



**TAIERI**  
COLLEGE

*Alumni*

**November 2016**

*Welcome to the spring newsletter of 2016. In this issue we celebrate the success of some of our former students, including our own Holly Robinson, flag bearer and silver medalist at the Rio Paralympics. We profile Neville Peat, award-winning author, former councillor and Dunedin Citizen of the year. We pay tribute to former principal Christina Herrick, and former teacher and pupil Karen Taiaroa. And there are reminiscences from Dave Cannan who recalls a Gala Day publicity stunt pushing a wheel barrow from Dunedin to Mosgiel. We also hear from the class of '57, and some praise for the 1978 fifth form woodwork classes. Get in contact if you have any memories you'd like to share.*

### **The Alumni database is growing**

We welcome 50 new members who have joined our alumni group since the issue of our last newsletter in May! Thanks to everyone who have let old school mates know about us. The largest class year group we have registered is 25 members from 1977, so our challenge to you is to encourage all ex-students from your class year to enrol online at [www.taiericollege.school](http://www.taiericollege.school) or email [alumni@taieri.school.nz](mailto:alumni@taieri.school.nz) to join.

### **Sharing alumni names**

Many former pupils would like us to share the names, year and email addresses of alumni so they can stay in contact. Please let us know if don't want that information shared. We will share our list with you all shortly.

### **Donations**

We have been asked to include our bank account details from several members wanting to contribute to Taieri College. The College is currently fundraising for new cricket nets. If you would like to make a donation towards this, or if you are interested in funding an annual scholarship or prize to encourage students of today in a particular curriculum area that interests you, let us know. Any financial assistance you can provide, whatever amount, would be greatly appreciated. Receipts can be provided.

Account details: Westpac 03 1725 0106800 00 Reference: Alumni

### **Hislop Hall update**

Hislop Hall was finally demolished in June after being damaged beyond repair in a fire in November 2015. The concept plan for a replacement building is with the MOE waiting for approval. Once this is received we can prepare final drawings and call for tenders. The College is using the Indoor Training Centre for assemblies and will once again have to have prizegivings in Coronation Hall.



## ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

### Holly Robinson



Congratulations to former Taieri College pupil Holly Robinson, who won silver at the Rio Paralympics in September, and was also a very proud flag bearer for the New Zealand Paralympic team at the opening ceremony of the Rio Games. Holly competed in the women's F46 javelin, achieving a personal best throw of 41.22m.

Holly came to Mosgiel in 2011 after she was offered a scholarship to train under Para-Athletics coach Raylene Bates. She attended her first IPC Athletics World Championships in 2011, and the following year was selected and competed at the London 2012 Paralympic Games. She set a New Zealand national record at the 2016 Australian Athletics Championships with a throw of 40.81 m, ranking her number one in the world for the javelin F46. Holly completed a degree at the Otago Institute of Sport and Adventure in 2015 gaining a Bachelor of Applied Science in physical activity, health and wellness. She is currently studying two papers at the University of Otago.

## Abigail Clark



Congratulations to Abigail Clark, who was part of a group of young leaders which presented to the United Nations in New York in August. Abigail and 360 young leaders from all over the world attended a two week camp in New York, run by World Merit, to create an Action Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Abigail's goal was Reduced Inequalities. Abigail was also one of 12 finalist in the International Volunteer [HQ Volunteer of the Year award 2015](#), the only one from New Zealand. And she was this year awarded an Otago University Students' Association award for 2016 - the Outstanding Member of the University Community.

## ALUMNI PROFILE - Neville Peat

(TTHS alumni 1960-1964)



The son of a Mosgiel cycle shop owner, Dunedin-born Neville Peat attended Green Street School before moving on to Taieri High in 1960. He recalls being an average student - and vertically challenged on the basketball court.

As a result of an impulse to write stories about the school and Taieri affairs for The Evening Star in his last year at school, Neville became a cub reporter at the newspaper - the start of a lifetime career as a wordsmith.

Journalism took him to South Africa, where he wrote shipping news for the Cape Town Argus, then to Tonga where he was acting editor of the Tonga Chronicle on year-long VSA volunteer assignment. Two summers at Scott Base publicising the New Zealand Antarctic Research Programme were followed by eight years publicising the New Zealand Overseas Aid Programme.

His first book, on an Antarctic theme, was published in 1977. His 40 books span themes of geography, biography, history and the natural environment. He has won several national book awards, including New Zealand's largest literary prize, the Creative New Zealand Michael King Writers' Fellowship in 2007, for a comprehensive book on the Tasman Sea, and this year, a premier writing award from Copyright Licensing New Zealand for a climate-change book about coastal erosion and rising sea levels. Best-selling titles include Hurricane Tim - The Story of Sir Tim Wallis (2005), Wild Dunedin (1995, 2014), and Shackleton's Whisky (2012).

Active in local government and environmental politics, Neville served nine years as an Otago regional councillor (1998-2007) and three years on the Dunedin City Council (2013-16). He chaired the Orokonui Ecosanctuary Trust board for six years from soon after the project's opening in 2009, and in the 1990s led the innovative Dunedin Environmental Business Network for five years. For his environmental and nature conservation efforts and his photographic souvenir books about his home city, Neville was named the Dunedin Citizen of the Year in 1994.

Apart from several books about the sea, his interest in the marine environment extends to lecturing on small cruise ship on tours of the New Zealand Subantarctic Islands, for which he researched and wrote the nomination for the UNESCO World Natural Heritage Area designation in 1998. He is a member of the government-appointed South-East Marine Protection Forum, which is proposing a network of marine reserves along the Otago coast.

Neville lives on Otago Peninsula. [www.nevillepeatsnewzealand.com](http://www.nevillepeatsnewzealand.com)

### **OBITUARY - Christina Herrick (Foundation Principal of Taieri College)**



Christina arrived as Deputy Principal at The Taieri High School in 2002. She took up the role of Acting Principal in 2003 and found herself involved in the Ministry of Education's review of schools on the Taieri. The decision was made to merge Mosgiel Intermediate with The Taieri High School. The position of Principal was advertised and Christina was appointed as the Foundation Principal of Taieri College.

What followed was a considerable change required in the campus and little time to get ready for the "birth" of Taieri College in February 2004. With her indomitable spirit, Christina tackled the monumental task of accommodating Year 7 and 8 classes onto the site, re-siting a number of curriculum areas, dealing with classroom refurbishments, and the addition of a completely new block, G Block, onto the site where the Principal's house had resided.

Christina was passionate about Taieri College and always very proud to show the College off. To this end, numerous "top brass" were invited to the College, to open buildings and attend official functions.

There were considerable educational changes in the wind which Christina took in her stride. Not only did the students have excellent buildings and resources to work with, but they were always encouraged to strive for excellence in their academic, sporting and cultural involvement in the College. The College boasted a diverse curriculum and Christina was constantly looking for ways to enrich the experiences of the students. She had high expectations and immense pride in the students and their achievements. Her favourite

saying to the parents and Year 6 students at the meeting prior to their entry into Taieri College was that she wanted the students "to be happy, safe and learning lots".

Christina was quick to acknowledge the potential and expertise amongst the staff and encouraged and promoted them so that they got the opportunity to develop professionally.

Her life revolved around Taieri College and Christina worked tirelessly. When she retired in 2012, Christina left behind a great legacy - Taieri College was a successful community College (which embodied her vision for all students on the Taieri).

Christina had truly deserved a long retirement and it is with sadness that staff heard of her passing. We wish her family well as they reflect on the impact that Christina had on Taieri College staff and students.

### **OBITUARY - Karen Taiaroa - 1962-2016 (TTHS alumni 1976-1980)**



### **Karen and her daughter Tui with her artwork now displayed at Taieri College**

Karen Taiaroa was a teacher, artist and former pupil of The Taieri High School.

The second child of Nelson & Dorothy Taiaroa, Karen and siblings Riki, Bevan & Megan lived in Mosgiel and attended Taieri High School.

She graduated from Canterbury University Art School in 1987, and the following year accepted part-time roles at Wanganui Polytech & Sacred Heart College, Wanganui. In 1990 she completed her Teaching Diploma at Palmerston North College of Education; then accepted a position as Art Teacher at Gore High School.

Karen returned to Taieri College as HOD-Art, then moved to Te Anau to teach at Fiordland College.

Described as a fabulous teacher, she inspired the thousands of students she taught throughout her career and enabled them to fulfill their artistic potential. Her warmth, compassion and no-nonsense approach coupled with her own practical and theoretical artistic background ensured she was able to get the most out of her students.

During the 1990's Karen's works were exhibited as a finalist in the Telecom Art Awards which toured NZ; her winning Design for Suffrage Banners in 1994-5 is now in the permanent collection of the Otago Settlers Museum.

She then researched, developed and painted the 32 works used in the "Legends of Ngatoro-i-rangi" published in July, 2006 by Reeds Publishing, and in 2007 this book was the winner of the Spectrum Print Book Design Award for Best Children's Book.

The original artwork from this book was then exhibited at the Tuwharetoa Art Exhibition in Taupo (in June 2007) - the framing and naming of these works having been funded by the Mighty River Power Development Trust. And she wrote later that "the enthusiastic response of the hundreds of young and old people who attended this exhibition has inspired me to explore other stories of our people."

In 2012 Karen graduated from Otago Polytechnic School of Arts with a Masters of Visual Arts (With Distinction). It was from here that some of her works were selected to represent NZ for an Indigenous Art Exhibition in Budapest, Hungary.

It was during her Master's studies that Karen's art works started to reflect her search for her Maori heritage some of which was lost when the Taiaroa family was separated from its Tuwharetoa and Ngati Apa roots. Her intention was to make knowledge related to the family name Tamatea more accessible to "firstly my family and then to the wider public."

Karen's art work was unveiled at the College on 17 July and a Rata tree was planted beside the art room in her memory.

### I REMEMBER WHEN...



Dave Cannan (1965-1969) wants to know if any other pupil can remember the day in October, 1969 (he thinks!) when a group of senior pupils pushed a wheelbarrow from Dunedin to the school to help publicise Taieri's Gala Day, carrying large sandwich boards as well? As publicity stunts go it must have worked because he's pretty sure the photo ended up on the front page of the Otago Daily Times the next day as they struggled up the very steep Stuart St past Moana Pool on a hot afternoon!

## 1960's ATHLETICS PHOTO



We featured this photo in our last newsletter of a hurdler from an athletics day in the 1960's and asked for a name. Kevin Middlemiss has suggested it may be Alan Dougal.

## 1957 UPPER 5TH FORM/6TH FORM REUNION

Twenty 5th form pupils from 1957 recently gathered to renew acquaintances. The group were all foundation members of The Taieri High School. Previous get togethers were held in 2007 and 2011. Included in the group were members from Tauranga, Wellington, Timaru, Central Otago, Maitua, Dunedin and Mosgiel.

"On Friday afternoon we visited the Taieri College which was most enlightening and we were extremely grateful to Principal David Hunter for giving us his time to guide us around numerous blocks. We were amazed at the technology, the colourful classrooms and the wide ranging opportunities available for present day pupils. A far cry from our day. There was little of the old school left and it was difficult to visualise where our old classrooms were situated. We were pleased to see the Kauri tree had survived the fire - this tree was planted at the time of the opening of The Taieri High School. As pupils we were constantly reminded by the Principal T G Hislop of our school motto "Esse Quam Videri" - to be, rather than to seem (to be) -- and discovered it was no longer used as well as the changing of the school colours.

David Hunter has every reason to be proud of his school and we as pupils appreciated the education we also received.

Friday concluded with a meal at the RSA. Saturday dawned bright and sunny and a perfect day for a trip to Portobello where we were taken on a leisurely cruise on the harbour on the "Elsie Evans". The "Elsie Evans" has been graciously restored by a group of volunteers which included an ex pupil of the group Hugh Montgomery who was very much involved in the fundraising. It is hoped that the "Elsie Evans" will soon be in service on the Otago Harbour.

The evening was spent at Hotel Taieri where the group enjoyed a meal and enjoyed sharing stories of school days and beyond. Sunday morning brought celebrations to a close with a visit to Toitu and brunch at Ironic Restaurant.

Plans are proposed for a further get together in 2020.

## 1957 UPPER 5TH FORM/6TH FORM REUNION



**Back Row:** Ernie McCraw, Peter Morris, Jean McCraw, Rata Garside, David Kennedy, Joy Kennedy (Fraser) at rear John McFarlane, Graeme Garside, June Thomas (Weir), Daphne McFarlane (Richards), Reg Thomas, Zelda Matheson (Reid), Runa Chesney (visitor), Russell Lovelock, Trevor Pullar, Alex Corlet, Alyth Thomson (Bowie), Bob MacDonald, Lynn Brosnan (Weir) visitor, Donald MacKenzie

**Front Row:** Daphne Parsons (Dickson), Elizabeth Jones (Poole), Peggy Lehmann (Turvey), Anne McLeod (Irving), Daphne McCabe (Cook), Avis Morris (Chesney), Janice McCutcheon (Stevenson), Beverley MacIver (Trochon), Shirley Reid (Wilson)



## BLAST FROM THE PAST .....



Otago Excursion Train Trust  
P.O. Box 140, Dunedin  
Telephone enquiries to: 774-176

14 November 1978

A vote of thanks to the Fifth Form Woodwork classes of Taieri High School.

The Otago Excursion Train Trust was formed in April this year with the object of establishing an excursion train for the people of Otago. This is a community project and the Trust aims to involve the community as widely as possible. We were most pleased therefore that pupils of the woodwork classes at Taieri High School should choose to become actively engaged in the restoration of one of the carriages.

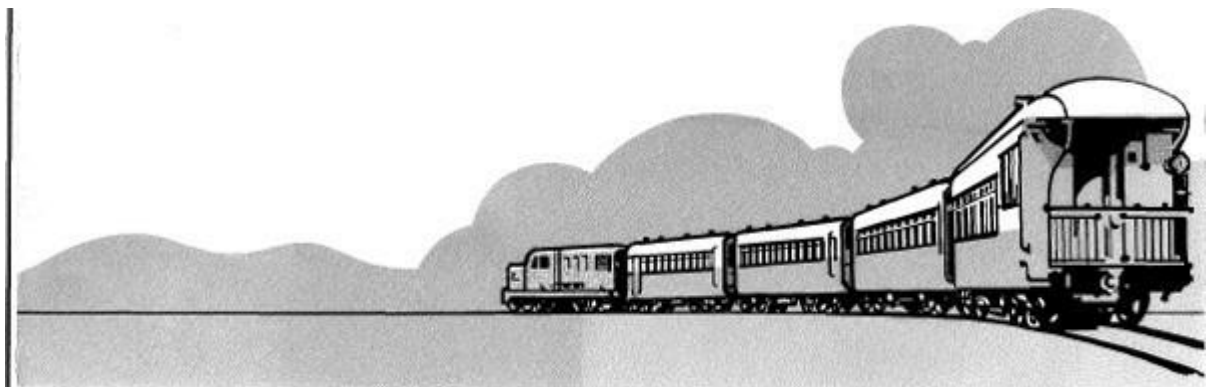
These had been out of service for some time and their condition had deteriorated badly under the combined assault of vandals, and the West Coast weather.

The pupils undertook a challenging task made more difficult by a bleak wet winter but they have acquitted themselves well and made a valuable contribution the rebuilding of the carriage. It is particularly noteworthy that some boys spent part of their school holidays working on the project.

I am sure that they will all feel that they have done something worthwhile and that they now have a lasting interest in the train.

On behalf of the Trust I thank you for your enthusiasm and your assistance and look forward to a continuing association between the Otago Excursion Train Trust and the School.

G.W. Emerson Chairman



5th Form Woodwork Class 1978 working on the carriage



We hope you enjoy 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](mailto:alumni@taieri.school.nz). Click [here](#) if you wish to read previous Taieri College alumni newsletters.

