

August 2019

Welcome ...

In this issue, we feature Dean O'Brien, otherwise known as Mr Yipadee. We also pay tribute to three long-serving retiring teachers - Graeme Watson, Sally Shanks and Shona Carruthers. We highlight the new Taieri College Performing Arts Centre, while former pupil John Noble reminisces about outside assemblies. And we had our Alumni Association annual meeting.

Taieri College alumni now has 643 members registered, the largest year group being 30 members from 1960. As always, please pass on our contact details to fellow classmates - we would like to pass the 1000 mark this year.

The Taieri College Alumni Association had its annual meeting on April 24. John Cuttance has been re-elected Chair and Sue Brinsdon re-elected Secretary. Committee members are: Claire Grant, Sandra McLeod, Robert Findlay, Aroha Wylie, and Judy Southworth.

Email alumni@taieri.school.nz if you would like a copy of the Chair's report, accounts or minutes.

The Taieri College reunion is in 2021 - Taieri College will be forming a committee to help organise this. Please get in touch if you would like to help.

TAIERI COLLEGE NEWS

Taieri College has had a large number of new students enrolling in 2019 across all year levels; the role being 1142 students at the beginning of the year.



The new Performing Arts Centre (PAC) has finally been completed and is being put to good use. It is a comfortable assembly venue and will be used extensively as a theatre for music and drama. It contains the very latest in sound and lighting technology and is a wonderful resource for the College.

In addition to school activities, the PAC has been used for Rockquest heats and regional finals, Equippers Church meetings and the Manu Korero Otago Southland regional speech finals.

The Centre is also hosting the College's musical, being held over three nights, beginning Thursday 8 August. The production is a spoof on "High School Musical". Tickets can be purchased from the school office.



Renovations to C Block have also been completed and students are enjoying learning in the newly renovated science labs and classrooms.

The College has a new Librarian, Lauryn Urquart-Eaton (TTHS alumni 1992-96)



Lauryn was appointed to the position at the end of term 1. Previously, she worked at Mosgiel Public Library for 13 years where she oversaw development and delivery of the children's programmes. Lauryn has two children at Taieri College and is a former student so is a familiar face to many. "I'm thrilled to be back at Taieri and working with young people. My aim is to share my passion for reading and ensure the library is meeting the needs of students and staff." Authors Mandy Hager and Suzanne Main visited the College in term 2 through the Storyline's Festival, with more visits from published authors planned later in the year. A grant from the Arthur Burns Memorial Trust has meant work on Library's outdoor courtyard is due to start soon and will include the addition of a shade cloth, outdoor furniture, landscaping and painting.

Taieri College's Year 10 junior netball team recently won the South Island Championships in Christchurch, winning by nine points over Christchurch Girls' in the final. The Year 9 team competed well in the Championships, ending up 8th in their competition.

ALUMNI PROFILE: Dean O'Brien



Dean O'Brien, otherwise known as Mr Yipadee, is well known singer, author and children's entertainer in New Zealand and in the UK.

He has published five children's books, produced numerous CD's, and performed on the Kidz Field stage at Glastonbury -- the festival of contemporary performing arts in England.

Dean is also Mosgiel-born, and has memories of drama and music at Taieri High School, having attended from 1992 to 1996. His parents still live in Mosgiel.

He loved high school and has loads of good memories -- he played in bands, one coming second in Rock Quest, recalling that at the time it felt like the biggest thing in the world. One of his highlights was being in the school show -- and he says he loved being the scarecrow in the Wizard of Oz. As well as music and drama he also enjoyed engineering, and he learnt to touch typing -- a skill he is very grateful to have picked up. The Form Teacher he remembers the most is Miss Simpson. He worked in More FM radio after leaving school, initially in Dunedin, then in Wellington and the Waikato. He taught English through music in Japan for a year, before going on to host breakfast shows in Manchester, Liverpool and Lancashire, eventually becoming a programme director in radio.

But music was what really interested him, so when he was made redundant, he took a leap of faith and became a children's entertainer - Mr Yipadee was born. He put together a children's album and performed at Glastonbury in 2013.

Mr Yipadee has now released four albums:

- The Animal Choir
- The Yes I Can Club
- Positively Nursery Rhymes
- World's Greatest Christmas Party.

In 2015, he organised a dozen television celebrities and children to create an album called "Sing Along For Syria". He has also written several top selling children's books:

- Jingle Bells, Rudolph Smells
- Nee Naw The Little Fire Engine
- Nee Naw and the Cowtastrophe
- Stink-o-saurus
- Monster Slime

Dean is now a full time entertainer, he and his wife and two children dividing their time between the UK, Australia and New Zealand. He has also worked with children's entertainer Craig Smith aka the Wonky Donkey man in both New Zealand and the UK.

The aim of Mr Yipadee is to inspire kids to laugh and to believe in themselves. " Every single child on the planet deserves to experience laughter on a daily basis and to grow knowing that they are special, unique, and they can follow their heart. It's our belief that happy kids that believe in themselves and grow to trust their instincts can absolutely change the world."

"For me being a children's entertainer is the best job in the world -- its magical to be able to use my skills and make people laugh and see them having fun."

He is hoping to eventually extend his Mr Yipadee entertainment into television and the digital platform.

<https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/kids-entertainer-mr-yipadee-has-best-job-in-world-but-probably-some-peoples-nightmare>

Dean's 3rd form class in 1992



Form Teacher: Ms G KITCHINGMAN, Room C1, Form Class **3KM**

IN THE NEWS...

Bryan Williams



Molecular biologist Bryan Williams paid for his University of Otago studies by working in a shearing gang. Now he and his doctoral students are working on a drug that targets late stage bowel and bladder cancer but does not harm normal cells.

"The drug is promising so we are trying to find a company that might be interested in taking the work further," Professor Williams said. "It is just in the early stages and drug development takes a long time."

It is a different world from crutching and working a wool press for three months a year. Prof Williams was born in Mosgiel and went to The Taieri High School (now Taieri College). His parents had a lifestyle block and his father Ray taught him to shear. "I was never good enough to be a shearer but did do a bit of crutching and worked in the yards and on the wool press."

He also spent time working on his first wife Vivian's father's farm in Waitahuna. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science (with honours) in Microbiology in 1973, he received his PhD in 1976.

He moved to London to work at the National Institute for Medical Research. Later he went to Toronto in 1980 to work at the Hospital for Sick Children and the University of Toronto, and then to the Lerner Research Institute at the Cleveland Clinic, Ohio, until 2005.

Prof Williams was appointed director of Monash Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne in 2006, and when it merged with the Prince Henry Institute in 2014, he became chief executive and director of the new Hudson Institute of Medical Research. Prof Williams has been involved in various cancer-related research projects, received several awards, honours and fellowships, and is a director on the Dunedin company Pacific Edge Ltd, which provides bladder cancer diagnostic tools.

Now nearly 70, he intends to retire in a few months, and he and wife Lynda Power are thinking of returning permanently to New Zealand where they have a holiday home in Clyde, the McFelin

Ridge vineyard in Lowburn, and where the fishing is good. However, before that happens, he has been asked to be a consultant at a research facility in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, as well as the Cleveland Clinic, Ohio.

Prof Williams said he had not given up the rural lifestyle entirely as they had a 45ha property near Melbourne where they raised and fattened cattle. "It is a hobby farm with some sheep to keep the grass down and it pays the rates." They sell the fruit from their vineyard to Mt Difficulty, which uses it in its Roaring Meg pinot noir. Mt Difficulty also produces the McFelin Ridge chardonnay.

"I don't have enough time to be hands on [at the vineyard] but I do a bit of native planting and bush cutting," he said. They have three children between them, including Mark Williams who has a visual effects business and has done work for Star Wars. Roscoe Power runs two businesses in Melbourne, and Sarah Power is a pharmacy technician there as well.

Story published by Rural Life on line 8 July 2019 Yvonne O'Hara

RETIRING STAFF:

Graeme Watson



Graeme started teaching Technical Subjects at The Taieri High School in 1987. From 1990-1997 he was a Year 9 Dean (formerly known as Form 3).

In 1994-2002 he branched out into teaching Computing to Form 3 students. He was also a member of the Technology Committee which provided technological challenges for the junior students in Term 4.

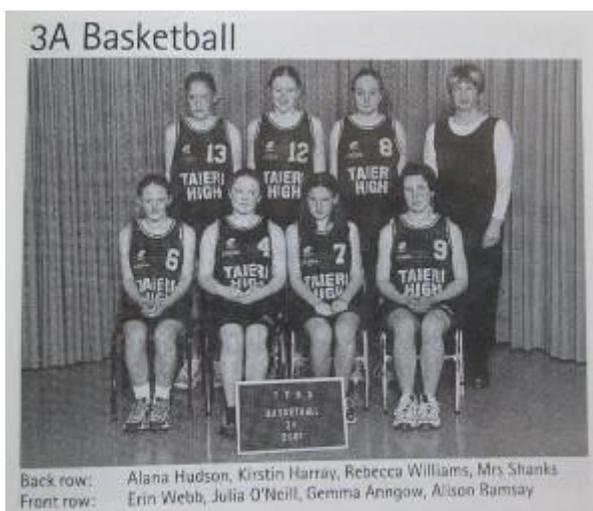
The Taieri College Trades Academy commenced in 2001 with Graeme as the Academy Director. The purpose of the Trades Academy was to offer students the opportunity to gain a wide variety of skills and gain national qualifications. There were 22 inaugural members. Graeme was passionate about the Academy and set about making connections with the community so that the students were able to get practical experience in the workplace. There were also visits from members of organisations who shared their experience and information with the students.

Several years later Graeme was HOD Technical as well as Director of the Trades Academy. The curriculum in the Trades Academy eventually expanded and led, in 2010, to the extension of the scope of subjects offered to include Plumbing, Gasfitting and Drainlaying Unit Standards, and a Welding Unit Standard. In 2014 The College gained Competenz Accreditation for delivery of BMETS unit standards in the field of engineering.

Graeme was recognised nationally and spent some time working with an ITO to develop units of work suitable for secondary schools. Graeme also introduced the students to the Pocket Bike Challenge and opened the workshop one night a week so that the students, and some of their parents, spent hours constructing their pocket bikes. This became a communal activity, often with a shared meal. These bikes were then tested around the College and out on Kaye Field and the students took great pride in their work. The Trades Academy is a wonderful example and legacy of Graeme's commitment to providing career pathways for students.

One of the most important tasks Graeme undertook was acting as the starter for the Athletic Sports, a hard job to fill!

Sally Shanks



Sally's first association with The Taieri High School was as a Third Form (Year 9) student in 1968. As a student at the school she went on to play many sports, and in her final year was captain of the girls "A" basketball team and played in the "A" netball team. Her last year at school, when she was a prefect, also included being on the Magazine committee, a student group responsible for the production of the school magazine. She was a house captain when the whole school was divided into 4 houses, and a great role model to many students.

Sally trained as a primary school teacher and became involved with the school when she married Brian Shanks, a Science teacher at The Taieri High School. In 1982, following an overseas trip, Sally first became a teacher at The Taieri High School as a Phys Ed teacher. After starting a family, Sally was a regular relieving teacher in the school. Due to her reliability, commitment to the students, ability in a wide range of subjects and understanding of the workings of The Taieri High School, she was one of the first people called upon to fill in when teachers were absent.

In 1991, Sally became a part-time Mathematics teacher and this soon turned into a full-time permanent position. Her children all attended the school. As well as working and raising children, Sally managed once again to become involved in a wide cross-section of The Taieri High School's life. Her many commitments to the school included coaching basketball teams, costuming for school musicals, attending camps at Tautuku, performing in the Wearable Arts performance, and co-producing the photo book. At that time photos had to be cut out by hand and glued next to the correctly typed name. Ski trips were also a big commitment, with food to be organised for the week long holiday activity each year. Sally and Brian also very ably lead the dancing at the school formals for many years.

Sally had leave in 2000 to complete her B.Ed degree which included papers in Calculus and Statistics. This gave her the most up to date understanding of the needs of students as they moved on to tertiary study. When 'Mathematics with Statistics' was renamed "Statistics and Modelling" for a few years, Sally joked that Gwenda did the Statistics and she did the modelling. Sally's grasp of statistics in a subject that has changed significantly over the last ten years has been extremely helpful to the students and her colleagues in the school.

On her return, she took on the role of Year 11 Dean. She was also the teacher in charge of girls' basketball, involving many hours of organisation with many teams. As the collage shows, Sally has certainly featured in a number of magazine photos throughout her years at school.

From 2006 to 2016 Sally was the Year 13 Dean. As mentor, she played a major guiding role in the lives of young adults as they faced one of their biggest challenges of moving out into the adult world. In the end of year valediction given by head prefects, it is clear just how much students have appreciated the guidance that she has given them. Some students may take some

years to realise just how sound her advice was, but most could see at the time that Sally always had their best interest at heart.

As changes have arisen within the curriculum, Sally has been proactive and very helpful in helping Maths teachers adapt to those changes. Modules were introduced within the school for a short time which meant timetabling changes, units of work needing rewritten, and report writing every six weeks. Unit Standards were trialled in the school in 1995 before NCEA was introduced. This involved countless hours of work with a very poorly designed professional development programme, and the requirement that all assessments be original and written in the school. In 2003, Sally was acting HOD Mathematics when a very demanding NCEA Level 2 was introduced. When B block was upgraded, all the resources were kept in a container and the Maths office became a small room in A block! Throughout all of these challenges, Sally's down to earth approach, understanding of student and staff needs, realistic understanding of demands, and delightful sense of humour, contributed greatly to us getting through these changes with the minimum of disruption to student learning.

Shona Carruthers



Shona joined the staff as HOD Social Sciences at the commencement of Taieri College in 2004. She quickly established herself into the Taieri College way and began the process of developing the curriculum for the Social Sciences Department.

In 2007, the Social Sciences Department moved into G Block which has proved hugely successful. During her time at Taieri College, Shona has been instrumental in ensuring that the Geography students have been involved in practical work and explored the local environment. The Year 11 students become familiar with their "home" -- the Taieri Plain. The Year 12 students combine with Biology and have a three day trip to Aoraki Mt Cook and the Year 13 Geographers explore the Taieri River Catchment.

In 2005, Anna Harvey, (a student on the trip), acknowledged Shona for "the thought and preparation she had put into the trip, making it a worthwhile and memorable experience". The value of this trip has continued, with it being mentioned in the Head Prefect Valediction speeches in 2008 and again in 2012, along with it receiving a consistent mention at the Year 13 Leavers Ceremony.

In 2009, Shona initiated a student group called the Eco-Warriors and their mission was to introduce the plastic recycling bins we have to this day. That year, students also were involved in an Eco bag competition, held a mufti day and ran a Fair Trade Stall. In 2010 the Enviro Schools programme commenced. There was also planting of natives along the Silverstream. In 2014 the Eco Warriors were involved in the creation of a garden in the D Block area. The Eco Warriors continue as an integral part of Taieri College today.

In 2012, Shona was the organiser of the World Challenge Expedition to Botswana and Namibia and took a group of students, along with Paul Bolton. This was an amazing opportunity and set the precedent for further trips to take place.

Also in 2012, Shona commenced taking a Year 13 form class, a tradition that has continued. She has been a legend in ensuring that her form class met all their commitments.

Shona has also been involved in taking students to participate in MUNA, (the Model United Nations simulation), and organising the activities for the 40-hour famine. In 2016 and 2017 Shona was among a group of teachers who volunteered to be a member of the "sponge throwing at the staff" competition to assist the World Vision 40 Hour Famine Appeal. In 2016 there was a

World Vision 40 Hour Famine Back Pack Challenge at Shona's home where the students created their own refugee camp simulation.

Shona has participated in numerous Tautuku trips and current events quizzes. In 2015, she gained a mention in the Head Prefect Valedictory speech for having the World Record for discussion around meandering!

TTHS ALUMNI OF THE T. G. Hislop Era 1956-1966

A group of ex-pupils from the era when Mr Thomas G. Hislop, the original Principal at The Taieri High School, was Principal have decided to produce a book. "TTHS -The T. G. Hislop Era - 1956-67"

(To minimise cost it will be published electronically. ie available on a memory stick).

The book will feature ; Thomas G. Hislop, Principal. The story of the man and the development of TTTHS during his time.

1. The Pupils.
2. The Teachers.
3. School activities during THE era.
4. Memories and Stories.
5. Notable Alumni. (We hope to be able to feature stories of a number of notable Alumni who have had achieved interesting or special recognition after their years at TTTHS. There is no fixed criteria and ex-pupils can either submit their own stories or nominate others who they feel should be featured to John Cuttance.

The book will have a full index of pupils who attended TTTHS during the era, together with, where available or provided, a note relating to each pupil.

You are invited to provide the following to Trish Fleming.

- A. School name and maiden name if appropriate.
- B. The years you attended TTTHS.
- C. The class/course you followed at TTTHS, the qualifications you achieved and a brief description of your life after school including notable achievements and places of residence etc.
- D. A current email address if you wish this to be included.

(Eg. Sandra Brown (nee Campbell), Commercial Studies, SC 1963, Registered Nurse Dunedin Hospital, Senior Nurse Christchurch Hospital 30 years, Canterbury Netball Representative 1968-72. Dunedin, London, Christchurch.)

We are also seeking stories of memories of your days at TTTHS, both good and bad, during the period Mr Hislop was the Principal with possible mention of teachers, fellow students, sports or activities involvements, friendships, romances or anything else you wish to tell about. Limit of approximately 1000 words. We reserve the right to select submissions and edit original scripts.

Your help in providing this information will assist us in producing, what we hope will be a lively and interesting record of a special time in the lives of the hundreds of pupils (est.c 2,700) who attended TTTHS over the years during of the Hislop era. To John Cuttance

Contact emails are:

John Cuttance cuttancej@gmail.com
Trish Fleming trishfleming@hotmail.com
Zelda Matheson dornoch@xtra.co.nz
Robert "Bob" Findlay Convenor findlayrm@xtra.co.nz

If you would like to assist with this project you will be most welcome. Feel free to contact any of the above people. We especially seek assistance with descriptions of the school activities. For example Neville Peat is covering the School cadets. Alan Shaw the AFS scheme. A list of the

activities is available if you wish to see which you could assist with... Drama, Choir, Flying classrooms.

Photographs of the Era 1956-67. A picture can convey a thousand words and it is intended that photographs will be a major feature of the book. If you are able to supply photographs from your private collections which help to tell the story of the T.G. Hislop era we would love to have copies with permission to be included in the book with a note of the story or event they convey. To Robert "Bob" Findlay.

BLAST FROM THE PAST:

1959 cricket team



Mr O'Connell, Stewart Perriam, Bernard Klitcher, Doug Sheppard, Bruce Thompson
Alister Munro, Lyndon Berry, Ray Hunt, Ken McArthur, Barry Milburn

1975 Volleyball team



Who are these students? Let us know...

Bomber Command Memorial Service



Ex TTHS students (1960's) Alison Hebbard, Bruce Hebbard and Keith Stilling who attended the Bomber Command Memorial Service at the memorial in London's Green Park recently. Bruce attended in his capacity as President of the NZ Bomber Command Association.

If you have any stories of interest to share or are planning any reunions please let us know at alumni@taieri.school.nz

Click [here](#) if you wish to read previous Taieri College newsletters

