

School Ties

Wellington Girls' College Alumnae Newsletter



October 2009 Issue 13

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

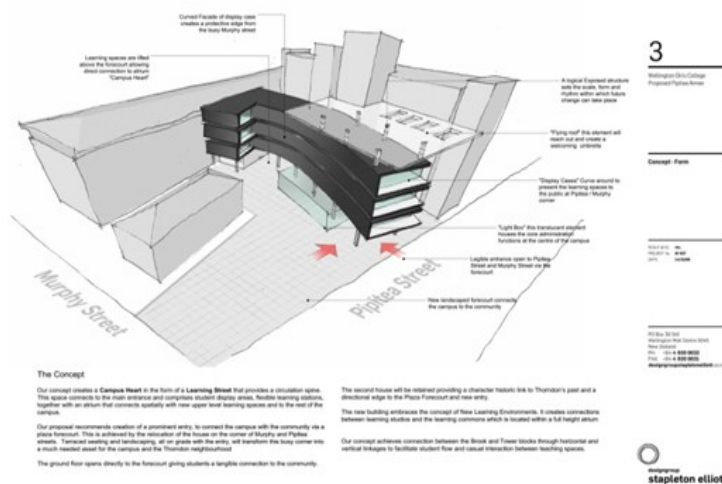


Dear alumnae

In the last issue of *School Ties* I noted that we were about to have the Education Review Office visit. They came, they saw and they seemed pretty happy with us! For the full report, look on our website, or on ERO's – www.ero.govt.nz. We were one of the first schools in the country to receive the new 4-5 year review, so it will be quite some time before we see them again. We were delighted actually. Whatever anyone says, it is a nerve-wracking time when they visit and having them give us a huge tick of approval was really satisfying for everyone who has worked here in the last decade as it is the culmination of all their work as well as for those of us here now.

Since ERO left, a huge amount of my time has been taken up with the new building. Named Pipitea Block through a competition run by the Student Council, the four storey development will run behind and parallel to the Tower block, bridging the space from Pipitea St through to Brook block. Arrow International are the Project Managers for this and the architects are Designgroup Stapleton Elliot. The space will provide for a

new front entrance to the school, a three storey atrium at the bottom of which there will be large spaces for girls to mingle and work in a relaxed environment, admin and student offices and on the three floors above ground level, teaching spaces equivalent to twelve regular classrooms. None of these will be regular spaces however – there will actually be six double sized rooms with break out spaces for small meeting areas, resource spaces and meeting rooms. Teachers of English, Media, Social Sciences, Latin, Classics and Technology will be the initial inhabitants of the block and they have been really busy working with the architects to determine their needs. It is a long slow process, but well worth it in the end I'm sure.



One of the two caveats put on us by the WGC Charitable Foundation when they agreed to give us \$1.2 million for the building, was that somewhere in the development there had to be a space available for alumnae to leave their mark on the school in a permanent and appropriate manner.

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From the Principal *cont.*

There is a large forecourt in front of the building which will be landscaped, so we are currently working on a plan that alumnae can be part of.

Once this is finalised you will be contacted and invited to take part. Our aim is that this will then be added to

each year as another cohort of girls leave. We will also have a plan of the forecourt on the website so you can find where your mark is - and you'll be able to find it whenever you or your family visit WGC.

If you are interested in finding out more

about the Pipitea block, watch our website for Building Blocks, a newsletter written by some Yr 10 girls to tell you about progress - it's beginning to get exciting.

Julia Davidson
Principal

On being a Young Male Teacher at WGC 1959-1963 - by Barry Rait



My introduction to WGC was in 1958 when I was working for a candid photographer company in Wellington to bolster my income while at VUW. While photographing all and sundry at the 75th year WGC Jubilee I came across my old Rongotai College colleague Richard Heine in the crowd and of course I asked him what was he doing there and he replied that he was teaching. I was 'struck dumb'.

The girls' colleges were short of science teachers and they were very keen to employ any males who suited the bill. Initially I started at Wellington East Girls' College for several days where my booming voice intruded on three classrooms either side of mine. Eventually I was not needed at WEGC so I applied to WGC. When asked by Miss Fraser what did I do prior to VUW medical intermediate [studies I said that I was a wharfie for four years and before that I was an office cleaner at nights. These revelations must have struck an adventurous employment chord in Miss Fraser. After a little name dropping like Richard Heine, Professor Jim Robb and Jack Shallcrass I think she thought that I could not have been all that unpromising. I started at WGC in January 1959.

Being the eldest of seven children, four of whom were my sisters, was no real help at WGC where the iniquities of the pervasive gender preferences for males and their presumption of precedence became

alarmingly demonstrated as I gradually learned of my deficits in understanding my society. 'Girl Power' was certainly being promoted.

My first class was a fifth form with 50 pupils for Human Biology. Thank goodness it did not last more than a week. The timetable was soon settled and matters seriously educational became normalized.

It was a short time before I became attracted to the physical educational side of the college's activities through the warm welcome from Marion Law (now Lewin) and Helen Trotter. Within a week I was absorbed into the training for the pending secondary schools championships. Training programmes before, during and after school hours were organised. St Mary's College and Queen Margaret College athletes were also invited. The central communications notice board for athletics and eventually hockey and chess became an essential information site for most pupils of the college who wanted to be informed.

Being an accepted part of the college occurred abruptly after I had an initial hockey tactics talk in an endeavour to get some understanding of the spatial relationships of players on a hockey field. After dusting off the blackboard (it was actually green) I turned around to go to the practice side of lunch time and was confronted by all the hockey players changing their clothes, en masse. Somewhat unbalanced by this sight, I returned to unnecessarily re-dust the blackboard and contemplate my next move. What did this all mean? It meant that I was now accepted as 'part of the furniture.'

In 1960 it was not quite yet the era of female emancipation and one young female staff member turned up at Olga Harding's annual play presentation to help with preparing the participants for the stage. I saw her later on during the

production in a bewildered state. She had received a dark look from an authority figure and wanted to know what was wrong. In my presumed role of appreciator of the female form I told her straight, that her attire of well fitting slacks on a curvaceous body probably did the trick. She was a little too early for the feminist reforms of the 1960s.

One highly amusing instance occurred through the genuine frankness of a temporary art master who after sitting through an emergency staff meeting called to discuss a lunchtime fracas between several 'gals' on the front lawn in full public view. After the earnest discussion had ended he blandly asked who had won the fight! This was certainly not the point dear man.

I well remember the first pay when women teachers reached equality with men. I was near Olga Harding when she opened her pay envelope and exclaimed "about bloody time!" It was then I knew where I stood in the social order of things.

In about 1990 I took the ultimate academic challenge and completed a Diploma in Women's Studies at Massey. This experience coupled with reflection on the years at WGC got me through a necessary re-education to re-position myself as a male person within New Zealand society. Now I rile at the still wholesale under-representation of women in parts of New Zealand society let alone other countries. The Taliban crusade can wait.

There were many, many instances of human interest that have been put into a volume and sent to the library at WGC, with amendments to come.

You can contact Barry directly via his email address: southacc@woosh.co.nz

Dame Jenny Gibbs - Old Girl 1954 - 1957

Ask Auckland art collector and philanthropist Jenny Gibbs how she feels about being called a dame, and she laughs. "Of course it's a great honour but really it's a bit of a giggle. I feel as though I'm in a pantomime."

Dame Jenny has been made a Dame Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit "for services to the arts", a modest description that barely scratches the surface.

Over the years, Dame Jenny's work has included helping to buy and redevelop the derelict telephone exchange now leased to the Auckland City Council for \$1 a year as the New Gallery, an adjunct to the Auckland Art Gallery; establishing the biennial \$50,000 Walters Prize for contemporary art; supporting an internship at Artspace Gallery; and substantial patronage of the Auckland Writers and Readers Festival, the Opera NZ Foundation and the Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra. She is a board member of the Sea+City

Projects, which is overseeing the redevelopment of the Tank Farm in the Wynyard Quarter; she served on the University of Auckland Council for 24 years and continues to work for the University Foundation and the Liggins

Institute; and she is on the governing board and art purchasing committee of the university's Gus Fisher Gallery.

Wellington Girls' College Alumnae congratulate Dame Jenny Gibbs on receiving this recognition.



From the Chair of the Capital Girls' Association - Heather Macfarlane

During the first weekend in September, the WGC Assembly Hall was a showcase of artworks 'embracing the creative talents of Wellington Girls' College old Girls and artists with a connection to the school - a



Capital Girls' fundraising event. Works were submitted by past and present pupils, teachers, parents and friends, and featured a group of prints by guest artist Michel Tuffery, whose daughter is a current pupil at the school. We were delighted with the high quality and colourful nature of the artwork and received wonderful feedback from those who were present at the opening function or visited the exhibition over the weekend.

Whilst we were pleased with the result, given the current economic climate, the success of the venture would have been much greater had we been able to attract a larger number of exhibitors and

attendees.

We advertised through the Listener, the Dominion Post and in the 'coming events' section of the previous edition of *'School Ties'*, but our ability to contact a wider group of past pupils was hampered by a lack of email addresses, functioning networks of class/decade/regional groupings, and of course the high cost of advertising.

We also held a fundraising film premiere at the Penthouse Theatre in May, but had similar difficulty in getting the message out to a wider network of Old Girls and sadly, had to cancel the planned Bridge Tournament in June, for the same reason.

So, instead of continuing down the path of running a series of events in Wellington for the relatively small group of Old Girls who are known to us (other than the annual High Tea for the older members of the Association, which we will of course continue to organise), the Executive Committee of Capital Girls' has decided to change our focus to one of facilitating networks, putting former pupils in touch

with each other and passing on news from those groups that are already meeting regularly. We know that many of you meet from time to time with your former classmates or a part of a group in your geographic area – and we would love to hear from you.

Kirsty Tikao, the Alumnae Development Manager for Wellington Girls' College, whose employment is made possible by the WGC Charitable Foundation and who edits this publication, is currently working on a database of contact details of former pupils. Kirsty desperately needs you to provide her with your email address (if you have one) and to let her know if your contact details change. Kirsty can be contacted by mail through the college, or by email to wgc.alumnae@gmail.com. This information will create a greater opportunity for us to facilitate networking amongst Old Girls as well as building up a reliable contact base so that we can keep you informed about upcoming events.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Business Hall of Fame - Kay Dangaard



Born in Wellington, Kay (Hooper) Dangaard received her secondary education at Wellington Girls' College (1956-1958).

Kay has had a distinguished career first as a journalist and then later in very senior roles in the public relations and marketing divisions of large corporations such as Columbia Pictures and amazon.com.

As a journalist Kay worked in South Africa, the United States and Hong Kong. She was one of the first, if only, Western female writers to cross into Mainland China at the height of the Cultural Revolution.

In 1975 she co-founded her own company **International Features**, a syndicated news service that conducted celebrity interviews, then packaged and distributed them to newspapers across the United States.

In her public relations and marketing role Kay was Vice President of Advertising, Publicity and Promotion for **Columbia Pictures Television**.

Here she was responsible for the domestic and international marketing of Columbia product including series, mini-series, movies and specials. She designed and implemented all consumer and

industry campaigns.

In 1986 she took a year off and took her son Chris to New Zealand to "do a year" at Auckland Grammar. While living in Auckland she was a weekly guest on the Paul Holmes Breakfast Show on 2ZB.

Returning to Los Angeles in 1987 she became interested in emerging internet technology and accepted, when asked by a group of young "techies" in Marina del Rey, California, to launch THE SPOT, the first episodic show on the World Wide Web. Kay created and implemented what has since become known in technology circles as the first viral marketing campaign. Her on-line launch campaign resulted in a record-breaking audience to a website.

In early 1997, one year after the launch of THE SPOT Kay was approached by Jeff Bezos the founder of a then start-up company, amazon.com to become Chief Spokesperson and Director of Press Relations. In this position Kay was responsible for the development and implementation of global corporate, financial and consumer publicity. "The next three plus years I was running on strong Seattle coffee and pizzas," she says.

By May of 1997 the company had gone through a highly successful Initial Public Offering and Kay and Jeff began travelling the world as the company launched sites in Britain, Europe and Asia. That August amazon.com proposed putting a short story writing contest on-line inviting users of the site to compete to add a paragraph a day until the story was complete. Amazon.com editors would select the best paragraph entered each day and add it to the story.

Looking for a media-hook Kay came up with the idea of pulling in an American literary giant to begin the story. She sought assistance from the publisher-relations unit at amazon.com and they landed for her Pulitzer Prize winning author John Updike.

On day 44 of the contest, September 12,

1997, Kay couriered the story to Updike and talked by telephone with him while he read it for the first time and wrote the ending. The contest garnered more than 380,000 entries. Dangaard had delivered a flawless campaign. Amazon.com was congratulated and heralded in a Washington Post editorial, and the campaign featured in Rick Bruner's marketing book "Net Results" as The Greatest PR Coup ever held.

After "retiring" from amazon.com Kay Dangaard returned to Los Angeles. She currently is a director on the board of Ava-Works, a privately held Santa Monica, California corporation. The company owns patented technology enabling the transmission of avatars/sprites to mobile devices. She is also a director on the board of Cyber Oasys Corporation, located in Santa Monica, California.

Kay has served as Vice-Chairman on the Board of Directors of Young Artists International. As benefactress she personally underwrote concerts that enabled young award-winning musicians from twenty countries to perform at Disney Concert Hall in 2004 and 2005.

In 1997 Kay produced the first Webby Awards, held at the famed Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, the site of the first Academy Awards.

Kay has been a member of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences since 1983.

She is the seventh former student of Wellington Girls' College to be inducted into the College's Business Hall of Fame.

We are sure that Kay Dangaard will inspire many students and we are delighted to have her as part of our Business Hall of Fame.

Have you been active in business since graduating from Wellington Girls' College? If yes, or if you know of other former students who have made their mark in business, the College would be very pleased to hear about that success.

The 1948 Girls

We are the Wellington-based "ladies of a certain age" who started at Wellington Girls in 1948.

Following a large gathering in 2003, with former classmates from places near and

far, those of us who live here in Wellington region meet annually for a very long lunch. In between times, we remain in touch with each other - there is nothing quite like the comfort and pleasure of on-going friendships.

If more 1948 girls read this, we'd be happy to have you join us.

Please contact Fae Hope (Clarkson) at 04 568 6995 or email at : alnfae@paradise.net.nz

Horowhenua/Manawatu Old Girls' AGM

The Horowhenua/Manawatu Old Girls' Association met for their Annual General Meeting on Saturday 31st October 2009.

Principal Julia Davidson and Alumnae Development Manager Kirsty Tikao were also invited and were delighted to attend.

After official business was concluded, President Majorie Law (student 1951-1954), Secretary Eleanor Carr (student 1953-1955) and Treasurer Esma Stephenson (student 1947-1951) lead the ladies in an enthusiastic rendition of the School song, followed by an equally joyful Happy Birthday for their oldest member Edna Whittaker (nee Burd) (student 1926-1929) who had celebrated her 97th birthday the day before.

Julia spoke to the Old Girls' of the school she leads today, many of the changes taking place and the challenges of meeting the needs of girls in an ever changing technological age. Julia provided an update on the new school building, including artistic impressions of what it will look like - which was greeted with much interest by those in attendance.

Just over 20 members of the association were at the AGM, where a fabulous lunch and afternoon tea was provided courtesy of the ladies themselves.

The association boasts an impressive tenure of 29 years, having been formed back in 1980, but they are always looking for new members to join them. Any Old Girls' living in the Otaki/

Fielding/Manawatu area who are interested in joining the group should contact Eleanor Carr for more details. They would love to hear from you!

Eleanor Carr

Secretary, Horowhenua Old Girls' Assn

Phone: 06 368 1519



In Memoriam

Verna Frances CLARK (Paul) 06/03/2009
Student 1956-1959

Jean Carlton FISK 01/04/2009
Student 1944-1946

Dorothy Ives TAYLOR-JONES 03/04/2009
Student 1933-1934

Muriel Isabel SHAW 17/04/2009
co-founder of Kapiti Old Girls Assn - Student 1928

Grace Dardanella JOHNSTONE (Kyle) 24/04/2009
Student 1929-1930

Shirley Grace NARIN (Binnie) 02/05/2009
Student 1935-1941

Mary Sutherland BUICK-CONSTABLE 08/06/2009
Student 1933-1936

Bessie Jean HONORE (Smith) (Cathie) 20/06/2009
Student 1934-1936

Audrey Lena Burness TOMKIES 26/06/2009
Student 1924-1926

Ngaire Jean HAYWARD (McIntosh) 27/06/2009
Student 1940-1942

Gweneth Valerie GILMOUR (Shapcott)
Student 1934—1936

Elaine MITCHELL 30/07/2009
Student 1970-1971

Joan Margaret BUTLER (Sheehy) 08/08/2009
Student 1955-1957

Diana Mae MCINTOSH 09/08/2009
Student 1950-1952

Judith Margaret DALE 09/09/2009
Student 1953-1957

Betty Olwyn WHITE 11/09/2009
Student 1932-1936

Helen Mary WILY, QSM 12/09/2009
Student 1933-1938

Margaret Normanby O'CONNOR (Morrison) 13/09/2009
Student 1943-1945

Valerie June NELSON 28/09/2009
Student 1947-1949

Janet Alice ZOHRAB (nee Cooper) 04/11/2009
Student 1957

Alumnae News & Events

Are our records correct?

Would you like to receive **School Ties** by email? If so please send an email to: wgc.alumnae@gmail.com

If your contact details have changed we would appreciate an update from you.

Do you have any news?

If you have any Old Girls' news that you would like considered for inclusion in the next issue of **School Ties**, or you have any feedback or suggestions around the Alumnae and its events, then we would like to hear from you.

Old Girls' Networks

Let us know what you are doing, events? news? We want to share news of Old Girls' groups for those who may wish to join you. Please contact **School Ties** at wgc.alumnae@gmail.com

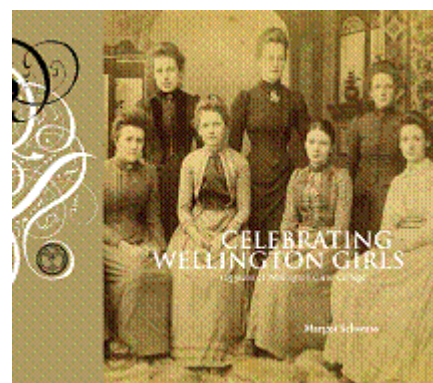
Kirsty Tikao
 Alumnae Development Manager
 Wellington Girls' College
 Pipitea Street
 WELLINGTON 6011

or phone the college on (04) 472 5743 for more information.

A Lasting Memento

Produced to mark the 125th Jubilee of Wellington Girls College in 2008, this stunning 280 page limited edition, titled *Celebrating Wellington Girls, 125 Years of Wellington Girls' College*, by Margot Schwass, combines historical commentary, personal memories, anecdotes and photography, both historic and contemporary. With contributions from past and current pupils, teachers and principals, this is both an 'official' account of the school and the world beyond its gates, and a rich record of individual experience. It is also a lasting memento for you as an Old' Girl.

This book along with commemorative key rings, bags and cards are available for purchase using the form below.



WELLINGTON GIRLS' COLLEGE JUBILEE MEMORABILIA

Capital Girls' Assoc. Inc. (Wellington Girls' College Jubilee Committee)	
If you would like to support the college by purchasing memorabilia, then please select from the items below:	

Please send me:	
<input type="checkbox"/> BAG \$4.00 now \$2.00	<input type="checkbox"/> CARDS (6 PER PACK) \$8.00
<input type="checkbox"/> KEY RING \$8.00 now \$4.00	
<input type="checkbox"/> HISTORICAL BOOK - Celebrating Wellington Girls', 125 years of Wellington Girls' College \$39.99 (+p&p within NZ \$5.00)	

Enclosed is by cheque for \$..... made payable to Capital Girls' Assoc. Inc. ; or I have deposited \$..... To Westpac Bank Account number: 030518-0299756-26	
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Please send your order to Capital Girls' Assoc. Inc. C/- Wellington Girls' College, Pipitea Street, Wellington 6011 GST No. 95-440-401	

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