

SPOTSWOOD COLLEGE

50th JUBILEE

1960-2009

EASTER 2010



Photo by Rob Tucker 25/03/09



www.spotswoodcollege.school.nz

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Welcome

Greetings all ex-Spotswoodians

On behalf of the 50th Jubilee organising committee, I extend a very warm welcome to all who have registered to celebrate this most significant milestone (toka nui) in the history of Spotswood College. A special welcome back to the 42 foundation students of 1960 and to those who have traveled from overseas (Australia(50), Thailand, USA(3), Canada, England(4), Scotland, Belgium, Chile) and from throughout New Zealand.

We hope that you all renew many old friendships, revive old memories, and most of all enjoy yourselves throughout the weekend. As you catch-up with your "old" classmates and friends, teachers and fellow staff members, I am sure you will all be reminded of just why Spotswood College was/is such a great place to experience your secondary school years.

Since the College opened with 139 third form (Year 9) students and 12 staff on 2nd February, 1960 it is estimated that approximately 12,500 students will have been enrolled at the College. Many of these students have gone on to achieve fame in numerous fields of endeavour both nationally and internationally. Similarly, many staff members have achieved highly in their chosen field. In some way, every student and staff member who has been associated with the College will have contributed in a small way to its growth and success.

You will all notice many of the physical changes that have taken place in and around the College campus. Many have been the results of the voluntary fund-raising efforts undertaken by students, staff, PTA members and the Board of Trustees. We acknowledge and thank those who have been responsible for these additions (e.g: Gymnasium, Swimming Pool, Beach Arena, etc). I sincerely wish to thank the small organising committee who have worked hard during the last two years to ensure that this weekend's celebrations are most successful and that you all re-discover those happy "Spotswoodian" memories.

Wishing you a safe return home and looking forward to seeing you again at the "60th Reunion" in 2020.

Phil Gayton ONZM
Chairman, 50th Jubilee organising committee



Hi folks, and welcome to the 50th Jubilee of Spotswood College!

Former students are coming from around New Zealand and overseas to attend this celebration of New Plymouth city's only co-ed secondary school.

From the time the college opened on 2 February 1960 with 139 third form students, its alumni have gone on to achieve both national and international success in business, sports, academia, science, the arts ... you name it, they've done it! And what a wonderful start they had to their later careers through the education they received from Spotswood College.

Today there are just under 1,000 students from years 9 to 13 in the school, learning the skills they'll need to forge their own paths in life.

I'd like to congratulate the organisers of this event as they have pulled together a great programme to celebrate this 50th Jubilee milestone. Joining in the celebration are former students from throughout New Zealand as well as from Australia, Thailand, USA, Canada, Scotland, England, Belgium and Russia – an international gathering to celebrate a truly wonderful college!

So welcome, everyone. I am sure you will have a fantastic time meeting up with old schoolmates and rekindling memories of your time at Spotswood College – and we look forward to another 50 years of great achievements from the school!

Peter Tennent
Mayor

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all people involved in the 50th Jubilee for Spotswood College. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I hope this will be a memorable occasion for all attending and that most of you encounter past friends and classmates.

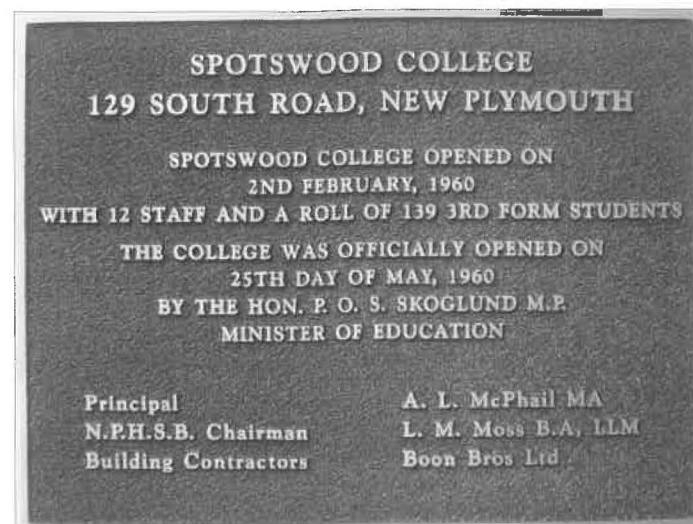
Well done to the Jubilee Committee for all their time and effort in organising this 50th Jubilee. I hope everyone enjoys the activities that are planned.

Good luck & thank you.

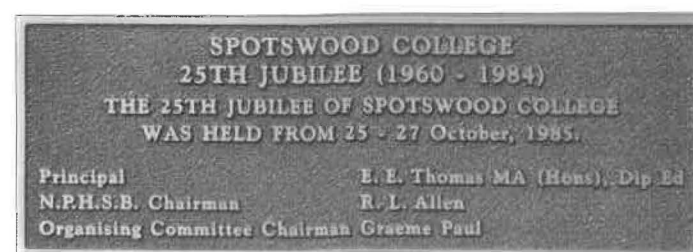
Martin Pearce
Chairperson, Board of Trustees



The Foundation Board



The Official Opening Plaque



The 25th Jubilee Commemorative Plaque

Programme

FRIDAY 2ND APRIL:

Registration packs will be available at the TSB Stadium from 1pm onwards

MEET & GREET/MIX & MINGLE

Venue: TSB Stadium
Time: 7.00pm - 2.00am
Cost: \$30 (Cash bar available)
Food: Finger food served from 8.30 - 11.30pm

SATURDAY 3RD APRIL:

Registration packs available from the College office from 8.30am

09.00am Tours of the College (from the Assembly Hall)
10.00am Official opening in the College Gymnasium
11.00am Photos - Various groups (times announced on day)
A4 Colour, mounted, payable on the day
12.30pm Lunch (Foodstalls available at the College)
1.30pm Staff, Ex-staff and Foundation students luncheon at Quality Hotel Plymouth International

Afternoon This is available for "Classes", "Year groups" and "Specific groups" to arrange their own get together, set a time & book a venue.

MIX & MINGLE & DANCE

Venue: TSB Stadium
Time: 8.00pm - 2.00am
Cost: \$35 (Cash bar available)
Music: The band is the Troubadors (aka The Hipnotics)
Food: Finger food served from 9.00pm - 12.00am

SUNDAY 4TH APRIL:

10.00am Church service (venue to be advised later)
1.00pm Sports events - Present day pupils vs ex-pupils
1.00pm: Basketball & Hockey
2.00pm: Volleyball & Football / Soccer
3.00pm: Rugby & Netball
Golf afternoon

VARIETY CONCERT

Venue: College Assembly Hall
Time: 7.00pm
No Cost: This is an opportunity for any ex-pupil performing artists - solo singers, bands, choirs, etc to perform on stage.



Stephen Jennings 1978

Introduction

They have starred on the big screen, climbed the highest mountain, written and sung their hearts out, helped save the world and also conquered it.

Spotswood College students and teachers have gone on to great things, living by the motto emblazoned below the school's red lion emblem – High Endeavour (Eke Matauranga).

The school opened on February 2, 1960, with 139 third-form students under the owl-like guardianship of principal Alex McPhail.

The name Spotswood was chosen to reflect the suburb of New Plymouth, which is probably named after Louisa Jane Spotswood, the wife of New Zealand's longest-serving Prime Minister, Richard John Seddon.

As New Plymouth's only co-ed high school, students flocked to the college. The roll steadily grew and in 1969, Spotswood was divided into East and West schools, virtually running two schools within a school.

At its height, in the mid-1970s, the roll rose to nearly 1500 students. These days, there are 965 students enrolled at the college, and 31 of those are international students.

There have been four principals at the college and a fifth is ready to take the helm. Alex McPhail retired at the end of 1977 and was replaced by Evan Thomas in 1978. Barry Finch took over in 1987 and, when he retired in 2002, Graeme McFadyen was appointed. He resigned at the end of 2009 to take up an overseas posting. On April 19, 2010, Mark Bowden becomes the new principal of Spotswood College, Te Kura Tuarua O Ngamotu.





School Principal

THE McPHAIL YEARS 1960-1977

Teachers who worked under the steady guidance of Spotswood College principal Alex McPhail are unanimous in their praise of him.

He's been described as a visionary, a hard task master, a passionate educationalist and a man open to ideas – if teachers could prove they would work. Some students saw him as a conservative disciplinarian and others say he was like a father figure. No matter what their views, he was a man who made a lasting impression.

Foundation teacher Carol Kenworthy (nee Scott) holds him in the highest esteem. "Alex McPhail was a very special man," she says. "He was serious and he was proper, generous and fun loving and I guess authoritarian – just a very fine man, I thought."

Daughter Anne Smillie says her father had a strong connection with his Scottish roots, which he spread into Spotswood.

"I can remember Dad sitting at our kitchen table when we lived at Upper Hutt before we came to Spotswood College, designing the crest for the college, in colour," she says. "He wanted it to have a Scottish lion on it."

Alex also gave a great deal of thought to the school motto. "He didn't want anything in Latin – he wanted one people understood immediately, which is why he chose, eventually, 'high endeavour'," she says.

For the 25th jubilee booklet, Alex said that not many teachers get the chance of being able to share in the establishment of a new school. "I count myself lucky to have had the opportunity. "Suffice to say that we did get on with the job and the years were notable for the rapid increase in numbers of pupils and staff, the presence of builders on the site every year and the increasing variety of activities inside and outside the classroom we became involved in," he wrote.

"Some of the educational developments which took place were important and fully in line with our aims. In 1963 we appointed a part-time guidance counsellor, Miss Emmie Cannell, and there were very few if any such in New Zealand at that time. She gave us all, both staff and pupils, wise advice and down-to-earth counsel. I believe her work paved the way for later expansion of guidance in schools.

"Work experience classes at the fourth then fifth form level were set up in the mid-sixties – a successful attempt at bringing school and work place into closer contact." Alex said the co-operation from local businesses that gave opportunities for work experience was outstanding. "The move was later extended to the sixth and seventh forms to give them better understanding of the jobs they expected to take after leaving school," he wrote.

"The roll climbed rapidly and by 1976 had reached 1474. Well before this staff became concerned about the size of the school and felt it could become too impersonal. In the mid-sixties, Mr H. W.



ALEX McPHAIL

Sayers, Regional Superintendent of Education, discussed with me the possibility of having the 'schools within a school' organisation where there would be two schools on the one campus sharing staff and accommodation but uniting on all occasions beyond the school gates. "After much discussion and research the Board agreed that the system be adopted. It was wise to have had such a length of time to consider the move as it meant that new buildings could be placed on the site in such a way that the two schools concept could be physically arranged – hence the placing of B Block and the new unit library.

"East and west schools, as they were named, each consisted of about 700 pupils. This had considerable success in combining the benefits of small schools with their more personal relationships between pupils and staff and the benefits of large schools with the amenities they were entitled to especially in buildings and equipment," he wrote.

"We also introduced vertical forms which saw pupils from third to seventh forms in the one group. There was something of value in having the newest third former in the same form as maybe the Head Girl or Head Boy. I felt this arrangement made for better relationships and more consideration for others.

"After the Educational Review of the early seventies a positive move was made to broaden the curriculum at all levels and to introduce five, one-hour periods each day instead of the usual seven. Also the school was chosen to have a pilot guidance network where personal guidance as well as vocational advice became available to all.

"Physically, the school has changed greatly since 1960. Additions to the original technical block of technical drawing rooms, a second woodwork shop and a second metalwork shop, art rooms and a sewing room have given us a fine complex which is used fully by Evening Classes as well as normal classes. As required, three two-storey blocks have been supplied, each consisting of twelve rooms including typing rooms and biology or general science laboratories. Further small blocks were added to these giving us more classrooms, team-teaching rooms, laboratories, and for the senior school specialist physics and chemistry laboratories.

"These buildings were provided by the Department. Two others came to us through the tremendous efforts of the Parent Teachers' Association and pupils of the school together with Departmental grants. I refer to the gymnasium and the cafeteria. These have immeasurably added to our facilities and we wonder now how we managed without them. By the time the building programme was completed to this stage we were among the largest schools in New Zealand – for what that is worth. The roll has fallen since 1976."

On the academic front, Alex wrote: "We have more than held our own within the province and probably further afield. The fact that Christina McPhail was our first scholarship winner is mentioned with due humility and fatherly pride, shared I know by Mr Doug Ball, for many years head of the mathematics and physics departments, when his son Rod was also successful later on.

"Every kind of sport has its place and to these we have added tramping, attending the Outdoor Pursuits Centre, joining the crew of the Spirit of Adventure and setting up trips to Curious Cove, the South Island, Rotorua and to Australia. Crusaders became firmly established, we support World Vision, assist in worthy appeals and the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme had large numbers interested in qualifying. Our first two gold awards went to Susan Turner and Ruth Ward.

"Drama and music have involved many of us, both staff as well as pupils," he wrote. He lists some of the productions, beginning with 'Pyramus and Thisbe' of 1960. Other shows were: 'The Winslow Boy', 'The Sound of Murder', 'Our Town', 'I Remember Mama', 'Trial by Jury', 'Tobias and the Angel', 'The happiest Days of Your Life', and 'Before Your Very Eyes'.

"Music began with class singing under the guidance of Mrs Nola Francis. This led to part singing, generally of hymns at assemblies once the hall was completed. Mr Frank Beevers, our first full-time teacher of music, was particularly concerned with building up the orchestra. In 1963 we began our long music and debating inter-school visits with Tawa College. Mr Guy Jansen and Miss Brigid McLafferty did so much to lift music in the school. Few of us will ever forget the fine six-part massed items from the 'Messiah', the magnificent singing of the madrigal groups and the pleasure we experienced as listeners. Mr Allan Purdy extended the scope of the orchestra and choirs and together with Mr Lionel Hall fostered the brass band until it became a real part of the musical education of the school.

"It did not take long for the school to become deeply involved in many sporting activities. We participated fully in inter-secondary meetings involving athletics, swimming, and cross-country running, played our part in summer and winter Saturday games, and when the gymnasium was completed added further to the list of sporting competitions. Inter-school visits have been enjoyed with Manurewa High School, Freyberg High School, Te Awamutu College, Tawa College, and Wanganui Boys College."

Alex paid tribute to the high-quality senior staff at Spotswood, including foundation teachers Alison Simpson and Terry Sweeney. "These two fine teachers did much to set the tone in the school, something that is hard to pinpoint but which is there all the time showing itself in attitudes and relationships between pupils and staff." That continued right through with senior staff Neville Northover, Alec Hutchinson and Janet Grant, plus many more.

"At a pre-assembly staff meeting a day or two before the 1977 prize-giving ceremony, Alec Hutchinson held me with his glittering eye and told me to stay put," Alex wrote. "Then entirely unexpectedly and I mean that, on behalf of the staff he presented me with 'the McPhail' kilt, a wonderful and memorable gift. It is now a family heirloom and I have worn it several times since."

Alex McPhail died on June 29, 1991. In 2003, his grandson Matthew, who also attended Spotswood College, wore the green McPhail kilt on his wedding day when he married fellow student Fleur Gaston.





School Principal

**THE THOMAS YEARS
1978-1987**

Spotswood College's second principal Evan Thomas is the man who brought back the four-house system.

"When I came to the college, I was conscious of its reputation for innovation in organisational ways – the two schools, the pilot Guidance Network, the pathfinding work exploration programmes – and I had no intention to change things," he wrote in a 1984 report for the school's 25th jubilee. This article is almost entirely based on that report.

"Nonetheless, the roll had already dropped from 1485 to 1278 and some subjects, eg French, were hard to sustain in both East and West," he said. "In altering the timetable to allow programme continuation, I inevitably brought about the unification of East and West into one school and consequently the re-establishing of four houses, this time named after four leading figures in the establishment of New Plymouth – Barrett (the Whaler), Atkinson (the landowner and political leader), Richmond (the pioneer family linked with the Atkinsons) and Darnell (the railway designing engineer)." Evan says the staff and students adapted well to these changes, and academic, cultural and sporting pursuits proceeded most commendably.

"Academic success by students has remained at its best level, with 1984 achieving particularly notable highs." There were two Scholarships, an 85% success rate by Form 7 in gaining either an A or B Bursary, and 65% of sixth formers gained University Entrance – the highest percentage since the school began.

There were physical changes in the school during Evan's time too. The music suite was completed in 1979, the three demountable classrooms came to and went from the lower field (1980) and the library foyer was extended both ways – north to make toilets and south to make an office for the head of English (1983).

"The art kiln was moved outside to a free-standing kiln-house (1984), the 700 tree pine forest was planted on spare land by Omata Road (1983), the gym foyer was extended and weight-training room built (1984), the old music room converted to a drama room (1981) and the swimming pool dug, poured and filtered in 1984." After many years of fundraising and preparation, the school pool was finally opened in 1985.

"The sporting and cultural areas in which Spotswood College continues to shine are volleyball, inter-secondary school swimming, dramatic performances and, in the last four years, a return to musical productions the last two being Gilbert and Sullivan's Trial by Jury and H.M.S. Pinafore," he wrote.

"In 1984 our concert band members won the district Westpac musical award. Those readers who espouse other sports or cultural activities can, most likely, claim grand achievements for them and they would be correct, for rugby, soccer, netball, badminton, hockey, tennis, cricket, softball, athletics, cross-country and



EVAN THOMAS

badminton all flourish at the school. "The distinctions gained by individuals over the years are too many to name but we are conscious and proud of them.

"It remains to comment on a favourite topic for most pupils and ex-pupils much of the time, viz the teachers. I have found the staff of Spotswood College to be an outstandingly warm, friendly, responsive and professional bunch of educators and straight New Zealand citizens (and I choose my words very carefully). Notables come, stay longer than most less notables, and eventually move on or retire. It says much for the quality of the staffing experience here that many of the departures are to retirement after a lengthy, enjoyable 'season' at Spotswood.

"For example, Messrs McPhail, Hutchinson, Greensill, Page, Sutcliffe and Mrs Emmett have seen their time out and Mr Chapple is soon to join them in an active New Plymouth community life," he wrote.

"Others have moved elsewhere to establish themselves but their 'immortality' won here exists in warm memories we have of them, viz George Proctor, Bill Crisp, Laurence Sunde, Mrs Harrison. Promotions in the service are a talking-point and the big step taken by Barry Finch into the deputy principal's position is notable and pleasing as is Ernie Priestley's rise to full-time counsellor and H.O.D. careers guidance.

"We continue to be blessed with outstanding office and clerical staff in the mould of Jan Morris (they broke the mould after Harry Russell was born) and we find Denise Sallaway, Jolie Richings and Anne Ward carrying on their excellent traditions."

Evan Thomas resigned from Spotswood College in 1987. Evan, aged 75, is retired and lives in Waikanae with his wife, Shirley. These days he is a volunteer driver for the Cancer Society and runs a volunteer show on Access Radio. The show is about the English language and is called May I Have a Word? He is also a volunteer at the Office for Senior Citizens in the Ministry of Social Development.



School Principal

**THE FINCH YEARS
1987-2002**

Barry Finch says that becoming the third principal of Spotswood College in 1987 was one of his proudest moments. But his call to the college came many years before.

After getting a Bachelor of Science degree in maths and physics at Victoria University, Barry returned to his home town to teach.

"I was in my third year of teaching at Stratford Technical High School when I got a call from Alex McPhail and he gave me an offer I couldn't refuse."

So in February 1969, he joined the staff of Spotswood College and stayed for the next 34 years. "People kept giving me new jobs and new responsibilities." As well as teaching, Barry was heavily involved in marking School Certificate (now NCEA). "I was always busy and I had the advantage of working with some talented and gifted teachers," he says, naming John Barrowman, Doug Ball and Terry Guy. "There are many many more."

The students he taught were also top-class. Barry says year after year, he taught maths and physics to wave after wave of intelligent and focused young people intent on becoming engineers, scientists and doctors. "There were two that stood out. One was a young man who had an incredible intuition in mathematics that I've not met before or since," Barry says.

The teenager carried around a little notebook containing famous unsolved mathematical problems, some dating back centuries. "He had managed to find what he thought were solutions, to the point I had to send him away to the University of Canterbury to see if he had found a solution." Barry says the academics could not determine whether or not he had solved the famous problems. "The only thing they could determine was they couldn't find a flaw in his argument."

The other extraordinarily gifted student did scholarship in the sixth form by himself and ended up doing a PhD at Princeton University. "I picked those two out, but every year there was a whole bunch of enormously talented kids – there were gazillions of them," he says. "It gave you a sense of pride that you could be part of their life."

As time went by, Barry stopped teaching at junior level, instead focusing solely on the seniors, especially the seventh form. "I taught maths and calculus even when I was principal."

Over the years he was also involved in coaching soccer and his great love, basketball. As with his maths teaching, Barry continued to coach the speedy court sport while leading the school.

His rise to the helm came in steps. He became deputy principal in 1984, acting principal in February 1987 when Evan Thomas resigned and in September 1987 became principal, remaining in the top job until his retirement at the end of 2002.



BARRY FINCH

There are three major achievements he is particularly proud of during his tenure as principal – revitalising the performing arts, strengthening the Maori culture programme and expanding the special needs department.

When Barry took over as principal the music programme and performance side was dropping away. So, he took a three-month sabbatical to look at music programmes in the United States. On his return, he worked with music teachers Margaret Purdy and Don Boyd to develop a programme whereby students were given instruments and taught en masse. From this came concert bands, including the school's jazz band, Hatrix, which is still going today. "Not only were they able to play at a performance level, but an enormous number of people left being able to play instruments," he says.

Another move was to strengthen the school's Maori culture and Te Reo department. With the help of Nicola Ngawera and Kui Pirikahu, a school-based marae was put in place at the end of 1990. The whare, called Whaitata, is adjacent to the school gym.

"As a consequence, we started forming stronger relationships with the Ngati te Whiti hapu."

Staff members were also encouraged to learn about Maori culture and a teacher-only day involved all staff visiting Parihaka, a Taranaki village famous for its passive resistance stance. "That was a very good experience. The overall result of that was that the staff had the chance to absorb and learn a little about a part of history that most people didn't know about."

Another major learning curve happened when Roselyn Special School closed in the mid-1990s. Spotswood then had an influx of students with disabilities, some of them quite severe. To cope, the college built a new special needs facility on the bottom field. "When we built it we made a conscious decision to put the facility right smack in the middle of the school so they could not be tucked away in the corner," he says.



Barry says that when it opened, it was the biggest school facility for special needs in the country. "It gave access to every child in New Plymouth to come and take as full a part in education as they were able in a normal environment." Physical therapists, teachers, sign language and Braille experts were employed by the school, along with teachers, including Barry's wife, Corrina, who became head of the department. The able students in the school were both accepting and supportive of their disabled peers.

"Bunches of kids learnt to sign – how could you not be proud of that?" he says. "They learnt one of the greatest life lessons – tolerance and respect for all people."

The facility didn't just focus on children with disabilities. "It was open to everyone in the school. It was OK, if you needed help, this is where you went."

Also under Barry's leadership the model of the school was changed and a property manager and a business manager were employed. Parallel with this, board member Paul Goldsmith drew up a blueprint for ongoing physical renewal of the school and that document proved invaluable for Barry and the board during his whole time as principal. The piece de resistance of that upgrade programme was the Finch technology block. "That happened after I left," Barry says of the building named in his honour. "That gave me a nice warm feeling." But it wasn't always that way.

"The job of principal was very demanding job and early on I had some pressures and issues around the school and it meant it was 24-7 and it took a heavy toll on me."

During his first year at the helm, two Rotary exchange students at the school were on their way to Wellington when they were involved in a car crash. A Swedish student was killed and an American student was badly injured. "Losing students – those are really low points," he says. Another was watching the roll drop.

In 1976, the last of the baby boomers pushed the roll up to 1474, and after that it gradually declined. By the 1990s, the roll was down to between 800 and 900 students. Barry says he was quite sensitive about the falling numbers. "I think the people of the town never quite realised what the school had to offer," he says.

"One of the board members used to say Spotswood College was the best-kept secret in New Plymouth."

He pays tribute to the many board members who gave their time and expertise to the school, including John Eaddy, Elaine Gill, Doug Hislop and, of course, Paul Goldsmith. "Every board member brought something to it."

Finally, Barry talks with emotion about his family. "I could not have done what I did there without Corrina. She's the one who kept me going through all this and never made any fuss and just got on with life," he says of the girl he fell in love with when they were both students at Stratford Technical High School.

"Both of my children went through Spotswood College and it was the best decision I ever made for them," he says.

Son Greg is now an orthopaedic surgeon in Auckland (see 1980s student profiles) and daughter Michelle became a genetic researcher and then teacher. She now lives in Fiji with her husband and children.

"It's pretty cool that you can have your whole family at a school – and it worked," he says.

After retiring, Barry spent six years as a New Plymouth District councillor.

Virginia Winder



School Principal

THE MCFADYEN YEARS 2003-2009

It was a question of age that set Graeme McFadyen on the path to Spotswood College.

In 2002, his daughter Hannah asked the then deputy principal (DP) of Hamilton's Fairfield College if he'd ever considered taking the helm of a high school. Graeme admitted the thought had passed through his mind now and then. "Well, if you're thinking of it, you'd better hurry up, otherwise you'll be too old," Hannah told her dad.

The silver-haired educator took her words to heart and, in September that same year, was appointed principal at Spotswood College. He began the job the following February, aged 56.

He didn't start alone. Hannah entered Year 13 at the school and within the first half hour of doing peer support training made a friend. Seven years later, Hannah was a bridesmaid at that same young woman's wedding. "Why I'm saying that is because kids at Spotswood are pretty friendly towards outsiders," Graeme says.

Opting to lead New Plymouth's only mixed-sex school was a matter of principle for the new principal. "I've only ever taught at co-ed schools. Co-ed and proud," he says.

His CV includes six years as deputy principal at Fairfield College, two years as DP at Otorohanga College and three years as DP and associate principal at Bayfield High School in Dunedin.

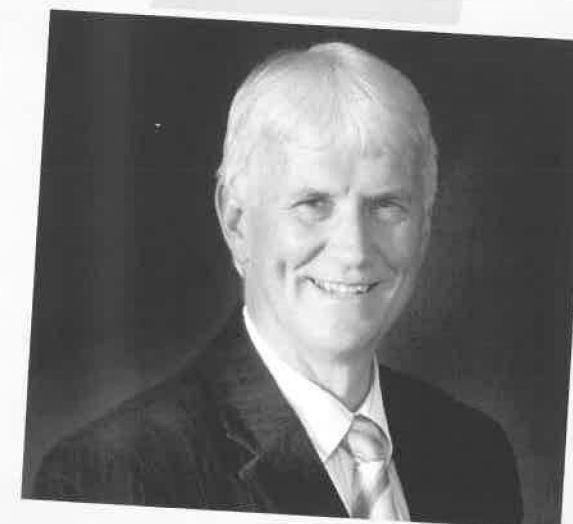
Graeme and wife Jan believe that while academic studies are the focus of education, school plays other important roles.

"A key part is the social educational opportunities that young people can have to interact with a range of people based on the concept that we should be preparing kids for the world they will meet and it's a co-educational world out there."

All three of the McFadyen children are the products of co-ed schools. The eldest, Ryan, is a teacher, who taught maths and science at Spotswood for three years during his dad's reign, son Jordan is a broadcaster and Hannah is a beauty therapist.

When Graeme first started at the school, he didn't rush in to make changes. Instead, he took a watch-listen-and-learn approach to find out about the culture of the college and to work with the structures already in place. His went in with the aim of making school a better education experience for students and teachers.

One of his goals was to lift academic achievement levels, beginning with publicly stating this plan in school assemblies and other forums, and visualising how this could be achieved. Believing that young people and teachers thrive on praise and encouragement, Graeme introduced a positive reinforcement programme for the junior school. It was first called credits and then pride points, which



GRAEME MCFADYEN

Photo: Pip Guthrie, Pippphoto

"I have a concept that life is all about attitude and that if kids can have a positive attitude and are rewarded for that maybe it will change their attitude towards education."

He also encouraged staff to be pro-active in their teaching styles and look at how they were doing things in the classroom.

Next, Graeme looked at how to lift student performance and expectations under the NCEA system. He introduced the academic gold, silver and bronze medals, to tie in with the Olympics. "We were trying to get the kids to think, 'I'm going for gold'." He also worked on a concept called BTB. "Better than before – and I pushed that a lot."

Marketing Spotswood College was another McFadyen vision. "Looking at the future, and realising that if we were a college of 730, we would be restricted in the range of options and quality of opportunities we could offer the kids, I embarked on a rather ambitious little marketing programme."

Full-colour advertisements starring photos of students appeared on the back of buses, outside the school and popped up before films showing at New Plymouth's movie theatre complex. A plane towing a Spotswood banner flew over Yarrow Stadium during a rugby match and radio promos voiced by students were all part of Graeme's "co-ed and proud" campaign.

The next move was more personal. Graeme and his crew visited contributing schools, met with principals and PTAs to share the message that good things were happening at Spotswood College. He also introduced a meet-and-greet plan for prospective students. This meant that either Graeme or a senior staff member had a half-hour on-site interview with every Year 8 child who would be coming to the school. These moves helped increase student numbers, and since 2006 the roll has been hovering around the 1000 student mark.

During Graeme's seven years at the college, he has seen between 150 and 200 students changing from other New Plymouth high schools to Spotswood. "We get a lot of students transferring in Year 12 and 13, because parents want their kids to have a co-ed experience as a way of preparing them for the world of tertiary and employment. That's been quite a significant trend for us." Intakes of Year 8 students have also increased to about 200 each year, with a high of 240 in 2005/2006.

The roll has also been boosted by the 40 to 45 international students, who pass through the school every year. These people from all over the globe are helping to broaden the world view of Spotswood students, Graeme says. This diverse environment is a key component at the college and is now reflected in new vision and mission statements, written in conjunction with the school's innovative board of trustees.

The vision: "Helping build great people."

The mission: "Encouraging pride, achievement and respect in a diverse, inclusive and co-educational environment."

Graeme says the school includes a wide range of people, especially in the vertical forms.

"I tell parents, they've got girls and boys, they've got all age groups, rich and poor kids, Kiwi and international, Maori and Pakeha – and that's what you face when you're out in the big wide world."

The physical environment of the school has also been improved. In 2004 and 2005 there was a big paint job and the school got new IT provisions and sunshade sails. Funding for these was helped by the TSB Community Trust and the Yarrow family. Also in 2005, there was a massive upgrade of the staffroom and administration block. "The public entry has been hugely improved, based on the concept that we welcome people in here. We want people to feel good coming in here and think, wow, this has a nice feel."

These upgrades have a great deal to do with the perseverance and capability of then deputy principal Brett Sloan, he says. The physical improvements help provide the framework for people achievements.

"I'm really proud to be able to say that we have developed hugely in the area of performing arts. That's been a focus, partly because I have seen how it's helped our own three kids," he says.

"One of my two main themes is creativity and communication. I think they are the two main skills that young people need in the 21st century." Graeme believes Spotswood College does well in helping to develop its students into good citizens who can work well with others and have a good set of values. That's the legacy he wants to be remembered for: "I tried to work with kids and teachers to make a better world, no matter how corny that may sound."

Not everything has been wonderful during his years at the school. There have been challenging moments, especially relating to difficult students. But the toughest times of all have been dealing with the deaths of five students and two staff members. "But that's shown the character of the Spotswood College family.

The wonderful support and wonderful love and people's goodwill have shone through in those bleak moments, typified by the community spirit with the passing of Melissa Long."

Maori department head Karen Wano and English department head Kyle Gilmore also died during Graeme's time. "Those have been substantial events in the group feeling of our teachers."

Another low point was the arson attack on the Year 13 common room in June 2009. The two-year-old building worth about \$65,000 was destroyed by the fire.

But the good times far outweigh the bad. Attending sports and performance events have been a highlight for Graeme, who was always spied on the sideline or in the audience watching Spotswood kids in action. "I've really loved all those experiences and I'll really miss that part of my job."

He's also seen young people go from strength to strength in their academic and personal lives. One girl who started at Spotswood by spending time in the school's activity centre for the more troubled students ended up as a prefect. She is now studying to be a teacher. He can think of others who have turned their lives around through sheer perseverance, of students who have achieved scholarships and five teachers who have gone on to become deputy principals.

"I'm proud of the greater acceptance of this college in the community. I'm proud of culture we have got here, which is a very caring, warm and friendly culture. Most people enjoy coming into this college," he says.

At the end of November 2009, Graeme left Spotswood for a job advising principals in Qatar in the Middle-East. He and Jan are looking on it as their OE.

"I leave feeling content and happy with all that we have achieved," he says. "Spotswood College – co-ed and proud."

Virginia Winder



STAFF PROFILE: 1960-1963

Poetry lessons with a young teacher called Carol Scott turned into a musical affair.

The Spotswood College foundation teacher was employed firstly as a cooking and sewing teacher, but also had to give lessons in physical education, social studies and English. "That was really being thrown in the deep end."

That was especially true when it came to teaching poetry, so she sought expert help from fellow teacher Terry Sweeney. "I said, 'I can't do it'. He said 'songs are poetry – sing the songs'." So she did, although 50 years on she can't recall what songs she chose. "I remember he stood outside the door and listened to me."

Carol says those early days at Spotswood were scary. "It was my first teaching appointment. I was all of 20 and although I was trained and thought I knew quite a lot, I quickly found there was a lot I didn't know."

Everything was a learning curve for the young woman, including working with teenage Maori girls, many from the Rangiatea hostel next door to the school. "Because I came from south Otago, I had had little or no contact with Maori or Polynesian people." Carol taught some of the girls in the classroom and got to know others as coach of the netball team.

"They were free spirits and that was a bit difficult because they were hard to coach. They did their own things. If it worked it was great, and if it didn't they laughed."

A few days before the students started, Carol remembers unpacking boxes and boxes of equipment for the home economics room. "Each box was like looking in Aladdin's cave – I had no idea what was in each one," she says. "It was like setting up house."

The school was still being built in those early days. There was a block of classrooms near where the gym is now, the tech block was complete and was the hub of the school, and the hall was in the throes of being erected. It was completed near the end of 1960. That meant there were always labourers and carpenters on site. "I remember the builders were a very cheeky lot," she says.

She rode to the college each day on a maroon-coloured Vespa and wore twin sets, which she sewed herself. And, with the support of principal Alex McPhail and her teaching colleagues, Carol flourished. "They knew I was young and they would go out of their way to make things easy for me."

When Carol turned 21, the staff organised a birthday party for her at the McPhail residence. "George Procter, who was the woodwork teacher, made the traditional key of the door." She also made firm friends with science and maths teacher Alison Simpson. "I stayed in touch with her until she died a few years ago in her 90s." Carol says



CAROL KENWORTHY
(nee. Scott)

the teachers also got to know the pupils well. When she returned to New Plymouth 25 years later, Carol says she renewed friendships with three former students and fellow surf lifesavers, Glenice Lile (nee Nickson), Suzanne Eagles (nee Yates) and Raewyn McLean (nee Dryden). "We meet for coffee from time to time," she says.

"It's also been a pleasure meeting people in the street and have them say, 'you used to teach me'."

After three years' teaching at Spotswood College, Carol got married and moved to Hawera with husband David Kenworthy. Soon after, they moved to Whangarei.

Because she focused on being a mum to her three children, Carol only taught part-time after that. When she did work at other schools, she says Spotswood was always her measuring stick.

She knows the comparisons aren't fair because starting out at a brand new high school was a special situation. "It was a small staff, so it was like a family and every year it grew a little bit bigger," Carol says. "It gave me, along with the students, the chance to learn from the experiences of the other staff and to grow with the school. The students were reminded regularly that what they did and achieved in that first year was setting the foundations and the traditions for the school for the future."

Carol says that as third formers, the students were given opportunities that their counterparts in larger schools would not have had. These included going away on sports trips and becoming involved in drama productions. "That's why I think those students have such a special bond."

The foundation staff members at Spotswood College in 1960 were: Fulltime, principal Alex McPhail, teachers George Procter, Phelps Deerson, Tom Fitzgibbon, Terry Sweeney, Alison Simpson, Carol Scott, Joan Foster (who arrived later because of illness); part-time, Beatrice Emmett, Nola Francis, Betty Alley and Isobel Johnston (who had filled in for Miss Foster).



STAFF PROFILE: 1961-1988

The 27 years Don Frank spent teaching at Spotswood College were his happiest.

"Looking back on my life now, I would say those were probably the best years of my life even though I didn't appreciate it at the time."

During his time at the college, Don taught geography, was head of the social studies department and was a deputy principal in charge of East School. Once he also taught fifth form English, which he found quite a challenge, and another time he took a fifth form history class. "I actually got my MA in history, but I preferred to teach geography because it was more down to earth to non-academic kids—I tried to make it that way," he says.

One of the highlights was taking a group of fifth formers on an annual geography trip to the South Island during the August school holidays. Don remembers one over-night ferry voyage from Wellington to Lyttelton with some bemusement. "I was in a six-berth cabin with some of the boys and this was about after 10 o'clock and I was feeling a bit tired and stropky and this voice boomed out of the darkness, 'I wonder where old Frank is'. I said, 'he's straight above you. Shut up and get to sleep'. He must have got quite a shock," he chuckles.

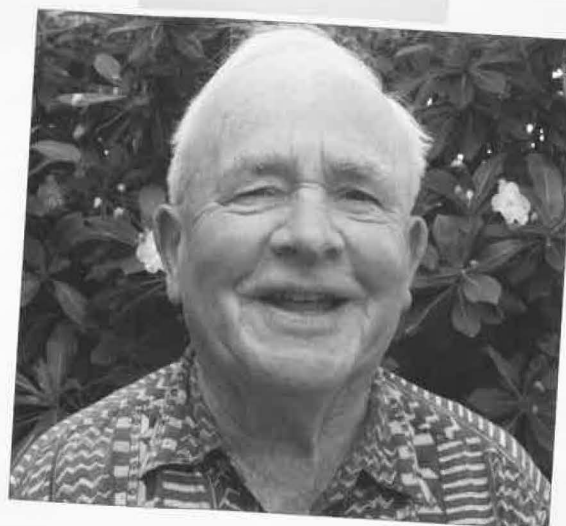
On those trips, the students visited tourist spots, including Queenstown and Wanaka, plus looked at geographical features like the Southern Alps. "For a lot of them (the students), it was probably one of the highlights of their school career."

At Spotswood, Don says he was a tough task master, but makes no apologies for that. "I thought that was part of my job to get the best I could out of the kids I taught. I believe that's the secret to good discipline – being well prepared and trying to give kids things that they can see some relevance in."

Before taking up his New Plymouth post, Don spent three years teaching at Rongotai College in Wellington. During his last year there he was on the national geography marking panel, "and that helped tremendously in my teaching". It also helped the School Certificate students at Spotswood, including one girl who scored 97 per cent in her geography exam. "I must admit, it does give you a healthy glow to see your kids do well."

As well as being a classroom teacher, he was also head of the department. Being an HOD in his early 30s was thoroughly satisfying for Don, who enjoyed working with such able teachers as Charles Gill (history) and Trevor Lanning (geography).

Don himself went to New Plymouth Boys' High School, but says that he opted to teach at Spotswood because, when he started in 1961, it was new and exciting.



DON FRANK

"I consider myself fortunate that I did most of my teaching under Alex McPhail, as he was an outstanding principal who had great integrity and encouraged you in your career."

As a result, Don rose through the ranks, although he was not so enamoured with being a deputy principal and head of East School (1976-79). "When I had been in the job a few months, sitting in my office shuffling around bits of paper and chasing up truancy and whacking backsides, I started to ask myself 'is this why I slogged my guts out for four years at university to get a degree?'."

When the school roll dropped and the two-school system disappeared, Don was more than happy to return to the classroom and his true calling – teaching. "Funnily enough, I had wanted to be a teacher right back in primary school days at Central School."

That dream led him to Spotswood, where young teachers were expected to coach sport and so Don was given a rugby team to nurture.

"The first Saturday it was a rainy day and I assumed the rugby would have been cancelled, so I didn't turn up, and on Monday I had half a dozen angry players on my doorstep." They wanted to know why he didn't show. "I didn't realise at that stage that if rugby was cancelled every rainy day in Taranaki you wouldn't have any rugby in the winter time. So that only happened once, needless to say."

Don learnt the ropes and spent nearly 30 years at Spotswood, teaching generations of students. "I got pretty used to kids coming up to me and saying, 'please sir my dad says you taught him and you whacked his backside'. My comment invariably was, 'it probably served him right'," he grins.

"I still run into a lot of ex-pupils, especially women, and they are the ones who seem to be pleased to see me." While his hair has turned white and is sparser, "Mr Frank", still looks the same and his dry humour is still intact. In his 80s now, he looks back with contentment: "If I had my life over, I wouldn't change much."

Virginia Winder



STAFF PROFILE: 1964-1985

Three ground-breaking teaching programmes began life at Spotswood College back in the 1960s.

Leading the way was teacher Rod Greensill, who helped develop remedial and accelerate teaching programmes, along with a work experience scheme. The latter has evolved into the Gateway programme, now run in high schools throughout New Zealand after a successful trial at the college in 2001. "What started as a small scheme at Spotswood College has become part of the national psyche," Rod says.

But it was an interest in children with learning difficulties that first lured Rod away from Okato District High School to Spotswood, a new high school with an inspiring principal.

"The beauty of Spotswood College was that it had probably the most innovative principal I've ever met," he says. "Alex McPhail was like a sponge; he simply wanted to soak up ideas that would make his school a great school."

If teachers thought through ideas fully and took them to the principal as a proposal, he would look at them seriously. "If he could see the benefit of it and he could see how it would fit into the school curriculum and it didn't disrupt the running of the school in any way, he was always thumbs up," Rod says. One of those proposals was to establish a class for students with learning difficulties.

In 1964, during his first year at Spotswood, Rod spent three months at the University of Queensland in Brisbane studying remedial and slow-learning children. Armed with a Diploma in Special Education, he returned to Spotswood and put together a third form class of students who needed extra help. "These were just ordinary kids whose intellectual and mental skills were behind the norm, if you like." Rod taught them all the core subjects, but they went off to other classes for technical and vocational subjects.

In the following years, third, fourth and fifth form classes were put in place for these students. Some of these students improved so much they were able to return to the regular school stream. "Then the kids who didn't go back into the normal stream we were able to at least believe that they were leaving school with basic skills which would allow them to cope in society." In line with this, Rod helped develop work experience schemes, so these young people could spend one day a week working in a career they were interested in.

Between 1966 and 1969, Spotswood put 73 students through the work experience programme and of that group, 49 students (67%) landed permanent jobs with their pre-vocational employers. This scheme was so successful that in the 1970s it was extended to the senior school, where students could spend one afternoon a week for half the year doing work experience.

Rod also organised career days, which involved young people listing



ROD GREENSILL

their dream jobs and the school finding appropriate people to speak to them.

"I think we were the only school that ever put on that type of careers day," he says. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Rod was seconded to the Ministry of Education to assist schools around the country to set up career programmes.

Meanwhile, the remedial learning programme was also extended to the greater school. "There were still a lot of kids – and this included senior students – who were having difficulties coping in the classroom, particularly with subjects like English." Some students, who were gifted in maths, physics and chemistry, failed English exams because they had no understanding of emotional language. "We came up with a scheme whereby I trained a large number of parents and interested members of the public in helping kids with remedial reading and how to cope with, and develop, the skills that allowed them to be successful in subjects like English."

In 1967, Rod also pushed for gifted students to be extended. "We were one of the first schools in New Zealand to ever establish accelerate classes for students who were at the other end of the IQ echelon." Subject teachers identified these students and they were placed in extension classes for some subjects. "Bert Mills was one of the guys who really took control of that."

Rod says that in some cases the gifted young people were streamed into special mathematics or physics classes. Other times, students were put up into more senior classes for some subjects and there were also lunchtime programmes to extend students.

Other changes involved the school's size and Rod's role. In 1970, when he was appointed the school's guidance counsellor, the oil industry began to mushroom and so did the number of students. "We were the second largest secondary school in New Zealand and that's when the school went to the East/West and senior concept." By the time Rod left in 1985 the roll had dropped to about 1100.

"From a personal point of view, they were some of the happiest times of my life because I worked with wonderful pupils and wonderful teachers," he says.

Virginia Winder 15



STAFF PROFILE: 1964-1983

The man given the task of "lord high executioner" at Spotswood College had the nickname TT2 Hutch.

Before giving the cane, deputy principal Alec Hutchinson would always talk to the boy in the firing line to find out details of his "crime". "I never caned a person first time up unless I'd actually caught them myself doing something. It was like the American system – three strikes and you're out."

If it was a minor offence, the lad would inevitably be sent out to collect ice cream sticks. "I used to say 'I want a hundred by the end of lunch-time'. I used to put them into the labs. We used to use them as splints when lighting the Bunsen burners."

While the TT2 stick quest kept the school clean and the labs equipped, it provided others with a dodgy income. "One or two of the more entrepreneurial students were gathering them up and putting them in a locker and you could buy 100 TT2 sticks," he says. "We found out who it was and emptied their lockers."

In 1989, six years after his retirement, corporal punishment became illegal in New Zealand schools.

Dishing out discipline was only part of Alec's job at Spotswood. He was also involved in the day-to-day running of the school, putting out the daily notices, and planning the year's events, including sports and music exchanges.

Alec spent half of his working life at Spotswood, moving from teaching science at Paeroa College to the city where he and wife Margaret spent their honeymoon in 1952. A dozen years after that romantic holiday, the no-nonsense teacher found his way back to the place with Pukekura Park at its heart.

"When I landed there (at Spotswood), it had about 380 pupils, but the tone of the school was fabulous." A lot of that came from principal Alex McPhail, who was "a great encourager" of both staff and students. "He could be a real disciplinarian too if he had to be. He had that knack."

In those early years at the college, Alec helped teacher Guy Jansen stage musical productions. Guy was the musical maestro and Alec did the dramatic work. He remembers the first show he helped with was called Trial by Jury.

Another highlight was when the roll rose and in 1969 the school was split into East and West. "I got East School – that was really fabulous. I was allowed, within reason, to try out a number of ideas that had been going around in my head." One of those was to introduce a system to get third and fourth form students to work all the way through the year and not just swot for exams. To determine how well students did in a year, their term work was worth 40 per cent and the exam 60 per cent, which in many ways was like a forerunner of today's NCEA system. Alec also decided that promotion to the next year should not be automatic.



ALEC HUTCHINSON

If students could not get an average of 35% in their exams, he made appointments to talk to them and their parents. "In some cases we simply changed their courses – and that made a difference. So they were doing things they were capable of doing, or wanting to do."

One boy who changed into the engineering course found his niche and excelled, going on to gain an apprenticeship. The same happened for a girl who changed from the academic to the commercial stream. "In a couple of years she got herself a good job." On the odd occasion the student was encouraged to redo a year before going up.

Keeping the students busy during the breaks was another East School initiative. There were lunchtime concerts that cost two cents to attend, and outside, bumble puppy (swing ball) was introduced and four square lines drawn up.

Having East and West school also enabled those in the junior school to become leaders. "Give people responsibility and by and large it works. There's no doubt about it, success breeds success."

In 1976, the senior positions were re-arranged and Alec was appointed associate principal and Janet Grant became deputy principal, so they were no longer associated with East and West. But when the roll dropped and the schools-within-a-school system was abandoned they went back to their original roles.

"I enjoyed thoroughly my years at Spotswood," he says. "We had lots of fun." He remembers characters like 1976 head boy Rodney Fraser who, on one occasion, dressed in black shorts, bush singlet and gumboots to emulate comic farmer Fred Dagg. Being co-ed was another plus, which is why his own boys – Richard, Timothy and Ian – all attended the school.

Since Alec retired in 1983, he's found other challenges. For 20 years he was secretary of St John Ambulance in New Plymouth, he is an active member of St Chad's Anglican Church and is a volunteer at Pukeiti. "John Lovell and I work up at Pukeiti every Thursday – weather permitting," he says.

Virginia Winder



STAFF PROFILE: 1966-1987

Spotswood College head mistress Janet Grant was a small woman with a huge presence.

Even though she's still alive and enjoying tramping and travelling, "Miss Grant", declined to be interviewed.

Former students and staff share their memories of this gutsy woman, who has touched so many lives.

Teacher Dot Andrews said Janet had the school at heart.

"She was dedicated to her job. She would bat for the underdog insofar as giving support and help for those who had lesser opportunities and she still had high expectations."

She was also big on having pride in appearance. "One of her favourites was correct uniform, even to the length of the skirt," Dot says.

Former student Jackie Burton (nee Sparkes) agrees. "She was fussy about uniform – length of skirts, tie straight, hair tied up, etc and she was renowned for peering through her blinds in her office at people passing by and calling out to them. So much so, her blinds had a permanent kink in them."

Miss Grant was first at school in the morning and last to leave. "In fact that Ford Escort was always in the carpark."

Jackie says the head mistress also had a tremendous enthusiasm for outdoor adventure. "She never missed a tramp and was always at the back, not that she wasn't fit but she always liked to jolly along the students who were tired." While she had a hard exterior, Miss Grant could be extremely caring if someone had a problem. "She was very fair."

Another ex-student Irena Brooks (nee Hobo) singles out Miss Grant as one of the stand-out staff members at Spotswood. "She had quite a positive influence on me and I treasure the interest she took in us, making sure we didn't go off the rails when our parents divorced. She was delightful," says Irena, who was at the school in the 1970s with twin sister Julia.

"I saw the soft side of her when she was pinning my prefect badge on in the seventh form and she had tears in her eyes; I think she was so chuffed," says Irena.

Deputy principal Alec Hutchinson says that it appears hindsight has been a wonderful thing in relation to Miss Grant. "There seemed to be girls who did not like her, but when you spoke to them once they had left school, they thought she was the best thing since sliced bread; they were glad she had pulled them up."

Another ex-student Pip Guthrie says she never had a problem with



JANET GRANT

Miss Grant, who went to school with her mother. "There was always a twinkling of 'I know who you are, but I won't give you any favouritism'."

However, the school mistress would help deserving students reach their goals. Pip remembers how she helped one of her friends get into nursing training. "She said 'I'll write you a letter' and she did." That student is now a qualified nurse.

Pip says Miss Grant was also famous for her eagle eyes. "She had a thing where she could spot a glint of jewellery from 30 metres."

Elemeno P drummer Scotty Pearson had her as teacher in the fifth form. "She's the one that made me pass English at School C because she was so tough."

WITT journalism tutor Robin Martin learnt just how tough when he had her for sixth form English. "She kicked me out of English for doing my beautifully researched and delivered speech on the Sex Pistols," he says.

He spent the rest of the year working alone. "I studied English like I never had before, just to spite her and increased my English mark from an average 55 to 60 to up in the 80s, and it laid the foundation for my journalism career today."

There are hundreds of others who remember the sternness and kindness of Miss Grant, and she does enjoy meeting them in the street.

In the 25th jubilee booklet she wrote:

"...I should know most of my ex-pupils, but if you've changed and I don't remember you at first sight, say hullo and see what memories come through. Put me to the test – most of you did when you were at school, remember?"

Virginia Winder 17



STAFF PROFILE: 1969 - Current

For more than 40 years, Dot Andrews has been inspiring young people at Spotswood College.

The enduring Spotswood physical education teacher still takes some sports classes, but her main role is as Year 10 dean.

"Of course now I'm teaching the next generation," she says. When students ask what their parents were like as students, Dot has a standard reply. "The answer is always 'good'. If you really stop and think about it, you know there's good in everyone, it's just a matter of finding it."

One of her early role models was Spotswood's first principal Alex McPhail. "He was sincere; he had all students' interests at heart. He had high expectations and values. He was hard working and expected staff to be likewise," Dot says.

"I'll never forget one of his favourite things was walking into a classroom and saying, 'Give me a number from 1 to 25'. This student would say number 10. He would go '1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 – show me your homework'. Students always got their homework done."

Others trained hard in their sports. "We have had a hell of a lot of good kids going through school sport." She says many have gone on to be named in national teams, including Jackie Clark, who was in the New Zealand women's cricket team from 1984 to 1992.

One year, Dot played cricket in the Spotswood College women's cricket team. "I scored the first century in Taranaki women's cricket." She was also a top hockey player, but retired from the game in 1980 and took up golf.

Her highlights at Spotswood have been around coaching sports teams and seeing youngsters improve, succeed and enjoy competing.

"If they don't enjoy, they are not going to succeed. I like to see I can make a difference just by working with the students. I was firm but fair; I had a joke with them."

She remembers one rain-soaked sixth form accrediting camp down the coast when humour and a bit of bribery saved the day. Dot had borrowed a whitebait net from an Okato woman and had been secretly catching the fishy delicacies, but was caught white-handed by a couple of female students. She told them to keep quiet and they did. When she was cooking up the catch, she yelled for the girls to "get here" and pretended to tell them off. Instead, the students were paid off in fritters. "They had a feed of whitebait because they had kept their mouths shut," she chuckles.



DOT ANDREWS

Another time, while coaching a women's softball team at Rugby Park (now Yarrow Stadium), a girl asked if it would be alright to smoke since it was the weekend. "I said 'no, you don't smoke in front of me'. And we were waiting to start warming up and there was smoke wafting past me and I turned and I said 'you are smoking after I told you not to smoke in front of me'. She said, 'I'm not, I'm smoking behind you'. I couldn't do much, I just asked her to put it out."

During her time, Dot has seen a lot of change at Spotswood College. "We never had a gym to start with. We used to do all our phys-ed classes either outside or in the hall." The school gym opened in 1970, and 15 years later the swimming pool opened.

Dot also remembers the time of East and West School, when friendly but fierce rivalry was rife. On athletics day the pupils would all dress in their house colours – yellow for East and red for West – ready to do battle. From either sides of the school, the students would march in rival lines up to the top field. Later in the 1970s, when the school roll was high, athletics day was held at Pukekura Park and, before the school got its pool, the swimming sports were held at Kawaroa baths (now called the aquatic centre).

Dot has stayed at Spotswood College because she enjoys working with young people. A lot of her job now involves discipline and guidance and she believes that it's only a matter of finding the good in students and "working on the positives to modify behaviour and attitudes".

In 1989, she became the Year 10 dean and for about three years was dean of both Year 10 and 11, the only teacher at the school to have held the double role.

She is still working at the college and holds dear to a simple philosophy about school: "It's a gateway to the future where opportunities are given that you've got to take."



STAFF PROFILE: 1969-1988

Seeing young people with special needs get regular jobs was a source of great satisfaction for Elza and Miles Sutcliffe.

For 20 years, the husband-and-wife team ran the special needs class at Spotswood College, educating hundreds of mentally disabled north Taranaki teenagers and having a hand in their success stories.

The couple first started teaching these youngsters at Devon Intermediate, but Elza always hoped the classes would continue at secondary school. She had found it heartbreaking when the pupils got too old to stay with her and were forced to leave school without being ready for the outside world. "So I was thrilled when they extended it up to Spotswood," she says.

In 1968, Miles went to the college to set up the unit and the following year when a second class was added, Elza was appointed as its teacher. There were 15 to 18 children in each class, so the special unit generally had about 30 students, all chosen by the Ministry of Education's psychology service. All of the children had major learning problems and many had physical disabilities as well.

"Well of course, with them they brought a lot of behaviour problems – they were either very docile or very hyperactive," she says. "The whole idea was that we tried to prepare them for life outside the school."

As part of that the students did work experience one day a week. "Many of them gained jobs through that – some of them stayed at the same job for 20 years."

Principal Alex McPhail was a great supporter of the special unit and any initiatives put forward by Miles. "If anyone showed any special skill, other teachers were very good about helping to encourage them," Elza says. She singles out teachers John Barrowman and Nanette Cook as being especially supportive. The latter was excellent at embroidery and so she took a special sewing class.

The students at the school weren't always so kind. At times they were teased, especially by those students who were just one step up from them and had themselves been identified as slow learners. But gradually the students became more tolerant, more understanding. "They went to an ordinary form class in the school, so they had contact there with other pupils and other teachers." Through that, the rest of the school learnt to accept these children with disabilities. "The senior pupils were extremely good in the latter years and took a keen interest in being supportive in the playground."

Elza and Miles, parents of four children themselves, always made home visits before a student came to the special unit. That meant they got to know the families and understand their circumstances. The husband and wife worked together for a great deal of their



ELZA SUTCLIFFE

"We used to joke that we were the only department where we could have our department meeting at home in bed before we came to school," Elza says.

At school, their job was to help prepare these young people for living and working in the community by teaching them life skills and building their confidence. Once, Elza was doing a unit on self-esteem and asked the students to think of things they didn't like about themselves, with the view of challenging those ideas. "Most of them had a huge list and one girl just sat there and said 'there is nothing I don't like about me'," she says. The girl came from a supportive home, with a family who encouraged her in everything. "She was quite happy with herself."

But the best moments of all were when these young people got permanent jobs. "That was the whole aim – for them to get out and be part of the community and I still meet students in town and we have chats and that's a thrill that they are all happy to meet with you and tell you what's going on in their lives, etc." Some of those students have gone on to get married and have children. "Many of them have just moulded into the community and become faithful employees and good citizens."

That was especially true in the 1970s, which Elza calls the "golden years". Back then, a special, lower pay rate for these young people meant they had a good chance of getting jobs. But in the early 1980s, the law changed and the minimum wage was introduced, so the special rates negotiated with the Department of Labour were eroded. That led to fewer employers taking on these people with disabilities and so they either went to IHC workshops or stayed home.

Overall, Elza says she greatly enjoyed her time at Spotswood College. "It had its stresses, but it was, on the whole, a very rewarding job."

• Miles Sutcliffe retired in 1986 and died in 1991.



STAFF PROFILE: 1969-1993

It's Scotland in 1953 and six university students are peering at a magazine with tantalising words. "Oh look at this – they're looking for young people to go to New Zealand – where's New Zealand?"

One of the students is a teenager called Margaret, now a woman in her 70s, who remembers that scene more than half a century ago. "So anyway we had a look at that and six of us decided that we would send an application in," Margaret Williams remembers. "Within three weeks I had a letter back saying that I had been chosen to go to New Zealand. I was the only one."

The year before, her beloved father had died and so Margaret wanted to get away and make a new life on the other side of the world. A few months later, Margaret, the youngest from a family of 10 children, found herself in Wellington, studying at Victoria University and working at the Post Office in Herd St. "I became so very, very homesick," she says. Soon after, Margaret met a young man called Jack Williams and they got married.

"He was a lovely fella, but anyway that stopped my education a bit." Margaret says she did go back and do her teacher training and, when her husband was transferred to New Plymouth for work, she got a job at Spotswood College.

"I loved every minute of it. I really did," she says. "In the beginning we were like a big family, all the teachers there, and it became the family that I had left behind. I felt that I belonged there."

She says principal Alex McPhail was a wonderful man, as were all the teachers. "We had a marvellous time, we did things together, we talked together, we helped one another; it was really great."

One of those teachers was a tall man who used to delight in giving Margaret a lift to the staffroom. "I worked in B Block and I used to have to try and get out of there before he came, because his greatest idea was to put me over his shoulder and carry me to the staffroom," she laughs.

During her years at Spotswood, Margaret taught a smattering of social studies and history, but English was her forte. Later, the formidable teacher became head of East School and, even later, head mistress. But beneath that stern exterior is a woman of great passion.

On her list of great loves are the words of a man called William. "I loved Shakespeare. I still do. Part of English was teaching them how to read Shakespeare," she says. Margaret used to take the students to the hall, give them a page from one of his plays and get them to take the stage. On one occasion she remembers a boy who simply refused to do it. But his classmates were having none of – if they had to, then he did too. So he carefully read his part, then Margaret told him he had to have a go at acting it.



MARGARET WILLIAMS

"Oh, I can't act, he says. Well you do what you can. Well when he came on the stage, you would never believe it, he became Shylock," she says referring to the character from the Merchant of Venice. "I don't think anybody had ever seen anybody act Shylock as good as this fella. And I didn't realise that some of the teachers were standing behind us and they all clapped him." The boy went on to become a lawyer.

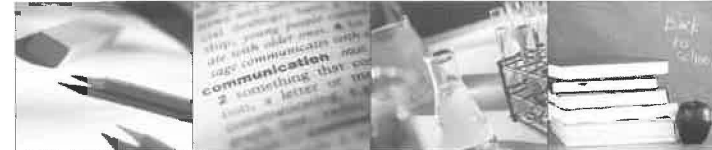
As well as getting students switched on to Shakespeare, Margaret also got them waltzing. For years, she taught ballroom dancing to senior students so they would be able move with some semblance of grace at the annual school ball.

"My mother said I was born dancing. Every time she took me shopping and there was music being played outside one of the shops I used to slip out of the pram and she'd find me dancing to an audience. My father was also a wonderful dancer and he taught me ballroom dancing. Real dancing," she emphasises. Margaret's contribution to the school productions was to take the dancing side of things.

She also took great strides for girls' cricket. When some of the female students came to her and asked if they could have a cricket team, she went into bat for them.

"I went to Mr McPhail and I said, 'there's quite a few girls would like to have a cricket team'. And he says, 'oh girls playing cricket, we can't have that'." But Margaret remained firm. "I said, 'But why not? They play everything else'." He relented. "He said, 'Well, if you think it's all right and you're going to be with them, yes you can have a cricket team'." And so it was.

Margaret Williams retired from Spotswood College in 1993, but she hasn't gone far. She still lives on South Rd, right beside the school.



STAFF PROFILE: 1971-2000

Wanderlust and luck led American maths teacher Dave Plyler to Spotswood College.

Back in 1971, the man from Pennsylvania got itchy feet so headed to the Australian embassy in Washington DC with the view of working Down Under.

As chance would have it, the embassy was closed because the Aussies were celebrating Queen's Birthday Weekend. But down the road the New Zealand embassy was open and Dave got chatting to an embassy staff member. "He said, 'well we actually celebrate the Queen's birthday on a different day'. So that's how I ended up in New Zealand."

At first the embassy man going over his papers wasn't too interested in the young teacher, who has a Masters degree in maths and education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. However, mention of the word "mathematics" swiftly changed the man's attitude and Dave soon found himself heading to a place called New Plymouth – the largest city he's ever lived in. The teacher known for his wild hair and droll humour grew up on an 8-acre farmlet in Pennsylvania, where his parents still live.

Spotswood College was also big. "By 1977 it was up to its maximum, which I think was 1470, and then it slowly drifted off so when I left in 2000, it was down to about 1000." When the college was divided, Dave was in West school. One time though, he himself was divided. A muck up in the timetable meant he was scheduled to teach a fifth form algebra class at the same time as workshop maths.

"So I would actually get the fifth form algebra going in A Block, walk over to B Block to take the workshop mathematics and would be with them for most of the period. Then about the last 10 minutes I would zip back to the algebra to say, 'how's it going, has anyone killed anybody?'"

There was apparently nothing that could be done about the clash, so Dave managed it for the whole year. "Yeah, it worked out all right. Generally the kids are pretty good. They were understanding."

Looking back at his years at Spotswood, Dave remembers many people with great fondness, including teachers Doug Ball, George Procter, principal Alex McPhail ("he was a good guy") and head mistress Janet Grant ("she was a character and a half"). He also remains firm friends with Charles Gill, Ernie Priestley, Rick Wood and Harold Rilkoff.

Another character was student Colin Visser, who turned out to be a master organiser. "He booked a sports team for an exchange to Spotswood College and they turned up in their bus. This was about 1976 or something like that," Dave says. "They said 'Mr Visser



DAVE PLYLER

booked us to come on exchange'."

The reaction from incredulous staff went something like this: "Sorry (but) Mr Visser is actually just a student. That's okay, we'll fit you in somehow." Dave can't remember where the visitors were from, but says the sports exchange did go ahead. "That was a bit of a choice one," he chuckles.

There were many moments of amusement and achievement for Dave at Spotswood College. He has got great satisfaction out of seeing his former maths students do well, like head girl Kaye McKenzie becoming a lawyer and Geoff Putt qualifying as a doctor.

His own sons, Craig and Scott also went through Spotswood, a school he felt no compulsion to leave.

"Things pottered along pretty well and the staff were pretty dedicated and flexible and innovative."

When the roll dropped further in 2000, Dave put his hand up for redundancy, retiring after nearly 30 years at the school. "I went home at the weekends, so I wasn't there all the time," he says.



STAFF PROFILE: 1974-2005

A sense of humour helped Rodney Ward not just survive, but thrive at Spotswood College.

As a woodwork and photography teacher, he spent 32 years at the school, beginning as an assistant technical teacher under the leadership of department head Terry Guy. "He was probably years ahead of his time in the way he set programmes up."

Subjects, like technical drawing, were divided into various sections so teachers had a set number of weeks to complete units. As a result, Spotswood students did extremely well in School Certificate. Terry also organised for the tech staff to do professional development, even though it wasn't called that back in the 1970s. "And he allowed you into the workshops to do other things. We did leatherwork and paua jewellery, and Terry was into copper enamelling, so we had all sorts of stuff going on."

Later on, after Terry's time, there were staff appraisals. This involved teachers watching their peers at work in the classroom and giving feedback. Rodney and four mates took this to new heights when assessing a colleague in action.

"We all put on white coats, hard hats and safety glasses and walked in with score cards," he says.

The teachers stood at the back of the class, watching and about every five minutes or so would confer and then hold up the score cards. Their colleague, who will remain nameless, was not impressed. However, a female science teacher faced with the same treatment did take it in her stride. "The HOD for science joined us for that."

Even a matter of theft was dealt with in an amusing way – in this case toilet humour. When Rodney noticed that his Snifters were disappearing, he asked fellow teacher Roy Neatherway if he'd been eating them. He hadn't, which put the blame on a sneaky student. So Rodney set a trap.

"I went and bought a block of laxative chocolate and I put it in the drawer. But I took the wrapper off it and broke a few bars off and just told Roy what I'd done."

A couple of days later, Rodney noticed all the chocolate had disappeared during one of his classes, so confronted the students. No one owned up, so he tried again promising that the culprit would not get into trouble. Finally, a boy owned up and Rodney took him outside for a chat about the evils of stealing. After establishing that the lad had eaten the lot, he gave him some good news and some bad news. "Well the good news is that you've had your chocolate, but the bad news is it was laxative chocolate." The boy looked at Rodney with fear. "I can remember his facial expression," he laughs.

"Well he wasn't at school for about three days. I had no trouble with theft after that whatsoever."



RODNEY WARD

Another funny moment was when Rodney and good mate and colleague Noel O'Keefe took a group of fifth form woodwork students on a forestry fieldtrip to Rotorua. When the all-male group turned up to stay at a ranch across from Hell's Gate, the teenagers moaned: "What are we going to do here?" "Noel turned around and said, 'it's all right, I've organised a busload of girls to arrive for you'. And lo and behold a busload or two busloads of young ladies from one of the private schools in Auckland did arrive," Rodney says. Their appearance was just sheer chance. "So of course you've got all these girls hanging out the windows and all the boys – what a shambles!"

Later on during his time at Spotswood, Rodney began taking a sixth form option class in photography on Thursday afternoons. That led to teaching the sixth form certificate class in photography, which later became NCEA level 2, and he took the seventh form for bursary. In his first year teaching the seventh form, a student gained a scholarship and the next year was even better. "We got another two, one of which was the second best in the country in terms of marks." The sixth formers also did well. "NCEA 2 was bordering on a 100 per cent pass rate."

Even in photography Rodney's sense of humour was let loose. During one holiday break he spruced up the darkroom and repositioned one of the safe lights. A couple of students noticed something had changed and asked why the darkroom was darker.

"I said, 'all that dark that was in there before has all been used up so in the holidays we pumped a whole new truckload of dark in'. I got, 'really?' and then you could see some little light bulbs starting to tick in the brain."

Rodney says he got on well with the students and his colleagues, even though he wasn't always PC. "I mean you've got to have fun, don't you?"

Virginia Winder



STAFF PROFILE: 1974-Current

Fog and a photograph began Matt and Freida Cooper's journey to Spotswood College.

In 1973 they took part in a friendly sports competition organised by mates in an East Midlands village called Harringworth.

"The whole village got fogged in, so all of us had to stay in their house," Matt says. "We woke up the next day, Freida and I, and along the wall there was an aerial shot of New Plymouth with the mountain looking over the school down at Devon Intermediate." The Coopers were captivated by that picture and the beautiful landscape.

It turns out the couple they were staying with had taught in New Plymouth and still had friends there. Through them, Matt discovered there was a physical education job going at Spotswood College so he applied and got it. He started in January 1974 – and he's still there. These days he teaches French and is assistant principal. Freida is also teaching at Spotswood and is head of the visual arts department.

Looking back on his 36 years at Spotswood, Matt says the highlights have been the students, especially those he took for rugby, athletics, tennis, basketball, gymnastics and outdoor pursuits. Many of his former pupils chat to him in the street and ask him if he's still at Spotswood. "I get that all the time," he says. "They're good kids who will come up and tell you stories about when they were there."

Sometimes when he looks at the staff honours board at the back of the staffroom he's reminded of just how long he's been there, "which is a worry". But Matt is quick to say he's changed jobs, starting as head of PE, moving into the classroom and into senior administration. In 1976, he became head of the languages department and over the years has taught French, German, Japanese, maths, English and living skills. He's been dean of year 12 and 13, acting deputy principal, chair of the Student Welfare Committee and is now chair of the deans.

Out of school, he was a top rugby player. He turned out for New Plymouth Old Boys and Taranaki, either as centre or on the wing.

He was also a champion at working out the school schedule. From 1985 to 1999, he was the teacher in charge of the timetable. In the early days, the task was done using boards with nails and hanging disks to represent different classes and subjects. Once disaster struck when, having completed the timetable after days of work, Matt and Barry Finch dropped a board while moving it. The disks went everywhere and the men had to start all over again, although they claim they knew where everything went. These days the timetable is worked out on a computer.

Matt remembers other changes in the school, including the reintroduction of the four-house system in 1980. Named after European pioneers, the houses are Darnell, Richmond, Atkinson



MATT COOPER

and Barrett. From 1980 to 1983, Matt was the house master of Darnell. He's also seen the education system change.

"We've gone from School C and UE accrediting to Tomorrow's Schools and now NCEA," he says. "We have gone from blackboards to whiteboards to Smart Boards."

The teaching staff at Spotswood has also changed. Many he remembers with great fondness and some with a grin, like Trevor Thomas, a tall teacher who drove a Mini.

Once, Matt and geography teacher Jim Hickey (now TV One's weatherman) moved the Mini by bouncing it and put in the quad that used to be between the hall and the staffroom. "I think we did that somewhere else too – we moved it so it was totally blocked in."

Matt's made a string of friendships through Spotswood, and even played in a staff basketball team in the New Plymouth league. He has been challenged in his career through change, but for him it always comes back to the students.

"I think the highlights are always the kids," he says. "I have had such great enjoyment – I laugh every day."



STAFF PROFILE: 1976-Current

Helping young people in times of trouble has been the highlight of Ernie Priestley's 34 years working at Spotswood College.

"I have seen so many kids over the years and to be a small part of their lives and to help them overcome some of the difficulties they have had has been a wonderful privilege," says the guidance counsellor. "It's been a wonderful job."

Ernie first started at Spotswood in 1976 as an assistant teacher in social studies, history and geography. Before that the young man from Waitara had been teaching at Southland College in Invercargill, but was keen to come home to be with his dying mother. "I was so pleased to come back – it was great for her to be with her grandchildren."

At that time, Ernie and wife Pip Abernathy, had two daughters and later had a third. All three girls went through Spotswood College and flourished, going on to get university degrees.

Anna is now an educational psychologist; Zoe, who was head girl in 1994, works part-time in public relations for the Ministry of Education; and Maria, who trained as a journalist, is now studying to be an early childhood teacher.

Before becoming a guidance counsellor, Ernie also taught economics. "There was a real growth of economics in the school," he says. "So I volunteered and I read some books over the holidays and the next thing I had two sixth form classes."

One student he remembers well was David Salisbury, who is now chief executive and managing director of New Zealand Oil and Gas. "I'm sure he knew more than I did."

Ernie's move into guidance counselling happened gradually. He started out doing part-time career advising alongside guidance counsellor Rod Greensill. "He left and I went for his job."

That was in the mid-1980s, and in '86 and '87, Ernie did part-time training in counselling under the tutelage of Massey University's Sue Webb and performance psychologist Dr Gary Hermansson. Since then, Ernie has been there to support hundreds of teenagers.

"People can come to this old boy and talk about many issues – the fact that lots of people can is amazing."

Because of confidentiality reasons, Ernie can't speak about any of cases, but he will talk about his approach. "I never tell people what to do. We look at the issues and look at what they can do," he says. "It's a pretty complex world these days. Family and home breakups



ERNIE PRIESTLEY

and relationship breakups are very much part of kids' lives. It's just really special for some people to share it (their issue) with someone. That's the highlight for me. That's why I keep doing this." However, he is looking towards retirement.

"I feel tired. Being a counsellor in a school is not an easy job."

He and Pip have four grandchildren to spend more time with and a bach in the Far North to enjoy. Ernie may even have more time to see old teaching colleagues Charles Gill, Rick Wood and Dave Plyler, who still get together regularly.

Reflecting on his career at Spotswood, Ernie feels satisfied.

"It's an ordinary, co-ed, state secondary school, but wonderful things have been done here and lots of kids have gained so much. I have gained so much by being here – I have gained a lifetime of experiences, especially feeling you are doing a reasonable job. Sometimes I look back and think I have done a good job. I always try and I will keep on trying until I retire."

STAFF PROFILE: 1976-2004

MERVYN CHIVERS

Mervyn Chivers is a man of many faces. You might have seen him as Lester the Jester, a bell-tinkling Morris dancer, or as an exuberant PE, drama or English teacher, whose style of education cannot be contained by convention. Others may know the quieter side of Mervyn; the devoted Baha'i, the thoughtful friend and caring husband, father and grandfather. What is certain is those who have had the energetic English-born teacher during his 28 years at Spotswood College speak of him with great fondness. Many students single him out as the teacher who made the most positive impact on their lives.

These days, Merv, as he is affectionately known, is teaching English in China with wife Jill. They've been there together since he finished at Spotswood College in 2004. When Merv first started at Spotswood in 1976, he was relieving as a maths teacher and Kevin Loasby was relieving in PE. The men conferred and then went to see principal Alex McPhail to ask if they could swap to be in their preferred disciplines. That's what happened, and so in the first four years at the college, Merv taught sport. When drama teacher Maggie Belcher left in 1978, he put up his hand to take over. "It was a nice chance, and I loved it."

Further changes came when, in 1980, the Moscow Olympics came and went without Merv watching any of it. "I realised it was probably not a good sign for a PE teacher and I took it as a sign that my heart wasn't in it. I wanted to do more teaching in the classroom." After talking with then principal Evan Thomas, Merv became an English teacher, using innovative strategies to engage the students in learning.

"As everyone knows, I'm funny to look at, so humour was a great one," he says. Also, Merv says tried to be fair. "For example, if students were bored with my lesson, I didn't think that was a blameworthy response. There's no law that says you have to be interested in English. You don't have to like it, but we do have to do it."

He also learnt about The Virtues, and so he appealed to pupils to be co-operative and patient. "I tried to see what was good in students, even students that were difficult. Consider man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value," he says quoting Baha'u'llah, prophet-founder of the Baha'i Faith. Putting that into practice wasn't always easy, because students always test teachers, but Merv says he did his best. "The more good you see, the more good you see, so it was a self-fulfilling prophecy almost."

Every now and then, Merv would shock a class into thinking by doing something outrageous. With some classes, in which the social health of students was not ideal, he would enter the room wearing a white mask and act as a frightened, nervous, uncertain character.

"One class attacked me. They knew it was a game and they were punching me, not hard, it was Hollywood stuff. I didn't know what to do so I lay on the floor of the drama room and screamed and started whimpering."

The students rushed back to their seats and then one boy came forward and helped him up. "He said 'I'm very sorry if we upset you, maybe it's because we don't know your name and you don't know our names', and he picked me up and introduced me to everyone. It was a marvellous moment. They weren't a class that were academically strong, but by the end of the year they were just lovely to be with."

Several times over the years, Merv also used silent treatment on his students. Quite simply, he would walk into a class and say absolutely nothing for an entire lesson. "What happened with those classes was usually incredible. I would smile, looking at the students expectantly."

(continued over page)



After a bit of confusion, the youngsters would work out that Merv wanted them to do the work, to do the thinking. "I would offer a piece of chalk and we used to end up with a blackboard conversation. We would have these wonderful discussions about why we are here, really." But Merv is quick to add: "I didn't do this in all my lessons you realise."

During his teaching, he was always looking for those "aha" moments when a student suddenly understands something that previously eluded them. This happened in English during a poetry lesson.

He had a female student who believed she couldn't understand poetry, so refused to see imagery in the poem the class was studying. Merv went to her and quietly challenged her, even going so far as to say that she was choosing to act stupid. This lifted a veil from the student's eyes and she instantly identified all the imagery in the poem.

"To that to me that was a highlight, where I helped a student realise what they could do. It doesn't happen every week, but when it does happen it's a privilege to be there."

There have also been some wonderful theatrical moments, with students doing great work. The first big play he produced was *Thunder*, about the Bronte sisters with students Vicki Fairley, Jackie Hogan, Iain Rea, Alex Baker, Scott Lelievre and Barbara Karalus. This went on to win a New Plymouth one-act play competition against adults.

Other standout productions were *Inca*, *It's Just the Beginning* starring Andrew Hamer, *Rock To Rock*, which involved the entire school, *Burn Up* and *The Insect Play*, which was staged at the New Plymouth Opera House (now TSB Showplace).

"Dorne Arthur said it was the best student production she had ever seen and one of the best of any production she'd ever seen," he says referring to the late theatre doyen's view of the play starring creepy crawlies.

Merv loved his time at Spotswood and in his early days literally ran to work filled with enthusiasm.

He is also quite protective of the college, which he says people not in the know consider "rough". That's not been his experience of Spotswood, which he believes is staffed by sincere teachers keen to do their best for the school's wonderful young people.

"By and large the vast majority of students were just lovely to be with. They were friendly, they were considerate, they were warm-hearted, they were co-operative."

He believes that's still the case. About 18 months ago he popped into a drama class and says the students were courteous and welcoming. "It felt just the same," he says.

When Merv finishes talking about his years at Spotswood, he signs off with his customary farewell: "Happy days."

Virginia Winder



Merv Chivers with the cast of *A Time to Laugh*, 1995



STUDENT: 1983-1987 STAFF: 1992-Current

Antony Joe's reason for going to Spotswood College hasn't changed much. "I turned up for sport," he says of his student days.

As a staff member, AJ, as he's called, mostly teaches physical education (PE). He also takes a bit of science and leads the way in boys' volleyball.

Back in the 1980s, AJ played volleyball for the school and enjoyed travelling around the country for competitions. He thanks PE teacher Phil Gayton for that. "He was very good at taking us away on trips and he gave me the joy of volleyball and an appreciation of where sport can take you," he says. "My parents told me you could never make a living in sport."

AJ also went to the national champs for athletics, competing in the high jump and triple jump. "I was an average kid," he says. "I was good for this area, but I wasn't national grade."

Looking back, AJ says he was a typical boy who didn't work hard until Year 11 and 12. "I got my six subjects in School C and then passed Sixth Form Certificate. In the seventh form I became a bit of a lad again." While he may not have pushed himself academically in that last year, AJ was challenged in other ways by taking on the responsibility of being head boy. "I'm not a great public speaker and I still have a problem with public speaking – I know I speak too fast," he says.

In the seventh form, he was also focused on the future. "I always knew where I was going – to teacher's college." In 1988, AJ headed to Palmerston North, where he stayed four years and gained a Bachelor of Education. In 1992, with help from Dot Andrews, he began relieving at Spotswood and then went travelling overseas.

He came back in 1993 to become a full-time teacher at the college. He's still there and works alongside Phil. These days, AJ is the one who takes the boys on volleyball trips around New Zealand. Phil is in charge of girls' volleyball. AJ's links with Spotswood College are strong. His sisters, Michelle, Christine, Leanne and Theresa all went to the school, as did his wife Kristina, who was two years behind him. The college is special to him because he feels everyone is welcome there.

"It doesn't matter who you are. You don't have to be good at sport as long as you give it a good go."

He also formed strong friendships, especially in the seventh form. "That was the year Barry Finch became principal and Evan Thomas left. Our whole year group did very well and we have kept in touch." He also has vivid memories of one or two tough woman teachers, including Janet Grant who taught him English. "She was extremely scary." So he could survive her lessons without getting in trouble, AJ listened hard and behaved himself. "I learnt lots and always worked hard – that was respect," he says. He also has the utmost respect for Dot Andrews' old school style, which he describes as strict, firm and fair. Others who had a positive influence on AJ were English teachers Margaret Williams, Diane Kawana and Ken Crawford.

AJ is happy to have come full circle, because he believes in what Spotswood has to give: "It's very social and teaches people to be well-rounded."



ANTONY JOE



ANTONY JOE
(Head boy 1987)



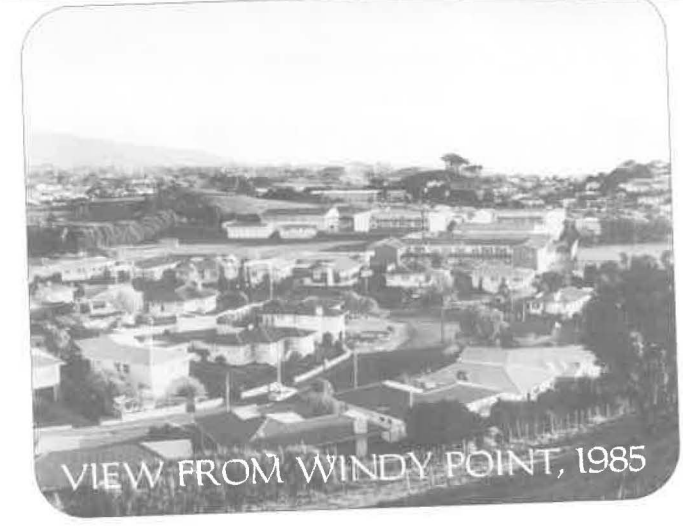
SITE - 1958



S BLOCK - 1961



GYM 1969



VIEW FROM WINDY POINT, 1985



1960 SCHOOL PHOTO (TAKEN LATE 1960 AFTER THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ASSEMBLY HALL)



PREFECTS 1961 (FOURTH FORM, YEAR 10)



ORIGINAL FIRST XV 1963



GYMNASTICS TEAM 1964



WEST SCHOOL LEADERS 1969



College Music

Spotswood College is making a name for itself in the music world of Taranaki. People are beginning to realise that, at College, music is not just another subject but an integral part of school life.

The Madrigal Singers 1965

During the school year, the Madrigal Singers performed at concerts held at St. Aubyn's, Whiteley and St. Mary's. Their not only for entertainment but to give assistance in raising funds. Their final engagement for the year will be at the 'Carols by Candlelight' at Pukekura Park on the evening of December 25th. This will be the last occasion that the Singers as such will be heard, because a large number will be lost through leaving school.



Massed Choir 1964

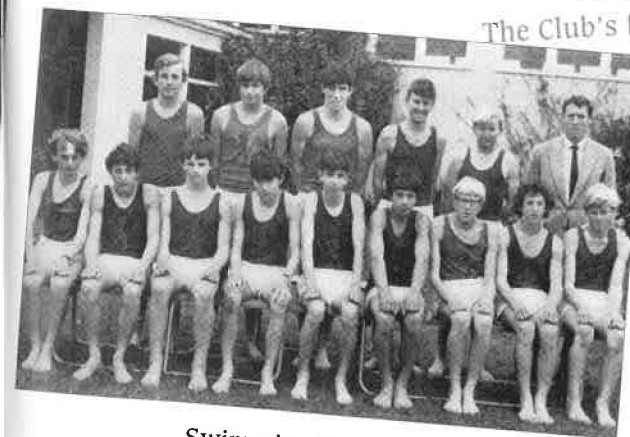
The school choir, conducted by Mr Guy Jansen and accompanied by Mr Ray Ashworth recorded items at Whiteley Church and produced a vinyl record in 1965, with the major work being 'The Hallelujah Chorus' from Handel's 'Messiah'. Also recorded were the Madrigal Singers and the Festival Choir.

Interact 1970

During the course of the year the Club made many donations to various organisations. The first was to the East End Surf Club towards replacing their broken surf canoe. Another donation was to Barnett Bond towards traveling expenses to the Commonwealth Games.



The Club's first project for the year was the clearing of trees at Pukerangiora Pa.



Swimming Team 1970



Chess Team 1971



Surfing Team 1973



Staff 1976



East School Prefects 1978



1985 HMS Pinafore school production



1988 Culture group



1989 The King & I school production



1998 Shakespeare school production



1999 Senior girls volleyball (3rd in NZ)



1999 snowboarding team



2001 Japan school trip



2008 young enterprise scheme



HOUSE PRIDE





the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1960-1964

The history books show the first student enrolled at Spotswood College was Anne McPhail.

The daughter of first principal Alex McPhail has her late father to thank for that claim to fame. "The very first day they were enrolling people he grabbed a form and wrote my name on it," she says. Anne was one of 139 foundation pupils who began at Spotswood in 1960, a time when the school was still being built around them.

"The first school assembly was held in the woodwork or metalwork room. That's all the school there was," she says. "What was the technical block; that was it."

There were only four or five classrooms and the library was in a tiny office, but everything looked and smelt brand new. The group of third formers were also rearing to go. "We were lucky as a group – we were the senior students all the way through out schooling."

That meant those original pupils helped establish the school traditions in sport and music. "It gave you a sense of responsibility and you also developed a different relationship with the teachers because you were always the senior pupils." It didn't feel that way in the beginning. Anne was in the top class, 5A, and John Barrowman, a good friend of her dad's, was the form teacher.

"The very first day he walked in with a cane, slapped it on the desk and said 'I've heard all about you lot, you think you're the greatest, you think you're the boss ones, well I'm not standing any nonsense from you'."

The students were stunned. "I think it was just his way. He actually got on with us very well, in the end. It was a new approach."

During her years at Spotswood, Anne says that being the principal's daughter had no affect on how she was treated by fellow students or staff. "I got told off as much as anyone else and I had to do detentions."

She was also fully involved in the wholesome side of school life. She played tennis and netball for her house, which was Paritutu, was a violinist in the school orchestra and was involved in the dramatic productions, mostly behind the scenes. "I played in the orchestra for 'Trial by Jury', which was our first musical. They drafted most of the 1st XV to be the jurors, which was quite interesting."

For Terence Rattigan's 'The Winslow Boy' she helped with set painting and costume, and in 'I Remember Mama' by John Van Druten she played the daughter of "Mama".



ANNE SMILLIE

(Nee: McPhail)

Anne also became a leader. In her last year at school, she was leader of the orchestra and deputy head girl behind Kathleen Sargent. That same year, Rennie Snell was the head boy and dux. Anne's own parents, Betty and Alex McPhail were also head girl and boy at the high school they went to in Wanganui.

Not surprisingly, people always asked Anne if she too would become a teacher. Her answer was always a firm "no!" Instead, she became a nurse, specialising in emergency care. She has also got a Masters in nursing (applied) from Victoria University, and her thesis has established her as a nurse historian. Her father's Masters was also in history.

"But I'm first and foremost and emergency nurse," says the unflappable woman. "Funnily enough, I do teaching as well. I travel the country doing the triage course for emergency nurses."

While she gained leadership experience and an excellent education at Spotswood, perhaps the best gift of all was love. In 1969, Anne married fellow foundation student John Smillie. They are still together.



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1960-1964

Humanitarian adviser Dennis McNamara has carved a career working in the world's crisis hot spots.

The Spotswood College foundation pupil spent 32 years with the United Nations, working in emergency relief, refugee law, peace keeping and as a special envoy.

His work has taken him to places like East Timor, Cambodia, Kosovo, Iraq, Kampuchea and Rwanda. For the first two years Dennis joined the UN, he was based in Geneva.

"I was just a programme officer with the Indo-China refugee exodus, because Vietnam had just fallen."

After that he spent most of his time working on different projects and in different roles for the UN refugee agency, UNHCR. From 2002 to 2004 he was inspector general of the agency, and during that time also acted as UNHCR's special envoy to Iraq.

In July 2007, Dennis joined the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue in Geneva, which specialises in conflict resolution and peace keeping. "I am its humanitarian adviser." Dennis says the organisation is funded by governments to mediate in places of conflict. For the past two years his work has been largely focused on finding solutions in Darfur in Sudan. "I have done a series of humanitarian workshops with the rebel movement and the government in Darfur, Geneva and Nairobi," he says. "We talk about humanitarian issues that we need the rebels and the government to take seriously and deal with because it's causing huge problems, such as hijacking food aid convoys in Darfur." While these workshops do deal with humanitarian issues, they also help coax the opposing sides into a room and get them talking.

One of the most satisfying projects Dennis has worked on was in a country still reeling from the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge. "I was the head of the human rights component of the peace-keeping mission in Cambodia in 1992," he says. "That was a fascinating challenge because we went in and set up a whole human rights structure there under the peace-keeping umbrella and got people out of prison etcetera... It was a devastated, traumatised country that had had a genocide and we came in to try and establish human rights and have a free and fair election and try and turn it round. Some of the human rights people we were worked with and set up there are still surviving."

Dennis says his humanitarian bent came from his mother, Lavinia Neuman. "She was a very literary, liberal, liberated woman who was always on the side of the underdog and who was a card carrying member of the Communist party in New Plymouth in the 1960s." She also sent him to Spotswood College.

"My mother sent me there because it was mixed, which I blessed her for. The co-ed thing was a positive for sure." He was also in the



DENNIS MCNAMARA

first intake of the college. "It was a brand new secondary school, with lots of enthusiasm and pride and we were the privileged ones to be the first 139 kids there," Dennis says.

"We, the lucky ones, were the head of the school for five years. We had a very privileged life."

But he says that being the first also came with a bit of pressure. "The constraints were we had no history, we had to make our own way and there was no tradition to follow and we had to establish Spotswood College as a serious entity."

Dennis says the school did have strong leadership. "Old McPhail was a decent honourable headmaster; a bit conservative, but nevertheless, he was quite supportive." Neville Northover was also quite influential. "He was a great historian and he instigated the drama and public speaking. He was a very dignified ex-Naval officer."

There were also games. "Sport was a huge part of our lives when I look back," he says.

After leaving school, Dennis got a law degree from Auckland University, qualifying in 1969. He then practiced law in Auckland, Australia, London and Kenya.

When Dennis is not mediating conflict resolution workshops, or working on peace keeping and humanitarian projects, he heads to nature. During his years in Kenya, he became fascinated by Africa's animals and regularly goes on jaunts to see them. "I just love the whole safari, the whole environment and the outdoor life," he says. And yes, he does have a favourite among the wildlife. "The marvellous animals of Africa are the elephants. They are so intelligent," Dennis says.



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STUDENT PROFILE: 1960-1963

ALLISON MUIR (nee. Brunning)

The Spotswood College community was like a family to first head girl Allison Muir. "When I was 11 going on 12, I was orphaned," she says. The eldest of four girls then went to live at the Rangiatea Maori Girls' Hostel, next to the college. She went to Devon Intermediate and then became a foundation student at Spotswood.

Allison says principal Alex McPhail was a great support to her. "He was like a father figure and I had a wonderful relationship with him," she says. "He wanted me to do really well because he knew my situation." Being at Rangiatea gave her stability, but it was the college that changed her life. "I didn't think it was like a high school, it was like a family. Everyone got on," she says. After a prefect trial in 1962, Allison was voted head girl alongside head boy Rennie Snell.

"I was very proud that I was a part-Maori girl coming from Rangiatea and I was head girl at Spotswood. It would have to be my proudest moment."

Looking back at her school days, Allison says her favourite teacher was Miss Scott (now Carol Kenworthy). "She was a sweetie. I can still see her in her mini-skirt on her scooter."

After leaving school, Allison worked in an office, met a young man named Terry Muir and got married. Eventually the couple ended up on his family farm at Warea, and they had two children. "We have been together 44 years this year." They have now retired from the farm and spend their time travelling and playing lawn bowls. They have toured around the whole of New Zealand "a couple of times" and spent two years in a motor-home taking in Australia, and 18 months renting a villa on the Gold Coast.

"I think New Zealand is still the most beautiful country," Allison says.

They are back into their home country now, but still have their eyes on the road.

Virginia Winder



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1964-1967

Water, wine and medicine are the three main ingredients of Barnett Bond's highly successful life.

He swam for New Zealand at the 1970 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh, owns Miro Vineyard on Waiheke Island, and is a medical doctor.

Barnett says he got an excellent start at Spotswood College, where he began in the fourth form. "The key thing about Spotswood is that it was a new school and it didn't have any entrenched traditions," he says.

"It didn't have time to have crusty old people who had been there forever. All the teachers were relatively young and most of them bright eyed and bushy tailed and enthusiastic about teaching."

The one he remembers most was maths and science teacher John Barrowman. "He would be among the elite in my view – fantastic teacher," he says. Social studies teacher Bert Mills sparked an interest in geography and history. "And there was this crusty old bugger called (Alan) Page, who took us for English. He used to smoke a pipe. I'm not sure if he was a good teacher or a bad teacher, but he did make us all succeed." Barnett says the small group of students he went through to the seventh form with did extraordinarily well. "There were 18 of us in the seventh form and I think 12 of us got either national scholarships or bursaries."

Barnett says it's interesting that people laud the elite schools, but he says a high school in a small provincial town with good teaching and supportive parents, can produce just as good results, if not better. "Natural ability is everywhere – it's not just focused in Epsom or Remuera."

Clean air, being close to Back Beach and girls made Spotswood an attractive place to be. He also believes biking to school and back everyday from Vogeltown was enormously important to his success.

As a teenager Barnett went to the national swimming championships every year. He says he did badly at ages 13 and 14, won the 200 metres backstroke title at 15, got a bronze medal at 16 and when he was 17 cleaned up in the backstroke events and both distances in the medley. At the Commonwealth Games he made individual finals in the 200m backstroke and the medley and was in the 4 X 200m relay team for freestyle. Barnett swam a personal best in that relay race, but "we were pipped for the bronze by 0.2 of a second by the bloody Australians".

Even though he won a string of senior titles, and swam for New Zealand at the Games and on a tour of Canada, the win that's always meant the most to him was his first junior title at 15. "I think because it was such a surprise. All I had in the past were failures," he



BARNETT BOND

says. "I went home to my hotel and lay in my bed and stared at the ceiling all night. I couldn't sleep all week, I was so excited. Nothing that came after really matched that moment."

In 1969, Barnett did a medical intermediate year at Otago University and then went on to become a doctor. He has trained in surgery, anaesthetics and in general practice. These days he does a lot of skin cancer surgery, but says the core of his doctoring role is as a GP.

Last decade, his peers voted him on to the Medical Council of New Zealand and he finished his six-year term at the end of 2009.

And while it sounds like his cup runneth over, there is still more to his life. "I fell in love with wine as a second-year med student because I didn't like beer."

He got introduced to French red wine at a tasting session while working in a city bottle store. "From then on I formed wine clubs wherever I went," says the father of six. Over the past 30 years, Barnett has, happily, watched New Zealand's wine industry expand and improve. He's also had a hand in its progress. For six years he was a judge for the Royal Easter Show Wine Awards and he's also a wine maker.

"I had a rush of blood to the head and thought I could grow grapes and make the stuff, which is pretty stupid because there's a whole lot of learning that goes along with that."

But learn he did, with the help of foreign winemakers, one of whom he'd employ each season. "We've been here 18 years and I'm starting to get the hang of it." At the Air New Zealand Wine Awards in November 2009, Miro Vineyard won a gold medal for its 2008 Syrah. "I think that means I'm nearly there," he says.



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STUDENT PROFILE: 1963-1966

JENNY ELLIS (nee. George)

Jenny Ellis (nee George) saw the light that led to teaching when she was a student in a commercial course at Spotswood College. Now she is principal of New Plymouth Girls' High School, a position she's held since 2005. But it all began on the other side of town, at the new co-ed college. "They were the best school years of my life. I had a wonderful, well-rounded education at

Spotswood. I loved school." Jenny was a "good girl" at college – named as a prefect in 1966 – but was considered an average student. "Girls in the commercial course were not considered to be academic. We were trained for secretarial and clerical work."

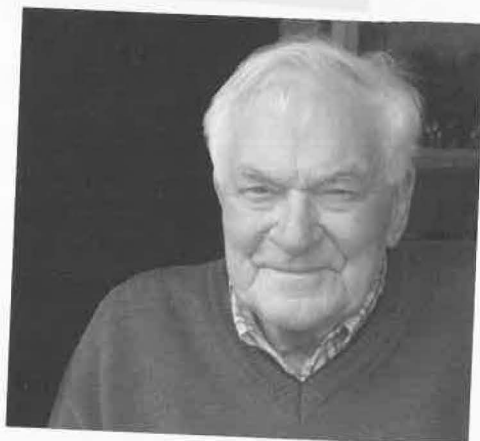
She was involved in a wide range of activities, from sport to theatre, singing to music. "I always wanted to be a teacher – an almost impossible dream for a student in a commercial course," she says. "I had a wonderful teacher, Maree Beck, who suggested I consider training to be a commercial teacher. The light switched on and I never looked back. "Maree was my role model and her influence lasted for many years after I began teaching." Jenny says she also had a lot of support from other staff, including principal Alex McPhail, deputy principal Alec Hutchinson, and teachers Don Frank, Guy Jensen, and Bridget McLafferty.

"My involvement at school in a wide range of extra-curricular activities was an added bonus as I was able to teach a range of subjects in addition to commercial such as music and physical education."

The girl from the commercial course, gained a Master of Educational Leadership (first class Honours) from Waikato University in 2006.

Virginia Winder

Heart & Sole



PAT SOLE



DENIS SOLE



NATHAN SOLE

There has been a member of the Sole family at Spotswood College for 49 of the high school's 50 years. Of those, Denis Sole was a founding pupil and his son, Nathan, of Kai With Sole fame, was the last in the line, leaving at the end of 2008. In between, there have been a whole string of other family members.

Denis' dad, Pat, has also had a long relationship with the school. He joined the Spotswood College Association in 1961, becoming the organisation's president. "I have been at every break up, except one, in its 50 years of life," he says. Pat says the association was involved in fundraising for school facilities and necessities. "It was fairly difficult, the years of getting established, but it became a very popular school." The organisation's first job was to provide curtains for the stage in the school hall. "The next big project was the fundraising for what was called the field house and is now the gymnasium." The school gym was opened in 1970. After that Pat decided it was time to retire from the association, but he was not let go so easily. He was then asked to represent Spotswood College on the New Plymouth High School Board. Pat was reticent at first, but after some consideration decided to accept. The board's job was to deal with the financial affairs of New Plymouth's three state high schools. "I was on that for 15 years and I had 12 years as chairman."

His son, Denis, clearly remembers starting the college as one of the foundation pupils back in 1960. "It was a new school – that was pretty exciting going to Spotswood. We had no older ones, so we were king of the roost right from the start." As a student, Denis says he wasn't the brightest, but he did excel at rugby, was in the school tennis team and became head boy in 1965. But the best things he gained at Spotswood were great friendships. "We were all family and stayed that way all the way through." There were people from all walks of life, including girls from the Rangiatea hostel next door and many others from farming backgrounds, like Denis. "We were treated exactly the same as those who came from wealthier families – it was a big leveller."

Denis says his father, Pat, was the chairman of the school association, which is maybe why he used to get time off to go haymaking. "In the back seat of the car was my mate (Malcolm McAlpine) as well, and off we'd go." That car, a Morris Minor, was the source of major embarrassment for Denis. One day on the farm the cows got out and he had to get them back in the paddock. He had a bit of help from his dog, who used to travel in the boot of the car. In his haste, Denis drove to school, forgetting he still had the dog on board. "I parked in the carpark right in the middle of the school. About 10am this horn started going. We looked out the window and someone was walking out to my car." It turns out the dog hadn't been happy with the situation so had chewed through wires and shorted out the horn. Denis laughs at himself. "Talk about a hillbilly come to school." The best year of his time at

Spotswood was in the seventh form. "The pressure came off academically. I achieved everything I wanted, so I concentrated on friendship and sport, and the things that really mattered in the school." When he left school, Denis went to Massey University, where he got a diploma in dairy farming. Then he worked on the family farm on Veale Rd until the mid 1980s. After that he became a jack of all trades. He worked at Motunui for three years, then moved on to jobs with various construction companies. "I've even done some grave digging and some property development," he says. These days he is semi-retired and working as a property manager at Vogeltown School in New Plymouth. But the school he remembers most fondly is Spotswood, where "we had the same ideologies and the openness of friendship".

His son Nathan is also proud to have attended the college. "It just seemed like a family environment – there was unity, really," he says. "I could never say anything bad about Spotswood." Nathan got his name in headlines during his time there. He was the original namesake of the fortnightly food page, Kai With Sole (now Soul), which is published in the Taranaki Daily News. Under the guidance of teacher Katie Power, Nathan, along with Daniel Bruce and Adam Collins, helped front a column about cooking basic food. "I did enjoy my time doing that," he says. "I got a bit of stick to start with from the rugby boys, but that was to be expected. I almost packed it in because I was over-whelmed by it." But he stuck with it and says he does sometimes put the lessons into practice. "I can cook the basic stuff," says the apprentice plumber. Nathan was in the 1st XV from the fifth form and he also played volleyball from Year 9. In 2006, he and Regan Cassidy were second in the Under-17 Men's Australasian Beach Volleyball Championships in Adelaide. Teacher and coach Anthony Joe was standout for Nathan. "I made friends that I will have forever through him. It was the best time of my life – that was Spotswood volleyball."

Virginia Winder



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STUDENT PROFILE: 1965-1969

Nick Banks may not have reached great heights as a scholar at Spotswood College, but he has taken the school's "high endeavour" motto to the extreme.

In October 1979, he became the second New Zealander to reach the summit of Mt Everest – 26 years after Sir Edmund Hillary's first-to-the-top feat. Nick's journey to the summit was as a member of a private expedition led by German Gerhard Schmatz, then aged 50. "We broke a lot of records," Nick says.

At the time, Schmatz was the oldest person to reach the peak of the world's tallest mountain and the party's ascent was the fastest – it took just 32 days from base camp. Those records have since been overturned. There were also two fatalities. Gerhard's wife, Hannelore, and an American, Ray Genet, both died of exhaustion and cold during the descent.

"You don't go to Everest and expect not to die, statistically," Nick says. "One in 10 people who have got to the summit have died on the way down."

That may be why Nick had thoughts other than jubilation when he was standing on the top of the world. "I was thinking how I could get the hell out of it as quickly as possible."

A cloud cap and deteriorating weather meant the expedition team only spent 10 minutes on the summit. Nick has climbed on Everest three times, but only reached the summit once. His first foray was in 1977, when he met Gerhard Schmatz, the second was the 1979 ascent and the third was as a mountain guide on the north side in 1997.

While climbing Everest was a high point, the former New Plymouth man has scrambled over thousands of other peaks during 45 years of climbing – 35 of those as an international mountain guide. He has been to the top of Mt Taranaki more than 200 times, and climbed extensively in Europe, Himalayas, New Guinea, Antarctica and Patagonia, the southern-most area of South American in Chile and Argentina. "That's all I did for 35 years, before I got bored and took up sailing," he says.

"Some of the first ascents of unclimbed peaks in Patagonia are some of the most satisfying."

Nick and wife Lindsay (nee Sutherland), another Spotswood College student, have a home in Llanrwst in the Conwy Valley in northern Wales.

Lindsay, a special needs teacher, is "a fair weather mountaineer". "She came to Everest base camp, and Patagonia and we've climbed a lot in the (Swiss) Alps," he says. The Kiwis are also keen ice and rock climbers.



NICK BANKS

They have two adult daughters who have gained theatrical degrees, going much further in academia than Nick ever did.

"I was very well behaved, but I didn't do much work."

To make his point, he recites two scathing quotes from teachers on his school report when he was in the sixth form at Spotswood. One read: "There is nothing in the New Zealand education system that will inspire this boy to work." The other: "This term has been nothing to Nick except a long period of rest."

He therefore finds it slightly ironic that the Taranaki Education Board sent him a letter of congratulations for his Everest success. In his defence, Nick says he didn't study because he was spending all this time climbing.

"Special thanks to (teacher) Sid Hill, who first took me tramping and (the late) Mr McPhail who turned a blind eye to my absences when climbing, and to Janet Grant who provided something to kick against but was always supportive and remains a friend to both Lindsay and myself."

These days Nick has stepped down from full-time mountaineering. "I still do quite a lot of work with outdoor instructors, assessing them and training them," he says. "I'm a semi-retired, layabout sailor type."

For the past 10 years, he and Lindsay have become keen sailors, gradually swapping mountains for high seas.

"We are hoping to buy a bigger boat and head off into the sunset for awhile," Nick says.



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1967-1970

A man who became secretary of New Zealand's Treasury spent 72 days of his last year at Spotswood College suspended from class.

Instead, Murray Horn was forced to sit at a desk outside principal Alex McPhail's office and work alone. His crime was rebellion. He grew his hair long and refused to cut it, wouldn't take part in sports and helped write a school newspaper with a five-point plan for change. It called for voluntary attendance, no uniforms, no compulsory sport, no prefects and no hair regulations. It infuriated the school's principal.

Looking back, Murray says those days of dissent taught him many things. He learnt resilience: "You can push and push and the sky doesn't fall in." It taught him to question those in charge: "It's been very helpful to have a natural suspicion of authority." Murray also learnt about self-governance: "When I was sitting outside the headmaster's office, the teachers used bring me work to. It taught me to work on my own."

Instead of going into the seventh form, a 16-year-old Murray enrolled to do a law degree at Auckland University. He had two years at law school then went pig farming. But being a farm labourer wasn't enough for Murray – he wanted to own a farm. So, he headed to Massey University to study agriculture but found the physics and chemistry components of the course were akin to learning Russian. So he packed up his 1952 Chevrolet and drove to Lincoln University in Canterbury. There, he began a degree in agriculture and commerce. "It was me to a tee," he says. "I got all As in the first year."

While the farming side of things was "rocking away nicely", Murray became absorbed in economics. In his second year he and some friends wrote an economics environmental essay and it was a finalist in a prestigious international competition. It didn't win, but Murray got to go to Houston for the awards.

In his third year, he finished his degree with 20 As and just one B, and got a summer job in the Treasury. He loved it and that was the end of his farming aspirations – he was hooked on economics.

He returned to Lincoln and completed a Masters in Economics with first-class honours. During his studies, he prepared and presented 32 seminars on the economic policies of different countries for a paper that everybody dropped except Murray. That's why he had to cover the lot. It was the making of him. "That's where I learnt to write fast and think fast, and carry an argument."

In 1978, with Masters in hand, Murray went to work at the Treasury. He then took time out in 1985 to attend Harvard University in the US, to study for a PhD in economics. "I was like a kid a candy store." He got his doctorate in just three years, writing a thesis titled: "The Political Economy of Public Administration."

That thesis was the co-winner of the American Academy of Public



MURRAY HORN

In 1989, Murray returned to New Zealand and the Treasury. He swiftly rose through the ranks to become the youngest-ever secretary of the Treasury, a position he held for four years. "That was the best job I ever had."

But Murray felt he'd done all he could in the civil service, so took a job with the ANZ. From 1998 to 2002, he was the managing director of the bank in New Zealand and was charged with turning the bank's performance around. "We achieved the mission – went from the least profitable to the most profitable, from the least efficient to the most efficient." During that time, Murray also spent a year as the chairman of the New Zealand Business Roundtable.

In 2002, ANZ asked him to go to Melbourne to take over a division that looked after customers who had a \$100 million turnover or more worldwide. After two years doing that Murray decided it was time to enjoy his four boys.

So he and second wife Angela took the boys overseas for three years. They schooled their sons themselves and showed them the world, living in places like the south of France, Italy, Slovenia and England. "We had seven summers in a row," he says. The Horn clan returned to New Zealand in November 2007 and are now living in New Plymouth.

Naturally, Murray continues to be a high flier. He's on the Telecom board of directors, does a bit of investing, and is involved in health reform. As chairman of the Ministerial Review Group, he worked on a report that recommended 170 changes to improve the health system. It's often referred to as the Horn Report.

Now he's chairman of the National Health Board. "I've got the bug," he says. "Health has gone from being a curiosity to being a mission." All this from a man whose first foray into trying to change the system began with a five-point plan for Spotswood College.



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STUDENT PROFILE: 1968-1971

HARRY DUYNHOVEN

For years, Harry Duynhoven was described as the country's hardest working MP. The Labour Party MP was first elected for the New Plymouth electorate 1987. He lost his seat in the 1990 election, was re-elected in 1993 and stayed right through until 2008, when National's Jonathan Young won New Plymouth.

All up, Harry spent 18 years in Parliament. He was Minister for Transport Safety and Associate Minister of Energy, plus served on most parliamentary committees. During his political career, Harry got to meet former South African President Nelson Mandela and visit New Zealand troops in East Timor at the height of operations. He also signed the Great South Basin contract for massive oil and gas exploration activity.

He also taught at Spotswood College – twice. He was employed as an assistant technical teacher in 1977 and from 1991-2. Harry says that as a student he was small and young for his year and had to rely on quickness and wits rather than strength. "Probably today, because I was reasonably able and very keen on all things technical, I would be known as a nerd," he says.

He went to Spotswood to take the technical subjects, but on his first day as a third-former a teacher tried to convince him he was "too good" for the industrial course and should take languages. "I insisted on taking technical subjects and it took until Alex McPhail personally intervened in Form 6 to move me to a 'professional' course. He very much wanted me to go to university, which I later did, doing a Masters degree in Public Policy during my 30s," Harry says. "I had an excellent preparation for life from some superb teachers and went to school with many interesting and varied characters."

Virginia Winder



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1968-1971

JANET CHARMAN

A couple of teachers at Spotswood College inspired and teased Janet Charman with literature. The winner of the 2008 Montana Poetry Prize for her book, *Cold Snack*, remembers that when she was in the 6th form, English teacher David McCrone wrote a poem on the board. She couldn't understand it. "It was called 'Dry Loaf'. He refused to tell us what it meant. We had to figure it out for ourselves. It haunted me," she says.

"Once, in my 20s, I ran into him on The Terrace in Wellington, and he still wouldn't tell me! Last year, I chanced on the poem again and found it was written by Wallace Stevens.

"And I've never forgotten Mrs (E. Georgie) Harding revving us up to do some creative writing in 5th form, but never, if I remember rightly, handing it back," Janet says. "I have convinced myself, with no evidence available to contradict me, that these little lost stories were works of genius. And I've been trying to equal them ever since. Thank you Georgie!"

Janet left school in May of her 6th form year to become a student nurse. She graduated and went straight into a job, not as a nurse, but as an advertising copywriter for ZB Radio in Wellington. Her career has been a mix of nursing, overseas travel, university study (she has an MA in English from the University of Auckland), teaching and writing. "Over more than two decades living in Auckland, I have had a couple of kids and have written and published six poetry collections," Janet says.

Her first collection, *Two Deaths in One Night*, was accepted by the New Women's Press in 1987. *Cold Snack*, about her experiences as secondary school teacher, was published by AUP in 2007. Now she's working on a new manuscript of poetry.

Virginia Winder



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1968-1970

RHONDA BARTLE (nee. Clegg)

Multi-award-winning author Rhonda Bartle says she felt high school was like a prison sentence. "I used to wake up every morning and wish it was summer," she says. "English is the only thing I went to school for." But Rhonda admits that during her time in the commercial stream at Spotswood College she gained an essential skill that has helped in her writing career. "Where would I be if I was not a touch typist? It lets my fingers keep up with my imagination." It also helped the second youngest of the five Clegg sisters land her first job. When Rhonda left school at the end of the fifth form, she became an office junior at W.R. Phillips. At age 27, she bought a typewriter and started writing "terribly cathartic pieces that were awash with sentimentality". One piece, about her grandfather, was published in *The Listener*, but it wasn't until years later that she realised how hard it was to be published in the weekly magazine. Despite that foray into writing, she didn't get serious until more than a decade later. "I always say I got sucked up the great vacuum cleaner of life and spat out again at 40. But in actual fact I wrote a story when I was pregnant with my fifth child and sent it to the Joan Faulkner Blake Competition in Stratford." Rhonda didn't win that contest but was on the shortlist, so was asked to the awards ceremony to read her story. "That was the first time I stood up as a writer. I was eight months' pregnant with Meg. I was 39." In 1999, Rhonda won the prestigious Katherine Mansfield Short Story Award with *Greenwich Mean Time*, an excerpt from her first book, *The Gospel @ccording to Cole* (2000). Her second novel, *The Lie of the Land* won the Richard Webster prize in 2003 and her short story, *A Cautionary Tale About Yellow Dogs*, was judged by Kevin Ireland as the best entry in the 2005 edition of *Home: New Short Short Stories* by New Zealand Writers. Her work has been included in all five volumes of 100 New Zealand Short Short Stories. Rhonda is also a trained journalist. She graduated from the WITT journalism course in 2003, and two years later landed a "dream job" writing *Taranaki Stories* for the Puke Ariki website. Later, some of her stories were published in a book. "I loved that job and I wish I could still have it back, but I couldn't write fiction when I was writing truth." While she has had quite a gap in her fiction writing, Rhonda is now working on a third novel.

Virginia Winder



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1972-1976

Being head girl of Spotswood College when the roll was at its highest gave Jenny Goddard the confidence to take on anything.

Standing up and speaking to a crowd of about 1500 people was a challenge.

"And if you could do it, you knew you would be alright for the rest of your life," the New Plymouth architect says.

Spotswood also set Jenny up for life academically and socially. "I think being co-ed was great. You always had boys who were friends, and girls. That followed through with things like sport – it meant you knew about guy's sport as well as more traditional girls' sports." Jenny played tennis at school, a bit of basketball and had a go at most things.

On the study front, she pays tribute to Barry Finch, who taught maths and physics. "He's a big guy and probably pretty strict, but he was a good teacher and cared about the kids," she says. "Charles Gill, he made history pretty interesting and it was always good to be in his class."

English teacher Suzette Goldsmith also had a big influence. "She was an inspiring teacher and I carried on at university doing English literature studies."

In 1977, Jenny headed to Auckland University to study architecture, and in her intermediate year took some English papers. Her interest in architecture developed while she was at Spotswood College. "We had those careers days and I remember going to the architecture one, probably in about the fifth form. I was fairly determined by the time I was in the seventh form," she says. "I knew I had to pass maths and physics and I wasn't doing tremendously well in maths and I remember doing a lot of extra study to pass and that meant I didn't need to do it in my first year of university."

After getting her degree, she returned to New Plymouth, worked for the city's council and got married to an Australian. They then moved to Melbourne, where she worked for the Australian government as an urban designer. "I worked in country towns that were undergoing change because of roading reforms."

They came back to New Plymouth in 1984 and Jenny had two children, so she worked part-time for herself. "I became registered under the mentoring of Terry Boon," she says.

Now her children are grown up, she works full-time (and more).

"Architecture is all-encompassing. It's not a hobby. It really does take over your life."



JENNY GODDARD (nee. Lobb)

Jenny has designed medical centres, worked on many home alterations and restoration projects. She is the architect who was responsible for the refurbishment of the Pukekura Park kiosk, now called the teahouse. Behind that building is another Goddard design.

Using her problem-solving skills, Jenny designed a steel pergola to hold up a 101-year-old wisteria needing extra support. Tenix Robert Stone installed Jenny's purpose-built steel design as a community project. The area is no longer a damp, dark tunnel but is light and airy; reminiscent of times gone by.

"When they had the opening a lady came up and said she got married under the wisteria 50 years ago. Then you could walk under it and now you can again," she says.

Jenny says she was still feeling good about the wisteria for a few weeks afterwards.

She also gets a kick out of helping make people's houses more liveable and aesthetically pleasing.

"I'm proud of heaps of things. I'm really lucky in the job that I do, that my work gets to be a lot of people's highlights. If it's gone well and come to fruition and the people are happy, it gives you a real buzz," Jenny says.



the
70s



STUDENT PROFILE: 1971-1975

ALAN HORSUP

For nearly 20 years Dr Alan Horsup has been fighting to save a rare Aussie. The former New Plymouth man is the world expert on the northern hairy-nosed wombat, a critically endangered species. Alan, who works for the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, says the wombat species is on the top-10 most-endangered mammals list. "For example the giant panda, which everyone gets excited about, well there are 1800 of those, but there are only 138 northern hairy-nosed wombats." There are three species of wombat, but the hairy-nosed is the only tropical species. "They live down burrows that can have more than 100 metres of tunnels. They don't come out if it's too hot or too dry. They are really fine-tuned to the environment." It appears that competition for food from introduced grazing animals and predation from dingoes are the main causes for their decline. However, Alan says that building a 20km dingo-proof perimeter fence in 2002, introducing old shower bases to provide water that oozes out of the ground and moving a handful of wombats to a new site, is improving their chances of survival. In fact, the numbers are slowly going up.

At Spotswood, Mr Piercy helped Alan with his own numbers. "He really got me going in maths." He also enjoyed his wife, Mrs Piercy, who taught him French. Overall, the college gave Alan a good grounding for life. "I think a co-ed school was the way to go. You mixed with people from all walks of life. It was a good reflection of society."

Alan is married to Christine Edwards, who went to New Plymouth Girls' High, and they have two teenage daughters. "Last year I spent 16 weeks away from home. In 20 years, I have probably spent five years away from home," he says, explaining the dedication needed to save an endangered species and to become an expert. "You don't have to be brilliant at something, you just have to apply yourself and stick with it," he says. "The hardest thing is keeping going. You just have to keep your nose down and take a step at a time. You just have to chip away at it – the big picture can be scary."

Virginia Winder



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1973-1978

Hanging out with Helen, soaring over the sea and getting up close with big boats are some of the highlights of Philippa Guthrie's photography career. But it took a little time for the New Plymouth woman to focus on her future.

"I didn't ever know what I was going to do," Pip says. But she remembers a conversation she had with Spotswood College head mistress Janet Grant, who asked Pip about her career aspirations. "I said 'oh, I'll drive trucks', and she said 'well that's OK'. It was a school that you could do what you thought you wanted to do. And I did drive trucks later on – out of a mine near Darwin." But deep down, the daughter of life-time photographer Rowan Guthrie instinctively knew her true calling.

"I think I always knew I was going to be a photographer and it was just when and where," she says.

Pip says she drifted into her career, doing some photography and lab work in Melbourne, Sydney and Oman, and even the National Gallery in London. Eventually, she came back to New Zealand and New Plymouth, doing printing work for her father in lieu of board. But the foundations were laid much earlier when a pre-school Pip used to go into the Charters and Guthrie photo studio with her mum, Aileen. "She used to clean the slides for the theatres, you know the ads."

Later, Pip and brother Alistair used to do after-school work for their dad, including printing, glazing and deliveries. "We could do a film by the time we were 12 years old. We just always were there. When we got older we helped with weddings. My brother was the one who immediately went into photography," she says of Alistair, who has made a name for himself in Auckland – and beyond.

Pip has carved a niche for herself in Taranaki. As a freelancer, she takes photos for magazines, newspapers, companies, councils and families, including weddings.

One of the most fun assignments involved following then Prime Minister Helen Clark during a visit to Taranaki. "I virtually had to drive behind the state car all day and catch her at everything she went to." The best photo Pip took that day was at the Urenui pub where Helen chatted at a leaner with a couple of guys drinking beer. "It was just Heartland stuff."

She also enjoys other high-flying assignments, especially in helicopters. Once she was on a job to photograph a ship somewhere in the Maari oil and gas field when she and the pilot spotted a dark shadow in the water. Neither knew what it was, so zoomed in for a better look. "It was jellyfish, a great shoal of them, about as big as this house," she says, shuddering at the image. That assignment also hints at one of Pip's surprise loves. "I think ships are my dirty little secret," she says. "I love it out there, that oily sea."



PIP GUTHRIE
(photo taken in 1978 by Rowan Guthrie)

She even subscribes to Ship Monthly and Sea Breezes. "Hence living by the port at Moturoa," she says.

For Pip, her high school days were all about hanging out with mates, especially at lunch time. For a few years, she and about four other girls would head to Jackie Visser's place for lunch on Bayly Rd, where they would watch The Young and The Restless. They paid Jackie's mum \$1 a week for bread. "We did that for a couple of years, until we got busted by Janet Grant." That was in Pip's last year at school, when she was a second-year sixth and a prefect.

During her five years at Spotswood, she had some great teachers and some who weren't. In her matter-of-fact way, Pip gives her own school report, picking out the best.

John Lovell: "Had him for English in the third form, got him back in the fifth form. Loved him; great English teacher."

Jo Connor: "Had her for French in the third form. Could have passed French if I'd had her for the next two years."

Diane Kawana: "I had her for English in the sixth form. She had a rapport with the students, but you did the work. There was respect."

John McLean (art): "He worked well with the students and he was groovy. You came from people like Jo Connor who were stalwarts, good teachers, and then you got this new breed who were almost like adult students. They weren't much older than you."

And finally, Spotswood College: "I thought it was a good all-round school. I enjoyed my five years there."



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1974-1978

One of the key players in helping the former Soviet Union move from communism to capitalism got hooked on economics at Spotswood College.

"Mr (Bali) Haque was our economics teacher, he was quite inspiring and he sparked my interest in economics," says business entrepreneur Stephen Jennings, chairman and chief executive of his own investment banking company, Renaissance Group.

"I remember him saying 'stop shagging around – this is important, this is interesting', and 'it's not cool to be a dope'."

Stephen did listen to those words, but admits he wasn't a great academic at school. "I was more interested in sport than studying." He played rugby and volleyball for the school, and also excelled at athletics. When he was in the 1st XV, his dad, David, coached the team, and he remembers the volleyball team, coached by Phil Gayton, winning the Taranaki secondary school champs.

"I think Spotswood helped give me a positive approach to life generally," he says. "We got the basics, but we didn't get a great academic education, but in a funny way, I think we got something equally valuable."

Home for a break from England and his globe-trotting lifestyle, Stephen sits on the deck of his home at Oakura Beach, considering the essence of that "something". "I think the positive atmosphere gave me a positive attitude towards life. It was very egalitarian, which in some ways was quite naïve, but you didn't have an inferiority complex. Whether it was in sport or in your studies, it gave you a sense that you could take on anyone and it was up to you really," he says. "You didn't have any sense of privilege, but you did have a sense of opportunity."

After leaving school, Stephen went to Massey University in Palmerston North, where he gained a Bachelor of Business Studies. He then headed to the University of Auckland, where he gained a Master of Philosophy in Economics.

On February 7, 1984, he started at the Treasury. "On July 15 we got a new Government and that year we did three budgets and in one year we had 20 years of reform." Leading the way was (Sir) Roger Douglas. Asked what he thought of the former minister of finance's influence on New Zealand, Stephen says: "Most Russians think the worst thing that happened to Russia was Mikhail Gorbachev. For these big agents of change, it's not a popularity contest."

After two years at the Treasury, Stephen got a job with New Zealand's biggest brokerage and investment bank, Jarden and Co, doing economic reform work in New Zealand and Australia.

He remained with the company when it was bought by investment



STEPHEN JENNINGS

Eastern Europe. "I was meant to be going to Hungary to the World Bank-sponsored privatisation of their bank sector – I even had an apartment in Budapest." But he didn't quite make it. "The company asked me to go to Russia for six weeks before going to Budapest. After those six weeks, I didn't want to leave." So he stayed, playing an integral role in the economic transformation of the former Soviet Union.

"When we did the first privatisations in Russia, that was mind blowing because you had the ultimate totalitarian situation and private enterprise was illegal," he says. "So we did these pilot privatisations, which, over three years, led to 5000 companies being privatised. That was like slaying the dragon in a way because totalitarianism or central planning could not come back after that."

In 1995, Stephen started Renaissance Group, an investment banking company focused on frontier emerging markets right across the former Soviet Union and now Africa. "We have opened up capital markets where there were no capital markets," he says. "People may say 'so what?', but when you are going into countries where there are no capital markets and weak institutions and management, these capital markets provide a huge source of financing, of growth. It creates a huge pressure for modernisation and change."

Renaissance Group has played a major role in opening capital markets in Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe. "We educated global investors about Africa and bought in several billion dollars worth of investment into these African countries. That money comes with a lot of strings attached – you have to be transparent, you have to perform and keep performing."

While the father of four is himself reported to be a billionaire, he hates talking about his personal wealth.

"It's not about the money, it's about real change," he says. "Imagine being in Africa and seeing these places change in a real way and you have a ring-side seat. It's enormously satisfying."



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1975-1979

Spotswood College helped pave Andrew Needs' road to diplomacy. New Zealand's High Commissioner to Canada says the co-educational secondary school gave him a sense of who he was and where he came from. "That's been so vital to me as I have been through my career," he says. Andrew says he had a happy time at Spotswood and left feeling well grounded. "I was very comfortable in my own skin," he says.

"I didn't have trouble with school work, but I wasn't in the cream of the crop. I was more interested in sports – soccer, rugby, tennis, squash – than motorbikes and then girls."

But he did get switched on to history and English. Charles Gill and Ernie Priestley both inspired him about the past and John Lovell made English interesting. Both of these subjects have helped greatly with political analysis and writing, which have been integral to his diplomatic career.

He also played in the same soccer team as his history teachers and he was touched when they sent him a card congratulating him on his Canadian assignment. The card read: "From your two team mates – Spotswood Academicals."

When Andrew began at Spotswood College, the roll was huge. "There were about 500 third formers when I started and we were divided into two schools." He was in East. After the seventh form, he lived in England for a year and travelled through Europe.

In 1981 he went to Massey University and gained a BA in Social Sciences, eventually earning a Masters Degree in Sociology. He was on the verge of doing a PhD, when he was steered towards the diplomatic service.

In 1990, at age 26, he was seconded to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Australia. Andrew got his first full diplomatic post in the Cook Islands, where he was the deputy high commissioner from 1991 to 1993.

From 1994 to 1996, he took two years out to work for a regional organisation in Fiji, returning to the diplomatic service at the New Zealand High Commission in Canberra.

After four years in the Australian capital and time back in the Wellington head office, he moved to Canada as deputy high commissioner from 2004 to 2008. After that posting he returned to New Zealand as adviser to foreign ministers under Labour and then the new National Government.



ANDREW NEEDS

Throughout 2009, he travelled extensively with Minister of Foreign Affairs Murray McCully and Andrew's personal highlight was a three-day visit to Afghanistan. During that trip they had to fly through the soaring Hindu Kush mountains, an 800km range with peaks up to three times higher than Mt Taranaki.

"We were flying below the level of the mountains and the pilot was having to throw the plane around the mountain peaks to deny line of sight to the Taliban."

The pilot knew that if they flew in a straight line, they would be sitting ducks from the Taliban's surface to air missiles. They arrived safely at the New Zealand army base at Bamyán, in a valley plundered by Genghis Khan 800 years ago. While there, the Kiwi contingent rose at 4am to take part in Anzac Day dawn commemorations. "That was a pretty moving combination – the sheer natural beauty, astounding history and being in a war zone," Andrew says.

In his new role, Andrew is based in Ottawa, but is also accredited as High Commissioner to four Caribbean countries – Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Guyana and Barbados.

He leads the New Zealand diplomatic team in Canada, working on key aspects of the bilateral relationship, including trade, public policy and security.

"New Zealand and Canada have a very close, deep and mature relationship. Two-way trade is worth \$1.2 billion and I will be striving to increase that over time."

Virginia Winder



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1975-1979

MARK CRYSELL

A man who says he was the class clown is now a class act in journalism. Mark Crysell has just finished his stint as the Europe correspondent for TVNZ, a role that was damn hard work. "I guess the most amazing thing I've done in my career is to survive the past two years of wars, riots, natural disasters, All Black tours, celebrity interviews and credit crunches, he says.

"Being on call 24/7, regular 18 hour days sometimes for up to 7 weeks in a row (I'm not a natural worker) – it came as a nasty shock."

Mark turned to journalism at age 29 after working in a bunch of jobs, including as a fencing contractor, a construction worker and "terrible" truck driver at Motunui on the Think Big projects, a seismic surveyor in the West Australian desert and a courier driver in London. After gaining a diploma in broadcast journalism, he worked for National Radio in Whangarei, Christchurch, Cologne, Germany and Wellington. He then moved into television, working for the arts and issues programme backch@t before heading to TVNZ where he worked for One News, Assignment and Sunday. At the Qantas journalism awards in 2002, he was named TV Current Affairs Reporter of the Year and overall TV Reporter of the Year. He says that was "pretty special, although I felt unworthy – if it was an election I would've demanded a recount".

Mark says his Spotswood days are some of the best of his life, but not the only ones. Back in the 70s, he says he was the class clown, a surfer and basketball player. He also had some academic inspirations. "I was lucky enough to have some great teachers that certainly shaped the person that I became – Charlie Gill, Merv Chivers, Steve Lusby, Bali Haque, and John Lander can all stand up and take a bow. Sorry if I left anybody out," he says.

Virginia Winder



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1976-1980

BRUCE LAWRENCE

When Bruce Lawrence started Spotswood College as a third former, he was a small, frightened boy. Five years later he was head boy and left school a confident young man ready to make his way in the world. "The biggest challenge was public speaking," he says of his leadership role. "It took me out of my comfort zone and that was a good thing."

Bruce is now finance manager/company secretary of Liguigas in New Plymouth. He is a chartered accountant, a happily married father of two and

highly community minded. He's a Spotswood College alumni trustee, a past-president of the Taranaki branch of the New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants and on the Taranaki Junior Cricket Association committee, and coaches his son's school team. But 35 years ago, when Bruce started school, he was a boy who kept a low profile. "It was really quite harrowing," he says, recalling his first days at the college. "I was 12 when I started secondary school and there were some tough kids there." But Bruce slowly, surely made his mark. "I was a pretty quiet, dedicated and hard-working pupil. Sporty too. If I was not working, I was playing sport." As a teenager, he represented Taranaki at age grade level in both cricket and rugby.

Bruce was in the 1st XI cricket team since the fourth form. "Spotswood College was not exactly a cricketing school," he says. "I used to open the batting and the bowling and some years I was the wicketkeeper." While he's had a couple of years off playing club cricket, Bruce is determined to get back playing. He also played rugby and made the 1st XV in the sixth form. The first five remembers coach David Jennings being a straight talker. "He'd certainly tell you if you had a bad game. I missed a tackle one time because a guy dummied and went straight past me and I remember him saying in his sardonic voice from the sideline: 'You bought an all-day sucker there, didn't you Lawrence'." Bruce says the teacher he admired most was Charles Gill. "I had him for four years in a row – social studies in the fourth form and history in the fifth, sixth and seventh. I recall that in my last year we used to have a number of arguments over the Springbok tour." Bruce, an ardent rugby fan, says his own views changed part-way through the 1981 tour. "A lot of what he said came to fruition and helped me understand the situation." The college also gave Bruce a sense of fairness. "Trying to treat people fairly and equally – that's a big factor of Spotswood. Everyone has an equal opportunity to achieve in life. I have tried to follow that motto in my life with the people I meet."

Virginia Winder



the
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STUDENT PROFILE: 1976-1980

A British pub in Los Angeles is the unlikely beginning of Irena Brooks' journalism career.

The editor of New Plymouth magazine, Live, says one of the regular customers was a man who put out an ex-pat newspaper called British Weekly. One day he came into the San Fernando-based pub and offered her a job selling advertising for the newspaper. She accepted.

"Got to the end of the first week and they were pasting up the paper and so, being a typical Kiwi, I asked, 'would you like a hand?' They didn't have a table for me, so I worked on a stack of telephone books pasting up."

Soon after that, Irena started writing stories for the newspaper. In September 1987, after three years working at the paper, she headed home to celebrate her 24th birthday with twin sister Julia. "I missed her so much; I just wanted to be here with her." In New Plymouth she tried for a job at the local newspaper office, but was turned away because she didn't have the computer skills needed for layout or the formal training to be a reporter. "My dad said 'why don't you start up your own paper?'" That got her thinking and, in February 1988, the first issue of her earlier magazine, Ragtime, went to print.

"I did that for nearly 10 years. I sold it when our boys were three years old and five months old," she says referring to Hayden (now 16) and Dane (now 13). Ragtime was published monthly for a year and then went fortnightly. She sold it in July 1997 after putting out 197 issues.

Irena was elected to the New Plymouth District Council in October that same year. One of her portfolios was tourism, which took her down another path. To cut a long story short, Irena ended up running Tourism Taranaki, and later when she and a group of people started a company called Destination Taranaki, she resigned from the council to avoid a conflict of interest.

Destination Taranaki took over Irena's life. "The hours were pretty horrendous. I remember sitting talking with (husband) Tony and we worked out I had worked 9 of the last 13 weekends." She called it quits in June 2004 and started dreaming again.

Irena says she had always, in the back of her mind, wondered: "If I did Ragtime again, what would I do differently – and that's Live." With the enthusiasm and can-do attitude that's become her trademark, she pulled together the people she most enjoyed working with over the years and launched the glossy monthly magazine.

The first issue of Live came out in December 2004. Since then it has covered many topical issues and highlighted the feats of former Spotswood College students, including TV journalist Mark Crysell and New Zealand's High Commissioner to Canada, Andrews Needs. Her brother, Richard Hobo, is a regular writer for the magazine and



IRENA BROOKS (nee. Hobo)

Irena says the college gave her many things, including a life-long love of surfing (body and body board) because it was so handy to Back Beach and self-belief. "Mr (Alan) Page, my English teacher was always encouraging. He made me believe I could write." It also sent her on a journey.

In the sixth form, the compulsory reading book was *Among The Cinders* by Maurice Shadbolt. "That book changed my life – it made me want to go hitch-hiking around New Zealand." And so, at the end of the seventh form, when other mates headed to university, Irena went walkabout – for four years.

She travelled and worked all over the country, forming strong friendships and adding to her bag of life lessons. These straightforward philosophies, include: "Nothing ventured, nothing gained; always look on the bright side of life; do unto others as you would have them do unto you; and there are far more good people in the world than bad."

In line with the first, she has been throwing herself into sport. In the past couple of years, she has completed a half ironman (triathlon), and been a force to reckon with at the New Zealand Masters Games. In 2009, she won gold medals in the 25-metre and 50m breaststroke, and also bagged a further five silver medals in swimming, running and long jump.

In 2007, Irena, Tony and their boys spent six weeks travelling through Europe, a trip that included a wild and unplanned family version of The Amazing Race.

Irena's successful life (and it's not over yet) can, in more than a small way, be traced back to someone who supported her at Spotswood College. Head mistress Janet Grant can take a bow for that. "She believed I could be more than I thought I could be," Irena says.



the
70s

STUDENT PROFILE: -1977-1980

Learning alongside boys in science subjects at Spotswood College helped fire up Mary Brooker's competitive spirit. "I did as well as any of the boys. It stood me in good stead and showed me girls could do anything," Mary says.

"I'm proud that I went to a public co-ed school, whereas a lot of my colleagues now are the products of private and single-sex schools."

These days Mary is a consultant anaesthetist working in the public hospital system for Hawke's Bay District Health Board. Looking back, she pays tribute to Barry Finch for his "no-nonsense" style of maths teaching, and says she found biology classes with Ricky Wood and John Lander interesting.

As a teenager she lived on South Rd, straight across the road from Spotswood. It took her two minutes to get to school, which meant she didn't need to get out of bed until late "and that set me in bad habits". Her sister, Margaret, a food author who now works for the Food Safety Authority, and brother, Edgar, a pricing consultant, financial analyst and strategist, also went to Spotswood.

Their parents both went to university, so for Mary it was a natural assumption that she would go too. She was in the sixth form when she decided to aim for medicine. Armed with an A Bursary, she went to the University of Otago where she earned a science degree with a double major in microbiology and biochemistry. Following that she went to Otago Medical School in Dunedin and then on to Christchurch Clinical School (still part of the Otago med school).

In 1989-90, Mary was a house surgeon at Taranaki Base Hospital and laughs thinking about how close she got to fulfilling one of Barry Finch's greatest fears.

"He always said he would be horrified if he was really sick and would wake up to find one of his old students looming over the bed (as his doctor). That didn't happen."

Instead, Mary moved on and into anaesthetics, along with some stints as an intensive care doctor. She has worked and studied overseas, including doing a one-year fellowship in paediatric anaesthetics at Toronto, and is now living in Hastings.

In the past few years she has also been making a difference in East Timor and Flores in Indonesia. Since 2007, she has been heading to East Timor with a paediatric surgeon from Wellington to perform operations on children with congenital bowel



MARY BROOKER

problems. "What it means for these kids is they don't have to have colostomy bags. It's a life-changing procedure." They also do surgery for hernias and bladder stones, getting through 8 to 22 operations a week.

In Indonesia, she has been teaming up with a general surgeon from Brisbane to perform operations on local people

"We get a real good team and accomplish lots – that's definitely life-saving and life-changing."

She has plans to continue this aid work, organised through the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

Mary does get holidays. She has fond memories of trekking in Nepal and takes regular scuba diving trips to places like the Solomon Islands and New Zealand's Poor Knight Islands.

She has also brought entertainment home. Inspired by the Mission Estate Winery Concerts, Mary has organised four alternative events on her property.

The event, called the "Not The Mission" party, attracts about 300 people. They bring wine and picnics to hear Hawke's Bay bands play on a back-of-a-truck stage. "We even have professional lighting and porta-loos," she says. Profit from the last event was donated to the Sustaining Hawke's Bay trust.

Mary's aim now is to become more self-sufficient on her land, but says that overall she is content. "I have a pretty blessed life."



IAIN REA : 1977-1981



NEILL REA: 1979-1983



DAVID REA: 1984-1988

the REA BROTHERS

The Rea brothers are Spotswood College triple stars. Iain and Neill have both shone on the big screen and David is an academic bright spark. When the movie credits roll at the end of *The World's Fastest Indian*, the first name up is Anthony Hopkins. The next is Iain's, an accomplished actor who plays the father of the boy who befriends Burt Munro. If you get Scarfies from the video shop, you'll find Neill billed as one of the leading students in the 1999 film. And if you do a Google search on David Rea, New Zealand, you'll learn about a man who got a scholarship to Cambridge University in England.

At Spotswood, all three Rea boys single out teachers Charles Gill (history) and John Lovell (English) as being influential. "The concept of history as fiction – I have never forgotten that lesson," Iain says of learning with Charles. David throws maths teacher Barry Finch's name into the ring too and praises all three. "They were all passionate about their subjects and they were all interested in your learning. They were great models as well; they were really nice people." Neill adds economics teacher Bali Haque into the mix and serves up a general comment. "They were all kind of crazy left wingers at the time – they were great." Iain also talks with warmth about drama teacher Mervyn Chivers, who directed *Thunder*, about the Bronte sisters. "At the tender age of 14 I lost myself totally in the character of Branwell Bronte."

After studying towards a BA in English and psychology, Iain trained at the Theatre Corporate drama school in Auckland. He says the theatre work he's most proud of is writing and producing a play called 600 Drums on Ivon Watkins Dow's dumping of 2,4,5-T waste products. That play toured Taranaki schools. On TV, he has appeared in and written for *Shortland Street* and had a role in *Xena: Warrior Princess* playing Philemon, the lover of Xena's lookalike. "I have to put acting with Tony Hopkins in *The World's Fastest Indian* as a highlight," he says.

These days Iain produces national advertising campaigns for the Radio Network, is a father of two children and is doing extra-mural study towards a National Diploma in Journalism.

Neill has followed a similar path to his oldest brother. He went to Victoria University, where he completed a BA honours degree with a double major in history and theatre and film. Afterwards, he gained a diploma in professional acting from the New Zealand Drama School and went into the theatre for a couple of years. Then followed his role in *Scarfies*. His screen highlight was making an in-house video for the Ministry of Justice about violent men. It had a drama through line and interviews with real offenders who had been locked up and were now going through rehabilitation. "I remember we had a screening at

the Wellington City Art Gallery and all the dudes who were interviewed were there." Neill's partner is an actress and they have two children, so these days he runs a casting company called Fly.

David also has a theatrical streak, but he didn't take that beyond Spotswood. Once he played Iain's wisier sidekick in a school production called *The Adventures of Gervase Beckett*. After leaving school, David went to Massey University to begin a degree in veterinary science. However, he changed to a BA in economics and became involved in student politics. He became president of the student association and put his studies on hold for a couple of years, before heading to Victoria University. There he completed an honours degree in economics and public administration. He then worked as an economic analyst for the Industrial Relations Centre and was awarded the scholarship to Cambridge, where he got a PhD in economics. For the past 15 years he has been working as a public servant in the Treasury, Department of Labour and now the Ministry of Social Development, where he has spanned the generations. He has been general manager of a policy group involving senior citizens and head of the Ministry of Youth Development. "Now I'm an advisor within the policy section, working on whatever particular policy issues that are relevant," says the father of three.

The Rea brothers all agree their co-ed high school gave them a good grounding, helping to teach them about equality and diversity. "I think Spotswood College was a pretty real world sort of place and it was academically reasonably strong as well. It wasn't pretentious," David says.

Virginia Winder



the 80s

STUDENT PROFILE: 1979-1981

SCOTTY PEARSON

Elemeno P drummer Scotty Pearson found his own beat during his time at Spotswood College. Initially, Scotty played the cello, but gave that up after buying his first drum kit while in the third form. He and mates Trevor Knox and Grant McDonald formed a band that won school music competitions in the fourth and fifth form. The band had a safe name for those contests, but Scotty can't remember what it was. Out of school the band was known as The Foreskins. "One night someone tagged the whole school with Foreskin and I got hauled into Evan Thomas' office," he says, referring to the then principal. But even now Scotty denies having anything to do with that graffiti crime. Those years at Spotswood gave him and his mates a chance to find out "how to create a vibe with your band". "There were the music rooms there, and a drum kit there, so we all used to get together in lunchtimes and try and have a bash. We got shut down heaps of times."

Scotty left school after the fifth form and did a building apprenticeship. Half way through that he took a year off to travel through schools with Youth For Christ group Y-One. Following that he moved to Auckland and continued playing in a variety of bands.

For two years in the mid-1990s, he joined Kiwi alternative gospel band Hoi Polloi in Nashville, Tennessee, and got to see a lot of the American continent. He remembers being blown away by the slums of Sao Paulo in Brazil. Next, he returned to New Zealand and started his own company, Scotty Construction Ltd, in Auckland. "Then eight years ago, Elemeno P started and it all went crazy," he says. "Everything I have done has had a relative amount of success about it, but Elemeno P is the one that connected with people." The band has released three albums. More than 45,000 copies of the first album, *Love & Disrespect* (2003) were sold, which meant it went triple platinum. That was followed by *Trouble in Paradise* (2005) and the self-titled *Elemeno P* (2008). In 2006, the band won Best Group at the New Zealand Music Awards. Scotty says the most amazing gig he's played with Elemeno P was on the Green Stage at the Big Day Out in 2005. "You couldn't even get into the paddock there were that many people there. That was just phenomenal."

Virginia Winder



the 80s



STUDENT PROFILE: 1981-1985

GREG FINCH

Let's get this straight – being a surgeon is nothing like the world depicted on TV show *Grey's Anatomy*. So says, orthopaedic surgeon and spine specialist Greg Finch. Yes, he admits, there can be gossip, but the operating theatre is a calm place. "You've sorted out exactly what you're going to do before you go in there." The Auckland-based doctor listens to his I-pod when he is operating on people's backbones. "It's on random play and it could play anything," he says.

Greg was dux at Spotswood in 1985, and then went straight to medical school at the University of Auckland. He qualified as an orthopaedic surgeon in 2000. He has since worked at the Shriners Children's Hospital in Portland Oregon, the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital in Birmingham, UK, and in teaching hospitals in Perth, Australia. He says the qualifications he gained in New Zealand are recognised internationally. "I have worked around the world with all these well-known surgeons," he says. But he's still extremely grounded and he thanks his time at Spotswood College for that.

"Having an all-round education is important because it helps you become a more balanced individual," says the married father of two. When Greg was at school, so were his parents. His mum, Corrina and father, Barry, were both teachers, mostly in the science and maths areas. Barry was also deputy principal and he went on to lead the school. "I was very proud of my parents and I think they were a great influence. They were caring and supportive of all the people they taught," he says.

Greg says that Spotswood gave him the freedom to try many things, including music, drama and sport. School was a time of little responsibility and being self-centred, which people grow out of as they become adults.

But when he got to medical school and was studying alongside students from some of the better-off and more well-known schools around the country, he realised Spotswood had given him the greatest gift of all: "We were taught to think."

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the
80s

STUDENT PROFILE: 1982-1986

ALINA LEIGH

One teacher made all the difference to the direction of Alina Leigh's life. The Spotswood College headgirl in 1986 says that standout person was her form teacher, Maree Munro. "She made me keep trying and to have a dream." That dream was to become a doctor, a goal that others thought was too lofty. Alina did extremely well in the sixth form, but in the seventh form only got an A bursary by three marks. "People told me there was no way I would get into medical school," she says. "I went to Otago and was told by the medical school that my marks were nowhere near high enough and I should do something else." Even her father, a teacher, told Alina she was setting her sights too high. But the determined young woman who went to Marfell primary, Devon Intermediate and Spotswood College, decided to give it one year of her life. "So then I'd know I had given it my very best shot."

In 1987, Alina immersed herself in study at Otago University. "I only went to the pub three times." For her efforts, the determined Taranaki woman was accepted into the medical intermediate class of 1988. She knew she was the cut off point, because a friend who was one point below her initially missed out. "But in my final year of my med school exams I got all As and only five got higher." There were 189 students in that class. Alina's studies didn't stop there. She decided to become a radiologist and, after two years as a house surgeon, gained a registrar training position in radiology at Wellington Hospital. In her second year of her radiology training she got married and had a daughter, who was born premature and extremely sick. When Alina went back to work 14 months later, she became the first person in Australasia to train part-time in radiology. "I changed the mould." Her daughter is now a healthy teenager. These days Alina is clinical director of radiology for the Taranaki District Health Board. She is also the health board's intern supervisor. "I look after all the house surgeons and I'm there for them when they have tough days. It's like a pastoral role," she says. "I really enjoy their enthusiasm and they teach me things too."

Virginia Winder



the
80s

STUDENT PROFILE: 1983-1986

HELEN BARRETT

A one-off question led long-distance swimmer Helen Barrett to tackle the big one. "I went to a radio interview to talk about pool swimming and was asked if I wanted to swim Cook Strait. I laughed. My swimming squad friends gave me a hard time for laughing on the radio." But her coach, Barry Salisbury, believed she could do it. "So he organised it and I swam it."

On March 30, 1986, Helen became the 36th person to swim Cook Strait, clocking a time of 6hrs 34mins. She was just 16 and her original plan was to set a new record. "Towards the end of the swim the North Island felt like it was never going to get any closer and the plan went out of the window. Barry and my father (Jim) kept me swimming until I touched land."

Helen, a teacher at Woodleigh School in New Plymouth, is extremely low-key about the feat. "I know that for some people Cook Strait is a big event, but in reality it took a few weeks of training and six-and-half hours of swimming on the day," she says. "Teaching on the other hand is something that takes a lot more commitment and dedication. It is constantly challenging and rewarding."

Helen says she loved her own school days. "I liked learning and as a student, at Spotswood College, there was a world of opportunities and possibilities. It felt like anything was possible – you just had to work at it." At high school, Helen says she was respectful, conservative and hung out with friends who also played sport. "The teachers always treated us with respect. If we put in the work and tried our best they supported our efforts," she says. She remembers Miss (Janet) Grant encouraging several students to apply for teachers' college and then helping out by reading or editing their applications. She even offered interview practise. "In my experience the teachers, at Spotswood, treat students like the young adults they are becoming."

Virginia Winder



the
80s



STUDENT PROFILE: 1982-1986

ANGELA ROBERTS

A woman who says she was a "loud mouth" at high school is now speaking out for teachers. For nearly 10 years, Angela Roberts has been on the national executive of the Post Primary Teachers' Association, which has about 18,000 members. "I would like to think we are an influential union," she says. "Some see us as the union that sets public sector pay rates." Angela, who is head of arts at Stratford High School, thrives on representing Taranaki at a national

level and is the longest-serving member of the executive. She would be prepared to take the top job. "I suppose, when the time is right, I would love to be the president of the PPTA." The mother of two young children is passionate about education and what it means to a nation. "For me it's one of the cornerstones of what makes a country great. It's the difference between a successful society and not." She got her own high school education at Spotswood College and loved it, especially the enthusiasm of teachers like Mervyn Chivers. "He was just so openly passionate about theatre and he got excited when you got excited," she says. "He literally jumped for joy that man." English teacher and Shakespeare lover Margaret Williams was also influential. "Macbeth in Year 9," Angela says. "She had her expectations – you were never late for class." At Stratford High, Angela teaches drama and economics, having gained a Bachelor of Business Studies from Massey University. "If you asked me when I left varsity what I would be doing, it wouldn't have been teaching – or living in rural Taranaki," she says. But when she didn't feel challenged in a marketing job, Angela had a rethink, so returned to study and turned to teaching. Her own students may be a little surprised to learn that Angela was no angel at high school. She describes herself as: "Cheeky. A bit of a slacker really, I suppose. A loud mouth – I don't think I showed a lot of respect for all of my teachers." But she was outgoing and involved. She was in the choir and did drama. She helped organise the school ball and the 40-hour famine. "You could pretty much be who you wanted to be and there was the space to do that." She also left school feeling that she could be or do anything she wanted to if she was prepared to work for it. "Anything was a possibility."

Virginia Winder



the
80s



STUDENT PROFILE: 1987-1991

FLEUR GASTON

When Cabinet meets in the Beehive, a former Spotswood College student is on hand to provide constitutional advice to the decision-makers. "We get to work very closely with the Prime Minister and Ministers and it's a real privilege," says senior adviser Fleur Gaston. "We ensure the smooth running of Cabinet and make sure it has the advice necessary to make good decisions."

She started her career as a policy adviser for the Ministry of Justice in 2000 and moved into the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in 2002. Fleur says the most privileged thing she has been involved in was helping to arrange posthumous recognition for Maori Battalion soldier Haane Manahi, of Te Arawa descent. The World War II veteran, who died in 1986, had been recommended for the Victoria Cross but never got it. "Ever since then his family had been lobbying to get the VC," Fleur says. In 2006, Buckingham Palace agreed to posthumously honour Haane Manahi but not with a VC. "I got to know all about his life and to meet his people and the Duke of York came out on behalf of the Queen to present the recognition package." Fleur has a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in history, a Masters in 20th century political history and international relations, and has done a couple of years' study towards a PhD. These built on the education and sage advice she gained at Spotswood College. "I remember a maths teacher (Phil Keenan) telling me that I needed to learn to ask for help when I didn't know the answer, rather than just trying to blunder on – that was a good life lesson." Merv Chivers was fantastic: "I had great fun working with him on the seventh form school production." English teacher John Lovell was "amazing; I just loved his classes" and principal Barry Finch "was a very good leader". Even though Fleur lives in Wellington, the spirit of Spotswood College remains close by. She is married to consultant engineer Dr Matthew Smillie, a fellow Spotswoodian and the grandson of the first principal, Alex McPhail. Her father, Glenn, went to the school and both her parents-in-law, John and Anne Smillie, are ex-pupils. "I feel like I married into one of the big families," she says.

Virginia Winder



the 80s

STUDENT PROFILE: 1987-1990

RODNEY O'CONNOR

Rodney O'Connor was born to race motorbikes. "I got my first motorbike for my fifth birthday," he says. "I've been into bikes all my life and started motocross when I was 12 years old."

When Rodney was born, his father was the Suzuki dealer in New Plymouth and owned Callender Motor Cycles. He sold that in the early 1980s and became an importer, especially of Ducati motorbikes.

In the early 1990s, Rodney bought a written-off Ducati and rebuilt it as a racing bike with the help of his dad. "Almost immediately I started getting good results." So he joined his father's race team, which had Robert Holden as the main rider. Two years later, Rodney became the New Zealand Formula 3 champion. Rodney continued racing nearly every season for 10 years, but never won another championship. However, he did win the Formula 3 street-racing title several times. In 1998 he raced in the historic races at Daytona in Florida, gaining a second, third and fourth, and a third in the single cylinder bike race. "I don't have that drive any more, which is why I don't race anymore but at the time it was just the need to win and the thrill and fun of it." Rodney has also won academic accolades and scored great jobs, including being a design engineer for Triumph motorcycles in England and a test rider for KTM in Austria.

When he studied for his New Zealand Certificate in Engineering at WITT, he was named top student two years in a row and won the Fletcher Challenge Trust Award. He then went to Auckland University where he gained a degree in mechanical engineering. These days Rodney is married and working in Auckland as an application engineer.

At Spotswood College, Rodney says he wasn't a great student but he appreciated his form teacher Mrs Van Paassen for her honesty and English teacher Merv Chivers for his unique teaching style. "I never had any real interest at school, but some of the things he taught in class stuck with me and have inspired me to think about writing later in life."

Virginia Winder



the 90s



STUDENT PROFILE: 1989-1993

JENNIFER O'CONNOR

World mountain biking star Jennifer O'Connor found her feet at Spotswood College. "I was allowed to be me at Spotswood and I left school feeling like I had the world at my feet." It turns out she did – on a mountain bike. Jenn discovered the sport while working on a newspaper in Queenstown. As the first recipient of the June Litman Scholarship, she studied journalism at AIT (now

AUT) in Auckland with tutor Jim Tucker and then landed a job at the Mountain Scene newspaper. In Queenstown, Jenn discovered mountain biking and began to wonder how good she could be if she trained. "I had no idea what was involved in being a competitive athlete," she says. "It took 10 years to get really good at it." With bike and backpack, she moved to the UK and ended up in Macclesfield, south of Manchester, the home of partner, her trainer and sports physiologist, Andrew Patterson. "I started to get sponsors, so I decided to quit my (marketing) job and make a real go of it," Jenn says. Her first big women's race was the six-hour Enduro 6 in 2002. "It was quite a prestigious race and I surprised myself by winning it. The year after that I lost it again and that's when I met Andy and started proper training." That same year, she started doing 24-hour mountain bike races. "Andy wrote his thesis on 24-hour racing and I was his study subject." Jenn entered and barely finished Mountain Mayhem in the UK, the biggest 24-hour race in the world. "After that, Andy and I went away and did all this study and training and I came back in 2003 and won Mountain Mayhem and I won it three years in a row." She then turned to marathon 100km loop mountain bike racing. She represented New Zealand at the 2006 World Marathon Championships in France, finishing 11th. Jenn returned to New Zealand in 2007 and won the national title in that discipline. That same year, she also represented New Zealand at the world champs for the cross country in Scotland. Also in 2007, she went back to have one last crack at the 24-hour Mountain Mayhem race. She led from the start in a "horrendously muddy race" and dominated the field to win her fourth title. Now Jenn and Andy are living in New Plymouth. "I'm having a year out," she says. "It's a very satisfying thing to be good at something and you don't always get to choose what you are good at. My natural talent seems to be riding a bike fast for a long time and I don't know whether that's a gift or a curse."

Virginia Winder



the 90s



STUDENT PROFILE: 1991-1993

VICTORIA GIRLING-BUTCHER

Singer-songwriter Victoria Girling-Butcher says the teachers at Spotswood College did their best to engage her in study.

"Mr (Murray) Hill the art teacher was very committed to getting me enthusiastic about school work," she says. "English teacher Mrs (Christine) Charteris was really engaging. I thought Barry Finch was a good fellow," she says of the then Spotswood principal.

This is Victoria's way of saying she wasn't an exemplary student. But she did enjoy music with Barry Bradshaw ("He was a bit of character") and says singing teacher Pauline Rigby was good.

During her high school years, she had a year out to attend a performing arts course, but went back to Spotswood in the seventh form. After that she studied at the Nelson School of Music and in her late 20s trained in journalism at WITT.

In between musical moments, Victoria has been doing research for television documentaries about a range of subjects, from the Treaty of Waitangi to Vietnam War veterans.

Victoria is best known in the music world as the lead singer of Lucid 3, which is no longer together. The trio recorded three albums and played all over New Zealand. "We supported people like Jimmy Cliff, UB40, James Blunt, Brooke Fraser and Dave Dobbyn."

But her favourite gig was playing at Womad in 2005. "It was in my home-town park – I used to lock the park gates as my job as a kid because we lived down the road. It felt like playing to the kindest home audience you could wish to play to – it was just lovely."

Lately, she has been working as a backing singer for Dave Dobbyn. "It's just amazing when you look into the audience and see thousands of people singing along."

But she's still writing and singing her own music. "I'm focusing on a solo project at the moment. That's my goal – to continue to make music a large part of my career and to offset that with journalism."

Virginia Winder

the 90s



STUDENT PROFILE: 1991-1995

HEELAN TOMPKINS

Getting an A in English has shown equestrian star Heelan Tompkins that anything is possible. The Oakura woman, who says she wasn't academic at school, has leapt other hurdles to become one of the top horsewomen in the world. Heelan has competed in the New Zealand three-day eventing team at two Olympics – Athens in 2004 and Hong Kong in 2008 – and two world championships. "I was ranked the world under-21 champion two years running before moving up into the senior ranks." She has also been ranked the No 1 cross-country rider in the world, and her highest world ranking for senior eventing has consistently been 7th. She says that one of her career highlights was back in 2006 when she finished 7th at the World Championships in Germany on her favourite little horse Glengarrick. "It was his final event before he was retired, so I will always remember it."

Heelan's horse-riding days began as a toddler. "My mum, Jill, ran the local riding school so I had a bit of a head start as horses were always a big part of my life," she says. But still, she knew she needed an education. "I was never really academic, but I always wanted to get UE, just in case. I did that and I ended up at university and had a blast," she says. "At Spotswood I made great friends and had teachers that really stuck with me when I struggled." There was a flipside. "I was a bit mischievous and gave some teachers a hard time on occasion and spent a few lunch times inside for it." But teachers like Dot Andrews, Jo Stallard and Stuart Greenhill helped her become the person she wanted to be. "The older I get the more I appreciate them," she says.

"I remember one of the best moments ever was opening my exam results in 7th form and getting an A for English – just an awesome feeling. I had never in my life had an A. Sounds weird, but I had never thought in a million years I was good enough to get that mark it showed me that anything really is possible."

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NP High School Board

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Spotswood College PTA

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1999	Mrs. R. Harvey	Mrs. G. Sharpe	Mrs. M. Rogers
2000	Mrs. R. Harvey	Mrs. G. Sharpe	Mrs. A. Hawkins
2001	Mrs. R. Harvey	Mrs. J. Paterson	Mrs. A. Hawkins
2002	Mrs. R. Harvey	Mrs. J. Paterson	Mrs. A. Hawkins
2003	Mrs. R. Harvey	Mrs. J. Paterson	Mrs. A. Hawkins
2004	Mrs. R. Harvey		Mrs. L. Hinton
2005	Mrs. Z. Hinton	Mrs. S. Williams	Mrs. L. Hinton
2006	Mrs. Z. Hinton	Mrs. S. Williams Mrs. C. Ardern	Mrs. L. Hinton
2007	Mrs. Z. Hinton	Mrs. C. Ardern	Mrs. L. Hinton
2008	Mrs. Z. Hinton	Mrs. C. Ardern	Mrs. R. Farrell
2009	Mrs. J. Halliburton	Mrs. C. Ardern	Mrs. R. Farrell

Honours Boards

The Honours Boards project for the College assembly hall and staffroom was started by Phil Gayton in 1998. Through generous funding assistance from three gaming trusts \$10,359.00 was raised to assist the making of the boards. As at results 28 boards are now in the assembly hall and 2 in the staffroom. The College acknowledges the generous donations from the following trusts:-

New Zealand Community Trust (NZCT)	\$4,039.00
The Trusts Charitable Foundation	\$3,000.00
The Lion Foundation	\$3,320.00

The Boards and their criteria are:-

1. Academic	Ph.D's, Masters, MBChB, BVs, LLB
2. Cultural	Winners of national competitions-Speech, Performance
3. Literary	Author, Journalist, Novelist, Playwright, Poet
4. Musical	Winners of national titles, members of national bands
5. Performing Arts	Dance, Drama, Screen, Stage,
6. Sport	Winners of national titles, members of national teams
7. Visual Arts	Painting, Photography, Sculpture,
8. College Leaders	Head Boy, Head Girl, Dux, Scholarships
9. Staffroom	Senior management, long term service of academic and support staff

Phil has been collecting data for these boards since 1998, and five boards have now been completed, with a sixth board 95% completed. Our aim is to complete the remaining boards after the 50th Jubilee when additional data is likely to become known. Already, a considerable amount of data has been collected on each of the boards but we are aware that this falls well short of reality. If you have any information that you think should be considered for any of the above Boards can you please supply this to:- Phil Gayton, Spotswood College, P.O. Box 6116, Moturoa, New Plymouth. 4344 Email: pga@spotswoodcollege.school.nz



SUPPORT STAFF

Jim Stoppard	Caretaker	1960 – 1979
Beatrice Emmett	Librarian	1960 – 1983
Clarence West	Groundsman	1961 – 1977
Cath Haunton	Office administration	1964 – 1975
Nigel Rawlinson	Groundsman	1967 – 1980
Wally Chisnall	Groundsman	1973 – 1983
Linda Gardiner	Office Administration	1977 – 1986
Judy Munro	Nurse	1979 – 1995
Anne Ward	Office Administration	1979 – 2007
Cherie Chard	Cleaner & Kitchen	1982 - 1993
Mary Gilbert	Librarian	1983 – 1997
Jean Moetara	Librarian	1983 – 1999
Gwen Butler	Laboratory technician	1985 – 1996
Marganne Sowman	Cleaner	1985 – 2002
Brian Sowman	Caretaker	1985 – 2003
Lynne Mills	Office Administration	1988 – 2005
Craig Sowman	Groundsman	1989 – 2002
Barbara Rivers	Transition assistant	1989 – 2003
Trish Byers	Office Staff	1990 – 2006

LONG SERVICE

Alison Hodges	Principal's Secretary	1990 –
Raewyn Leuthard	Teacher aide	1991 -
Peter Smith	Administration Manager	1991 –
Kim Woodward	Teacher aide	1993 – 2004
Colin Jarman	Property Maintenance	1994 -
Jo Wood	Teacher aide	1995 –
Mary-Anne Stretton	Laboratory technician	1997 –
Raewyn Barron	Teacher aide	1998 -
Jenny Brookes	Office Administration	1998 -
Susie Webling	Teacher aide	1998 -
Kerrie Greig	Teacher aide	1999 -
Angela Mason	Technology assistant	1999 -
Fran Newson	Physiotherapist	1999 -
Linda Nicholls	Teacher aide	1999 -
Maurice Paurini	Teacher aide	1999 –
Mary Turner	Teacher aide	1999 -
Janet Wrightson Lean	Teacher aide	1999 –
Donna Clement	Canteen	2000 –
Vivienne Iveson	Canteen	2000 –

SPOTSWOOD COLLEGE SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Principal	Deputy Principal	Deputy Principal	Senior Mistress	10 Years Service	10 Years Service
1960-1977 Alex Mc Phail	1960, 1962, 1963 Terry Sweeney	2000-2008 Brett Sloan	1960-1962 Alison Simpson	1969 Alex Mc Phail(18)	1979 Allan Purdy (13)
1978-1987 Evan Thomas	1961, 1963 Neville Northover	2007- 2008 Sue Baker	1963-1965 Cecily Hamilton	George Procter 1970	1980 Trevor Lanning
1987-2002 Barry Finch	1964-1983 Alec Hutchinson	2008- Daryn Shaw	1966-1975 Janet Grant	Don Frank Terry Guy	Doug Oliver Dave Plyler
2003- 2009 Graeme McFadyen	1969 – 1970 John Barrowman	2009 – Jude Barnes	1969 – 1975 Jo Connor	Alan Page 1973	Maree Munro (14) 1981
	1971 – 1977 George Procter		1976 Pat Hickland	Bill Crisp (16) Rod Greensill	Bali Haque (11) Ivan Komene (18)
	1976, 1977, 1987 Janet Grant		1977 Pat Sullivan	Alec Hutchinson 1975	John Mills (13) Julie Rowlands
	1976 – 1977 Don Frank		Margaret Williams	Jo Connor (10) Janet Grant	(Mutimer) (10) Naomi Jonas (Cash)
	1984-1987 Barry Finch		1978 – 1987 Janet Grant	John Lovell 1976	Barry Bradshaw Sue Plyler (12)
	1988-1990 Bali Haque		1988-1989 Rosalie Goldsworthy	Trudel Risch (11) 1977	1984 Corrina Finch
	1991-1993 Rosalie Goldsworthy		ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	Corrina Finch 1985	Sue Plyler (12) 1993
	1994-1996 Chris Lynch		1990 Rosalie Goldsworthy	Negmi Bagci (14) Merv Chivers	Nanette Cooke (10) Dennis Ingram(18)
	1997-1999 Garry Carnachan		1991 – 1993 Chris Lynch	Miles Sutcliffe (17) Barry Watt	1995 Gerard Clarke (10)
			1991- 2006 Robyn Moran	Clyde Wilks (17) 1978	Ian Gabites 1996
			2002 – Mathew Cooper	Dot Andrews Doug Ball (17)	Mike Paling (12) Tony Peters
				Barry Finch Elza Sutcliffe	Harold Rilkoff Graeme Woodhead (11)
				Margaret Williams	

LONG SERVICE ACADEMIC STAFF HONOURS BOARD

10 Years Service	10 Years Service	20 Years Service	20 Years Service	30 Years Service	40 Years Service
1987 Rob Meredith (10)	1997 John Hodgkinson (19)	1979 George Procter (21)	1994 Mathew Cooper	1998 Dot Andrews	2008 Dot Andrews
1988 Ken Crawford	Freida Cooper 1998	1980 Don Frank (27)	Corrina Finch (27)	Barry Finch (34)	
Lesley Kreisler Maree Munro (14)	Jan Beggs (11) Christine Charteris(16)	Terry Guy (27) Alan Page (25)	1995 Merv Chivers (28)	2000 Trevor Lanning(36)	
1989 Bali Haque (11)	Margaret Gaze (13) Kyle Gilmore	Rod Greensill (21) Alec Hutchinson(20)	Ernie Priestley 1996	Dave Plyler (30)	
Ivan Komene (18) 1991	Stuart Greenhill(10) 1999	Noel O'Keeffe(26) Rick Wood (22)	Noel O'Keeffe(26) 1997	Rodney Ward (32)	
John Mills (13) Julie Rowlands	Jan Carnachan (10) Murray Hill (11)	Phil Gayton 1998	Rick Wood (22) 1997	Mathew Cooper 2005	
(Mutimer) (10) Naomi Jonas (Cash)	Sheila Mack 2000	John Lovell (23) 1987	Phil Gayton 1998	Ernie Priestley 2007	
Barry Bradshaw Sue Plyler (12)	Robyn Moran(16) 2001	Barry Watt (25) 1988	Ken Crawford Lesley Kreisler(26)	Phil Gayton ONZM 2008	
1993 Nanette Cooke (10)	Gloria Holland Malcolm McGregor	Dot Andrews Barry Finch	Barry Bradshaw(22) 2003	Ken Crawford	
Dennis Ingram(18) 1995	2002 Antony Joe	Elza Sutcliffe (20) Margaret Williams(25)	Naomi Jonas(24) 2005		
Gerard Clarke (10) Ivan Gabites	Lee George (10) 2006	Trevor Lanning Doug Oliver (27)	Ian Gabites 2006		
1996 Mike Paling (12)	2008 Michele FitzPatrick	Dave Plyler 1992	Tony Peters 2007		
Tony Peters Harold Rilkoff	2009 Beverley McLean	Charles Gill (23) 1993	Harold Rilkoff 2009		
Graeme Woodhead (11)		Rodney Ward	Sheila Mack		



Head Students

HEAD BOYS

1962	Renny Snell
1963	Renny Snell
1964	Renny Snell
1965	Denis Sole
1966	Graham Ross
1967	Geoffrey Ward
1968	Bruce Walker
1969	Kerry Avery
1970	Alan Innes
1971	Ian Jackson
1972	Warren Williams
1973	Andrew Dungan
1974	David Marshall
1975	Paul Gardiner
1976	Rodney Fraser
1977	Owen Burgess
1978	Shane Colman
1979	Marua Wharepouri
1980	Bruce Lawrence
1981	Grant O'Donnell
1982	Mark Honeyfield
1983	Jonathon Purdy
1984	Mark Pardington
1985	Neil Honeyfield
1986	Rex Hancock
1987	Antony Joe
1988	Peter Blyde
1989	Gordon Bassett
1990	Greg Withers
1991	Todd Smythe
1992	Bevan Erueti
1993	Regan Avery
1994	Damian Johnson
1995	Patrick Watson
1996	Mark Rutherford
1997	Adam El Agez
1998	Alistair Tippet
1999	Jared Wilson
2000	James Riley
2001	Ben Gudjonsson
2002	Russell Dalton
2003	Silas Avery
2004	Nikhil George
2005	Michael Riley
2006	Stuart Julian
2007	Logan Squire
2008	Mathew Dickey
2009	Kaye McKee

HEAD GIRLS

1962	Allison Bruning
1963	Allison Bruning
1964	Kathleen Sargent
1965	Jan Hunter
1966	Dorothy Beadmore
1967	Barbara Sole
1968	Christina McPhail
1969	Lorraine Lovell
1970	Jennifer King
1971	Suzanne Johnson
1972	Raewyn Hill
1973	Marilyn Neumann
1974	Sally Conquest
1975	Helen Davies
1976	Jennifer Lobb
1977	Kaye McKenzie
1978	Beth Pearson
1979	Anne Leong
1980	Tammy Bentham
1981	Vivienne Smith
1982	Vicki Eaton & Linda Terry
1983	Lee McKenzie
1984	Lynette Rowan
1985	Jill Daamen
1986	Alina Leigh
1987	Donna Butt
1988	Prue Lobb
1989	Tracey Third
1990	Debbie Richardson
1991	Carly Williams
1992	Frieda Mong
1993	Trina Cowley
1994	Zoe Priestley
1995	Claire De Barr
1996	Gemma Perry
1997	Amelia Gaffy
1998	Elizabeth Buttimore
1999	Donna Bond
2000	Claire Charteris
2001	Charlotte Stoddart
2002	Amanda Brien
2003	Megan Sommerville
2004	Sarah Allemann
2005	Gwendoline Taylor
2006	Briar Plummer-Butt
2007	Jessica Dixon
2008	Kelsey Farmer
2009	Natalie Bunn

Dux

1964	Renny Snell
1965	Kathryn Procter
1966	Dorothy Beardmore
1967	Philip Alley & Alastair MacGibbon
1968	Christina McPhail
1969	Michael Collier
1970	Graeme Whittaker
1971	Andrew Stedman
1972	Malcolm Giles
1973	Stephen Hutton
1974	Murray Reid
1975	Linda Ball
1976	Michael Petrove
1977	Geoffrey Putt
1978	Christine Greiner
1979	Dianne Knapman
1980	John Ansell
1981	Sarah Read
1982	Mark Honeyfield
1983	Donna Leong
1984	David Salisbury
1985	Greg Finch
1986	Michael Walker
1987	Alan Greenhead
1988	Andrea Murray
1989	Kristin Holm
1990	Nicholas Ireland
1991	Sanjo Kuindersma
1992	Alison Blume
1993	Stephen Butler
1994	Zoe Priestley & Dion Blackler
1995	Carmel Jacobs
1996	Jill Tippet
1997	Marnie Carter
1998	Suzanne McCarthy
1999	Emily Miller & Timothy Bedford
2000	Claire Charteris
2001	Tessa Versteeg
2002	Lisa Kerr
2003	Monica Pitman
2004	Frances Doran
2005	Gwendoline Taylor
2006	Amy McLeod
2007	Kristy Bradley
2008	Sam Burton & Tod Rookes
2009	Bethany Lowe

Scholarships

1968	Christina McPhail		
1971	Andrew Stedman		
1972	Malcolm Giles	Barbara Hammonds	
1973	Roderick Ball	Stephen Hutton	
	Marilyn Neumann		
1974	Murray Reid		
1975	Helen Davies		
1976	Fraser Duncan		
1977	Geoffrey Putt	Terrance Robb	
1979	Michael Kaye		
1983	Donna Leong		
1984	Darin O'Keeffe	David Salisbury	
1988	Shane Dye		
1991	Lisa Rossiter(2)	Ian Beale	James Clareburt
	Sanjo Kuindersma(3)		
1992	Alison Blume(3)	Bevan Cooper(2)	Chauncey Flay
	Jason Johnson		
1993	Lisa Adams-Broyd	Kelly Austin(2)	Rachel Clareburt
	Nichola Rogers	Blyss Wagstaff(3)	Stephen Butler(3)
	Nigel Thomson(2)		
1994	Shannon Austin(2)	Dianne Avery	Cheryl Cottam
	Katie Holland	Tina O'Keeffe	Zoe Priestley(3)
	Frances Whitaker	Dwight Ashton	Andre Hansen,
	Ross MacNeil	Vaughan Robinson	Dimetre Triadis(2)
1995	Carmel Jacobs	Sharleen Maddox	Elizabeth Mayhead
	Rachael Walker		
1996	Julie Alexander(2)	Nicola Bell	Hannah Brown
	Sarah-Jane Thorstensen(2)	Nancy de Bueger	Jill Tippet
	Brendan Main		
1997	Hilary Blackstock	Inga Boyd	Marnie Carter
	Rebecca Grundy		Nicholas Forsythe
1998	Suzanne McCarthy	Ingrid O'Connor	William Lewis
	Ben Shaw		
1999	Donna Bond	Janine Martin	Emily Miller(4)
	Eloise Pollard	Michelle Soulsby	Thomas Parry(2)
2000	Phillipa Berry	Janelle Perry	
	Heidi Wallin		James Riley(2)
2001	Laura Adlam	Rebecca Reidy	Tessa Versteeg(4)
	Laura Sommerville	Ingmar de Ruiter(2)	
2002	Elizabeth Trevathan		
2003	Rowan Dixon	Li Jian Qui (2)	
2006	Claire Hinton	Emma Kennedy	
	Sarah Maessen	Sophie Norris	
	Lucia Williams		
2007	Ryan Ballinger	Tiffany Ho	
	James Walkinshaw		
2008	Brooke Bowers	Sam Burton	
	Matthew Dickey	Holly Harre	
2009	Andrea Brewster	Bethany Lowe	Martin van Paassen

Spotswood College Alumni Trust

SPOTSWOOD COLLEGE ALUMNI TRUST

The Spotswood College Alumni Trust was established at a Special General meeting held in the Spotswood College staffroom on Monday 24th July, 2006.

The Trust was registered as a Charitable Trust with the Registrar of Incorporated Societies No. 1855484, dated 15th August, 2006.

Under The Charities Act 2005, The Charities Commission granted Charity status to the Trust No. CC24439 dated 16th May, 2008.

THE TRUSTEES

- Chairman:** Phil Gayton ONZM, FSMNZ, Dip Phys.ED, Dip Tchg
Secondary School Teacher
- Secretary:** Jenny Goddard B.Arch (Hons)
Architect
- Treasurer:** Len Walker
Bank Manager
- Trustees:** Tim Coleman B.Sc, LL.B
Lawyer
Kevin Fenwick MBA, B.Com, CA
Chartered Accountant
Bruce Lawrence BBS, CA
Chartered Accountant
Alina Leigh MBChB, FRANZCR
Medical Doctor
Lindsay Thomson Dip Bus Studies, BBS, CA
Financial Adviser

OBJECTIVES OF THE ALUMNI TRUST

The purposes of the Trust are the advancement and passing on of education and learning through Spotswood College at New Plymouth and, without restricting the scope of the foregoing:-

- the education of students at Spotswood College who are financially or socially disadvantaged, or both; or
- to provide financial assistance, clothing, books, equipment, facilities, and other appropriate assistance to such students; and
- to provide Scholarships and prizes for academic, sporting, musical, arts and cultural achievement; and
- to provide financial assistance for students of Spotswood College to further their learning at a tertiary level; and
- to provide financial assistance for equipment, buildings, facilities, services and structures at Spotswood College

DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTABLE

As the Trust is a registered Charity, for individuals you can claim one-third of the total you donate up to the level of your taxable income. To claim the tax credit you need to fill out claim form IR526.

MAKING A DONATION

The Spotswood College Alumni Trust would kindly welcome a donation that you may wish to make. To do so, please contact the Trust at:-

The Secretary,
Spotswood College Alumni Trust,
c/- P.O. Box 6116,
Moturoa,
New Plymouth.
New Zealand 4344
Telephone: 64 – 6 – 7512416
Facsimilie: 64 – 6 – 7512418
Email: alumni@spotswoodcollege.school.nz

MAKING A BEQUEST

A bequest/gift in your will is a positive way to do this. There are several ways in which you can nominate your gift.

1. A Specified Sum:

This is a very common form of bequest where you specify a fixed amount, however it is recommended that you review your will every five years.

2. A Percentage Bequest:

This allows for a specific percentage/proportion of your estate to be given to the Trust.

3. A Residuary Bequest:

You may leave the balance of your estate to the Trust after all other expenses have been deducted.

4. Gift of Assets:

You may prefer to leave a specified gift to the Trust. A property, shares, stocks, bonds, jewellery, works of art or other gifts you wish to nominate. These may be retained by the trust as a capital investment or sold to raise funds.

Your will is the only way you can be confident that your affairs will be settled as you would wish.

The Spotswood College Alumni Trust would appreciate you giving consideration to making a bequest/gift to the Trust in your will. If you are interested in doing this, we suggest that you speak to your lawyer/solicitor or financial advisor about this. For further details please contact the Trust (details above).

Acknowledgements

Our thanks to the following people and businesses for their generous support:

- Cambrian Engineering Co.
- Amtec Engineering Ltd
- Drilling Fluid Equipment
- Tim Coleman (partner), Billings Lawyers
- Kingsway Menswear
- Taranaki Electrical Services Ltd
- Ardern Peters Architects Ltd
- Business Communications Taranaki
- Ross Fraser Panelbeaters
- New World City, New Plymouth

- Jenny Goddard, Architect
- Janko Computers
- Video Ezy
- Elco Canvas
- Prestige Joinery
- Nice Hotel + Table
- Vivian Pharmacy
- David Fletcher Mortgages
- Newton Gordge Joinery Ltd
- David Fernee Window Repairs
- Classic Carpets Flooring Xtra
- The Sign Shop

- Benny's Books
- Norwood Farm Machinery Centre
- New Plymouth Chiropractic Clinic
- Lindsay Thomson - Imperial Investments
- WITT
- Quality Hotel Plymouth International
- Spotswood College
- The Radio Network
- The Radioworks
- Live Magazine
- The Taranaki Daily News
- Spotswood College Alumni Trust

50th Jubilee Committee:

Phil Gayton (Chair), Robyn Harvey (Minute Secretary), Gavin FitzPatrick (Treasurer), Carol Kenworthy, Sue Maetzig, Angus Erueti, Terry Long, Lindsay Thomson

The committee wishes to express its most grateful thanks and appreciation to Virginia Winder for interviewing and writing the 51 profiles that appear in this booklet. Thanks also to Amanda Shewen and staff at Eyeprint - a big thank you for your help and assistance in bringing this booklet together.

Finally, a big thank you to those profiled who so happily were prepared to be interviewed and let their stories be part of this booklet.

College Memorabilia

We are attempting to build up a collection of Spotswood College memorabilia that can be used at events and functions in the future. Items such as uniforms, newspaper articles, photos etc, that you may like to donate to the college would be greatly appreciated. If you have something that you think will be of use, please contact Phil Gayton.

Phone: (06) 7512 416
Email pga@spotswoodcollege.school.nz



JOURNALIST: Virginia Winder (1976-1980)

Writer Virginia Winder got hooked on journalism when she did work experience at the Daily News as a 16-year-old. "Spotswood College had this great set-up where senior students would spend Thursday afternoons doing work experience. I chose the newspaper and used to go out on assignments with the reporters and photographers. Later, I ended up working with those same people." She has now been a journalist for 27 years and is a full-time freelancer. She taps out a weekly coffee column for the Taranaki Daily News called Bean There, and regularly writes for national and local magazines. In 2009, she wrote a series of books on immigrant children to Taranaki, and often takes on writing projects like the Spotswood College 50th jubilee book. "I've been blown away by the extraordinary achievements of past students. To be honest, I could have written a hundred more stories about our amazing people." Virginia says her standout teachers at Spotswood were John Lovell (English), Charles Gill (history), Maggie Belcher and Mervyn Chivers (drama) and Corrina Finch (social studies). Her links with Spotswood remain strong. She went through school with husband Warren Smart. "We were mates since kindergarten and got together in London when we were 25." Their two children, Clementine and Nelson are now at Spotswood.



GRAPHIC DESIGNER: Amanda Shewen (1991-1995)

Eyeprint owner Amanda Shewen (nee Bollond) says a glowing reference from a former Spotswood College teacher helped score her a job in graphic design. Even though she had no experience, the words of typing teacher Margaret Gaze were enough for the prospective employer, who told Amanda: "This reference is outstanding - I'm going to employ you on this alone." And so, instead of pursuing a career in the media like she imagined, Amanda became a whiz at graphic design, eventually becoming the owner of Eyeprint in 2005. Three other former Spotswood students work with her in the central New Plymouth office, which is highly visible because of its lime-green theme and eye logo. When she's not making business cards, brochures and putting together publications like the Spotswood College 50th jubilee booklet, Amanda can be found at the end of a flugel horn. While not one to blow her own trumpet, she has been a member of the New Plymouth brass band for 21 years. This year she will be made a life member. "That's the quirky thing people don't know about me," she says.



See you again at the
SPOTSWOOD COLLEGE

60TH school REUNION

EASTER: 10-12 APRIL 2020

Including the launch of the book
THE FIRST 50 YEARS OF HIGH ENDEAVOUR

If you have any information that you would like considered for inclusion in this book
please contact: Phil Gayton - Ph: (06) 7512416 - Email: pga@spotswoodcollege.school.nz

75TH Jubilee

EASTER: 23-25 MARCH 2035

JOIN OUR DATABASE FOR EX-PUPILS & EX-STAFF

Established to maintain contact with alumni, keep
you up to date with reunion/jubilee information,
and other events being held at Spotswood College

www.spotswoodcollege.school.nz/register