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Westlake Girls High School Alumni News August 2014

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From the Alumni Co-ordinator



Hello to Alumni and Friends of Westlake.

I hope you enjoy catching up on news of alumni and reading about the interesting and varied things our past students are doing. It's great to be meeting up with so many ex-students in the community and online. I would encourage those who have a profile on LinkedIn to join our [Westlake Girls High School Alumni and Friends](#) page as this means of networking and sending messages is becoming increasingly useful.

There will be continue to be a range of ways to re-connect, however, and I am delighted with the growth both in numbers and engagement with alumni.

Cathy Roughan, Alumni Co-ordinator

Alumni Association Update

There has been significant growth in the Alumni Association and the reach of the Alumni Newsletter since May. Alumni are increasingly connecting through LinkedIn – both through the Alumni Co-ordinator and through the Westlake Girls LinkedIn group.

We now have 973 likes on our [Alumni Facebook page](#) – let's aim for 1000 by the end of the year!

Our [Westlake Girls High School Alumni and Friends](#) LinkedIn page currently has 50 members.

There are a number of other Alumni Groups you can join that are expanding steadily:

- [Class of 1987](#)
- [Class of 2008](#)
- [Class of 2009](#)
- [Class of 2010](#)
- [Class of 2012](#)
- [Class of 2013](#)
- [Key Cygnetures \(Choir\)](#)

- Emma Scotter (Daniel)

Alumnae as WGHS teachers

- Danielle Payne
- Aneta Dezoete

- [Choralation Alumni](#)
- [Westlake Boys Alumni Page \(Westlakers\)](#)
- [Westlake Symphony Orchestra Alumni](#)

Keep in touch. Updates, contributions and suggestions are always welcome.

Westlake Music Success

The European Music Tour was a great success with Westlake Symphony, Concert Band and Choralation Choir taking out top honours at the Summa Cum Laude Competition in Vienna. This is the first time any one school or university has won 3 of the 5 sections.

It follows the success in 2008 when the premier choir at that time, 'Key Cygnetures' performed in the same competition.



Westlake Choralation Choir 2014

FLASHBACK to 2008

Key Cygnetures, the premier choir of Westlake Girls participated in the 2008 Vienna Summa Cum Laude and won the Most Outstanding Choir award.



Key Cygnetures 2008

The choir was established in 1992 by the incoming Director of

Choral Music at Westlake, Ms Elise Bradley. Over its 15 plus years it regularly won Gold at national Choral Festivals, receiving the supreme Platinum Award, and was nationally and internationally acclaimed.

Some of you will have great memories of the international successes – Gold in 1995 in Sydney, singing at the Opera House; Most Outstanding Choir at the International Festival in Argentina in 1997; Gold in Hawaii in 1999; The City of Vienna Award at the International Youth Festival in Vienna in 2005; the 2008 tour of Europe and the World Choral Symposium in Copenhagen.

Elise Bradley is in her 7th season as Artistic Director of The Toronto Children's Chorus and keeps in touch through Westlake alumni groups.

There are 45 members of the Key Cygnetures Alumni Facebook page. Join us for some catching up and share any photos and sound clips from the past. We'd love to build up our music archives and re-connect with alumni for future event.

Westlake High School 1957-1961

There is a small 'select' group of students who are alumni of a school that no longer exists. They are part of a former, largely unknown life of Westlake Girls High School – the founding co-ed students of Westlake High School, which split into the single-sex Westlake Girls and Boys High Schools in 1962.

Both the Westlake Schools are very pleased to have this founding group as part of our alumni communities.

There is a small active group who keep in touch and it is great to be including them in our growing alumni network. In particular, **Jan Franklin** is a great help as a key contact for the 1957–1961 group, and a source of knowledge and resources for the period. I would like to acknowledge her contribution, along with busy committees, in promoting previous reunions of the group held at the Boys' School. They celebrated the WHS 50th jubilee there in 2007. We look forward to hosting the group at Westlake Girls High School in our October event:

Westlake High School Reunion Tea and Tour
Wednesday 29th October, 2.30–4.30pm
Westlake Girls High School Staffroom
Cost: No charge

RSVP to Cathy Roughan by 22 Oct 2014
alumni@westlakegirls.school.nz

Spread the word to your schoolmates – all former students of Westlake High School are welcome!

An email was sent out in July to all those on the WHS database

(based on information available in 2007) and about 80 emails bounced. Research will be ongoing to contact WHS alumni. Westlake Girls and Boys Schools are working together on this and future events and are keen for feedback from the WHS group.

Then and Now



Where they studied - Westlake in 1957



Westlake Girls High School now



How they celebrated – an early School Ball (1961 we think!)

The Class of 1970

There is a growing number of students who started Westlake in 1966 (Class of 1970) getting in touch. Let us know if anyone is interested in setting up a Facebook Group to reach others?

Long-time friends

Another group from the class of 1970 have been friends since age 6 at Campbells Bay Primary and met up in 2012 in Mooloolaba along with partners.



The group during their Westlake school days (left to right): Jennifer Freeth (nee Graham), Susan Chisholm, Claire Murray (nee Burgess), Tricia Warwick-Naziris (nee Hayes)



The group in Mooloolaba, 2012 (left to right): Jennifer Freeth (nee Graham), Susan Chisholm, Claire Murray (nee Burgess), Tricia Warwick-Naziris (nee Hayes)

EVENTS

London-based alumni gathering

Roz Mexted, the principal, visited London in July, after supporting the combined Westlake Music tour to Europe, and met up with 9 ex-Westlake students. It was arranged at quite short notice and we were pleased to make contact with this interesting group. It is hoped to make this an annual or biennial event which will reach a larger number of UK-based alumni.

Let us know if you are based there and would like to be contacted about future gatherings. We also hope to start building up our network of alumni in other areas for future overseas reunion gatherings.

Other events - alumni netball

We didn't find enough interest to have an alumni v Westlake netball game, but we will try again another time.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Westlake Art Exhibition Northart Gallery

Opening Night: Sunday 5 October, 5-7.00pm

We are looking forward to the upcoming Art exhibition which this year, for the first time, features alumni artists from both Westlake High Schools.

There's an impressive line up of artists so try to get along for a visit. The exhibition runs from **6-17th October** at Northart Gallery, Norman King Square, Ernie Mays St, Northcote www.northart.co.nz



Technology Showcase

Wed 22nd October, 6pm – Fashion Show at 6.30pm

All are welcome to come along to view an impressive display of student work. In particular we are hoping to welcome alumni now working in the various fields – Fashion, Design, Graphic Design, Architecture, Food ...

We hope that alumni will be willing to talk to students that day, or another convenient time and want to build up our knowledge of the interesting, creative things our ex-students are doing.

Please get in touch if you are willing to share some ideas with students.

Alumni in the News

Hannah Carlsen, Class of 2013, is in the Junior Football Ferns, playing in the Junior Football World Cup in Canada this month. And the team physio is another ex-student **Catherine Porteous**.

Temalisi Fakahokotau, Class of 2012, continues to be in the sporting headlines as a promising and rising netball star in her 1st season with the Northern Mystics.

Hye-Won Suh, Class of 2009, a talented flautist, was 2nd in the University of Auckland Gala Concerto Competition, winning \$3000 towards further tuition.

Deena Franklin, Class of 2012, has been selected in the Tall Ferns, the national women's basketball team. Another ex-Westlake student, **Lisa Wallbutton**, has been a prominent player in the team after debuting in 2005. She is unavailable through injury at the moment.

Westlake music alumnae at the Edinburgh Festival 2014

Rosita Vai, Class of 1999 performed at the August Edinburgh Festival in the Musical 'The Factory, a Pacific Musical'. This is an acclaimed musical production that toured NZ and Australia before heading to the UK.

Also performing at this year's Edinburgh Festival was UK-based **Bridget Walsh**, in her group Electric Swing Circus. Both are ex-Key Cygnetures members.

Commonwealth Games Success

Moira De Villiers, Class of 2007, won Silver in judo (70kg). During her years at Westlake she was already featuring as a top judoka in national competitions and has gone on to compete at a high level nationally and internationally.

Scholarship Success for recent graduate

Courtney Davy, Class of 2009, attended Westlake Girls High School from 2005-2009 with her passion for Chemistry beginning in Year 13 with Mrs Gatland as her Chemistry Teacher.

She studied at the University of Auckland in the science faculty, completing her B.Sc in 2012, before going on to gain First Class Honours in 2013.

Her interest in Green Chemistry was facilitated with a paid summer scholarship from the university, and based on her research work, she was nominated for an international scholarship.

As a result, Courtney has been awarded a scholarship of \$105,000 with the Pharmaceutical Trust in Ireland to enable her to complete her PhD in the field of Green Chemistry at the University of Auckland and also attend overseas conferences and research forums in 2015 and 2016.



Courtney Davy

ALUMNA PROFILE, Class of 1961

Jenny Kirk, MNZM Former MP and City Councillor

Jenny has had an interesting and varied career as a journalist, politician and City Councillor. Now retired, she continues to be active in politics and the community, observing and commentating on a range of local and national issues.

Jenny attended Westlake High School from 1958–1961 when it was co-ed, before it transitioned into a

girls' school in 1962. She worked as a journalist on the North Shore Times Advertiser from 1979–1983.



She represented the Birkenhead electorate for the Labour Party from 1987–1990, was a North Shore City Councillor 1995–2001, and a community board member for Birkenhead–Northcote and Glenfield.

In 2002 she was made a Member of the NZ Order of Merit for services to local body and community affairs.

Her significant community involvement includes having been CEO of the National Foundation for the Deaf and North Harbour Employment Centre, a trustee with Women's Health Action Trust, an advisor to the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust and a member of Northart. Jenny was a member of the Auckland Conservation Board 2003–2009, and she continues to advocate for and write about environmental issues, particularly in Northland where she now lives. From 2003–2011, Jenny was a member of the ASB Community Trust and has taken an active role in the MPEI (Maori and Pacific Education Initiatives) Pacific Reference Group.

We are proud to recognise Jenny as one of Westlake's notable alumni.

ALUMNA PROFILE, Class of 1979

Stephanie Brookes

Author, freelance travel writer

Stephanie has written an extensive range of over 50 publications with articles appearing in numerous airline Flight Magazines, expat journals, and The Jakarta Post.

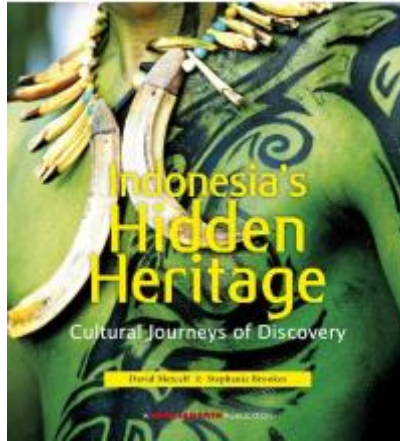
Her biggest honour came earlier this year when her latest book, 'Indonesia's Hidden Heritage – Cultural Journeys of Discovery' was launched at Museum National, Jakarta, and opened by the Vice Minister of Culture.



Stephanie got the travel bug shortly after finishing Form 6 at Westlake in 1978, saving enough to go travelling after a year and setting off with another Westlake student. Their yellow Datsun pickup truck, with Kia Ora plastered across the back was 'home' for 4 years and 56,000 kms!

This latest book is the result of many years living in Indonesia on and off, and follows 12 months exploring remote destinations there with her NZ-born husband. Her latest book has been reviewed to much acclaim, described as 'a gem'.

With her family, raised in Indonesia, now living in different parts of the globe, Stephanie and husband David are permanently based in



Bali, running a villa www.villadamee.com and a photography business davidmetcalfphotography.com.

ALUMNA PROFILE, Class of 2003

Yvette Rein (Perrott)

Post-doctoral researcher, astro-physicist

Yvette Perrott was at Westlake from 1999 to 2003. After her 7th form year she did a school exchange to Italy with ASSE, then returned to do a conjoint BA/BSc in Italian, Spanish and Physics at Auckland University. By the end of that, she had finally made her mind up between Arts and Science and decided to continue on with Physics.



She did a BSc(Hons) at Auckland in Physics, including a research project in gravitational microlensing, searching for extra-solar planets using the fact that distant stars can bend light and magnify another background star. She found this aspect really interesting and enjoyable and decided to pursue further study in astronomy.

She was awarded the prestigious Rutherford Scholarship from the Royal Society of NZ to do her PhD at Cambridge University in the UK, so headed there in 2010. The PhD was with the Astrophysics Group in the Cavendish Laboratory and involved using a radio telescope to study distant clusters of galaxies. These are the largest gravitationally bound structures in the Universe, and can be used to investigate the structure formation history and expansion history of the Universe.

On completing her PhD in 2013 she obtained a Junior Research Fellowship at Trinity College, Cambridge, a four year position allowing her to pursue her own research. She hopes to use this time to broaden her research interests.

Yvette met up with Roz, during her recent London visit. Yvette and her husband, Carl, (who went to Westlake Boys!) are expecting

their first child in October and plan to return to NZ after the Fellowship is finished.

ALUMNA PROFILE, Class of 1997

Roselle Thoreau

Research Manager at University College London

Roselle has been based in London for 11 years and met up with the Westlake principal, Roz Mexted there in July 2014.

Roselle left Westlake in 1997, having concentrated on Arts subjects and enjoying the cello as one of her main co-curricular interests. Her focus at the University of Auckland turned to STEM (science, technology, engineering,



maths) issues and ideas. Majoring in Psychology, she went on to complete her MA there in 2002. Her main field of interest was Ergonomics.

She headed to London shortly after graduating and has been studying and working at University College London (UCL) since 2003. She loves working in research because she is able to share her findings and make a real difference in people's lives. She has numerous publications in her field either written by herself or as collaborative reports. Her research includes road safety and disability issues, community planning research, and projects to help overcome challenges posed by an ageing population.

Working at UCL as a PhD student, Roselle has access to world renowned experts she can call on for advice. She is currently midway through a PhD, investigating issues related to older people's health and mobility and hopes to complete it in 2015.

She is an active member of the ARG (Accessibility Research Group) and Chair of TARSAN (Transport Accessibility Rehabilitation Advisory Network) in the UK and previously ran the UCL Centre for Lifelong Health and Wellbeing. Her work and leisure activities reflect her passionate interest in people's health and well-being as well as the importance of encouraging women into engineering.

Roselle has family still living on the Shore and visits from time to time.

ALUMNA PROFILE, Class of 2008

Georgia Nicholson

Designer/Director

Georgia is a NZ designer who has recently re-located from Auckland to Sydney. This follows the success of her children's sleepwear range with her label, G.Nancy. Georgia started the label in September 2012 with 8 NZ stockists, and a small online presence from April 2013.

Her company has grown rapidly and there is now strong online demand and nearly 50 retailers around the world.



Georgia followed up her interest in clothing and design at Westlake, including organising the 2008 school fashion show, with a Bachelor of Design at AUT, specializing in menswear. Working part-time as a nanny through her studies, she decided to switch her focus to designing children's sleepwear and bedding. She has an overall focus on natural products, organic fabrics and environmentally-friendly dyes.

After graduating, she gained further experience through internships at Cybèle, Showroom 22, Sherie Muijs and Ingrid Starnes, before starting work as an assistant designer with KAF Childrenswear in Ponsonby, Auckland.

Since the setup of her own company, she has also collaborated with other designers in acclaimed and popular creations, including the illustrations of her fiancé Oli Holmes, which also feature on some of her products.

Georgia recently featured in The NZ Herald as one of our top children's designers, and she has recently featured in Homestyle, Your Home and Garden, Viva and Canvas magazines.

Her newest collection titled 'Roar' is due to launch online and in stores around the world in early September. The collection has been developed from 100% cotton jersey, printed with the softest water-based inks and made locally in Sydney, Australia. All fabrics have been dyed and printed by her team and are a completely original combination of beautiful earthy tones.

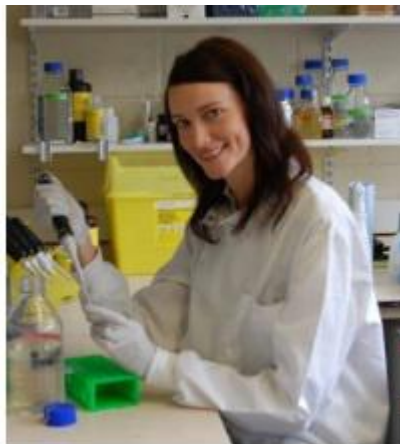
To see some of Georgia's designs: <http://gnancy.co.nz/>

ALUMNA PROFILE, Class of 1999

Emma Scotter (Daniel) Neuroscientist

Emma is forging an impressive career in neuroscience research with skills honed both in New Zealand and the UK.

Emma Scotter left Westlake in 1999. Her interests at school included languages and sciences and for her first step, she followed her enthusiasm for the Japanese language and headed off on a year's exchange to Japan after completing Form 7 (Year 13).



Returning to NZ, she focused on sciences at Auckland University, obtaining a PhD in Neuropharmacology in 2009. She was awarded the prestigious Marie Curie Scholarship to enable her to do post-doctoral studies on motor neurone disease at Kings College in London where she worked for nearly four years.

In 2014, she returned to NZ as a Post-Doctoral Aotearoa Fellow at the Centre for Brain Research at the University of Auckland where she continues her work on motor neurone disease in conjunction with the Brain Research Biobank.

Her primary research interest is in modelling neurodegenerative disease in cultured cells – the “disease-in-a-dish” – in order to screen for drugs which might slow disease. With her expertise in drug screening and enjoyment of collaborative and cross-disciplinary research, she is a valuable asset to this research field back in New Zealand.

Alumnae as WGHS teachers

At last count there were 7 alumnae on the current staff of Westlake Girls and many others have taught there in the past or passed through as trainee teachers. Two are re-introduced to you here in their roles ‘from the other side’.

Danielle Payne, Class of 2003 Alumna, Staff member, Committee member

Danielle is heading off in September for an exciting 10 months in France. This is a language immersion award funded by the NZ Ministry of Education and organised by AFS.

She will be based in a small town, la Roche-sur-Yon in the Loire region in the Northwest of France where she will work part time in a high school as a language assistant, and also have time to improve her French language skills.

After leaving Westlake, Danielle's passion for languages saw her complete a BA at the University of Auckland in 2006, with a double major in French and Spanish. She spent the following year in the Rhône-Alpes region in the South East of France working as a language assistant in two collèges and a lycée.

She returned to Westlake Girls in 2010 to teach French, ESOL and English, and subsequently, junior Spanish. Danielle has been involved in two school language trips – New Caledonia and Paris, and has also had the opportunity for language immersion with three weeks in Nouméa on a programme for French teachers. This year she was appointed as Teacher in Charge of French.

She is looking forward to getting to know a different region of France and having the opportunity to be fully immersed in a culture and language that she loves. She has been a great help as part of the Alumni Association Committee since 2013.

Aneta Dezoete, Class of 1993

Alumna, Staff member

Aneta joined the Westlake staff this year, returning to her old school in quite a different role. She left Westlake to study at Auckland University after a busy final year as Head Girl and Board of Trustee Representative.

After graduating from the University of Auckland with a BA (English) and Postgraduate Diploma of Teaching (English and ESOL), she taught in a range of London schools during 1998 and 1999.

She returned to Auckland in late 1999 and worked as an English, Drama and ESOL teacher at Birkenhead College until the end of 2003. She joined the staff of St Mary's College, Auckland, as Assistant HOD English in 2004 and became the Specialist Classroom Teacher in 2005. During her time there she completed a



Postgraduate Diploma in Education (with Distinction) in 2011 and a Master of Education (with First Class Honours) in 2012 both from the University of Auckland.

She joined the Westlake Girls staff at the beginning of 2014 as HOD English and is relishing the new challenges that the role brings.

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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