have included the establishment of the Alumni Association in 2013, the development this year of a mentoring programme for all students in Years 10 – 13, enhancing the relationship between the school and Kai Tahu and the implementation of the Global Leadership Programme.

This year we have introduced a mentoring programme for all students in Years 10 – 13. This has involved pairing students with mentor teachers who will be with the students throughout their time at Otago Girls'. Students, parents and mentors will meet on at least three occasions each year, once to confirm course selections at the beginning of the year, and twice for conferences at which the student's goals are discussed, samples of best work shared and overall progress and achievement monitored. The aims of the student learning conferences include improving home-school partnerships, promoting self-responsibility, improving time management skills, increasing attendance and more closely tracking student achievement. Already we have seen successful outcomes from these conferences and much higher rates of parent engagement. At the March conferences we had 96% student attendance and 79% parent attendance. This compares with 52% parent attendance at the traditional parent-

teacher interviews in the past. We also saw parents of many priority learners that we had never met at interviews before which bodes well for our on-going relationships with families.

One of the highlights for this term has been seeing the performances of our combined OGHS/OBHS kapa haka group, Wairua Puhou. Their preparations and performances for Te Hautonga have been nothing short of inspirational and are testament to the support and encouragement of whanau and community. Further connection with our Māori community is being developed as staff prepare for a Teacher Only Day to be held at Otakou Marae on Otago Peninsula later this month. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to visit our local marae, upskill ourselves in te reo and tikaka Māori and focus on how we can best support our Māori learners, and therefore all learners, in our classrooms. We are grateful to members of Kai Tahu who are supporting us in this learning.

The Global Leadership Programme (GLP) is an opportunity for you, our Alumni, to engage with our students. I am in the process of developing a speaker series for the GLP and am looking for people with a global outlook to come and speak to the girls about their international experiences and connections. If you, or anyone you know, would be willing to speak to the girls, please contact me on [mi@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:mi@otagogirls.school.nz)

Linda Miller

## New mural at Otago Girls' High School



A recent addition to the school grounds is the mural depicted in the top two photographs on the following page. It has been mounted on the side of the school garages in front of the Siedeberg block.

This 2m x 4m mural was painted by our hard materials teacher Mr Simon Pickard in his school holidays and is copied from a well known photograph taken of students at Otago Girls' doing Physical Education in 1905. The original photograph is also depicted here.



Mr Pickard at work



Close up of Mr Pickard's mural



Copy of original 1905 photograph.

# Alumni AGM and social event

**Sunday 20 September 2015**

Our AGM will be held in the school library on Sunday 20 September 2015 at 2pm. The meeting itself will be brief, the main purpose of the afternoon being a social get-together with other ex-girls. Bubbles/juice and nibbles will be provided and we hope to have a tour of the music suite and access tower which is nearing completion. It won't be possible to hold the function there as intended. It will also be an opportunity to see the display of Dame Silvia Cartwright's medals that she recently donated to Otago Girls' High School.

It would be great to see you come along and support this event - find another ex-girl to bring with you.

Please RSVP to [sd@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:sd@otagogirls.school.nz)

## Thank you

**Thank you to Judith Eathorne (nee Homer) who attended Otago Girls' High School from 1978 to 1982, for the kind donation of her school gym frock and tie.**

**Thank you to the Auckland Branch of Ex-Girls for their kind donation of \$100 for resources for the school library.**

## Add your memories to the school website

**Under the Alumni section of the school website there is now a place to add your memories of your time of school. We would love to start gathering these to use for the 150th reunion. Please visit our the website and send us some of your memories from your time at Otago Girls' High School.**

## Ex-Girl Profile

**Millie Lovelock  
OGHS 2007-2011**



I attended Otago Girls' High School from 2007 until 2011 and had, as most teenagers do, a conflicting relationship with my time at high school. In spite of any angst, I was relatively serious about my studies and when I left school I did what most students inevitably do and went straight on to tertiary study. For the past four years I have been studying English literature and French language at the University of Otago. I started out studying music but decided pretty quickly that it wasn't for me and I was better off playing and making music in my own time. Since abandoning my musical studies I have played with my bands around the country and written and released three albums. My fourth album is coming out this month. Last year I took a break from studying at Otago and went to McGill University in Montreal for a semester where I slipped around in the snow and worked on my Quebecois. By the end of last year I was promising myself I would take a break from study for a while and would come back to do post-graduate studies later, but my self-control is weak and this year I am back at university completing my honours year in English literature. I am writing my dissertation on Djuna Barnes, an American Modernist whose journalism and cult novel *Nightwood* have inspired me to further pursue a career in writing. I'm not one hundred per cent on what I am going to do next, but next year might find me writing more and touring Europe with my band.

(Millie wrote the article which features on the following page).

# There is more to history than a lot of white men



## A SITUATION REPORT

MILLIE LOVELOCK

ONCE had a poetry professor announce to the class on the first day that unfortunately, on a reading list of more than 20 poets, it just wouldn't be possible to include more than two women, or one person of colour. This was when I started to realise exactly how much space white men manage to take up.

If white men are good at anything it is taking up space. Apparently, they are even capable of taking up all of the conceptual time/space we afford to a decade. And if you let them loose with boats and weapons they can really work spatial wonders.

But all that is so negative, all that taking, plundering and hoarding, especially when there are people out there who aren't white men who create and alter spaces so that they are inclusive and progressive and welcoming.

There are countless people who do this and who have done this, but this week I've been thinking about a few notable individuals.

The first is Karetai, a Maori leader of the Ngai Tahu tribe at Otakou, on what is now the Otago Peninsula. Karetai was a renowned warrior, but he was also famous and well respected for his level head and his astute dealings with European settlers.

Over many years, Karetai was engaged in discussions with the Europeans. His principal concern was mutual respect between Maori and European settlers.

In 1844, he signed the Otago deed, effectively signing over the land that has become Otago and Dunedin as we know it. Obviously and unfortunately, the Otago deed, along with other land agreements has had countless negative impacts on Maori access to land and resources. So, it is especially important that Europeans acknowledge we are privileged to live in this space, and it has only been made possible due to the efforts on the part of Karetai and other Maori leaders not to take or to exclude, even though so much was taken from them.

Secondly, I want to talk about people who created spaces which were initially limited to one small



Rachel Reynolds



Learmonth Dalrymple



Ethel Benjamin



Margaret Cruickshank



Mai Chen

location, but which had far-reaching impacts.

In 1889, Rachel Reynolds established, in Dunedin, New Zealand's first kindergarten. At the turn of the century the importance of starting education young was beginning to become apparent, and it had been apparent for some time that childcare for working class families was a resource that was desperately lacking.

Rachel Reynolds, in opening a free kindergarten, not only created a space that benefited children in terms of their education, but also relieved working mothers and fathers of a costly burden.

In a similar vein, Learmonth Whyte Dalrymple campaigned long and hard in order to establish in 1871 the southern hemisphere's first state-funded girls' high school, Otago Girls' High School.

The school provided (and still provides) girls with a space in which they were able to access an

education that would allow them to pursue essentially the same goals as men.

The school has had wider implications for Dunedin, New Zealand and the rest of the world. It not only set a standard for showing that girls are as vital and integral contributors to society as boys and men (even though they are consistently afforded fewer opportunities), but it also showed New Zealand women their options were not as

limited as they had been led to believe.

The school has had countless incredible graduates including Ethel Benjamin, New Zealand's first female lawyer, Margaret Cruickshank, New Zealand's first female medical doctor, and, more recently, Mai Chen, one of New Zealand's top constitutional and administrative law experts.

In my eyes you should only take up space if you are going to do something that positively affects everyone. History remembers white men and their relationship to space because history has legislated against anyone else providing a documented and valued contribution. In light of this, it is so important to concretely acknowledge and applaud those who have added to our heritage but had to fight to do so from the margins.

● Millie Lovelock is a Dunedin student.

This article appeared in the *Otago Daily Times* on 18 July 2015. It was written by ex-girl Millie Lovelock and focusses on a number of prominent ex-students.

## Ex-Girl Profile

### Hilary Bracefield (nee Briggs) OGHS 1954-1955



I attended OGHS as a sixth form pupil in 1954 and 1955. My mother Phyllis Briggs (Anderson) was a pupil, as was my sister Lindsay Gunn (Briggs), and Lindsay's daughter Hilary Lawrence and granddaughter Sarah Hawker-Lawrence. After MAs in both English and Music from Otago University, I became a foundation staff member at Bayfield High School, leaving in 1970 for study at Birmingham University, and moving to Northern Ireland in 1976 to lecture at the University of Ulster, where I became Head of Music in 1988 (one of the first women to hold such a post). I retired in 2003.

I have been active in many ways in the musical world of the UK, including being Vice-President of the Royal Musical Association and serving on the Council of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, the Board of the Contemporary Music Centre of Ireland, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, and the Sonorities Festival of Contemporary Music in Belfast. I was an editor of the important journal of contemporary music, *Contact*, and recently wrote 23 articles for the Encyclopedia of Music in Ireland. I ran an International Jazz Summer School at the university for seven years, kickstarting the playing of modern jazz in Ireland, and I also did much to research and promote music therapy in Northern Ireland in its early days of establishment. For some of these achievements I was awarded an honorary degree in 1999 by the Open University, for whom I taught for many years. My New Zealand voice became well-known through regular broadcasts on music and the arts on BBC Northern Ireland for twenty years. I have kept an interest in New Zealand arts, and have published articles on a number of topics, including Fleur Adcock and Gillian Whitehead. I have just presented a paper to the New Zealand Studies Association at its annual conference, this year in Vienna, on the importance of the Dominion Song books in schools from 130 onwards. Does anyone remember them?

## Ex-Girl Profile

### Jemma Adams (nee Montagu) OGHS 1997-2001



After leaving high school I studied at the University of Otago. I completed a BA in Linguistics and German, and then promptly moved to Wellington with the aim of working for a few months and saving some money before embarking on a traditional OE in London. That plan never eventuated, however; I loved living in Wellington and always found a reason to stay.

I started off working as a secretary for a Member of Parliament. Over the next few years I did various bits of postgraduate study and work around Parliament, and then took over the running of a senior Cabinet Minister's office, which remains my career highlight to date. It's a great privilege to work in the Beehive, and it's an exciting - if sometimes pressured - place to work. I had the opportunity to travel overseas, including attending the United Nations General Assembly in New York and bilateral foreign visits in Europe, the UK and Asia.

I then moved to PwC, where I've been working as a consultant since 2012. My role has great variety, with everything from business cases and communications plans to reviews and project management. I transferred to the Dunedin office last year so that my husband and I could move home and raise our family here. We have a little girl, Isobel, who just turned one. I love being home and getting to know Dunedin again, this time as a professional rather than as a student!

# Catching up with Mai Chen (OGHS 1977-1981)

Recently I attended the NZ Assistant Principals'/Deputy Principals' Conference in Auckland. One of the reasons I had made the decision to attend this conference was because Mai Chen was listed as one of the Key Note speakers. I had taught Mai for Social Studies and History when she attended Otago Girls' High School in the 1970s and I had also coached her for Volleyball – along with her sisters. I had followed Mai's career with interest and was eager to hear how she would address the conference.

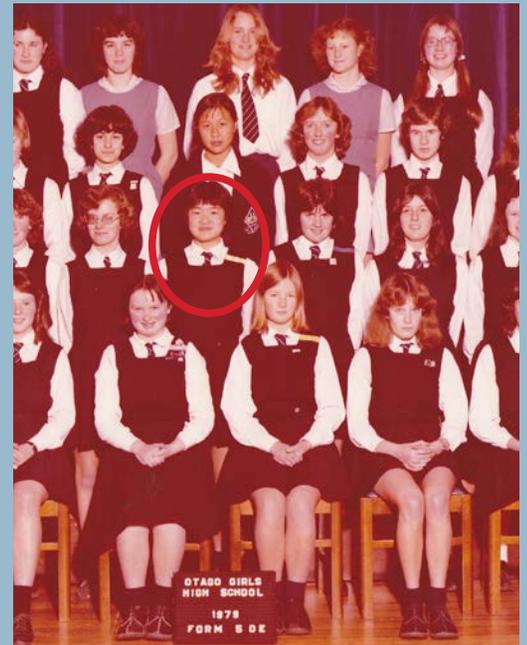
I was not disappointed – and listened to her speech with a certain amount of pride – she spoke to us about the need for schools to act with care to avoid ending up in the courts but she also had some advice on how to keep ourselves “sharp” amidst the many demands that teaching places on us. Her address was very well received by the audience of over 300 participants.

Mai's achievements reinforced for me the significance of Otago Girls' in preparing young women from Dunedin to “take on the world” and how necessary it is for the girls to become global citizens. Mai's career path certainly conveyed the message that students from Dunedin are able to take their place anywhere in the world and there is no limit to what they can achieve. I was delighted to be able to catch up with Mai following her address and as always she was very kind in her comments about Otago Girls' High School.

Jock Murley, Deputy Principal



*Mai Chen catching up with her former teacher and volleyball coach Jock Murley at a recent conference.*



*Mai Chen (highlighted) in form 5 DE in 1979.*



*Mai Chen, centre, at her Naturalisation ceremony in 1975. Mai was a pupil at Balmacewen Intermediate at the time. From right are her sisters, then OGHS students, Mindy, Angel, and Annie Chen.*

## Ex-Girl Branch reports welcome:

This newsletter will be published three times a year, along with a Mid Year School report. We welcome reports from all Ex-Girls branches to be included in these publications. Please send these, along with any photographs to [sd@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:sd@otagogirls.school.nz)

## Keen to visit Otago Girls' High School?

Otago Girls' High School is delighted to welcome ex-girls who are visiting Dunedin to call into the school - you are always welcome and we will find the time to show you around and answer your questions.

We also welcome hearing from any groups that want to organise a reunion and use the school as a base for their celebrations. We are happy to help host these events over a weekend. If we can help you in any way contact Jane Smallfield on [sd@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:sd@otagogirls.school.nz)

## 150th OGHS Anniversary Planning Committee

The first planning meeting for the 150th Anniversary Celebrations to be held at Waitangi weekend 2021 was held earlier this year. The following ex-girls and staff have volunteered to help with the organisation of the event:

Jemma Adams, Joanne Deaker, Jacqui Gee, Jenny Heller, Kathryn Jenner, Sue Lynch (OGHS Assistant Principal), Linda Miller (OGHS Principal), Lauren Pegg, Joan Sinclair, Jane Smallfield (OGHS Librarian), Marion Strang, Louise van de Vlierd and Helen Walsh

If you are keen to come and work with our Committee we would love to hear from you - please contact Jane Smallfield on [sd@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:sd@otagogirls.school.nz)



Wairua Puhou (at right) and Peer Support leaders (at rear) welcome prospective 2106 Year 9 students to Otago Girls' High School.

## OGHS 150th Celebrations- Waitangi Weekend 5-7 February 2021

Planning is already underway for our 150th Celebrations in 2021. You can help us out by making sure any ex-students or staff have registered their interest in this event. If you aren't already on our database you can go to the school website and enter your details on our Alumni page. Alternatively you can email us at [alumni@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:alumni@otagogirls.school.nz)



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