

# School Ties

Wellington Girls' College Alumnae Newsletter



May 2010 Issue 14

## Mission Statement

*Wellington Girls' College prepares young women to go out into the world as independent thinkers with respect for themselves and others, the confidence to accept and respond to challenges and an enduring passion for learning.*

## From the Principal



Dear alumnae

2010 is well underway. We have 1270 girls and 126 staff on site this year. We are offering 30 subjects in Yr 9; 21 in Yr 10; 26 in Yr 11; 33 in Yr 12 and 36 in Yr 13. We have 20 sports codes, 12 main cultural activities and 10 student led clubs. Most girls in the school take part in at least one co-curricular activity and some take part in far too many! The highlight last year was our top cricket team winning the national competition – the first time a Wellington team has ever done this. Our top netball team also played in the new regional Super League (just below the level of the Trans Tasman competition) and we were the only school team to have a place in this.

Our 2009 NCEA results were the top of all the state schools in Wellington at every year level and we gained 54 Scholarships including the award for the top student in the country in Chinese. 2010 looks as if it will be another great year and we have been lucky to recruit some superb new staff at a time of international teacher shortage.

2010 will see two international trips for our students. Each April holidays a group of Yr 13 students head to Nepal for some serious tramping, followed by service work in local schools. This year's group has returned with

their world view much broader and their ideas about the lives they lead back here and what is really important to them seriously challenged. In September, our triennial trip to Germany will take place. This is a German language trip offered to senior students. As well as travel around Germany the girls will stay with German families and they are expected to use their German at all times, so that can be a testing experience as well. These trips are a great way to let the girls test themselves - but within some safety nets relatively close at hand if everything turns to custard for them.

So we have started as we mean to continue – with great opportunities for the girls in a wide range of activities and with outstanding results in many areas. Some of what happens now wouldn't be recognisable to you, but I'm certain the passion with which it was undertaken would be!

I had hoped the contract on our new Pipitea block would have been signed off yesterday, but as I write we are still waiting on someone in the Ministry of Education to give their approval, so it may happen next week. I think we are all getting a bit tired of not much happening – the contractor is ready to move in and we just can't wait for the work to get going. It looks as if the work will take about a year, so by this time next year we should be ready to have the grand opening and related events which we hope many of you will want to attend.

As part of the project there is a large open forecourt which will lead from the Murphy/Pipitea St corner toward the new front entrance and building. On this forecourt there will be a number of solid 'plinths'. These plinths will be faced so that names can be engraved in them. Along with this edition of School Ties, you will receive a flier called 'Leave our mark on WGC'. All alumnae will be offered the chance to have their name engraved on the plinths – there are several options offered. We have a number of people who have already booked their space and in some cases families over three or four generations will be remembered. Get in touch with me if you are interested in doing this – we are really excited about having the school's alumnae remembered in such a public manner.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy 2010 .

*Julia Davidson*

## Old Girls' making their mark on the world



Pharmacy tutor Gael Donoghue, second from right, is still 'handing on the light' to technicians.

**Gael Donoghue** nee Mackay (student 1951-1954) has been around the pharmacy industry for longer than just about anyone, and has now been given the Pharmaceutical Society's highest accolade.

After 50 years in the industry, many of them involved in tutoring, lecturing, or mentoring, she's influenced the careers of hundreds of pharmacists, technicians and assistants and is still full of enthusiasm.

Now the Palmerston North-based off-campus tutor and mentor for Open Polytechnic students working towards pharmacy technician qualifications from Hawke's Bay to Whanganui, she's still full of enthusiasm.

She says her attitude owes much to the Wellington Girls' College School motto:

*Accept the light and hand it on.*

In March Gael was made the first ever life member of the Pharmaceutical Society, as the first person to meet the criteria – 50 years of membership involving exceptional service".

Her career began at 16, with a love of chemistry, and a drive to help people. She worked at the Ngaio Pharmacy as an apprentice while studying after hours. She spent another year at a pharmacy on Lambton Quay before taking up her first tutoring job, at the Pharmacy College.

Gael married Alan Donoghue – a pharmacist who later trained as a GP, then as a gynecologist and obstetrician. For several years, the couple had a pharmacy in Levin, then moved to Dunedin to medical school. This was followed by a year in Ranfurly, then a move to London for specialist training.

Not long after she qualified, a degree course in pharmacy was set up in Otago, and she later lectured there from 1988 to 1992.

The Donoghues had two sons in Dunedin, and the third was born in London.

Their return home saw them based first in Dunedin, then in Whanganui. Nine years ago they moved to Palmerston North.

Gael remembers when doctors' prescriptions were hand-written in barely legible Latin. Even the instruction to "shake the bottle" was in Latin, and apprentices had to learn it all by heart.

Powders and liquids were measured in grains and minims, and most pharmacists were men.

Throughout her career, Gael has filled many roles with the Pharmaceutical Society, the body responsible for supporting pharmacists through education to achieve and maintain their competence.

As well as her pharmacy career, Gael has been an active politician, for National in Dunedin North in 1990, in Whanganui in 1993, and twice for the Christian Heritage Party.

At a community level, she has been a member of an array of organisations, including Altrusa, the National Council of Women, Zonta, Inner Wheel, and Wanganui Chamber of Commerce.

She also plays the piano, and was a music teacher.

Her life membership citation summarises her career thus: "She has worn many hats... and always worn them enthusiastically."

**Philippa Parker** (student 1972-1974) attended the Wellington Hospital School of Nursing, graduating R.N in 1978, and has since spent her life travelling the world as a member of the Red Cross, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka and the Thai-Cambodian border.

In 1992 Philippa started working directly for the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) firstly in Geneva as a recruitment officer for field personnel and then in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda, Sudan, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Philippa's roles have varied from running hospitals for the treatment of war wounded, to supplying clinics and hospitals with much needed material and equipment, to visiting prisons.

In the last 10 years she has coordinated the health programmes of the ICRC in selected countries. These programmes included First Aid, Primary Health Care, Hospitals, Health in Detention and physical rehabilitation activities.

In 1990 Philippa received an Outstanding Services Medal from the New Zealand Red Cross and in the same year a QSM for public services. In 1993 she was awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal for services to the International Red Cross movement.

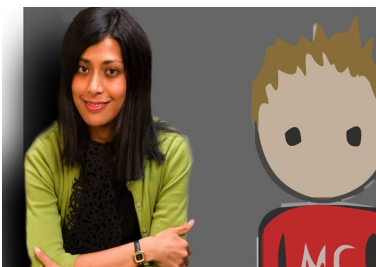
At present Philippa is based in Geneva and holds the position of the Head of Health Services Unit for ICRC health activities throughout the world.



### Do you have any news?

If you have any Old Girls' news that you would like considered for inclusion in the next issue of *School Ties*, or you have any feedback or suggestions around the Alumnae and its events, then we would like to hear from you.

## Published Old Girls'



*Rilla in a photomontage with MC, a character from her game Smoke.*

Old girl' **Rilla Khaled** (student 1994-1999) hopes interactive video games will turn young people away from smoking and other bad habits.

The computer science expert and Victoria University PhD graduate has helped create a game called *Smoke*, designed to fight the powerful addiction.

In *Smoke*, the player guides a character called MC through decisions and actions over six weeks of his life, mirroring the path people must take to give up smoking. Two versions of the game were designed, one aimed at a Maori audience and the other for New Zealand Europeans. Adapting the educational video game to different cultural audiences improved its effectiveness, Dr Khaled said.

Feedback from Wellington high school and university students revealed all players had preferred elements of the game, for example, language, designed for their culture. Dr Khaled's findings could help the design of technology encouraging all sorts of behaviour change.

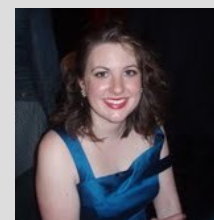
"To date there hasn't been a lot of persuasive technology research outside countries considered to have an individualist culture. Countries like New Zealand, which are steadily becoming more ethnically diverse, are ideal testing grounds for this kind of research."

About 5000 deaths each year in New Zealand are attributed to direct smoking or second-hand smoke - that's 13 people a day.

Smoking also affects children's health through its effects during pregnancy and childhood. These include increased risk of serious respiratory tract conditions such as bronchitis and pneumonia.

*Rilla currently works as an Assistant Professor at the Centre for Computer Games Research in Copenhagen, Denmark.*

**Eleanor Bishop** (student 2002-2003) was named "Most Promising New Director of the Year" at the 2009 Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards. The awards honour Wellington's best and brightest productions, with over 100 shows in contention for the awards each year. The award is for her production of Eli Kent's *The Intricate Art of Actually Caring*, which was staged in Eli's bedroom in the NZ Fringe Festival. The show won "Most Original Production of the Year" and was nominated for "Production of the Year". In 2009, it had subsequent seasons at Downstage Theatre and the Christchurch Arts Festival and will tour nationally in 2010.



Eleanor came to Wellington Girls' College in 2002 in order to get more Drama into her life, and has since graduated from Victoria University of Wellington with a First Class Honours degree in Theatre and a Commerce degree in Marketing. She has spent the last year making theatre, working as a producer and a director. She runs the Wellington Producers Room, a creative space for theatre practitioners at Wellington's Arts Centre Toi Poneke, as well as tutoring Theatre and Arts Marketing at Victoria University.

## BUSINESS HALL OF FAME

**Libby Calder** was welcomed back to Wellington Girls' College and inducted into the college's Business Hall of Fame on the 23 November 2009.

Libby is a dedicated young business woman who has created a vibrant and highly successful company combining her passion for dance and her entrepreneurial skills. For one so young Libby's achievements are all the more outstanding.

Libby attended Wellington Girls' College from 1998 to 2002. She was one of two lead choreographers for the Wellington Girls' College, winning entry for Stage Challenge in 2002.

During her time at Wellington Girls', Libby achieved an overall A for her Bursary level studies. She won both the Alliance Francaise Speaking Competition and the Goethe Society Speaking Competition in 1999 and was a finalist in other years.

After leaving college, Libby completed a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours at Victoria University, majoring in French and German.



In 2001, at the age of 16, Libby Calder created Pump Dance Ltd, a highly successful Wellington based hip hop dance company.

Today there are over 300 students and 14 dance instructors at Pump Dance Studios, all of which are involved in competitions and performances throughout New Zealand.

Since 2001, Libby has regularly conducted hip hop dance workshops at schools and dance studios in Wellington. She has been involved in dance productions for Maori TV, What Now TV and The Fringe Festival, Cuba St Carnival, The Good Morning show and Top of the Pops.

In 2008 she was named as a Lifestyle Ambassador for Mission On, promoting the benefits of a healthy active lifestyle while doing dance workshops in schools throughout New Zealand. Libby also judged the dance section of the Regional Stage Challenge competitions and is a founding member of the all female dance crew, Infinite, who compete and perform regularly around Wellington.

We are delighted to have Libby as a part of our Business Hall of Fame.



Comedian Jan Maree (Janmaree Franicevic)  
Student 1987 – 1991

### What Janny did....

My cousin went to WGC and I thought she ruled the planet. So much so, that I wanted to be just like her. Henceforth I BROKE MY NECK (parental nagging, sulking sessions, etc) to get into Wellington Girls' College. And so it was to be. It was the January of 1987, I can still remember the first girl I met. Her name was Adrienne and she seemed as nervous about the first day as I was. It was such an adventure, a complete culture shock for me as I had come from a reasonably small primary school in Petone (Wilford School) WGC appeared to be a city all on its own. My subject choice of Typing soon got changed to French and then things just went along, like school does.

A born show off it was no surprise that I joined up the Poly Group (following on from the days of Kapa Haka at school) and junior drama, led by Miss Colosimo who pretty much had a tie to me each of my years at WGC (debate team coach, drama club leader, teacher, school production director to name a few). I have never been the sporty type but something about the new environment encouraged me to go in for the Volleyball team (I think I ended up in the lowest grade but man, we had a lot of fun!) and later on I took up Irish Dancing with the flame haired Mrs O'Connor (full trend setter as these were days pre-Michael Flatley).

Always one for talking, my favourite part of my senior school days was when my debating or Theatre Sports team got together and practiced/performed. By the time I hit 7th Form I had all but given up on every other aspect of school life and was more interested in playing improv games in the Common Room than attend-

## Jan Maree, Comedian and winner of the coveted 'Billy T Award for Comedy' shares her story with *School Ties*

ing my Classics or Art History classes. After all, I had decided right at the start of Form 7 that I would not bother to take Bursary Exams, it was a risky decision as it was also the final year that the Wellington College of Education would accept students without having sat them. I was convinced that I would be accepted to train as a primary school teacher. God bless the careers counselor, Mrs Gibson, she suggested that I apply for some office jobs just in case I was unsuccessful. Yes, I applied for some jobs but something in me just knew that the acceptance letter would come. Seven days before Christmas 1991 it came!

I was determined to become a primary school teacher, this had always been my goal (since I was 6 years old!) however once I graduated in 1994 with my Diploma of Education (Primary) I realised that I had been inside classrooms consecutively for 15 years. To be frank, I was a bit over blackboards and lined refill.

As luck would have it there was a full time position going where I had worked part-time whilst studying so I leapt at the chance to earn a living while I figured out what I would do next.

By 1997 I had been a Bottle Store Duty Manager, a Wine Consultant a Merchandising Display Manager and had somehow stumbled into a job as a pre-press sales rep (which I was not very passionate about but paid well). I had started doing comedy to meet a guy that played in the half time band in 1994 and since then had done a few gigs here and there but nothing serious. Then one inclement October day I got a phone call from the Talent Scout for Pulp Comedy who asked me to be on the TV3 show as a new face. Whilst in Auckland it became apparent that if I seriously wanted a career in comedy I would need to relocate there and so in December 1997 I did just that.

Finally I found what I really wanted to do with my life.

In 2001 I became the second ever female

to win the coveted 'Billy T Award for Comedy' and whilst on a nationwide tour I was spotted by More FM Waikato's General Manager who enticed me down to live in Hamilton in 2003 and become one half of the Breakfast Show with Jeff Newton. I stayed in the radio industry until mid 2006, by then I had not only hosted breakfast but also worked as a news reader, a morning show roving reporter and had successfully taken local Hamilton rock station The Generator's midday show to #3 in the ratings.

However as I am easily bored new challenges were awaiting me, this time in the form of a comedy cooking show series entitled *Eat Me!* that would see me busy performing at hospitality shows, culinary festivals and comedy festivals up until the present day (I have just returned to Hamilton after a sold out season of *Eat Me* #2 at Sandwiches in Wellington for the NZ International Comedy Festival).



I am now 36 years old. I live in Whatawhata (halfway between Hamilton City and Raglan) with my partner Rick and our three dogs, Flash, Titch and Spark. We also have two doves, Ebb and Zebb. I am a full-time stand up comedian and with Rick am proud owner of COMICStrip a touring comedy company. Rick operates the management and artist liaison side of the business whilst I do the talking! Life is good. However it has not been a simple journey. The opportunities which have come along and arrested my passion and soul are the things I hold dearest and know that as long as I love what I am doing, I will never work a day in my life.

Check out Jan Maree's website at :  
[www.janmaree.co.nz](http://www.janmaree.co.nz)

**Are our records correct?** Would you like to receive *School Ties* by email? If so please let us know.

If your contact details have changed we would appreciate an update from you.

Please contact *School Ties* at: [wgc.alumnae@gmail.com](mailto:wgc.alumnae@gmail.com); or write to us at:

School Ties  
Wellington Girls' College  
Pipitea Street  
WELLINGTON 6011

## Published Old Girls'



- Nancy Adams
- Fleur Adcock
- Sylvia Ashton-Warner
- Rachel Barrowman
- Patricia Booth (nee Eade)
- Joan Cameron (nee Mattingly)
- Fifi Colston
- Lauris Edmond
- Susan Emanuel
- Anne French
- Greeks, Polly
- Noeline Hall
- Glenda Hughes
- Edith Howes
- Katherine Mansfield
- Robyn Marsack
- Margaret Maxwell (Dr)
- Mary McCallum
- Elizabeth McLeay
- Leone Morris-Bensemam
- Mary Mountier
- Pauline Morse
- Emma Neale
- Jenny Neale
- Jenny Pattrick (nee Priestley)
- Jo Randerson
- Beverley Reeves (nee Watkins)
- Jane Ritchie (nee Beaglehole)
- Schwass, Margot
- Barbara Strathdee (nee Smythe)
- Irene Swadling (nee Lusty)
- Lynette Taylor (nee Routledge)
- Iris Wilkinson / Robin Hyde
- Rachel Pether

*Wellington Girls' College has an impressive list of published writers, which includes authors, poets, illustrators, and historians. However we are sure there are lots of our Alumnae who are missing from this list, so if you should be on this list, or know someone who should be then please write and let us know, or email us at: [wgc.alumnae@gmail.com](mailto:wgc.alumnae@gmail.com).*

## Feedback

We love hearing from our Old Girls' so please keep the feedback coming!

Within the last few days I have received the October edition of School Ties and read with interest Mr. Rait's contribution. He was my science teacher in the 3rd form in 1959. I recall one girl spent an hour creating a hair style she thought would impress Mr. Rait. One of her friends told Mr. Rait as soon as he walked in to our classroom...his response was that she could go and show it to Miss Fraser!!!

One of the things that use to impress the hockey girls was the way he could tell the Thorndon children it was our turn on the jointly shared field. For some unknown reason they ignored us and would sit in the goal post or, in the summer, in front of the cricket wickets.

In 1959 and 1960 there seemed a lack of grounds because the field was shared and the tennis courts were close to Miss Fraser's office. I remember Miss Fraser opening her office window one day and saying "some of us have to work you know!"

**Margaret Slater**

I really enjoyed Barry Rait's article. I was a student when Barry first came to Wellington Girls' and he created quite a stir.

I was a hockey player and I am sure I remember him coaching us in 1959 which was my last year at the college. I can't remember us all changing in front of him so, as he says, we must have accepted him as part of the furniture.

I also enjoyed his mention of "Miss Harding". These days I remember her with affection but in those days I regarded her with fear and trepidation - even when I'd done nothing wrong!

**Judith Smith (nee Allard)**

**Old Girls' Networks:** Let us know what you are doing, events? news?

Would you like to start an Old Girls' Network - let us know and we can assist you in making contact with other Old Girls' in your area. Please contact *School Ties* at: [wgc.alumnae@gmail.com](mailto:wgc.alumnae@gmail.com)

## A Love Story

A love story that lasted 69 years ended with the deaths of Dot and Bert Bailey four days apart.

Charles Bertram Bailey met **Doris Lilian Hatcher** (student 1929-1931) through a mutual friend. They married in 1940 and had three daughters: Joy, Fay and Claire.



Both had a strong work ethic with Bert working two jobs when his daughters were young. He was head-hunted by the Legislative Council—the upper house of Parliament—to work in the office of the clerk, and he worked three nights and often at the weekends in a soap factory.

Dot also skillfully juggled home life with work. At 14, she left Wellington Girls' College to work in her grandfather's coal yard — doing administration but also carrying bags of coal and chopped wood.

Four years later she went to secretarial college then worked for the National Creditman's Association till she married.

After having her daughters she worked at Four Square, then managed another grocery shop, set up a canteen and worked in the office at Mana College, then moved on to DIC.

Cricket was Dot's passion. She took up the sport in 1929 at the age of 13 while attending Wellington Girls' College.

The opening batswoman and bowler made her Wellington debut in 1934 and toured New South Wales with the New Zealand team in 1938. She was the first Wellington woman to score a century — 117 against Auckland — but gave up the game when she married. Nine years later, with encouragement from her husband, Dot made her comeback

and was selected for representative sides once again.

The couple were never spectators and were always involved in community groups and organisations and family life. Mr. Bailey was superintendent of Plimmerton Volunteer fire brigade in the 1940s and the oldest person to make written and oral submissions on the Transmission Gully route.

Both loved being near the sea and Dot was still swimming at Plimmerton Beach at 91, while Bert would hold her towel and inhaler at the water's edge.

Mrs. Bailey died on November 30 2009. Ten minutes later an ambulance was called for her husband. He was admitted to Wellington Hospital and died four days later.

The couple were farewelled on 7 December 2009, their caskets side by side, by family and friends in their home town of Plimmerton. Firefighters formed a guard of honour for the couple. Dot's 1949 New Zealand cricket blazer was placed on her casket, as was Bert's firefighter's helmet on his.

While they were never "gushy", daughter Joy Gray said: "I always felt Mum and Dad needed and loved each other and, if one went, the other would not be far behind."



## In Memoriam

Mary Alison **CLARKE** (Weir) 27/02/2009  
Student 1932-1936

Joan Elspeth **PETRIE** (Russell) 15/05/2009  
Student 1935-1937

Sylvia **HILL** (Gully) 19/06/2009  
Student 1941-1944

Shirley **BELL** (Wilson) 26/07/09  
Former Secretary WGC Old Girls, Auckland  
Student 1939-1940

Pauline Enid **STAFFORD** 15/08/2009  
Teacher

Angela Clare **KIRKBY** (Bell) 14/09/2009  
Student 1972-1975

Doris Lilian **BAILEY** (Hatcher) 30/11/9009  
Student 1929-1931

Catherine Mary **LEVENS** (Tid) 08/12/2009  
Student 1934-1936

Margaret Webster **MANDER** (Irving) 09/12/2009  
Teacher 1955-1956

Beryl Robin **LAIRD** (Hallewell) 28/02/2010  
Student 1953-1955

Flora **MACDONALD** 04/02/2010  
Student (1942 - 1944)

Gwen **KOOZNETZOFF** 11/05/2010  
Teacher (former HOD German) 1973-2001