



ALUMNI

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER



December 2023

Kia ora everyone,

In this issue, we have stories about alumni successes in sporting, academic and other endeavours, alumni in the news, and Westlake events.

A big welcome to our newest alumnae, our most recent school leavers, the class of 2023! It's lovely to have you with us. I hope you enjoy reading all the fantastic news from our community, and we look forward to hearing yours in the future.

Cathy Roughan, Alumni Co-Ordinator.



A group of Y13s at the Leavers' Function.

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Our Supporters

Connect with Us

- **Facebook (including all Alumni Year groups)**
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Events & School News

Our Community



Inaugural Mother-Daughter Function

On 23 August, our Event Centre buzzed with the sounds of happy talk and laughter during our first-ever Mother-Daughter breakfast. Over 300 students and the special wāhine in their lives enjoyed a vibrant start to their day.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious breakfast, and former Deputy Prefect **Katie Perkins** (class of 2006) amazed and entertained us with her tales of post-school life, first as a NZ Women's Cricketer and now as a police officer. Women need strong women in their lives! Feeling such positive energy filling the beautiful Event Centre was a joy.

We look forward to making this wonderful event a regular fixture on our calendar.

The 4th formers of 1962

COMING EVENT

THE PANAMA HAT GIRLS REUNION



A group of former students who got together at the Westlake High School Founders reunion earlier this year, are planning to meet again in early 2024. This time they would love others from their year to join them, to reconnect with old friends, make some new ones, and share memories over lunch at a great venue.

They started at Westlake in Form 3 in 1961, or transitioned from St Anne's School, so they were all in Form 4 at Westlake Girls in 1962, the year Westlake Girls and Boys High Schools officially separated.

What:

'The Panama Hat Girls reunion'
(WGHS Form 3 1961 / Form 4 1962)

When:

Wednesday, 6 March, 2024 - lunchtime

Where:

The Bays Club, Browns Bay



Photo Left to Right:
Robin Bartlett, Jackie Watkins, Georgie Williams, Bev Thomas

Contact bevthomas@extra.co.nz, details are on the Westlake High School Founders Facebook page.

Getting in touch with former students isn't easy with many changes in surnames, so please spread the word amongst others from that year.

Thanks to **Bev Weber (Thomas)** for getting this reunion planning underway, with help from former classmates, **Georgie Harvey (Williams)**, **Robin Bartlett**, and **Mary Biss**.





The best girls' racing team in Australasia!

Westlake has seen many individual, team and group successes in academic, sporting, musical, and cultural arenas this year – far too many to share with you here. Our Westlake school newsletter, Te Reo o Te Roto (Language of the Lake), brims with these stories every fortnight. Click [here](#) for all issues.

Some recent highlights.

We are the national basketball, sailing, and ki-o-rahi champions, and Auckland champions in badminton, hockey, snowboarding, rugby 7s and advanced open debating.

Sailing champions

The Westlake sailing team was one of three NZ girls' teams invited to represent NZ in the September Interdominion Teams Racing Regatta in Sydney. This followed their wins in the Auckland and then the NZ Secondary Schools' Championship earlier this year. The sailing competition pits the three top NZ and Australian girls sailing teams against each other.

The young team of eight, with six juniors, sailed brilliantly to take the Women's title for the event, making it the best girls' racing team in Australasia.

The team manager, **Paula Satterthwaite (Knauf)**, Class of 1989, whose daughter is in the team, is a former student of Westlake and an experienced sailor. Among Paula's successes was winning the NZ Women's Match Racing Competition in 2000, along with fellow Westlaker **Amy Mulcahy (Waring)**.

Basketball champions

Westlake's premier basketball team won the New Zealand Secondary Schools' Championship for the second time in a row. This fantastic win has led to their invitation to the World Schools Championships in Macau, China, in June-July 2024. This is a bi-annual competition and is only open to national champions.

Music awards

Westlake musical groups continue to excel at regional and national competitions, with premier choirs, Choralation and Cantare, winning gold and 'Best Performance' awards at the national finale.

Instrumental groups - Westlake Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, Concert Band and Big Band won gold at the KBB awards and also 'Best Performance' awards in their categories.

Combined schools' production

One of the two productions for 2023, 'Into the Woods' won the supreme award at the Auckland Live Showdown theatre awards – 'The Best Production of 2023', competing against 29 plays and musicals for 30 awards. In total, the show won seven awards – a remarkable achievement.

Service to the Community – House Fundraising



Westlake strongly believes in the importance of service to the community, and this year, our Houses collectively raised a great deal of money for their charities. **\$19,200** in total - an outstanding effort!

Their charities were Akoranga House - The Heart Foundation, Hauraki House - Frankie to the Rescue, Onewa House - Pillars, Pupuke House - Respect, and Wairau House - Mobility Dogs. In addition, the Houses raised money for NZ Red Cross/Cyclone Appeal, Rising Swans/Star Jam, Pink Shirt Day, and Daffodil Day.

Former Students Return to Speak at Events

We welcomed four former students back to Westlake for end-of-year events. We appreciated their anecdotes of Westlake, insights and messages for current students.

Prefects' Graduation

Hala Barakat (Class of 2019)

Hala Barakat is in her final year of a Bachelor of Engineering degree at the University of Auckland. She was Head Prefect in 2019 and has continued to take on leadership roles at university. These include being on the Executive Council of the Faculty of Engineering, being a Residential Advisor in student accommodation, and this year, the

student representative of the university governing body – the University of Auckland Council.

Inaugural Mother/Daughter Breakfast

Katie Perkins (Class of 2006)

Katie Perkins has had a long and notable career as a White Fern cricketer (2012 – 2020) and she played for the Auckland Hearts for over 15 years. She retired from playing in February 2023, with over 120 international matches across all formats. Katie has balanced this with working as a police officer in South Auckland, mainly in community roles engaging with young people. Most recently, her role has been in the Supported Resolution team in Manukau.

Katie was Deputy Prefect and Sports Prefect at Westlake and was involved in many sport and service activities. Cricket was her main sporting passion from a young age.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=3432912153692860>

Senior Academic Prizegiving

Nicole Roughan (Class of 1999)

Nicole Roughan is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Auckland. She holds a prestigious Rutherford Discovery Fellowship from the Royal Society. She researches and teaches in the field of philosophy of law, where she is recognised as a leading expert on theories of authority and interaction between indigenous law and state law. She is a graduate of Yale Law School, the University of Auckland, and Westlake Girls High School, where she sang in the ‘Key Cygnetures’ choir, played in the Big Band, and represented the school in debating. Nicole was Head Girl and Dux in 1999.

Sports Prizegiving

Tara Vaughan (Class of 2020)

Tara Vaughan was a gold medal canoe sprinter in the K4 500 event in the 2023 World Championship in Germany.



Hala Barakat (Class of 2019)



Katie Perkins (Class of 2006)



Nicole Roughan (Class of 1999)



Tara Vaughan (Class of 2020)

Alumni Updates

The Arts

University of Auckland 2023 Arts Student of the Year



Thira Sels (Surakel), Class of 2020, has been named the 2023 University of Auckland Arts Student of the Year – a huge honour.

Of the five sub-categories, she was the Culture and Community category winner. Fellow Class of 2020 student Charlotte Print was the Leadership category winner.

Many charities and organisations commended Thira for her community involvement, particularly in the mental health field. This includes 216 volunteer hours with Anxiety Org’s Helpline, at least six hours a week at Auckland Hospital working with dementia and stroke patients, volunteering at The Big Gay Out, with the LGBTQ+ community, and in Ryman retirement villages. She was also the Academic Co-ordinator for the university’s summer programme, and tutors in philosophy.

Thira has just completed a BA, majoring in Psychology and Philosophy. She will study for a Master’s in Health Psychology next year. She recently received a scholarship to study an intensive language course in Germany and will spend the summer break there.

At Westlake, Thira completed Level 3 with Excellence and was involved with Amnesty and MUNA.

<https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/arts/current-students/student-life/student-of-the-year.html>

Peter Burn - Westlake Foundation Student



Peter Burn (Class of 1961)

Peter Burn, a Westlake High School foundation student from 1957, recently received a Lifetime Membership award from the Pumfhouse Theatre in Takapuna.

He has been on the theatre board since 2011 and Chairperson since 2015.

Peter's keen interest in Westlake continued after he left in 1961. He subsequently joined the Board of Governors of Westlake Girls, becoming the Chairperson for several years, and he has been active in helping organise alumni reunions for the school's co-ed founders.

Peter had an extensive career in the airline industry in New Zealand and the USA. He was a senior accountant at Air New Zealand and a senior management team member. He also led a large logistics company in North America and had a management contracting role at Auckland Council Property. He held various roles over a long period at city and local government level on the North Shore, reflecting his strong sense of community. These roles include being a city councillor, local board member and a long association as a trustee and former Chair of the Kaipatiki Community Facilities Trust.

Peter comments, "I have always had a strong affiliation to Westlake Girls as that was the home where the foundation pupils, both boys and girls studied and where we were taught by memorable, dedicated teachers and learned the many skills that gave us our start in life.

I well remember going out of bounds to swim in Lake Pupuke at lunchtime and receiving the cane for doing so. The lake at the time was a reserve water supply for the North Shore and not to be swum in or used for any recreational sport. Look at it today with Olympic gold medallist canoers and many water sports athletes using it extensively.

We saw the school grow from two classroom blocks, to include the old hall and two new classroom and administration blocks. As a Board Member of Westlake Girls during its formative years, I was proud to be part of its rapid growth during the 1970s and 1980s and am fortunate to have seen the school become one of the country's foremost girls' secondary schools, with its enviable facilities and teaching staff. As past pupils, you all contributed to the growth, and I hope that Westlake also has strong memories for you."

Holly Haines, Artist



Holly Haines (Class of 2016) is an emerging impressionist landscape artist based in the UK. In October, she had her first solo exhibition at the Takapuna Art Gallery, ‘Art by the Sea’. Holly is currently studying classical oil painting at the Edinburgh Atelier of Fine Art, and the exhibition featured several works that follow her journey from NZ to Edinburgh.

Holly excelled at Westlake, particularly in painting, gaining an NCEA Level 3 Scholarship award. She followed her passion for art and studied at Auckland University of Technology. She has previously exhibited and sold her artworks at North Shore galleries.

Sport

Andrea Nelson, MNZM



Andrea Nelson (left) with Dame Cindy Kiro.

Andrea Nelson (née Wilson), Class of 1993, was appointed as a Member of the NZ Order of Merit (MNZM) for her services to sport in the King's Birthday Honours. In September, she received her insignia from the Governor General, Dame Cindy Kiro. We warmly congratulate Andrea on receiving this high honour.

She was CEO of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in 2022, leading the upgrade of facilities to host the event, which saw a record-breaking sold-out final at Hagley Oval

and 1.64 billion video views.

At Westlake, Andrea was more interested in the arts than sport. She enjoyed English and debating and took part in school productions. She was attracted to the media, and after leaving Westlake, she undertook a year stint as a radio host with 95bFM while completing a Post-Graduate Diploma in Journalism at AUT.

Andrea's involvement in sport started with her work at the 2012 London Olympics from 2005 to 2012. This led to key roles in the 2015 FIFA U20 World Cup held in NZ (Director of Communications and Marketing) and the 2017 Rugby League World Cup (General Manager). Until recently, she was Chair of Northern Region Football. Currently, she is the CEO of Gymnastics NZ.

Last year, she was an entertaining guest speaker at the Westlake Father-Daughter Breakfast event.

Holly Gray, NZ Rowing Squad Summer 2023



Holly Gray (Class of 2017) has been named in the NZ Rowing Squad for summer 2023. She has been rowing for about ten years and, in 2019, was in the NZ U21 Trans-Tasman rowing team.

Holly has just finished studying for a Master's in Sports Exercise and Health at AUT. She has had various placements and jobs related to sport, fitness and well-being, including being a fitness consultant at Auckland Council, a research assistant at AUT Sports Performance Research Institute, and a student performance technique analyst intern at High Performance Sport NZ.

She has been based in Cambridge since April, working as an F45 Training instructor and front of house at a café in Cambridge while completing her studies and training towards selection for the rowing team.

Kate Burley, Silver Ferns Netball Squad



Kate Burley (Class of 2014) has been named in the Silver Ferns Squad for 2023/24, having previously been in Silver Ferns development squads. Kate has been playing as a defender in the ANZ Premier League for several seasons - with the Northern Stars, Northern Mystics, and most recently, the Southern Steel, where she was named Player of the Year 2023.

She was in the 2022 Netball FAST5 Ferns team that won bronze in the Fast5 World Series last year and the 2023 World Series, where they came second.

Kate has been studying full- or part-time for over eight years, juggling this with her playing commitments. This year, she graduated with a BSc from the University of Auckland, majoring in Psychology and Physiology. Kate is considering part-time post-graduate study if she can fit it around her new full-time two-year contract with the Northern Stars from 2024.

Kate was Head Prefect at Westlake in 2014 and played in the premier Westlake netball teams. See below for Kate in the media.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2u7-UPOdO8>

<https://www.newsroom.co.nz/lockerroom/burleys-southern-stint-takes-her-to-the-top>

<https://newsroom.co.nz/2023/08/23/burleys-southern-stint-takes-her-to-the-top/>

Business

Rebecca Sowden, Fixing the Internet



Rebecca Sowden (Class of 1999) is a former New Zealand Football Fern, USA division one college soccer player and New Zealand Women of Influence Finalist (contribution to sport).

Rebecca has spent 17 years running the sponsorship and marketing for some of the world's leading sport and entertainment properties.

These include Hong Kong Rugby Sevens, Volvo Ocean Race, FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, Masterchef and Idol. She also started her own sport technology start-up and

national beach soccer series.

Rebecca is a founding partner of Team Heroine and *Correct the Internet*, led by her passion for supercharging women's sport. *Correct the Internet* has become a global campaign to correct gender bias on the internet and make women in sport more visible.

At Westlake, she played in the top football teams and was in the 1998 1st X1 that won the Secondary School Championship. She played in the NZ U17 and U19 representative teams. A football scholarship took her to William and Mary College in Virginia in 2000, where she completed a Bachelor of Business Administration in 2004.

Rebecca made her Football Ferns début in 2004 and finished her international career with ten caps to her credit. See Rebecca in the media below.

<https://www.correcttheinternet.com/>

<https://capsulenz.com/do/sport/correct-the-internet-nike/>



Amelia Linzey, CEO Beca Group

In October 2023, **Amelia Linzey (Class of 1989)** became Beca's new CEO. Beca is one of Asia Pacific's largest independent advisory, design and engineering consultancies.

Amelia is the first woman and non-engineer CEO to lead the group.

"It is a huge privilege to help make an impact on the next decade of Beca," says Amelia, who has worked there for over 25 years. Beca was founded in 1920 and is well into its second century, with more than 4,000 workers in 25 offices worldwide and delivering projects in more than 70 countries.

Before her CEO role, Amelia was Beca's Group Director – Advisory, Chief Planner, and Chair of Beca's Sustainability Steering Group. She was also a Director of both the Beca Group and Beca NZ boards. In April 2022, Amelia was selected as one of a small group of business leaders to accompany the then-prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, on a trade mission to Singapore and Japan.

Amelia completed Year 13 at Westlake Girls High School in 1989. She then completed her Master of Science degree at the University of Auckland, specialising in geography (along with other papers in anthropology, ecology, and resource management).

Amelia says, "When I was younger, I would have never imagined that I would one day become a CEO as I was quite reserved as a kid. One thing I've always been passionate

about, though, is what's right and what's not right and standing up for change when it's needed. That helped me to take a deep breath and get involved in things.

During my days at Westlake Girls High School, I may not have been the easiest student, but I was always determined and stubborn about what interested me.

I think my curiosity and values have meant that I have had a really interesting journey – grabbing opportunities to do things that excite me. That means I am now leading a business that's passionate about making every day better for our people, clients and the communities we work with, and that's something I am privileged to do."

A geographer and planner by profession, Amelia has directed numerous strategic and community shaping, policy and infrastructure planning, and consultation projects across New Zealand, Australia, Samoa, Belize and the wider Asia Pacific region.

"A key focus for our business looking ahead is how we can support our clients in decarbonising our economy and nurture prosperous, resilient, and enduring communities – both now and for future generations."

El Reilly, NZ Fashion Week



Designer **Chantelle (El) Reilly (Class of 2018)** was one of the students selected to show her collection at the Graduate Show, NZ Fashion Week, held in August in Auckland. El graduated from Massey University, Wellington, with first-class honours in Fashion and Design.

She visited Westlake before the show to talk to the current fabric technology students. El has a zero-waste design approach, where every fabric part is used when designing a garment.

In Year 12, she entered the Hokonui Fashion Design Awards, winning the Recycled Garment section and the Supreme Award for the High School section. In Year 13, she was First in Subject for Fabric Technology and Art Photography.

El's former Fabric Technology teacher, Ms Kate Luisetti, was delighted to attend the graduate show to see El's garments.

Annuska Menoita, Gold-Winning Designer



Congratulations to former student **Annuska Menoita (Class of 2014)**, the lead designer at Wonder Group, an interior design agency based in Auckland. She and her team have won gold at the prestigious NZ Design Awards 2023 for their entry in the Workplace Environments category.

Annuska was a sports prefect at Westlake with a strong interest in graphics and design. She graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Auckland in 2018 and has worked in architectural and interior design since then. She has recently moved to Amsterdam to gain further experience in her field.

Young Enterprise Scheme



Charlotte Print (2020) has received the Young Enterprise Scheme (YES) Community Leader of the Year award at the recent YES Alumni Awards for her work as CEO of Velocity, a student-led entrepreneurship programme at the University of Auckland, and for her work with *Kairos*.

Kairos is a social enterprise educational start-up that Charlotte co-founded to help bridge the gap between low and high-decile schools, promoting tertiary educational opportunities by providing resources, workshops, and ongoing mentoring. Charlotte had wide-ranging interests at Westlake, including involvement in the YES programme, athletics, World Vision, Amnesty, and Philosophy Club. She also achieved significant academic accomplishments with three NCEA Scholarship awards and was named Proxime Accessit in 2020.

International Scholarships



KiHei Lee



Cecile McNeill

KiHei Lee and Cecile McNeill, Music Scholarships

KiHei Lee (Class of 2016), a violinist, and **Cecile McNeill (Class of 2018)**, a violist, have been Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra (APO) Fellows this year and have both recently left to further their music studies overseas.

Both had performance experiences in solo, chamber, and orchestral settings while at Westlake and as their musical careers developed through their university studies at the University of Auckland. Last year, they were selected as Young Artists to perform recitals at the Whakatipu Music Festival in Queenstown.

Cecile McNeill has just completed her Bachelor of Music (Hons) degree. She has now headed to the University of Southern California, where she won a full scholarship to study for a two-year Master of Music degree.

KiHei Lee graduated with a BMus (First Class Honours) degree and won second place in the National String Competition in 2021. She was a Violin Fellow in the Michael Hill International Violin Competition in 2023. KiHei is now continuing her studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London in the Master of Arts two-year course after receiving an Entrance scholarship.

Cecile and KiHei returned to Westlake this year for a farewell concert.



Rebecca Moors, Basketball Scholarship to Hawai'i.

Congratulations to **Rebecca Moors**, a new graduate from the Class of 2023 who has accepted a scholarship to the University of Hawai'i starting next year. Rebecca captained the winning Westlake premier basketball team and was named the MVP of the national tournament. She will also play for the team at the championship in Macau next year.

Our Wonderful Supporters

Thank you so much to the following organisations for your amazing support in enabling academic, creative and sporting achievements.

V O L V O

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NORTH SHORE

ACQUIRE
INSURANCE • MORTGAGES • INVESTMENTS

AUCKLAND CHORAL
Singing to inspire
Tūi-Tūi-Tuituia



DINES

Connect With Us

Facebook

Please like our [Westlake Girls Alumni and Friends](#) Facebook page.

We'll keep you informed of Westlake events you may be interested in, any alumni reunions, and alumni news. There are private Facebook groups for all of our alumni years and some musical and instrumental groups. The links are on the alumni page of our school [website](#).

LinkedIn

Our [LinkedIn](#) group has 3,500 alumni and has a helpful tool for finding Westlake alumni in particular fields or locations.

Email Us

The contact address for any queries about Westlake or alumni is alumni@westlakegirls.school.nz



Westlake Girls High School

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