



# Otago Girls' High School Alumni Association

## Happy 150th Birthday Otago Girls' High School

# Acting Principal's report

Tena koutou katoa

It is my very great privilege to be Acting Principal in our school's 150th year, while Ms Miller, our Principal, is seconded to the Teachers' Council for two terms. As we celebrate our 150th birthday and the generations of amazing women that have gone before us, we also look to the future with our current students here in 2021.



*Bridget Davidson, Acting Principal*

Every day at this school students inspire me. Every day there are new achievements, new heights of sporting and cultural excellence and new and surprising interests and activities taking place in our school. This doesn't happen by accident but rather arises from the commitment of an amazing team of staff, students, parents and community. Particular thanks goes to the School Board, PTSA, Sports Council and Arts Council for making things happen and providing steady and progressive governance and fundraising at our school. We are blessed with amazing facilities and supportive community connections in every area.

Learning is at the heart of everything we do and when students learn well, they feel good and they set their goals high. Engagement, achievement and wellbeing are interlinked. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020, our students achieved the highest results in NCEA, including 19 Scholarships, six Outstanding Scholarships and three Top Scholars in New Zealand in Media Studies, Sculpture and French. The New Zealand Top Scholars Awards were presented by Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand, and Chris Hipkins, Minister for Education, at Parliament in May.

We continue to be a Positive Behaviour for Learning school and our new initiative Connecting through Curriculum encourages respectful relationships focused on learning and developing emotional intelligence for future success. Our local curriculum centres on our Malaga - navigating our journey - and describes the principles and learner capabilities we foster in our students. We have a new student-led initiative around respect and kindness - Kotahitanga - which fosters inclusion and respect across all groups and peoples. The focus of this will be Cultural Day early in Term Three.

Cultural Highlights have been our very successful performance season of "Cry Baby" the combined OBHS/OGHS Senior Production, Wairua Pūhou's incredible performance for Hautonga, and the Choir and combined OBHS/OGHS choir performances in the Big Sing. They are two of 12 South Island choirs that have been selected to compete in Timaru in late August.

Year 9 student Anna Feillet's songwriting success gained her

1st Place in the New Zealand Music competition "Hook, Line & Sing Along" for her composition "Aroha / Aotearoa". Her song was sung in schools all over NZ in a mass sing-a-long on the last day of New Zealand Music Month. Our Show Quest dancers' superb performance won third place in Otago. Sophia Niblock Year 13 won 1st Place and a \$500 Scholarship in the Click Happy "Gratitude" Photography competition and our Arts Prefect Freya Pettigrew has worked hard to see her wonderful new initiative realised in the form of The Otago Secondary Schools' Portfolio Exhibition, which brings together art portfolios from a selection of schools.

Sporting highlights this year include the promotion of our Senior A Netball Team into the Premier Women's grade, Catherine Lund gaining 10th place in the National Year 11 to 13 Cross Country Championships, two year 13's being selected for the Otago Spirit Rugby team, winning the Senior A Sevens Rugby title, the Junior A Sevens Rugby title and being sunner Runners Up in the Junior B competition. Two teams competed in the inaugural season of the high schools' eSports competition. We currently have ex-pupils from our school in the New Zealand White Ferns cricket team, the New Zealand Black Ferns Sevens Rugby team, the Southern Steel Netball team and the New Zealand Kayak Squad.

In February, at our Founder's Day celebrations, we unveiled the Pare in our school foyer and each and every student passed under this into the hall, which represents the heart of our school. The Pare was carved by Ngāi Tahu master carver James York who then gave a korero about all of the significant elements of the installation. We will unveil Helen Pollock's 150th sculpture at the celebrations in October. In conjunction with the Otago Museum we also have a Street Art project in conception which will be based around the Chambered Nautilus. We look forward to the installation of lighted Pou in the grounds, a Mauri Stone and Tukatuku panels in the hall. It is indeed an exciting time for us all.

We continue to celebrate the diversity of our school community. Our international students inspire us with their resilience at a time when they are unable to travel home to their home countries. Well Chomchoei participated in the recent Shave for a Cure for cancer research and all of the international students were awarded badges designed by her. We also look forward to lunch out at a restaurant together early in Term Three. Our former refugee students also continue to inspire us with their resilience in embracing their new life and learning in another country.

We look forward to our 150th Celebrations at Labour Weekend. Special thanks to Mrs Smallfield and the 150th Committee for their tireless work on the arrangements. We will welcome Mai Chen as guest speaker at our opening and look forward to an exciting weekend of activities and reminiscences. Otago Girls' High School was, is, and remains, a remarkable school through the generations of young women who pass here.

**Mrs Bridget Davidson**  
Acting Principal



*The Prefects delivered Easter treats to residents at Redroofs retirement home where they met up with two of our ex-girls. Above with Miss Mary Ronnie (OGHS 1939-1942) and below with Merle van de Klundert (nee Tyrrell) (OGHS 1950-1951).*



## Rose Stevenson (OGHS 2015 to 2019, and Head Prefect 2019) wins the Dunedin Concerto Competition



In May Rose Stevenson won the Dunedin Concerto Competition held at the Dunedin Town Hall. Rose was one of three finalists in the competition with each one performing a concerto with the Dunedin Symphony Orchestra. Rose performed Barber's *Violin Concerto* and she was a very worthy winner of the event.

Rose is currently in her second year studying Performance Violin and Composition at Otago University. This is her seventh year as a member of the Dunedin Youth Orchestra and she has also played in the New Zealand Secondary Schools' Symphony Orchestra.

In the biography included in the competition programme Rose was described as a proud ex-Otago Girls' High School pupil and she acknowledged that she got a lot of experience in performance and public speaking while at the school. She said that Linda Miller, Eugene Shields and Will Martin all fostered both her personal and musical development while she was at school.

## Visit from members of Central Otago Branch of OGHS Ex-Girls.

In June we were delighted to have a visit from four members of the Central Otago Branch of OGHS Ex-Girls. The main purpose of their visit was to bring 93 year old ex-girl Kathleen Richardson (née Sutherland) for a visit to the school she attended from 1941 to 1943.

Those visiting with Kathleen were Esther Mackay (née Wilson) who attended OGHS from 1954 to 1957, Joan Graham (née Robertson) - OGHS from 1953 to 1956, and Elizabeth Golden (née Gardner) - OGHS from 1957 to 1959.

Kathleen's great granddaughter, Paige Milburn (pictured below with Kathleen) is a current Year 11 student at the school and it was special that she could join us for the occasion.

The group particularly enjoyed a visit to the Foods and Textiles rooms where classes were at work on various projects.

Kathleen regaled us with wonderful stories of her time at OGHS. She took Latin, avoided French, was interested in Geography and loved art with teacher Miss Lulu Currie.

Kathleen also kindly presented a copy of her family story *Memoirs of Kathleen and Nevis Richardson* to the library.





*Form IIIA 1941*

*Kathleen Sutherland (later Richardson) is second from left in the second row.*



*Left to Right: Jane Smallfield (Secretary of the Alumni Association), Elizabeth Golden, Joan Graham, Kathleen Richardson, Acting Principal Bridget Davidson and Esther McKay (President Central Otago Branch of Ex-Girls). Kathleen is presenting a copy of her family story to the school.*

## **Beverley Moyle (née Lucas)** **OGHS student 1952 to 1956** **OGHS staff 1962 to 1966**

Our beloved mother, Beverley Moyle (née Lucas) passed away on 9 November, 2019. She was a former student of OGHS, attending from 1952 to 1956 and then a Mathematics teacher from 1962 to 1965. She had originally planned to return to teaching at OGHS once we were at school ourselves but made the decision to support our father in the family business, Moyles Supermarket in Green Island.

Mum always had a very strong connection to OGHS and when we were children, loved nothing more than to recount many fond memories she had of her time there. Mum came from a large family of seven children, five boys and two girls. They grew up in difficult economic times, where building work was not always easy to find for her father. Neither of her parents had been given the opportunity to attend High School, so she valued her education more than most people.

She willingly made the early start from Abbotsford by train into Dunedin City, then the daily trudge up View Street. To her, it was worth it because at OGHS she was able to reach the academic potential she never took for granted. She excelled in Mathematics and Latin and later continued to study these subjects, as well as Greek at University. She had an intrinsic work ethic, which she applied to all parts of her life, even after she left OGHS.

But it wasn't all study, Mum was also an avid sportswoman and played Outdoor Basketball for OGHS before it became known as Netball. She was also a keen tennis player and when she earned Blues her sports, she worked at extra jobs to be able to afford a new Blazer with the sports names embroidered on them, so that she wouldn't have to wear her sister's hand me downs. The blazer was one of her most treasured possessions, which she kept her entire life.

Mum made many friends whilst at OGHS, many of whom she kept in contact with until shortly before her passing. She loved attending the various OGHS Jubilees over the years and it was one of her greatest wishes to attend the 150th celebrations this year. Unfortunately, this wasn't to be, but we are sure that she will be there in spirit, a very proud old girl, of the old school.

**Fay Manna** (Beverley's daughter)

## **Generous gift from the family of Beverley Moyle (née Lucas)**

The school is extremely grateful to the family of Beverley Moyle (Lynn King, Fay Manna and John Moyle) for a generous donation to the school on behalf of their loved mother. The donation has been used as a substantial contribution towards our 150th Jubilee Sculpture and some videoing equipment for the school.



*Beverley Moyle (née Lucas) with her sister Joan Galbraith (née Lucas).*



*Beverley's crest and sports blues off her much treasured school blazer.*



*From 3S 1952. Beverley Lucas is first on the left of the third row.*

*Back row: Rosemary Salter, Janette Deaker, Deidre Boyes, Ngaire Pelvin, Jennifer Carpenter, Margaret Kershaw, Alison Hamilton, Janetter Hudson*

*Third row: Beverley Lucas, Loris Sparks, Ngaire Black, Blanche Allen, Glenys Scott, Estelle Aitkenhead, Joan McConnachie, Hazel Murie*

*Second row: Marie Heenan, Robyn Graham, Maureen Parsons, Marie Poulter, Diane Edwards, Valerie Craigie, Jeanette Orange, Lynn Sinclair*

*Front row: Robin Hughes, Judith Brown, Mary Gordon, Beverley Knox, Joy Langford, Eleanor Aitken, Billie Hunter*

## **OGHS 150th Jubilee registrations**

Thank you to all of you who have already registered for this event to be held at Labour Weekend this year. Registrations will close on 31 July 2021 and can be made at the following site:

<https://150th.otagogirls.school.nz/event/DNE5BE/>

Make sure you register soon to ensure a place at all events especially the dinner which has limited places. Please spread the word amongst ex-girls you know who may not subscribe to this newsletter.

## **OGHS Jubilee Project - Sculpture**

Thanks to ex-girl Helen Pollock (née Young) for all the work she is doing bringing our sculpture to fruition. It is going to be permanent and significant work of art to mark the 150th Jubilee of the School and will be there for future generations to enjoy.

Made of bronze the sculpture has also been impacted by Covid-19. The cost of the bronze is now 40% higher than we anticipated and we are looking at raising a further \$15, 000 to meet the cost of the project. If you would like to contribute to this project please donate when you register or email [sd@otagogirls.school.nz](mailto:sd@otagogirls.school.nz)

## Isabella Cecilia Jane Ker Cochran (née Duncan) 1867-1951

**OGHS student 1880 to 1884**

**Dux of the school in 1882 aged 15**

**(Isabella remained at school for two years after becoming Dux)**

In March I was delighted to have a visit from Ruth Watson, a granddaughter of Isabella Duncan who attended Otago Girls' from 1880 to 1884.

Ruth had a large amount of fascinating information on Isabella, including images of her and original letters from staff at Otago Girls' and Otago Boys' attesting to Isabella's academic ability when she applied for University Scholarships in 1887. Ruth donated copies of these to the school and she wrote the following words about her grandmother.

*Schools featured prominently in Isabella's life. Born on 2 October 1867 in Corstorphine, Scotland, she was the daughter of schoolmaster William Duncan and Jane, nee Dingwall. Isabella came to Dunedin as a child on the Carlsburn, arriving 14 July 1874. She began her formal education at seven, after her father became headmaster of Green Island School.*

*Dux of Otago Girls' High School, Isabella won the Richardson scholarship to Otago University in 1885, through a highly competitive examination. Although she wanted desperately to become a missionary doctor in India, no woman had yet studied medicine and she took a degree in arts and sciences - Latin, Mathematics, Chemistry, English and French. At University she won the first class merit prize in Junior Mathematics, in 1885, and in Senior Mathematics, which included Mechanics, in 1886, and was awarded first prize for Solutions of Chemical Problems in 1887. She began her teaching career as an undergraduate, tutoring Professor James Black's son. She worked so industriously on laboratory experiments on coal, she succumbed to an illness from gas inhalation, but eventually recovered and in 1890 she completed her M.A. being the fourth woman to graduate from Otago University.*

*Professor Shand wrote that her 'gentle but firm disposition' would make her an ideal teacher. She went to Nelson Girls' College where she taught Mathematics, English and Chemistry. She married a Queenstown storekeeper, William Cochran at*

*her parents' home in Green Island on the 4th of March 1891. They lived in Queenstown for nearly ten years where they brought up three sons, Harry, Allan and Bruce. Isabella opened a school in her home, teaching different subjects, and was highly appreciated by the towns people.*

*Her husband William became a farmer at Te Tua in the Waiau District, Southland, where at first they lived in a tent reinforced with timber to keep out the cold. Isabella taught timber workers' children at Papatotara and Waihoaka schools, walking miles along rutted tracks with mud up to her three sons' knees. She also played the organ for the Presbyterian and Methodist churches, and for years ran a non-denominational Sunday school in their home. After her husband's death in 1929 she moved to Colac Bay.*

*Her love of learning continued all her life and was passed on to many young people. Her grandchildren remember her shelves full of interesting books, her cupboards of shells, books of pressed leaves, and walks on the beach and in the bush. She was constantly instilling in us a thirst for knowledge. Grandma Tocky, as she was known by her grandchildren and others, was a firm but loving teacher until her death on the 25th January 1951 at Winton.*

**Ruth Watson**

QUEENSTOWN PRIVATE SEMINARY.  
MRS COCHRAN, M.A..  
QUARTER BEGINS THURSDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.  
SYLLABUS:—Science, Mathematics, English, French, Latin, Drawing, Painting, Plain and Fancy Art Needlework.  
TERMS:—£1 10s per quarter: with music, £2 15s. Children under eight—15s per quarter.  
Arrangements have been made with a First-class Teacher for tuition in Music

Lake Wakatipu Mail, 6 September 1895





Isabella Cochran wearing her Otago Girls' Dux medal, 1882.



Isabella Cochran graduating with an MA in 1890.

Girls' High School  
Dunedin. July 4<sup>th</sup> 1887.

I have much pleasure in certifying to Miss Isabella Duncan's attainments in natural and physical science. While a senior pupil in the Dunedin Girls' High School she took a most prominent position in the Chemistry and Biology classes, showing special excellence in the study of Botany. The former of these branches of science she has followed up with great success in the

local University.  
I always found Miss Duncan a most satisfactory student, and have no doubt that in the sphere which she aspires to fill, her abilities, knowledge and diligence will lead to her complete success as a teacher.

Geo. M. Thomson  
Science Master.

Letter (1887) from George Malcolm Thomson, Science Master at Otago Girls', supporting Isabella's application for a University Scholarship.

## Introducing Andrea Dale (Public Relations Prefect)

Kia Ora all, my name is Andrea Dale and I am the Public Relations prefect for 2021. As part of my role I do a lot of behind the scenes work, taking tours around the school and showing prospective new girls and parents what we have to offer. I feel incredibly lucky to have been put in this role and to have the ability to show possible students what Otago Girls' is all about and share with them all of the amazing opportunities that are awaiting them here at our school.



So far this year it has been amazing to see everyone come together again as a school community participating in our annual swimming sports, athletics day, and cross country. This year these events in particular have not been taken for granted due to all that we had to miss out on last year because of Covid-19. We are incredibly fortunate to have the ability to come back together as a school this year.

This year is also an incredibly special time to be at school for all of the girls as we celebrate the 150th year of Otago Girls' High school. This is an incredible milestone for Otago Girls' High School and allows us to reflect on the past of the school and how far we have come. For the girls at school now it also allows us to realise how lucky we are to have an education such as this with incredible facilities and opportunities. Looking back and speaking to ex-girls it is amazing to see and hear what the past looked like especially relating to the change in uniform, and the subject opportunities. I love the stories of how students would go home for lunch on the trams.

As a school we were lucky enough to be able to celebrate this big milestone with each other on the 5th of February almost 150 years to the day that Otago Girls' High School opened for the first time in 1871. Staff and students are now looking forward to Labour Weekend when we will

be able to welcome back many Otago Girls' High School ex-students and celebrate this massive achievement with the wider community!

**Andrea Dale**

## Principal Linda Miller announces her resignation.



On Monday our Principal Linda Miller who is spending two terms working for the Teachers' Council called in to school to talk to students and staff. Sadly for Otago Girls' Ms Miller announced that while she will be back in Term 4 she will be retiring from the role of Principal at the end of the year. While there will be lots of official farewells and words later, we would like to thank Ms Miller for her incredible service over nearly 10 years. What amazing changes we have seen over the time she has been Principal.

### 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.



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.*