



December 2017

Welcome to our end-of-year newsletter for 2017.....

Two of our former students enjoyed significant milestones this year. Lieutenant-commander Lorna Gray(1996-2000) was named the first female commanding officer of an Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) offshore patrol vessel. And Robert Scott (1975-1979) was inducted into the New Zealand Music Hall of Fame. We feature both in this newsletter.

Our alumni database has continued to build steadily over the year, but we would like to see it grow further over the next 12 months, as we start preparing for the Taieri College sesquicentennial (150th) in 2021. We will be asking for help to organise the reunion at Labour weekend 2021 - contact us if you would like to be involved alumni@taieri.school.nz.

Don't forget to let your friends and family know about our Alumni database so they receive our newsletter, and updates on the upcoming reunion.

In the news

Congratulations to Holly Robinson, who has been chosen for the team competing at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in the Gold Coast, Australia, the only New Zealand athlete competing in Para athletics.

Taieri College news

Whilst the wheels of bureaucracy have turned incredibly slowly, Taieri College principal David Hunter is pleased to announce that tenders for the construction of the Performing Arts Centre will finally be called for in December and accepted in January. As well as a new performing arts facility the tender will also include a thorough refurbishment of our beloved C Block, involving deconstruction and reconstruction of the two science labs, renovated classrooms, and a lift to the first floor. A new outdoor locker bay will be created, meaning lockers in the famed and often notorious C Block corridor will soon cease to exist. I am sure that several of you (like me) will have your own special memories of the C Block corridor. As well as these jobs we are also renovating our Learning Support Centre in the Murdoch Wing and upgrading the air conditioning in G Block. All in all about \$6 million worth of capital upgrade over the next 12 months.

Blues evening

Sports woman of the year: Kaylee Bezett

Sports man of the year: Hamish Mears

Team of the year: Senior A Netball

Performing Arts Ambassadors: Scott Christie and Kaitlin West

2018 Head Girl: Emma Cramond

2018 Head Boy: Hunter Dale

Senior Prizegiving
Dux: Theo Christensen
Proxime Accessit: Kymberlee Choie



Cadzow Scholarship: Jamie Horrell

This award was presented at our senior prizegiving by Brian Cadzow.

Brian is from a Mosgiel family and attended Mosgiel West Primary School and then Taieri High School from 1974 to 1978. His two older sisters, Judith and Wendy, also attended The Taieri High School and were prefects in 1973 and 1974. Brian was Head Boy and Dux in 1978.

Brian attended Otago University and completed a Commerce degree. His career in commerce took him to Auckland in 1984. After various roles in corporates Brian had his own consulting firm for 10 years. In that time he was one of the founders of Vista Group.

Vista Group is the world leader in Film industry software and listed on the NZX in 2014. Brian now sits on the Board of the public company as Director of Commercial and Legal.

Brian and his wife Julie are keen to support students into education in the ICT sector, the area which has built the Vista Group business. They support a scholarship at the school their children went to in Auckland and are delighted to support this award at Brian's old school.

Medal results from the NZ Secondary Schools Athletics nationals held recently in Hastings:

SILVER Junior shotput: Zharna Beattie

BRONZE Junior discus throw: Zharna Beattie

SILVER Junior 80m hurdles and 300m hurdles: Tara McNally

BRONZE Senior shotput: Hamish Mears

National Silent Film Festival Taieri Filmmakers Scoop Top Honours Fledging filmmaker

Benaiah Dunn, a Taieri College year 11 student, has taken out most of the top prizes at the International Youth Silent Film Festival's (IYSFF) New Zealand finals this year.

Benaiah filmed "The Chase" in and around Middlemarch. It featured fellow Year 11 students Logan Carter and Jack McAtamney, with help from Benaiah's younger brother, Thomas.

The challenge was to develop a silent film based on a genre and music offered by the festival's organisers. Judges said they were "blown away" by the Buster Keaton styled film and loved the spectacular South Island scenery as well as the stunts.

"The Chase" won three of five categories - Best Cinematography, Best Shot and Best Production Design as well as being nominated for Best Actor and Best Director. "The Chase" was named second overall, earning Benaiah \$2,250 in prize money and securing The Chase a place in the IYSFF Award Finals in Portland, Oregon next June.

View the top four [National Silent Film Festival 2017](#) films



Visit to Japan - Kyotamba Visit

In the beginning of the last school holidays, five students from our Japanese classes and two teachers set off to visit Kyotamba in Japan. This is an excerpt from their report about the trip. "We arrived on the Monday and were welcomed by our host families, teachers and local councillors. We visited three schools in the district of Kyotamba, working in the classrooms with the Japanese students. Their school day is certainly different to ours, starting at 8am and finishing at 5pm!! The following weekend saw our host families take each student and teacher around the local (and not so local) amazing sight-seeing opportunities. We visited a golden castle, temples, restaurants and a few shopping occasions, to name but a few. The following day saw us at the airport to begin the long haul home, some very tired yet internationally experienced travellers arrived home safe and sound".

ALUMNI PROFILE - Lorna Gray (TTHS 1996 - 2000)



Lieutenant-commander Lorna Gray travels the world in her role as the commanding officer of the HMNZS Otago, but the Taieri always feel like home to her (photo courtesy of ODT).

The former Taieri High School pupil is the first female commanding officer of an Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) protector class offshore patrol vessel. While there have been other female commanding officers of warships, she is the first to lead an offshore vessel, something that has attracted considerable media interest since her appointment in June 2017.

The vessel is spending some of the summer patrolling the Southern Ocean, and LT CDR Gray is looking forward to her first visit to Antarctica. She has described being commanding officer of the ship and its 70 crew as an "absolute privilege."

LT CDR Gray joined the navy in 2005 at the age of 22 -- the idea first coming from visiting a navy recruitment stand at the Warbirds over Wanaka airshow. "It seemed like a great way to see the world."

She has served on several navy vessels before joining the Otago, completing numerous deployments in the Pacific and South East Asia regions, including a tour of duty as a UN military observe in Syria and Lebanon.

Lorna grew up on the Taieri, her family living in Dukes Road. She attended Wylies Crossing Primary School, then Taieri High School from 1996 to 2000. She then completed an honours degree in political science and English at the University of Otago.

At Taieri High, she was involved in everything. "I liked to try something new every year, so gave it all a go, including volleyball, tramping and badminton, as well as musicals, theatre sports, choir and school orchestra playing flute and violin."

She particularly enjoyed white-water kayaking, playing netball, and tramps lead by Mrs Phillips in her 7th form year.

Looking back now, she also enjoyed the freedom of growing up on the Taieri. "We were lucky to have the opportunities that children in bigger cities don't have, like spending the day biking or building huts in the macrocarpa hedge -- it's a freedom I didn't appreciate then, but have since spent time in places where young people are not able to enjoy that independence."

Although her family have since shifted to Auckland she still considers the Taieri Plain as home, and loves looking out for the Maungatuas as she comes into town.

ALUMNI PROFILE - Robert Scott (TTHS 1975 - 1979)



Taieri High School alumni Robert Scott has been inducted into the New Zealand Music Hall of Fame.

Robert, a prolific songwriter, guitarist and singer, was inducted at the Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA) Silver Scroll Awards held in Dunedin in 2017. The APRA dedicates the accolade to one noteworthy New Zealand musician or group each year.

Described as Indie rock royalty, Robert has been playing in bands since 1979; he is best known as the bass player for The Clean, and plays guitar and vocals for The Bats still. He has also been part of The Weeds, The Magick Heads, Electric Blood, Gina Rocco & the Rockettes, and Greg Franco & The Wandering Bear.

He has released several solo albums across several genres. His first solo album, *The Creeping Unknown*, came out in 2000 on Flying Nun Records and his most recent the pop-rock album, *Green House* was released in 2014.

He also drawn or painted the cover art for many Flying Nun album sleeves.

As well as following his passion for music and art, Robert is a teacher aide at Port Chalmers School, and has even made an album with children from the school.

Robert grew up in a musical household in East Taieri, his parent's love of English and Scottish folk music and church music his first influences.

He attended Taieri from 1975 to 1979, where his mum Pat Scott taught science. "I had a good time at school, made lots of friends, and had a good grounding."

He enjoyed any involvement in music, and learnt the music basics through trumpet and piano lessons, as well as being in the school choir. He also loved art, and painted the backdrops for all the school musicals of the time.

He spent a lot of time listening to records such as Neil Young, learning to play by picking each song apart. That set the scene to form a band "Electric Bride" at school, with brother Andy, Graham McKerracher and Patrick and Andrew Tomkins, writing songs and even recording their first album.

After high school, Robert attended the Otago Polytechnic Art School, fully immersing himself in the art and music scene.

He recalls the 1970's were an exciting time to be learning music and a great time to start out. "Anyone could do anything. The Dunedin Sound was an attitude as much as a style of music -- you didn't have to be polished first, anyone who could write songs or perform just got up and made music and had a good time. It was a great experience."

He has produced a lot of original music since then, and his music style has been validated by successful world tours.

There have been many rewards in his career, particularly during his overseas stints, and also several memorable moments in time -- Robert was in Berlin in November 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down, and in New York in the 9-11 terrorist attack.

"I write and perform music first and foremost for myself, but I feel lucky that it has also enabled me to have some great experiences over that time -- it's been an amazing journey."

TTHS CATCHUP: 1956-1967 friends



John Cuttance, Stu Neal, John McIntyre, Judie Bowie, Charles Forsythe

A 'yarn and lunch' for pupils of The Taieri High School from 1956 to 1967 was held at the Leviathan Hotel on 6th September.

It was attended by: Allan Morven, Bill Price, Carolyn Wigg, Chaz Forsythe, Faye Dodd, George Davis, Helen Lawrence, Isobel Roberts (McKinlay), John Cuttance, John McIntyre, John Young, Joy Flett (Walker), Jude Bowie, Lauchie McLauchlan, Lorraine Anderson (McDonald), Marie Smith (McRobie), Neville Struthers, Noeline King (Dee), Pater Miller, Rhuna Davis (Chesney), Robert Findlay, Stu Neil, Trish Fleming and Zelda Matheson.

Pre-lunch we enjoyed hearing about each of our journeys since school days. After lunch speaker included George Davis and Charles Forsythe. O Guide me O thou great redeemer/Jehova - this version was played as a "grace" before lunch and everyone burst forth singing without prompt the first verse. Obviously from being exposed to it so much at school assemblies.

(Report from Robert Findlay)

TTHS REUNION at Labour weekend: 1967 alumni



A meal at Hotel Taieri on Saturday evening and a get together at school on Sunday was enjoyed by a group of TTHS ex-pupils from 1967.

Blast from the Past
4th form Punch girls' at TTHS Formal 1974



Back row: Lindsay Fenton, Sharon Courtney, Barbara Burt, Robyn Jenkins, Sandra McIntosh
Front row: Diane Hunter, Debra Wylie, Sandra Hammer

We hope you enjoyed this edition of our newsletter - if you have any stories of interest or are planning any reunions email us. And please let us know if your details change, so we can update the database. Email alumni@taieri.school.nz

Visit our website to read previous [Taieri College Alumni](#) newsletters.

