

MAY 2016

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2016 for the Taieri College Alumni.

In this issue, we feature the first-ever Taieri High School girl's rugby team, as remembered by Stewart Robertson, and profiles on deputy principal Mike Newell, and Raylene Bates who's off to the Rio Paralympics later in the year. We also have a selection of photos from athletics, rugby, and a visit from Sir Edmund Hillary.

At present, 381 people have joined the Alumni - we've come up with an ambitious goal of bringing that up to 1000 over the coming year, and we need your help.

Please let old school mates know about our page on the Taieri College website www.taieri.school.nz and encourage them to register online. Alternatively, if you would like some registration forms to hand around to friends please contact Sue Brinsdon by emailing alumni@taieri.school.nz

To get the ball rolling we'd like to issue a challenge for ex-students to join up. We'd be interested to hear about how many continuous generations of MDHS/Taieri High School/Taieri College pupils there are that we can sign up - email us and let us know.

We would also like to make all alumni members names, class year and email address available to circulate amongst other alumni. If you do not want your name on this list please let us know by emailing us or phoning Sue Brinsdon on 4893823 extn 129.

We are also starting a Message Board in the newsletter so if you are organising an event you can let the rest of us know what you are planning.

Hislop Hall update

As you may know Hislop Hall was badly damaged by a fire in November last year, just days before the school administration was due to shift its temporary offices out of the hall, and into the brand-new Administration Block. The hall will be demolished in July during the school holiday break. The School and the Ministry of Education are discussing plans for the hall's replacement, with various options currently being considered. We'll keep you posted on developments, but prize giving at the end of the year will again be held off the school campus.

AGM

Our AGM was held on 13 April at Taieri College. A BIG thanks to Kirsty Fiddes, who has successfully led the Taieri College alumni committee as Chair since 2013, and has now stepped down. Kirsty's guidance has been invaluable and we

thank her for the many hours spent getting our alumni launched, developing the database and creating newsletters.

Thanks also to retiring inaugural committee members Kerri Kennedy, Jocelyn Boyes, Jan Clark, Caron Hodge and Janet Andrews who along with Kirsty helped get the alumni established. Also thanks to Suzie Ballantyne, who subsequently joined the committee and has now stepped down.

John Cuttance was elected chair at the AGM. John attended MDHS from 1959 to 1963. Committee members are Sue Brinsdon, Claire Grant and Sandra McLeod. Please get in touch if you'd like to help out, or have any suggestions - email alumni@taieri.school.nz

from your Taieri College Alumni Committee

INTRODUCING JOHN CUTTANCE

(MDHS ALUMNI 1959 - 1963)



I started at The Taieri High School in 1959. I was one of only two of the new entrance students who had come from St Mary's primary school. Because I lived at Otokia on the Taieri and had travelled on the school bus from the age of 5 it was logical that I should go to TTHS rather than a Catholic School in Dunedin. In total I travelled on the school bus every school day for 13 years, which I am sure is an all-time record.

1959 was at the beginning of the baby boomer generation. The roll was about 400, nearly half of whom were new students in the 3rd form. By the time I left from the Upper 6th and as Head Prefect at the end of 1963 the roll was over 650, so my time at TTHS was a time of rapid expansion marked by the regular arrival of pre-fab class rooms and new immigrant teachers from the United Kingdom.

After TTHS I studied at Otago University and completed Bachelor Degrees in Law and Economics. In 1970 I moved to Wellington working with the Department of Trade and Industry. I had become involved in the public service trade union,

the PSA, and for two years, while still a part time University student, I was the Otago Section PSA Chairman and a member of the National Advisory Council.

After moving to Wellington I left the public service and worked for a short time at Data Bank before I joined a law firm as a Solicitor. Acting as a general solicitor in private practice was my life for the next 25 years. I maintained an interest in workers' rights and labour laws and continued to do work for the PSA and appeared for many public servants in front of the Public Service Appeal Authority.

I was involved with the Labour Party for a number of years and in 1978 I was Campaign Manager for the successful MP for the Western Hutt parliamentary seat. I also held at various times Board appointments including the Wellington Area Health Board, The Wellington Airport Company and the United Building Society.

With the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act 1991 the time was right for a career change. After leaving general legal practice I established my own Employment Law practice and took up a part time tutor's position at the Whitirea Polytechnic in Porirua where for a period of 10 years I taught a variety of subjects including Business Law, Employment Law and Economics.

In 2006 I took another change in career. While cycling the Otago Central Rail Trail I discovered a hotel for sale at the old Railway Town of Waipiata. Although it was my intention that the hotel was to be an investment I soon discovered that my presence at the hotel to keep control of the patrons and the finances was absolutely necessary, so I became mine host.

After selling the hotel in 2009, and a well-deserved holiday in England, I returned to Dunedin and semi-retirement. Today I still practice employment law as well as enjoying such energetic pursuits as Petanque (at the Taieri Petanque Club), Curling and touring in my motor-home.

In 2013 along with Robert Findlay, now the Northern Region Alumni Organiser, and a small group of fellow ex-pupils we organised a Reunion of the TTHS 1960's ex-pupils to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the death of John Preston, a fellow 1st XV member who died as a result of an injury received while playing for TTHS. The Reunion was most successful and brought together a lot of old friends for the first time in 50 years. The Reunion rekindled my interest in the school and the need for a functioning Alumni. Many of the friends I met at TTHS remain good and close friends although we are spread far and wide throughout New Zealand and overseas.

In my newly elected role as Chairman of the Alumni I hope that I can help grow the membership so that the ex-pupils of Mosgiel District High School, The Taieri High School and Taieri College can keep connected and in touch with the school and their former school friends and colleagues.

FAREWELL TO DEPUTY PRINCIPAL MIKE NEWELL

(TTHS ALUMNI 1990 - 1994)



Congratulations to Deputy Principal Mike Newell, who has been appointed to the position of Principal at Northern Southland College. He leaves Taieri College at the end of term two. As a teacher and former pupil, we asked him to share some of his memories of Taieri.

I attended TTHS from 1990-1994. I remember the first day in the hall being told by Mr Craigie that we were a special group because no longer could we be punished via corporal punishment!

Some of my fond recollections are very similar to what you hear at the Y13 Leavers Ceremonies - the trips, Tautuku camp and getting to go back as a leader. Sport was everything to me at school and I played as many sports as I could. As a senior student, I got involved in as many leadership opportunities as I could - student's council, peer support leader, captain of 1st XV. I was also deputy head boy.

If I'm honest getting into teaching initially wasn't about shaping minds and all that stuff; as a 16-year-old I wanted to be a professional sportsman, and thought if that didn't happen, being a PE teacher was a good way to get paid for playing sport all day!

I attended University of Otago and Dunedin Teachers College from 1995-1999. In 2000 I was back at Taieri as a 22-year-old after being employed as a PE Teacher. I remember it being a bit weird being in the staff room with 38 of my old teachers.

When I reflect 17 years later, it is the opportunities outside the classroom that I have been involved in that are pretty cool - rafting, tramping, surfing, cross country skiing, scuba diving, sports interchanges, rugby trip to Aussie, U15 rugby tournaments in Nelson, Christchurch, Temuka, Alexandra, and Invercargill. I've been trying to get on the Y13 Tourism trip to Auckland and Y12 Mount Cook trip for the past few years but still haven't made the cut.

I've been lucky in my job to have been given plenty of opportunities to grow and have received sound advice and mentoring.

While it is not an easy decision to leave, I know that it is the right one. Northern Southland College in Lumsden is a small college of around 170 students where the majority of students come from farms. I'm looking forward to the challenge of being a Principal and also getting to know a new community and being involved in school life.



TTHS 1ST XV - 1992 Winners of Otago rugby Football Union Under 18 Competition

Back row: M Robson, T McFadgen, C Brown, C Scott, Q Strange

Middle row: P Shanks (coach), K Taylor, J St Claire-Newman, K Moore, **M Newell**, R Turoa, S Brown, G Jones (Coach)

Front row: R Jones, S Boyer, H Kirk, A Hogarth (Captain), C Murdoch (Vice Captain), R Van Toor, D Bain.

RAYLENE BATES (TTHS ALUMNI 1978 - 1982)



TTHS alumni Raylene Bates is preparing to attend the Rio paralympics in August 2016.

Raylene works for Athletics NZ as the Para-Athlete High Performance Manager/Head Coach. A well-respected athletics coach and sports administrator, she has already been to the Beijing and London Olympics and Paralympics, and the Commonwealth Games in India and in Melbourne Australia in 2006 (her first).

She was manager of the New Zealand track and field team at the 2012 London Olympics and head coach of the team at the Paralympics, a memorable event because of the way the UK got behind the campaign, her team competing in front of a massive crowd of 81,000 in the athletics stadium.

She has coached several para athletes to medal podiums at world championships and Commonwealth Games, including Rory McSweeney, Jessica Hamill, and local champion Holly Robinson, who shifted to Taieri College from Hokitika in 2011 to coach under Raylene, and is currently number one in the world in javelin.

Raylene's proud of the team of eight she managed at the 2015 world para champs in Doha, who not only brought home four world medals, but also broke 13 New Zealand records. More importantly, they also achieved 100% personal bests.

She is currently coaching a 13-strong athlete squad (able bodied and para) based in Dunedin with different abilities and event specialities, and overseeing a Para squad of 10 athletes scattered throughout New Zealand and Australia, to prepare for the Rio Paralympics. The team is strong, and Raylene is quietly confident of success.

The squad train as a team regularly so there is a lot of travel, but they also have individual day-to-day training programmes to follow, supported by video technical sessions and one-to-one instruction. The preparation is both mental and physical, and the team becomes a close family.

The self-confessed mother to many says her athletes have as much impact on her as she does on them. "It's an amazing experience to be part of an Olympics/Paralympics but it's also very special to see the athletes achieve life goals as well as sporting ones; it's a fantastic job."

A New Zealand champion herself, Raylene was the first New Zealand woman to win three senior throwing medals in one championship event. She also took out senior titles in the shotput, discus and hammer throw in 1995 Oceania Athletic Championships.

She has coached ever since, and is passionate about the sport. She has taken part in New Zealand's Coach Accelerator programme alongside the country's sporting elite, and serves on the International Paralympic Coaching Advisory Committee.

She also enjoys giving back to Taieri College sport; she helped set up the school's sports council, and managed and coached the athletics team for 20 years. She continues helping out, although sons Michael and Todd have now left, saying the strongly supportive community environment is what makes Taieri special.

Raylene enjoyed her time at The Taieri High School from 1978 to 1982, her best memories being playing basketball, and competing in athletics and attending the

nationals on a school trip. "We had a great athletics team at the time under the direction of Maths teacher Dennis Johnson; we were lucky to have great teachers who were really supportive of TTHS sport and took genuine interest in how everyone did. There was lots of discipline but it also fun, and we learnt a lot."

CONGRATULATIONS TO HOLLY ROBINSON (TAIERI COLLEGE ALUMNI 2011 - 2012)



Taieri College alumni Holly Robinson is one of six Para-Athletes selected by Paralympics New Zealand (PNZ) to represent New Zealand in Para-Athletics at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games this September. Holly, a javelin thrower, is currently ranked number one in the world in a highly competitive Women's Javelin F46 field. She also attended the London 2012 Paralympian.

I REMEMBER WHEN

by Stewart Robertson (TTHS Alumni 1969 - 1973)

A male bastion was shattered in 1973 when the first girls' rugby team at The Taieri High School kicked off. This ground breaker may not have been the first women's game in New Zealand (that was in 1888), but it certainly was rare -- the Black Ferns didn't play until 1992.

In 1921 Christchurch doctor William Simpson stated, "Football for girls would prove deleterious from both the physical and temperamental standpoint." In 1973 wives of officials and players were still confined to a 'ladies only' room, a corridor away from the men's bar at major rugby stadiums.

But The Taieri was a place where students took great delight in breaking the mould, and the team received the blessing of the principal at the time - Mr Ian Murdoch. However, what he did not approve of was the playing of an actual game -- against boys!

The historic game was played against the under-14 boys' team on the hallowed male domain of Kayefield. After some nervous giggles in the first few minutes the game "settled down" and became a brutal encounter of crash tackles and vicious rucking dominated by the girls.

The girls' team featured several future sporting stars, including Otago softballers Lesley Morrison and Kaye Robertson, international cricketers Jan Hall and Gail Tipa, and New Zealand sprint champion Neola Jopson, who played at centre and scored a brace of tries on the day.

I can't remember the score -- the boys won, but by less than 15 points. "Batman" Murdoch was not happy and he barred the team from playing again.



TTHS Girls' Rugby Team 1973

Back row left to right: Neola Jopson, Gail Tipa, Susan Howell, Cheryl Rae.

Middle row: Lesley Morrison, Barbara Turnbull, Sandra Skinner, Wendy Luskie, Eleanor Joll, Stewart Robertson (coach).

Front row: Karen Phillips, Karen Muirhead, Kaye Robertson (captain), Pauline Sidon, Marie Knott.

Absent: Jan Hall, Wenda Muir, Debra Reid.

2016 GIRLS' RUGBY

The college has one girls rugby team who play in the Otago Secondary Schools competition. This team is coached by an ex-pupil, Julia Gorinski (alumni 2007-2011). Julia played rugby while she was at college and was coached by Gemma Tuhega, who is a PE teacher and our Kaitiaki (pastoral & mentor person for Maori/Pasfika students). Julia and Gemma now play rugby together in the Otago Spirit team. Gemma will be playing her 50th game for the Otago team on 17 September at Forsyth Barr Stadium and this will be televised on Sky Sport.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Two excerpts from the 1937 MDHS autograph book belonging to Molly Ford...

"Yield not to flirtation
for flirting is sin
each brother to help you
his sister to win
Flirt manfully onwards
dark corners subdue
Don't flirt with high school boys
and they won't flirt with YOU"
*from LV OLIVER Form 3 7th April
1937*

"If your lips would keep from slips

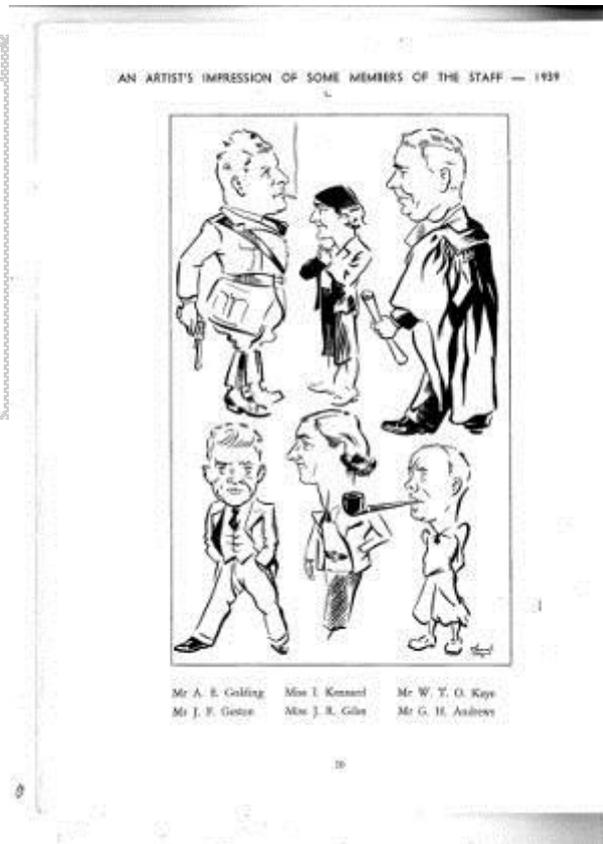
To whom you speak

of whom you speak

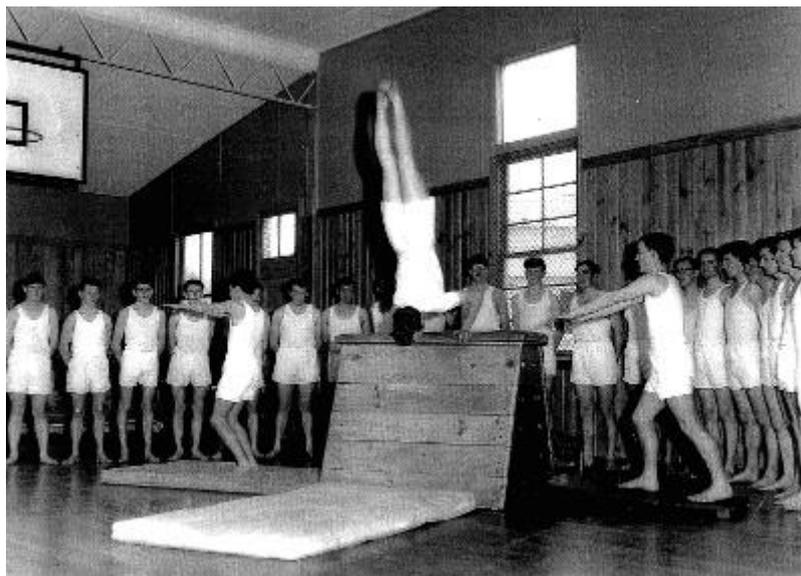
and how and when and where".

From JR Giles (teacher) 1937

five things observe with care



Miss JR Giles, bottom row, middle



The old gym 5P4 at work PE class 1965



Sir Edmund Hillary 1964, Senior pupils guard of honour



Athletics Day 1960's. Do you know who this person is? Let us know

2016 TAIERI COLLEGE ATHLETICS RECORDS BROKEN

- **U13 Girls' Shotput:** Tayla-Jo Crowe Melvin broke the record of 8.27m set by T. McNally in 2015 with a throw of 8.70m
- **U13 Girls' 100m:** Paige Flett broke the record of 13.90s set by H.Ashton in 2014 with a run of 12.91s
- **U14 Girls' Shotput:** Zharna Beattie broke the record of 8.75m set by J.Hyslop in 1977 with a throw of 10.52m.

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

