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Westlake Girls High School Alumni News August 2013

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Welcome Alumni



Welcome to our first Alumni email newsletter - an opportunity for our alumni association members to read about exciting events we have planned, and to read about the interesting things that other alumni are doing.

We are thrilled to have our new Alumni Coordinator Cathy Roughan on board, building up our numbers and making connections with former students. I look forward to catching up with any alumni who may be passing through Auckland, when we have an event on at school.

Last year we celebrated the first fifty years of Westlake Girls High School and reconnected with lots of former students, sharing their memories and experiences. Social networking makes it easier to make contact and to keep connected. I hope that the Alumni association will continue to strengthen and grow with your help, and I look forward to reading stories of Westlake Girls High School alumni from around the world.

Roz Mexted, Principal

Alumni Honours 2013

Westlake Girls High School congratulates two former students who were honoured this year.



Jo Aleh (MNZM) – Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit – Honoured in the 2013 New Year's Honours for services to sailing; 2012 Olympic Gold Medallist

Jo is competing in Europe with her sailing partner, Polly Powrie, beginning their 'road to Rio 2016'. Jo visited the school late last year and was guest speaker at the 2012

[See the new uniform!](#)

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EVENTS

Westlake Music Annual Gala Showcase

THURS 15 AUGUST 2013

Time TBC

Venue: Westlake Boys High
School Auditorium

Gather a group of friends and come along to enjoy the excellent Westlake choirs, orchestras and bands.

Afternoon tea for former WGHS staff

THURS 12 SEPTEMBER 2013

3.30-5.00 pm

Venue: School Staff Room

We hope that former Westlake staff will enjoy catching up with old friends, meeting up with some current staff, and having a look around the school. We ask that you contribute a small plate of food to share for afternoon tea. A number of our former staff have friends currently at the school which will help, but we don't have contact information for most. Please let others know. More information will be emailed as we learn your contact details. Email alumni@westlakegirls.school.nz at any time.

Kathy Reichs Event

TUES 24 SEPTEMBER 2013

Dr Kathy Reichs is a Forensic Anthropologist and author of the Temperance Brennan books - known by TV audiences as Bones. Dr Reichs is coming to New Zealand where she will be conversing with foremost crime reviewer and book blogger Graham Beattie about her work and new novel, 'Bones of the Lost'.

We are very excited to have such an inspirational speaker to come

graduation dinner. Follow Jo's progress www.teamjollyracing.com.



Samantha Scott (MNZM)

(Class of 1979) – Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit – Honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours 2013 for services to theatre.

Sam is the founder and artistic director of Massive Company, an open access professional theatre company with young people/emerging artists at the heart of the work. Massive Company has performed nationally and internationally, and produced a number of well known New Zealand actors and performing arts practitioners.

Sam's involvement with theatre, film and TV spans 28 years and a number of different roles including a director for Shortland Street from 1998-2007 and a continued position as tutor for Auckland's Theatresports Young People's Programme (which Sam founded in 1990). Massive Company's latest production "The Brave Tour" starts in Auckland in August. Tour details and trailer can be found on their website: massivecompany.co.nz/on-stage/
Ticket sales: www.iticket.co.nz

Alumni visits to WGHS

Thank you to these alumni who visited Westlake this year to share their experiences with our current students:



Siale Mann (Class of 2010) visited in March to share her experiences in the NZ Air Force where she is an Air Warfare Officer.

Jordyn Roe visited the school in May to talk to students about studying at Lincoln University and passed on useful information about her DairyNZ Scholarship. She is in her 4th year studying a Bachelor of Agricultural Science (Hons).

to the North Shore and Westlake community to talk about her experiences as a scientist and author.

We will be serving refreshments before the event and Dr Kathy Reichs will be available for signing her books afterwards.

Venue: Auditorium, Westlake Boys High School, 30 Forrest Hill Road, Forrest Hill, Auckland; Tuesday 24 September, doors open at 6:00pm.

Book your ticket with [eventfinder](#).

"3.15" Art Exhibition at NorthArt - Invitation to Alumni artists

EXHIBITION 1-16 OCTOBER 2013

The "3:15" group is a collaborative group of Art educators and students from Westlake Girls High School. The group wishes to invite former WGHS students to exhibit with them at NorthArt this year.

If you are interested, please email Assistant HOD Art, Kheang Ov at kov@westlakegirls.school.nz

ALUMNI Spring Meetup

SUN 20 OCTOBER 2013

2.00-4.00 pm

SAVE THE DATE NOW!

Westlake Girls alumni are invited to a Spring Meetup at Westlake Girls High School. This will be an informal gathering; a chance to have a look at some of the changes in the physical environment, meet the new principal, catch up with friends, and contribute to the building up of our network in these early days. MORE DETAILS TO COME.

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Nicole Roughan (Class of 1999) visited the school in May to talk to the Westlake Philosophy Club, just before taking up her new position at the National University of Singapore.

Lilly Peng (Class of 2012), International Student of the Year 2012, visited the school to share her reflections on her experience at WGHS for the benefit of others and for the school website.



Hala Nasr gave an interesting talk to the WGHS Amnesty group in May, shortly before taking up a new job at the United Nations.

Alumni Achievements

Personal and career milestones of former students:

Stella Kim (Class of 2010), a violinist, currently studying music at Auckland University has been awarded a Pettman Junior Academy music scholarship to compete at an international competition in Italy in July.

Somi Kim (Class of 2007) has been awarded a scholarship to study piano accompaniment at the Royal Academy in London at the end of 2013.

Anona Pak (Class of 2011) won the Women's Badminton Singles National Championship in April.

Katie Perkins (Class of 2006) is in the national women's cricket squad and is currently training for the NZ Police.

Hayley Reynolds (Class of 1999) working in Melbourne in cancer research has just had the Australian edition of her book published – 'In My Brother's Shadows'.



Natasha Bowyer (Class of 2011) received an Honours award from Massey University recently for being a top performing business student in 2012. You might see her training and competing in triathlon events around the country.

Chelle Thomson (Class of 2012) has a voice you want to hear if you are in trouble on the water. She has landed her 'dream job' as a marine radio operator with the Auckland Marine Centre.

Jane Pou, Alumna Profile

WGHS 1966-1969



Congratulations to Jane Pou on becoming a JP in Tauranga recently.

Armed with School Certificate and excellent 'commercial practice' skills from Westlake, she undertook a variety of office and managerial roles before pursuing a career as a professional singer, first in a pioneering 'one woman band', then as one of 'Tui's Angels' in Prince Tui Teka's all girl band. She has been singing for 50 years!

She has been involved in a wide variety of community activities in the Bay of Plenty and Waikato, starting women's rugby there, and volunteering in a wealth of different spheres.

Jane has been able to combine two passions – involvement in disability issues, and music, working with the BOP District Health Board as a Needs Assessor and supporting ministers of the clergy with karakia.

She has family links with the North Shore and visits frequently, maintaining an interest in the school and a pride in being one of its pupils in its early years.

Her recognition as a JP acknowledges her skills and on-going commitment to helping others, as she continues to be actively

involved in the Tauranga community.

Lynlee Smith, Alumna Profile

Class of 2005



Good luck to Lynlee, representing NZ in water polo at the World Championships this month.

Lynlee Smith attended Westlake Girls High School from 2001 to 2005. She was a talented water polo player and led the school team for 3 years. In her final year of school she was named Auckland Young Sportsperson of the Year and also represented NZ at the World Championships.

While studying at Arizona State University she continued to excel in her university team and also represented NZ in the FINA World Championships in 2009 and 2010.

After graduating with a major in Business and Communications, Lynlee had a year's break from competing but in 2012, decided to 'get back in the pool again'. Within a short time she was back in the national women's water polo team. 2013 sees her training hard again and about to set off for a training camp in Hungary, preparing to represent NZ at the championships in Barcelona in July.

Future plans include serious training for 'half iron man' events after the world champs.

Ronelle Tomkinson, Alumna Profile

Class of 2009

Congratulations to former student Ronelle Tomkinson (nee Barnes), on being elected to the Westlake Girls Board of Trustees. She is also a valuable committee member of the Alumni Association

Ronelle's final year at WGHS was 1999. She went on to study law and commerce at the University of Auckland. She currently works as a Senior Associate at a boutique city law firm, called LangtonHudsonButcher, which specialises in employment law.

In her work, she has acted for school boards and teachers and has been learning about the education system and the separation between a school's management and board's governance responsibilities.



She has signed up to WGHS's Alumni Committee and School Board to learn more, and in the hope that her legal training and experience might be of use to the School.

As a former student of WGHS, she still feels a sense of belonging there and pride. She wants to see it continue to excel, and to be the school of choice for girls like it was for her, and might be for her young daughter in the future.



The new uniform for Westlake Girls High School is being phased in beginning in 2013. See more pics at [WGHS Alumni Gallery](#).



The Gernhoefer Administration Centre opened in 2011 at the new school entrance adjacent to Smales Farm Station. See more pics at [WGHS website gallery](#).

Cathy Roughan

Alumni Association Update

It is exciting to be involved with Westlake Girls as the new Alumni Coordinator, thus extending my role as a former WGHS parent (1995–1999), and then WGHS teacher (2004–2012).

It is a pleasure now to be linking up with former students who are making their mark in the local and wider communities, hearing about personal and career milestones over its 50 year history as a girls' school (since 1962) and its 5 years as a co-ed, Westlake High School (1957–1961).



Our alumni – former students and staff – are as close as the WGHS staff room (there are a number of former students on the staff), or the local community (eg Takapuna Library), to a range of jobs and activities overseas.

Alumni Coordinator, Cathy Roughan (left), and Alumni Association committee member, Danielle Payne (former WGHS student and current staff member).

Alumni Association stats

Thanks to everyone for taking big or small steps to reconnect with Westlake. Great effort in just a few months!
We now have:

- 336 members of the [Alumni Association](#)
- 463 likes on the [Alumni Facebook page](#)
- 259 members of the [‘Class of 2010’ Facebook page](#)
- 63 members of the [‘Class of 2009’ Facebook page](#)
- 59 members of the [‘Class of 1987’ Facebook page](#)

Get connected

Would you like to reconnect with Westlake Girls and old friends? There are a number of ways you can reconnect, helping us keep updated with your news, and helping to connect with each other.

Our website

[Westlake Girls High School Alumni Association](#)

Complete a membership form online. It's free!



Our facebook pages

[Westlake Girls High School Alumni Facebook Page](#)

In addition, we are keen to build networks of graduating (alumni year) classes. Your alumni year is the year in which you completed, or would have completed, Year 13 (Form 7).

[Class of 2010 WGHS Alumni Association](#)

[Class of 2009 WGHS Alumni Association](#)

[Class of 1987 WGHS Alumni Association](#)

Thanks to Jean Yang for her hard work in setting these up, (2010 and 2009) and Christy Brenneman Staveley for getting the 1987 group under way late last year. Thanks to Elle Crump and Shanice Duggan-Keefe for coming on board as Administrators.

Message to the class of 2008: A facebook page for your graduating year will be under way later in July. Thanks to Elizabeth Ogle for her help.



Our LinkedIn Group

We now have a LinkedIn Group: [Westlake Girls High School Alumni and Friends](#) - join us and help spread the word.

How to get in touch with others

For those who wish to reconnect with a former classmate, colleague or teacher, please email alumni@westlakegirls.school.nz with your name and email address, and the other person's name and the years they attended or worked at the school. If that person is an Alumni member, we will send them an email letting them know you want to reconnect with them and it will be up to them to make contact with you.

Get involved

If you are able to help by being a facebook administrator or joint administrator for your graduating year, please let me know. This will be a prime way of reconnecting with former classmates for sharing information and keeping in touch about milestones, activities and events now and in future years.

The Class of 2010 has 250 members and this may be impossible to beat! Other year levels over the decades are much more widely dispersed, often with name changes, to complicate things.

Email alumni@westlakegirls.school.nz with the graduating year you are willing to set up and I will help as much as possible with contacts and ensure the facebook groups have an overall link.

Thanks for your help so far

A committee of 10-12 has met 3 times with ideas and following up suggestions of others.

An interest group of a further 30 has offered help with different activities.

Your suggestions by word of mouth, email, or through the membership form are all appreciated. As our network expands we hope to tap into those ideas and offer a variety of activities.

Watch out for these initiatives - coming soon!

- A mentoring/mentee scheme
- Developments on the school website with alumni profiles

ALUMNI Quotes

"Westlake set me up for success career wise, and introduced me to some wonderful women whom I am still in touch with today"

"It had a huge impact. We were taught to strive to achieve our goals. This set me up really well for the future."

"Westlake taught me to work hard and aim high in spite of my natural reluctance to do so."

"Wonderful, rich extra-curricular music programme. I still play in an orchestra. Great times, great friends. Whenever I drive past I only have good memories. Very positive."

NOTE on PRIVACY and GATHERING of DATA

The information that you have already provided in signing up to the Alumni Association is collected by Westlake Girls High School's Alumni Association for the purpose of keeping in contact with you about the School, its former students and staff, and about the Alumni Association and its activities. Your personal information may be stored by the Alumni Association using a cloud storage facility such as Google. Your personal information will not be used for any other purpose, or shared with any other person or organisation, without your consent. You may, at any time, request access to, and correction of, your personal information by contacting the Alumni Association at alumni@westlakegirls.school.nz.



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The Alumni Association thanks WGHS alumna, Hannah Dymond for her time and expertise in producing this newsletter.

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