



School Ties

Wellington Girls' College Alumnae Newsletter

November 2010 Issue 15

Mission Statement

Wellington Girls' College prepares young women to go out into the world as independent thinkers with respect for themselves and others, the confidence to accept and respond to challenges and an enduring passion for learning.

From the Principal



Dear alumnae

2010 has been a wonderful year for the college. We have had nearly 1260 girls enrolled and it has been an extremely busy and successful time for the college.

Cultural issues have taken pride of place in the school this year. Our Stage Challenge item – Generation Y – won the Wellington regional competition; our top choir, Teal Voices, won several awards at the local Big Sing festival and then were named as one of the top 18 school choirs in New Zealand which headed to the finale in Auckland where they were awarded a bronze medal; our Head Girl, Freya Sadgrove was named 'Best Villain' in the local Shakespeare competition, won the Wellington Alliance Francaise competition and last month won the national Alliance Francaise competition which means an all expenses paid trip to Paris for four weeks in January; our hip hop dance crew won the national title; we held our first 'Cultural Intravaganza' which we hope will run every second year, alternating with the

Extravaganza with Wellington College; Junior drama flourished and this year had a double bill performance with the Senior drama in late September; Brendon Hay, from the Royal Shakespeare Company's cast of Waiting for Godot ran two workshops with senior drama students; our new look assemblies have featured a different performance each week which we all thoroughly enjoy and to cap it all off, in early November we inducted our first two laureates into our new Arts & Culture Hall of Fame – Elizabeth McRae & Jenny Pattrick. The quality and quantity of performance this year has been outstanding and the staff and students responsible for the various activities should be extremely proud of their accomplishments. It has definitely been a year to remember in the cultural sense.

It has been a big year in other ways as well. The new Pipitea building is now well under way with steel in place, concrete being poured and the noise of saws, nail guns and hammering providing the backdrop to our daily lives. The old house on the corner will be removed over the summer and work is on track for completion by early July. We are already planning for a wonderful opening and a series of events to show everyone our new spaces. Watch out for the special function we'll hold for our alumnae and remember to buy your name on the plinths outside – we have a list ready to be engraved for when we open and we're keen to have more.

Also new for next year will be the uniform. After a year of surveying parents, staff and girls, we tendered the contract last year

Cont. on page 2

Head Girl, Freya Sadgrove



I suddenly find myself with just one full day left at Wellington Girls' College. It's happening tomorrow. I am a little flabbergasted. I suppose because it has always felt so permanent – I knew it would only ever last five years, but I think I also thought those five years would last forever (I know that doesn't make sense, but very little ever does completely, especially for us teenage folk I think). And now I've very nearly reached the end of a final year that has been an absolutely phenomenal experience - everything I could ever have asked for and also rather a lot more.

For me, the best thing about Wellington Girls' has always been the people. The girls themselves. It's funny, up until the start of this year I just couldn't imagine being a Year Thirteen... they seemed so far off, and sort of legendary, and so very Good At Things. How could I ever become one of those? And then suddenly I was one – we all were, all the girls I'd spent a fairly significant portion of my life growing up with - and I suppose it was just a matter of working very hard and making the most of the time we had left that united us even more strongly than before. As a result, I think we've accomplished some really great things together this year, which every one of us can be proud of.

cont. on page 2

From the Principal *cont.*

and received design proposals from three firms. Teamwear NZ won the contract and since the start of this year we have been refining the design and testing samples, working closely with the students who ran the original survey. The new look (pictured below), which will be worn only by Yr 9 next year and phased in over four years, is more of a capsule wardrobe than a uniform. The girls have choices about which garments they want to wear and how they put them together. We are sure it will mean the girls are more comfortable, and better able to cope with the vagaries of Wellington's weather.

The only criticism we've heard so far is from the girls currently at school who are unimpressed that they can't wear the new style – it's a criticism we're happy about!

I look forward to meeting up with the Kapiti and Manawatu/Horowhenua Old girls groups over the next few weeks. Let me know if your group is meeting – I'm always happy to come and tell you about what's happening at school and answer questions.

Best wishes for a relaxing and happy holiday season and I'll hope to see many of you next year when we finally open the new face of the school.

Julia Davidson

Wellington Girls' College Uniform



Freya Sadgrove *cont.*

On a personal level, I'm really happy with what I've achieved this year academically. Last term I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to take part in the regional Alliance Française Concours Oral – a French speaking competition for secondary school students – and I came first for Wellington, which meant that I went through to the National Competition. I felt quite a bit of pressure on my shoulders leading up to the competition, which was run like an exam, but I was determined just to do my best, and I knew if I did that then I'd be able to be happy with my efforts, whatever the result. It was a bit of a struggle of an exam. I came out feeling as though my brain was going to melt, actually. But it was okay, because I only did what I could (and that's all you ever can do really). Then in the holidays I got a call from the Alliance, who told me that actually I had won, and that they'd be sending me off to Paris in January, for a month. So, that was a bit of a shock, and I fell right off my chair with the excitement of the situation. I'd say that was a highlight for me this year.

So now that things are wrapping up, and we're all hunkering down for exams, it feels nice to say again just how much I love my school. I'm saying it now – I love my school to pieces. I love it oodles, I love it more than I can even reach with my arms. And I am so extremely grateful for all the opportunities it has given me. 2010 has been excellent, and I can say in all honesty that I will remember it with great fondness for the rest of my life.

Freya Sadgrove

Thorndon Landmark to disappear

The well known two storey building on the corner of Pipitea and Murphy Streets, which we have all passed many times on our way to school, since it was built in 1929, will disappear at the end of this year.

Originally a family residence with 5 bedrooms, it was acquired by the Wellington Girls' College Charitable Foundation in the late 1980s and leased back to the College for its use. In recent times it has served as the Student Services Centre.

Still in good condition, with native timber floors and leadlight windows, the Foundation have advertised it for sale and removal in the hope that it would continue to serve a useful purpose, given its historic character.

If it fails to sell it will be demolished to make way for the building of the new Pipitea Block and provide space for a much needed forecourt and new entranceway to the College.





Congratulations to Arabella Ansell, Isabella Blunt and Georgina Fulford for completing their Gold Award in 2009, and to Eloise Callister-Baker and Nika Thomson in 2010.

The girls were presented with their certificates by Their Excellencies the Governor-General Sir Anand Satyanand and Lady Satyanand on 11 September 2010.

They were supported and assessed by tutors, teachers, coaches and of course parents in achieving their Gold Award.

Our congratulations also to Mrs Margot Griffith, who was presented with a Coordinator Long Service Award for 36 years at Wellington Girls' College.

Model UN—A Life Lesson



Zoe Crook feels as if Syria is her second home, but she has never been there.

Zoe has been selected to join 15 other top pupils from around the country as part of the New Zealand delegation to The Hague International

Model United Nations – an academic simulation of the UN.

The conference in the Netherlands in January and February, which will be attended by more than 4000 pupils from all 192 UN member countries, will give the pupils a chance to take part in debates about human rights and environmental matters.

Their findings will be presented to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the end of the conference.

Each delegation at the conference will be assigned a UN country to represent.

The pupils were selected after taking part in the New Zealand Model United Nations in Wellington this year.

Zoe, 16, represented Syria at the Wellington event, which included a debate about whether countries should be allowed to import military technology.

"I just went with the intention of having fun, but I now know a lot about Syria. I can't wait to go on this trip. It sounds like an amazing opportunity."

Each member of the Kiwi team has to raise about \$8000 to pay for the trip.

Just some of WGC's 2010 Sporting Achievements

- At the Secondary Schools' Cross Country Championships WGC had some great team results. Ashleigh Martin, Christina Goodwin and Tayla Radovanovich were members of the winning 3 person and 6 person teams in the Intermediate division. Also winners of the 6 person team were Caitlin Peetz, Annie Noakes and Lisa Marsden. Members of the winning 3 person Senior team were Jess Paton, Sophie Pepperell and Florence Reynolds.
- Florence was also the runner up for College Sport Road Race Champs.
- The WGC Rugby team finished the season in the top spot of Division 2 with a really exciting win over Sacred Heart in the final.
- The Senior A Netball team came 2nd at the Lower North Island tournament, losing by one goal in the final to Tu Toa. This means they qualify for Nationals for the 3rd year in a row, where the top 12 school teams in the country compete.
- The team also placed first in the College A League netball competition beating St Mary's in the final
- Senior B Badminton team has had a successful season winning Division 1.
- The 1st X1 Football team has played a good season in the competition league and narrowly lost to Wellington East Girls' College in the final.
- The Underwater Hockey Senior A team had a fantastic year finishing 4th at Nationals and 1st in the Wellington competition.
- The Junior A football team scraped into the semi final and then won a close match with Wellington East Girls' College to make it into the Wellington regional final against St Oran's who were the heavy favourites. After a 1 all draw at full time they won an exciting penalty shoot out 4 – 2.
- Congratulations to Sam Lucie-Smith who recently competed in the Wellington Short Course Swimming Champs where she achieved 3 gold medals and in doing so broke the 1500 metres freestyle Wellington Open Record, Wellington Age group record and the NZ age group record.
- The 1st XI Hockey team had a good end to their season, reaching the semi finals of the Wellington competition.

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 College Alumnae'**

Arts and Cultural Hall of Fame

One of the forefront thoughts on the Business Hall of Fame committee's mind this year was the need for Wellington Girls' College to extend the sphere of recognising old girls in business to encompass successful old girls in other areas of endeavour. After much deliberation it was decided that an Arts and Cultural Hall of Fame would be created, to honour those former students who have made a significant contribution to the arts in New Zealand.

We are delighted to announce that our first two inductees into our Arts and Cultural Hall of Fame are Elizabeth McRae and Jenny Patrick. The contribution of each of these women to New Zealand's cultural and artistic heritage has been significant and ongoing.

Jenny & Elizabeth were presented with their citations at the school assembly on 4 November 2010, followed by a morning tea held in their honour.

We hope that these dedicated, energetic and talented women will inspire many generations of Wellington Girls' College students.

Elizabeth McRae Student 1950-1954



Attending Wellington Girls' College for 4 years, it is clear that Elizabeth was always an involved member of the school community. She partook in many cultural events, including two school productions and The Marjorie Nicholls speech competitions, and it is clear from the decision to appoint her as Head Prefect in 1954 that she was an integral part of

the school community. Whilst holding this position she was also house captain for Cecil.

Elizabeth was a founding member of Mercury Theatre Company where she also taught voice and speech.

She also acted for Theatre Corporate and her many roles included parts in The Crucible, Pygmalion, The God Boy, The Wind in the Willows, Uncle Vanya and many more.

Elizabeth was in the original cast of Shortland Street where she played the receptionist Marj for the first four years.

Other film and television credits include An Angel At My Table, Jubilee, Scarecrow and Never Say Die.

Elizabeth is an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for services to theatre.

If you know of an old girl who the Arts & Cultural Hall of Fame, or the Business Hall of Fame would consider, then please contact Marietta Connor by writing c/- the School or send an email to marietta.connor@wgc.school.nz

Jenny Patrick Student 1950-1954



Jenny played an active role in the life of the college; she was a published writer in the school reporter and entered the Marjorie Nicholls speech competition several times during her time here at Wellington Girls' College. In 1952, Jenny was also in the school production of Androcles and the Lion, with Elizabeth. She vividly remembers the fact that

the two were constantly competing for roles in various school productions. Jenny Patrick received an endorsed School Certificate in 1953.

After leaving school, she trained and worked as a teacher.

Jenny is widely known as a historical novelist. She is also a celebrated jeweller, and she plays an active role in the New Zealand arts community.

Her first novel, The Denniston Rose, published in 2003 and its sequel, Heart of Coal, published a year later, are two of New Zealand's biggest-selling novels. She has also written fiction for radio. Jenny was the winner of the 2009 New Zealand Post Mansfield Prize.

She has also had many honorary positions within the New Zealand Arts community, including Board member of the New Zealand Book Council, Chairperson of the Readers and Writers committee of New Zealand from 1994 to 2002.

Jenny's jewellery has been chosen for New Zealand representative exhibitions and her silver and paua work was exhibited at Te Papa 2005 and 2010.

She was awarded the OBE and the New Zealand 1990 medal.

Published Old Girls

Below is the updated list of Published Old Girls. Thank you to everyone who contacted the Alumnae to let us know the names of published old girls who were not included in our original list, and our sincere apologies to many who should never have been overlooked.

We look forward to continuing to grow this list of authors, poets, illustrators, and historians and will publish an updated list annually. We know there are still many missing, so please write and let us know, or email us at: wgc.alumnae@gmail.com.

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| • Nancy Adams | • Robyn Marsack |
| • Susan Adams | • Margaret Maxwell (Dr) |
| • Fleur Adcock | • Mary McCallum |
| • Ruth M. Allan (Fletcher) | • Elizabeth McLeay |
| • Sylvia Ashton-Warner | • Julia Millen |
| • Rachel Barrowman | • Leone Morris-Bensemam |
| • Julia Brooke-White (Stace) | • Mary Mountier |
| • Patricia Booth (Eade) | • Lora Mountjoy |
| • Joan Cameron (Mattingly) | • Pauline Morse |
| • Fifi Colston | • Emma Neale |
| • Pamela Cubey (Hildreth) | • Jenny Neale |
| • Lauris Edmond | • Karen Nimmo |
| • Barbara Einhorn | • Jenny Pattrick (Priestley) |
| • Susan Emanuel | • Rachel Pether |
| • Kirsty N Findlay (Northcote -Bade) | • Jean Phipps (Elliott) |
| • Anne French | • Beverly Price (Randell) |
| • Alison Gray (Norris) | • Jo Randerson |
| • Lorraine Gray | • Beverley Reeves (Watkins) |
| • Penelope Griffith | • Jane Ritchie (Beaglehole) |
| • Polly Greeks | • Margot Schwass |
| • Noeline Hall | • Adrienne Simpson |
| • Glenda Hughes | • Barbara Strathdee (Smythe) |
| • Edith Howes | • Irene Swadling (Lusty) |
| • Annabel Langbein | • Lynette Taylor (Routledge) |
| • Marjorie Law | • Shirley Tunnicliff (Magee) |
| • Katherine Mansfield | • Iris Wilkinson / Robin Hyde |

Calling All Artists

The Wellington Girls' College Charitable Foundation wish to acknowledge the heritage of the many girls and staff who have spent time at Wellington Girls' College by commissioning an artwork to hang in the atrium which forms the Foundation Foyer in the new building being erected on the corner of Pipitea and Murphy Streets.

As sponsors of the WGC Alumnae, it is our fervent hope that such an artwork could be commissioned from an artist with connections to the College.

There is dedicated space available for such an artwork. The work could stand beside or be hung on the foyer wall, which measures 3900mm wide by 2485mm high, or suspended from the atrium ceiling, with a height of 3.5m. Artwork will be visible from the street. There is provision for lighting and/or a power source. Budget for the artwork is flexible at this stage.

We are open to considering all possibilities (sculpture, glass, ceramic, mixed media, paint, carving etc.), as long as they create an interesting and/or imposing statement and can stand the test of time.

If you or someone you know would be interested in receiving further details of this commission, with a view to submitting a proposal, please send your details to the following Trustee of the Foundation:

heather.ware@xtra.co.nz or write to:

Heather Ware
26 Ngaio Road
WELLINGTON 6012

All communications will be acknowledged.

Expressions of interest close on 31 January 2011 and we plan to enter into negotiations with an artist before the end of March – all going well. The building is due for completion in late June 2011 when we hope the chosen artwork will be ready for installation.

Linda McCulloch
Chair
Wellington Girls' College Charitable Foundation



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In Memoriam - Flora MacDonald (Old Girl 1942-1944)

Flora MacDonald lived in the same Lower Hutt house all her life.

She was a woman who took a lot of pleasure from sewing, embroidery and passing on the joy of handcrafting fabrics, quilts and clothing.

She was also an indefatigable recycler. Whenever somebody was doing a clear out she would gratefully take all their old clothing, fabrics, knitting wool and cotton and as many as 20 bags a week would be left on the front porch of her Boulcott home.

All the usable material would be washed and sorted for re-use, most of it sent off to schools and prisons.

She did not have a television set and she would knit or sew in bed every night with a cat or two for company. Her woollen baby singlets and cardigans were supplied weekly to the Hutt Hospital maternity unit.

Her love of handcrafts may have partly been inherited from her father, Donald, who was a seaman before taking a shore job in Wellington making cargo nets for the New Zealand Shipping Company.

Miss MacDonald was a skilled quilt maker - her first major project was restoring or recreating a Scottish quilt that had been gifted to her parents and went on to develop her skills at night class in Wellington in the 1960s. She learnt all the stitches, had a good feel for colour and willingly passed her knowledge to others.

Many migrant women attended her Just Sew classes at Avalon Hall and some still remember the day a series of men phoned the hall asking to speak to different women.



They were all calling a brothel which had had its phone number misprinted in the paper. Miss MacDonald and the other mostly mature, well-upholstered women in her sewing class had a lot of fun that day, laughing at the thought of what the men would have found if they had turned up in person.

Miss MacDonald had a lifelong association with the Girls Brigade for which she received a Lower Hutt Civic award in 2000.

After leaving Wellington Girls' College in 1944 she secured an office job at Hutt Hospital's dental department where she worked for the next

44 years.

She was a stalwart of Knox Presbyterian Church, contributing handcrafts to its fundraising fairs and flowers from her garden, where the chooks and ducks helped control the slugs and slaters.

A lot of fruit and other produce would be given away and she would give jars of homemade jam to her friends at Christmas.

She was a wealth of local knowledge about Lower Hutt, many of its residents and who lived where.

But she respected the privacy of others. Friends say she was herself a rather private woman.

Miss MacDonald knew that all was not well a few weeks before she died. A brain tumour was diagnosed after a succession of blackouts and falls.

Going into hospital to have the tumour removed, she packed some biscuits to supplement the hospital food and had her knitting ready so she could pick up the stitches again while she was recovering.

She was not able to finish her last baby's cardigan - she never regained consciousness and died of a stroke a few days after the operation.

Flora MacDonald, born Lower Hutt February 17, 1929, died Wellington February 4, 2010, aged 80.

In Memoriam

Yvonne Stockley **DOWNEY** (Smith) 24/01/2008
Student 1977-1980

Joyce **WETZINGA** 20/03/2009
Student 1935-1940

Kathleen Ann **WILLINK** (Hyatt) 15/05/2010
Student 1946-1950

Janet **FRANCE** (Hepburn) 16/05/2010
Student 1948 - 1950

Joan Alison **PATERSON** (Cleverall) 04/06/2010
Student 1930

Althoea Violet **CURTIS** (Bevan) 06/06/2010
Student 1905

Are our records correct? Would you like to receive *School Ties* by email? If so please let us know. If your contact details have changed we would appreciate an update from you.

Please contact *School Ties* via email at wgc.alumnae@gmail.com; or you can write to us at:

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