



TAIERI
COLLEGE

Alumni

July 2018

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2018 for the Taieri College Alumni.

In this issue, we feature Adam Hall, double gold medalist in the Paralympic Winter Games, who is also an ex pupil of Taieri, and congratulate MNZM recipient Neville Peat. We hear from former teacher Harry Duncan, and some fond memories of a trip to Curious Cove, as well as some news from Taieri College, including an update on the Hislop Hall replacement.

At present we have 482 people registered with our Alumni. 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

We would like to thank Brent Wenlock for his technical help in setting up and guiding the Taieri College Alumni newsletter and database. His support has been much appreciated.

IN THE NEWS

Neville Peat Investiture (TTHS 1960-1964)

Congratulations to Neville Peat, recipient of a Queens honour earlier this year.



The Governor-General, The Rt Hon Dame Patsy Reddy, and Neville Peat at Government House Wellington on Wednesday 16 May, 2018. Mr Peat received the MNZM for services to conservation.

TAIERI COLLEGE NEWS

The replacement build for Hislop Hall has finally started! Construction of our new Performing Arts Centre commenced in April. All external walls are up and the roof has just been completed.



Performing Arts Centre design

Athletics record broken

The 1991 girls' discus record of 32m held by Kim Blackwood was broken this year by Zharna Beattie throwing 35.47m.

Swimming records broken

The 1997 25m freestyle record of 15.28 held by K Batten was broken this year by Gabby Kakahi 14.36. Gabby also broke the 1998 100m freestyle record of 1.21.00 held by J Bennett with her time of 1.13.89.

Peru trip

For almost 4 weeks in March/April a group of 8 students and 2 teachers visited Peru trekking, sightseeing and helping communities as part of an Antipodeans Abroad experience. This included a hike to Machu Pichu and a trip to Lake Titicaca.



The group at "Sun Gate" near Machu Picchu

International department camp - Quarantine Island

In March students from our International dept spent two nights at Quarantine Island in Dunedin. They had great fun kayaking, nature walks and spending time together singing, toasting marshmallows, playing cards and lots of laughing. It was a great opportunity for these students from around the world get to know each other better and share stories of their lives. One student described it as the best weekend of his life!



Fundraising efforts

A group of Taieri College students fundraising for their rugby trip to Spain/Portugal in 2020, spent several hours working at the Northern Cemetery for Heritage Roses Otago last month.



Students from Taieri College working with ex-pupil Betty Riach (nee Clyde) MDHS-TTHS 1953-1956



(Photo courtesy of The Star)

Visit from NZ Navy Lieutenant Brett Fitzgerald (TTHS-Taieri College 2000-2004)

In May, Lt Brett Fitzgerald spoke to some Social Science classes about his experiences working for the United Nations in the DMZ in Korea. He gave the students great insight into the workings of the United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission and his roles as Joint Duty Officer and Corridor Control Officer supervising transport movements between North and South Korea. His deployment was for six months, right at the time of the Winter Olympics and most recently, the Korean Summit talks - the students were very interested in his insights.

Retirement

Teacher, Graeme Watson (Head of Technology) has retired after over 30 years at the school. He began his tenure in January 1987, and has since been responsible for the development of our highly regarded Trades Academy, which gives practical learning opportunities for young people who wish to pursue a career in the trades. Through Graeme's efforts and expertise the community has benefited from a large number of well-prepared Trades Academy graduates who progress into the workforce as skilled tradespeople or well-prepared apprentices. On behalf of present and past students, and staff, we wish him all the very best for his retirement.

Alumni AGM

Our AGM was held on 28.03.18 at Taieri College and attended by 11 members. Committee positions remain the same with John Cuttance as President and Sue Brinsdon, Claire Grant and Sandra McLeod as committee members.

Please email us if you would like a copy of the Chair's report or the financial report. And let us know if you would like to join our small committee, or to give us a hand as we prepare for the reunion at Labour weekend 2021 - contact us if you would like to be involved alumni@taieri.school.nz.

ALUMNI PROFILE - Adam Hall - Taieri College alumni 2001-2005



Being one of the top Paralympic alpine skiers in the world has meant the sacrifice of many summers for the Taieri's own Adam Hall - 14 years of them so far.

Double Paralympic Champion skier and former Taieri High School student Adam won two medals at the Paralympic Winter Games in PyeongChang, Korea in March 2018 - a gold medal in slalom and a further bronze medal in the super combined event.

Adam was named winner of the 2018 Winter Paralympics' top honour, the Whang Youn Dai achievement award, presented to one male and one female athlete who best represent the spirit of the games. The two-time Paralympic gold medallist also won gold in the slalom at the 2010 Paralympics eight years earlier, and has competed at a total of four Paralympic Winter Games.

In 2011, he was awarded as Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours, for services to sport.

Adam says standing on a podium listening to the New Zealand national anthem with a gold medal around your neck is a surreal experience.

"The four years of build-up to the Paralympics are plain hard work. There's endless training and gym work, competition, and a lot of planning and mental preparation. Then when you're competing at the event you're worked so hard for, everything happens quickly and suddenly you're up on the podium trying to take it all in. It's a big honour, and there is a huge amount of pride and emotion."

He says self belief and planning are as important as the technical skills, alongside people that work very hard together behind the scenes towards the common goal. "It's a team achievement."

Adam, who was born with spina bifida, has been competing internationally since 2005, racing in the sport class LW1 which is the classification for para athletes with a physical impairment that strongly affects both legs.

He and his family lived on a dairy farm on the Taieri. He took up skiing when he was at Outram School, spending weekends and school holidays enjoying the snow with a group of fellow disabled youngsters. While learning to ski initially meant falling a lot, he loved the speed, and he found a great deal of independence when he mastered snowboarding, realising he could go as far as he wanted in snow sports.

He set his goals high as a teenager, switching from snowboarding to skiing to try for selection with the New Zealand Paralympic team, aiming for the 2006 Paralympics in Turino, Italy. That meant a lot of time on the ski fields in his last year's at Taieri, and in the lead up to Turino he was able take his school work to Wanaka while he was training in Wanaka.

But he has fond memories of PhysEd and taking part in as many sports as he could when he was at Taieri High from 2001-2005; he particularly remembers lunch times playing cricket in the fields, and good mates. He also said having the support of the school and of his teachers, especially when he was trying for selection for the New Zealand Paralympic team, was a big help. "I wasn't treated any differently and that helps with breaking down barriers."

Adam and his wife together have divided their time between Wanaka in New Zealand, and Winter Park, Colorado in the USA for nearly a decade.

While the four-year campaign towards the 2018 Paralympics may have been brutal, Adam says there's definitely still more in the tank, and he is hoping to continue skiing while working as a public speaker.

Career highlights: Gold medal in Slalom and Bronze medal in Super Combined at the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games; Gold medal in Slalom at the 2010 Paralympic Winter Games; Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZOM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours, for services to sport; 2014 World Cup Slalom Crystal Globe; Multiple World Cup medals.



REMINISCES from Harry Duncan ex-teacher TTHS (1954-1965)

In 1954 I went to Mosgiel District High secondary department as a reliever. When Mosgiel District High was morphed into The Taieri High School, Mr Cumberbeach, the Deputy Head, recruited me to teach science to 3rd, 4th & 5th formers in Room 12. There I remained for 10 years. I loved it and learned to be a teacher.

I was well received as I lived in Mosgiel, played rugby and had taught at the school before. My welcome by the Principal, Mr Hislop, made me feel that this was a great place to be. I'd always wanted to teach. One of the reasons teaching appealed was the opportunity to coach sport. I wasn't asked to coach the 1st XV in year one or ever, but I did manage to steal some of their players to set up TTHS 7-a-side teams to play in the Central Otago Tournaments.

They did very, very, well, much better at Sevens than at Fifteens! Names like, Hughes, Whitson, Skilling, Hauraki and Stevenson are names that I'm pleased and proud to have in my memory bank. I'm glad I met them. They were great fun!

The pupils of the TTHS taught me to teach, how important school is in people's lives and above all, how significant the personality and character of the teacher is on their effectiveness as teachers.

TTHS had some outstanding teachers and one or two who were not! My observations helped my future significantly; I was in a great training ground. I enjoyed my role beyond the classroom. The school canteen was initiated by one of my accounting classes and developed into the students' social centre; when the Hislop Hall was opened, expenses were covered by canteen profits.

I was also responsible for the conduct of school socials. I found the staff more difficult to control (and said so) than the pupils. The pupils met my future wife at those socials and let me know of her acceptability.

I wonder if any of you remember me turning up at an unauthorized after-social party at Whare Flat Scout Camp on my large noisy motor-bike to catch them all being very naughty? I enjoyed that! They all went home and waited and waited and waited. That was our secret. I enjoyed that also! I hope some of you remember that drama and still enjoy that memory.

Apart from my science classes, I started a 13 member accounting group. Most became accountants and good ones too. They were special people to me and I enjoyed tracking their progress over their careers. From little acorns, interesting trees grow.

I thank those folk for the interest they have provided to me. One even flew aeroplanes. I left the TTHS in April 1967. It was a sadly exciting day when the school said goodbye, while we kept the staff waiting for 30 minutes. I enjoyed that! I've still got the glasses I received and they're very well used still.

I joined the New Zealand Army as an Education Officer. The transition was simple. I'd been a territorial army officer and a member of TTHS cadet corps so my association with the army had been long and thorough. My appointment as an army officer was a natural progression from my military and teaching background.

My first appointment gave me responsibility to assist in the selection of and preparation of Regular Force Cadets and officer cadets prior to graduation into the Regular Force as professional officers and soldiers. All the things I had hoped to do as a teacher, I was able to do as an RNZAEC Officer.

My final position was Director of Army Education and Welfare, which included psychological selection and welfare services as well as Director of Army Sport. In performing these duties, my family moved between Waiouru, Singapore and Auckland. After an exciting two year stint as a YMCA Manager, we are now living in Taupo where, at 86 , I'm enthusiastically trying to reduce the trout population!



Harry Duncan with Jean Hunter (also ex TTHS teacher) at a TTHS reunion in 2013

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Curious Cove - the school trip 55 years past

Today as I read with interest news of the overseas study trips that today's Taieri College students travel on to exotic places in Asia or South America takes me back to 1962 when the great student trip for the year in the May holidays was to Curious Cove in the Queen Charlotte Sound.

The report of the trip in the 1963 TTHS magazine is interesting and quite humorous reading 55 years after the journey. On the 1962 trip of 90 pupils and 6 teachers a major liberalisation was allowed for the train journey from Mosgiel to Christchurch.

"This year mixed company was permitted. However, for the night journey from Christchurch to Picton on the 'night-goods' express we were separated. Most of us spent rather an uncomfortable night, although several people seemed to enjoy the luggage racks."

Accommodation at Curious Cove was quite basic. Although the camp was first established in 1905 it became an RNZAF holiday and recreation site after the Americans had developed it as a potential convalescent base during WW11. Later it was then taken over by Mr Manning and developed as a holiday camp. For many years it hosted an annual University's Camp which gained a somewhat riotous reputation.

However we were there as a well behaved mixed high school group in the days when sex education, fraternising, smoking and alcohol were forbidden activities.

Our week long stay at the camp was filled with numerous boat trips to various surrounding special sites in the Marlborough Sounds including the historic Tory Channel Whaling Station, Ships Cove and a visit to explore the town of Picton. Activities that we were offered including historic home films provided by Mr Manning as well as ballroom dance lessons, cards, housie and fishing and swimming. One special night time activity included the 'ship wrecked dance' and the following after party.

"After the dance everybody was allowed to stage a party in their huts and invite whom they liked - provided the lights were kept on and the doors remained open. At 1 o'clock everybody went to bed and the lights were put out."

Despite the restrained nature of our visit there was still room for some mischief. A group of us senior students planned to breach the night curfew as we planned for a late night party in the unoccupied huts up the hill at the back of the camp. During the Wednesday trip to Picton we managed to surreptitiously acquire a bottle of Vodka which was to be the party fuel. Come the night, lights are off and the invitees, most still in night wear sneak off up the hill to party. As we settled down and started to pair off for some fraternising and some enjoyment we were sprung by a posse of teachers. Unfortunately one or the invitees, still not identified, had failed to remember the war time cliché loose lips sink ships. I can't recall what happened to the bottle of Vodka, but I don't think the posse discovered it - a night of great expectation became one of great frustration.

Oh how life has changed over the past 55 years.

John Cuttance.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

**TTHS 1ST XI - 1986
Winners NZ Secondary Schools, Dunedin Tournament**



Back Row: Gerard Watt, Wayne Tippett, Harley McCabe
Middle Row: Brent Stevens, Robert Quigley, Sean Abbott, Martin Roy, Martin Dale, Chris Della Rocca
Front Row: Mr W Chisholm (coach), Craig Whitson, Kirk Davidson, Andrew Quigley, Dyson Findlay, James Letts, Gavin Painter

If you have any stories of interest 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.

