

# Otago Girls' High School Alumni Association

# Principal's Report

As the first term draws to a close I can look back with immense satisfaction on what the students at Otago Girls' have recently achieved. I was delighted with the 2014 NCEA results. Level 1 NCEA was achieved by 92% of students, Level 2 by 91% and Level 3 by 87%. I was also delighted with the 10 Scholarships obtained by our students.



Throughout the term the girls have continued to obtain success in sporting and cultural events. One of the highlights was Juliette Lequeux and Karley Wilden-Palms gaining fourth place in the A final of the UI8 double sculls at the Maadi Cup. I continue to be delighted with how our students are displaying our core values of Respect, Positivity and Integrity. This brings a vibrant yet settled atmosphere to the daily life of the school.

One of the current developments at school is the construction of the new music suite and access tower (pictured here) which is due to be completed by the end of July. We intend to hold an Alumni function later in the year to give you a chance to look through these new buildings.

The first planning meeting for the OGHS 150th Celebrations was held in early March and took the form of a brain storming session relating to what format we would like the celebrations to take. The Committee have confirmed that the 150th Celebrations will be held at Waitangi Weekend 5-7 February 2021 and they have agreed to organise the event themselves rather than contract out the organisation of it. Our priority is to keep the registration fee as low as possible to encourage the best attendance we can.

This year Otago Girls' will be holding it's first full ANZAC service in the grounds of the school. Student led, the service will include the laying of a field of remembrance for those who died during War World I and also the unveiling of a plaque in remembrance of our seven ex-girls who served in that war. You are all warmly invited to join us at this service to be held on Friday 24 April at 2.15pm. Please see the invitation on the last page of this newsletter.

One week into the Second term I will begin my Principal's sabbatical and will be away from school until Term 3. The purpose of the sabbatical, is in part, to provide time away from school for professional learning and the development of a Global Leadership Programme. This programme will pull together and acknowledge the diverse range of achievements and experiences girls encounter during their time at Otago Girls', as well as encouraging greater global awareness and action. My vision for the programme is that students from Otago Girls' will develop and

have acknowledged, skills, attitudes and values that will enable them to participate and lead within their global communities. There will also be a time for rejuvenation during the sabbatical which I am also looking forward to. Mr Jock Murley will be Acting Principal in my absence.



Development of the new access tower and music suite, April 2015.

## Call for old school uniforms

In preparation for our 150th Celebrations the school would be grateful for donations of any OGHS uniforms pre 1990. We are particularly keen to get some gymfrocks, blazers and school hats.

Recently we were grateful to receive a 1964 full school uniform from Candyce Carter (nee Heinsen) in the USA. Candyce was an American Field Scholar and Prefect at Otago Girls' in 1964. Read about her on the following page.

Please email Jane Smallfield on

[sd@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:sd@otagogirls.school.nz) if you can help us out.



## Candy Heinsen Carter AFS Scholar at OGHS in 1964.

To say that my year in Dunedin and at Otago Girls' High School had a profound impact on me in more ways than I can name is an understatement. Memories of my 16-year-old self are both intellectual and sensory. Thanks to Mrs Mayhew, I learned to love British history (I still have the notebooks from her class, and even refer to them on occasion!). In Miss Prisk's English class, we read novels and poems that are not usually part of the U.S. literary canon; more importantly, I was exposed to approaches to close textual analysis unlike anything I had done before.

Other memories more closely resemble snapshots: the long trudge up the hill to school, rushing to sit on the heaters between classes because the classrooms were cold, being hopeless in gym class, passing notes, and most importantly, for once—unlike in my coed US high school—not worrying about my appearance. This last point is important: I grew from a trim 47 kg to fat-but-happy 64 kg. My uniform was the only thing that still fitted! Hooray for gym frocks!

Post-OGHS, I continued my education at Stanford University, where I completed double degrees in English and Psychology. From there, I went on to teach secondary school English (and related fields) for 40 years. I met and married my husband of 45 years, Nick Carter, and paid my AFS experience both backwards and forwards by hosting numerous AFS students for short periods or a year. Consequently I have continued to make friends in unlikely places—from Paraguay to Istanbul.

After retiring from teaching in 2009, Nick and I moved

back to San Jose (from Reno, NV, where we had lived for 20 years), and I returned to my alma mater to earn a Master of Liberal Arts. An unusual program for “working adults” (or in my case, retired adults), the Stanford MLA curriculum is a part-time four or five-year interdisciplinary course culminating in a thesis. When I wrote my thesis, my classroom experiences at OGHS returned to me, because I studied a little-known Jacobean playwright--thank you again, Mrs. Mayhew and Miss Prisk.

I will always cherish my experience at OGHS and will be forever grateful for its role in what was undoubtedly my life's most pivotal year.



Diana Heinsen with her host sister Diana Millar, 1964.



Diana Heinsen (now Carter), seated at right with her 1964 host sister Diana Millar (now Millar Faull), and with their respective husbands. The couples met up again recently in the USA.



Diana Heinsen (now Carter)

## New Zealand's earliest women doctors - first four from OGHS!

It has long been acknowledged that the first two medical graduates at Otago Medical School were Emily Hancock Siedeberg (1896) and Margaret Barnett Cruickshank (1897) but some recent research into these graduates indicates that the first four were pupils of Otago Girls'. The third graduate was Jane Kinder (1900) who attended Otago Girls' from February 1885 and the fourth was Daisy Elizabeth Platts (1900) who attend Otago Girls' from 1883-1884. It would also appear that eight of the first ten female medical graduates were pupils of Otago Girls'.



The Anatomy dissection room, 1890s. Margaret Cruickshank is in the foreground and Emily Siedeberg is behind her. (Hocken Collections, University of Otago, MS-1537/461:SO6 458 d)



Students at the Otago Medical School in 1896. Emily Seideberg is the second woman from the left, and Margaret Cruickshank the third. While at least two of the other women pictured went to Otago Girls', they haven't been identified. Note the additional "student" fourth from right. (Hocken Collections, University of Otago, ACC.No. S 03-316a).



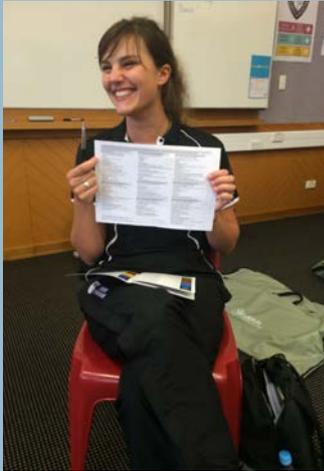
## Otago Girls' happenings Term I 2015



## Ex-Girl Profile

### Helen Johnston OGHS 2005-2010

I am a born and bred Dunedin girl. I loved the range of activities I was involved in during my time at Otago Girls', from sports to Stage Challenge, camps to becoming Health Prefect. In my final year I applied and gained admission into both the Dunedin College of Education and The Dunedin School of Art. I decided to go to Art School.



*Helen Johnston back at OGHS teaching her teachers first aid*

Since leaving Otago Girls' I have graduated with a Degree, moved to Australia for seven months, travelled to Europe and visited London, Italy, Ireland and Greece, reuniting with old school friends over there.

I began volunteering in 2010 for Camp Quality, a non-profit organisation for children living with cancer. Through Camp Quality I was the chosen recipient of a 21-day Classic Outward Bound course Scholarship. We learnt the saying "Plus est en vous – There is more in you". I hope as many people as possible have the opportunity to complete an Outward Bound course, so they too can discover how far they really can go to meet their potential.

Upon returning from my travels in September I got offered a job as an Instructor at Workplace First Aid Training in Dunedin. I came to Otago Girls' and trained the Year 10 girls for their pre-camp first aid course in November and I recently returned to train the teachers. Rolls were reversed that day, I called the teachers by their first names and I saw the inside of the staff room. I am so happy that I am able to combine my passion for teaching with a skill that can help others save lives.

## Ex-Girl Profile

### Siobhan Downes OGHS 2004-2008

After leaving Otago Girls' in 2008, I carried on studying the subjects I had enjoyed most at school - Japanese and History. At the end of Year 12 I had spent two months on exchange at Yasuda Girls' High School in Hiroshima, one of our sister schools, and from my first taste of okonomiyaki (a delicious Japanese pancake), I was hooked on Japan.

I ended up doing honours in Japanese at Otago University, and in my final year I spent a semester studying in Osaka, Japan. I started a blog, called The Only Blonde in Osaka, writing about my experiences. I also got my first travel feature published in the Otago Daily Times, and the thrill of seeing my name in print helped me decide that was what I wanted to do. I had always loved writing, and throughout uni I wrote for the student magazine, Critic. So after graduating, I enrolled in a Postgraduate Diploma in Journalism at Massey University in Wellington.

I am still based in the capital and have spent the past two years working for Fairfax Media as a national news reporter, writing stories for stuff.co.nz and newspapers all over the country, including The Dominion Post and The Press.

Last year, I got an Asia New Zealand Foundation scholarship to spend six weeks working for The New York Times in Hong Kong. I headed over there at the same time as the "Umbrella Movement" democracy protests, and found myself in the middle of one of the biggest news stories in the world. That's the great thing about this job - you never quite know where you'll end up.



*Siobhan Downes in Hong Kong*

## Ex-Girl Profile

### Lisa Futschek

#### OGHS 1979-1983 Head Prefect

##### ***As the swift seasons roll***

Since leaving school in 1983 I have studied, lived and worked in many far flung places across the globe and have often found myself reflecting on how an education at OGHS has set me up so very well for the many challenges in life. After graduating from Otago University with two first class honours degrees in English and



Music, I went on to complete a Post-Graduate Diploma in Broadcast Communications at Auckland University. Thereafter followed my first real job with my ex school debating coach Michael Laws, by then a backbench Member of Parliament in the National government of the time. Working for Michael and subsequently Pauline Gardiner, MP for Wellington Central, was a fascinating (and addictive!) insight into national politics and the machinations of government. But after four years I was ready for new challenges.

##### ***A dome more vast***

I was recruited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and spent the next 18 years as a career diplomat representing New Zealand's foreign policy priorities and negotiating New Zealand's trade interests with foreign governments and trading partners.

##### ***In gulfs enchanted***

My first posting was in Santiago, Chile, a wonderful three years where, in addition to work, the Spanish language and salsa dancing became personal passions! On my return to Wellington I focussed on multilateral work within the Ministry's trade negotiations and United Nations divisions. Highlights were taking on a maternity relief assignment in New York leading the New Zealand delegation to the UN Third Committee (children's and women's rights) and being Campaign Manager for New Zealand Supreme Court Judge Sir Kenneth Keith's successful bid for a seat on the International Court of Justice in The Hague (the first New Zealander to be elected to the Court). My next full posting was as the Deputy Head of Mission in Berlin, Germany, an incredible five years in this economic powerhouse of Europe. From Germany, we also managed relations with other European countries where New Zealand does not have an Embassy, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

##### ***Leaving, thine outworn shell***

On my return from Berlin in 2013, and with the interests of my husband, our 10 year old son and 7 year old daughter in mind, we decided to make New Zealand a more permanent home. I was appointed to my current role as Regional Director Americas, Japan and Korea at Education New Zealand, ENZ being the Government's international education marketing and development agency. I am delighted to have come full circle back into the education realm. And equally delighted to see how engaged OGHS is with internationalisation and the diversity and richness offshore students bring to our schools. The right education makes the heart as strong as an oak – I couldn't agree more.

## Library Donation

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

## 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)

## 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)



OGHS Wall of Remembrance - poppies produced by students, staff, extended families and the Christchurch branch of OGHS ex-girls.

## Otago Girls' High School Anzac Service

Friday 24 April commencing at 2.15pm in the school grounds



You are warmly invited to attend the first full ANZAC service to be held at Otago Girls' High School. As part of the service we will dedicate a plaque to the ex-girls' who served in WW1 and we will lay a field of remembrance. Afternoon tea will be served at the conclusion of the service.

RSVP to 4740496 or [admin@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:admin@otagogirls.school.nz) by Tuesday 21 April.



## 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)

Otago Girls' High School Alumni Association  
41 Tennyson Street, Dunedin 9016  
03 474 0496



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

