

MEMORIES

ALUMNI

PROFILES

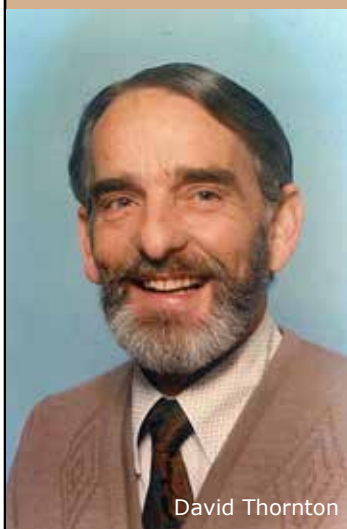
DAVID THORNTON  
HEADMASTER 1961 - 1978

Issue 2 - December 2015

# The Thornton Years News



ST PETER'S  
CAMBRIDGE  
NEW ZEALAND



David Thornton

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## Editor's Note –

"There are so many staff who have contributed in so many ways to St Peter's that we will continue their stories".

## The Thornton Years News (Issue 2)

**Welcome back to the Thornton Years News. When I put together the 1st Issue in July I had no idea of the reaction or feedback I would receive and if it was going to be possible to continue with the newsletters. Well as you can see we are back. This is thanks to the great feedback and support I have received from old boys and staff from the Thornton Years.**

I received a lot of emails, notes and phone calls providing me with a number of address updates, interesting snippets of life at and post St Peters. Also delighted to get input from staff of the era and am hopeful of bringing you many more stories not only of old boys but also on the staff who helped shape your lives.

To those that have communicated with me and provided information – thank you. The challenge now is to keep the news interesting and for that I need regular contributions. So if you are able to provide a story, a profile, details of your life post St Peters or information on friends please keep it coming to me. A few minutes jotting down some thoughts and I will make it into an interesting story.

I now have all the School Chronicles from 1961 to 1978 so if you are looking to verify any of your or friends time at St Peters – just email me. Or if you are trying to find old friends – try me and I will see if I can help.

I still only have contact details for less than half of the Old Boys from the Thornton Years but am aiming to continue to gain new information on the whereabouts of the missing ones. So feel free to share this with any of your friends you have contact details for and suggest if they haven't received their own copy then for them to send their details to me.



## 1978 Staff

**Back row:** Mrs B. M Burns, D Hezelgrave, F J T Toby, G F Slack, W F Barnes, I G Campbell, R D Finlay, Mrs P G Thornton

**Front row:** The Revd D H Mellsop, F A Davis, Miss D F T Swears, B P Fitzgerald, D J Thornton, M E Brock, M C Hanna, T E Dorman, R J Galloway

**Absent:** H F Rive, M Von Dadelzen

## Music at St Peters

**Guyon Wells OBE Director of Music (1961-1967)**

Guyon was born in 1931, the younger son of the Medical Superintendent of the Ashburton Public Hospital. His early education was at the Ashburton Borough School until 1945 when he became a pupil in Jacob's House, Christ's College (The House from which David Thornton was to later also have connections!)

It was while at College that he began his association with both the incredible Chapel Organ Tracker Action and the English Cathedral Choral Tradition, both of which were to greatly influence his approach to Music at St Peter's.

From here, he began a lengthy period of study at Canterbury University College, graduating in both Science and Music. This was followed by overseas study at the Royal School of Church Music, which at that time was located in the magnificent Addington Palace, Croydon, a former home of the Archbishop of Canterbury. It was in this idyllic setting that he was able to further his Organ studies with Sir William Harris, then Director of Music at St. George's Chapel, Windsor. While in Britain, he sat his ARCO followed by the Choirmasters Diploma of the Royal College of Organists for which he was awarded the William Harris Memorial Diploma gaining the highest marks in the Choirmasters Examination. It was at this time that by chance he came to the attention of Arthur Broadhurst. The position of Music Director at St Peter's School in New Zealand was currently vacant due to the resignation of Stanley Jackson and it was considered an appropriate appointment for Guyon who wished to return home to New Zealand. AFB approved the proposal and so in 1961 Guyon took up the appointment of Head of Music at St Peter's School, so well noted for its musical tradition and famous Summer Music School. He was surprised on arrival, to find how far the School roll had decreased since

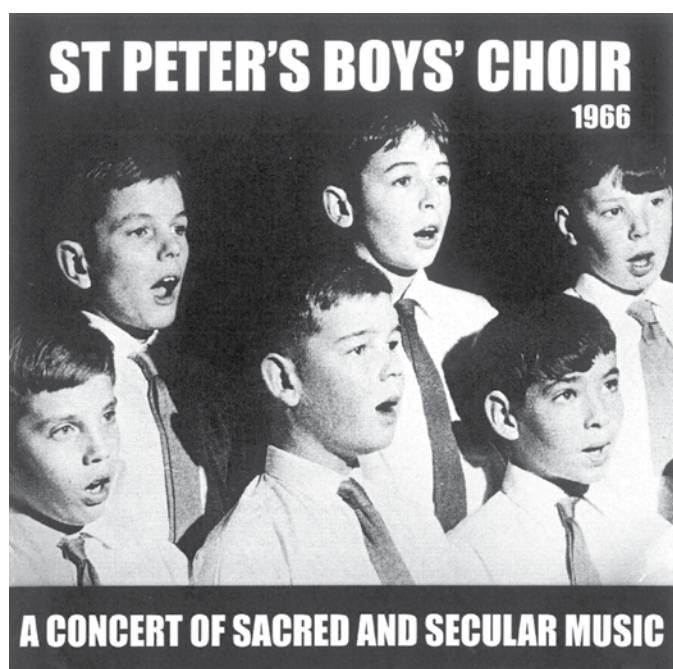


*Guyon Wells in 1963*

AFB's day and how much was required to rebuild the musical standard and interest. Thanks to the splendid work of the violin tutor Vivian Bevan, the framework for the future had been carefully maintained and work could begin on rebuilding a choral and music programme in keeping with the past. It was Guyon's belief that it could take up to six years to fully implement his programme and this proved to be the case with the high point being reached in 1966 with tours to most major areas of the North Island.

With the appointment of David Thornton as Head Master, the connection between the two men, took on a lasting influence over the following years. David's interest in the Chapel music and his support of the choir were to lead to some remarkable experiences for both Guyon and the Boys' Choir. It was David's initiative to invite the Choir to participate in the official Opening of the 1966 International Arts Festival by the Governor-General, Sir Bernard Fergusson in the Auckland Town Hall, and it was from this that many subsequent events were to develop including a private recital at Government House in Wellington followed by drinks and games on the lawns outside!

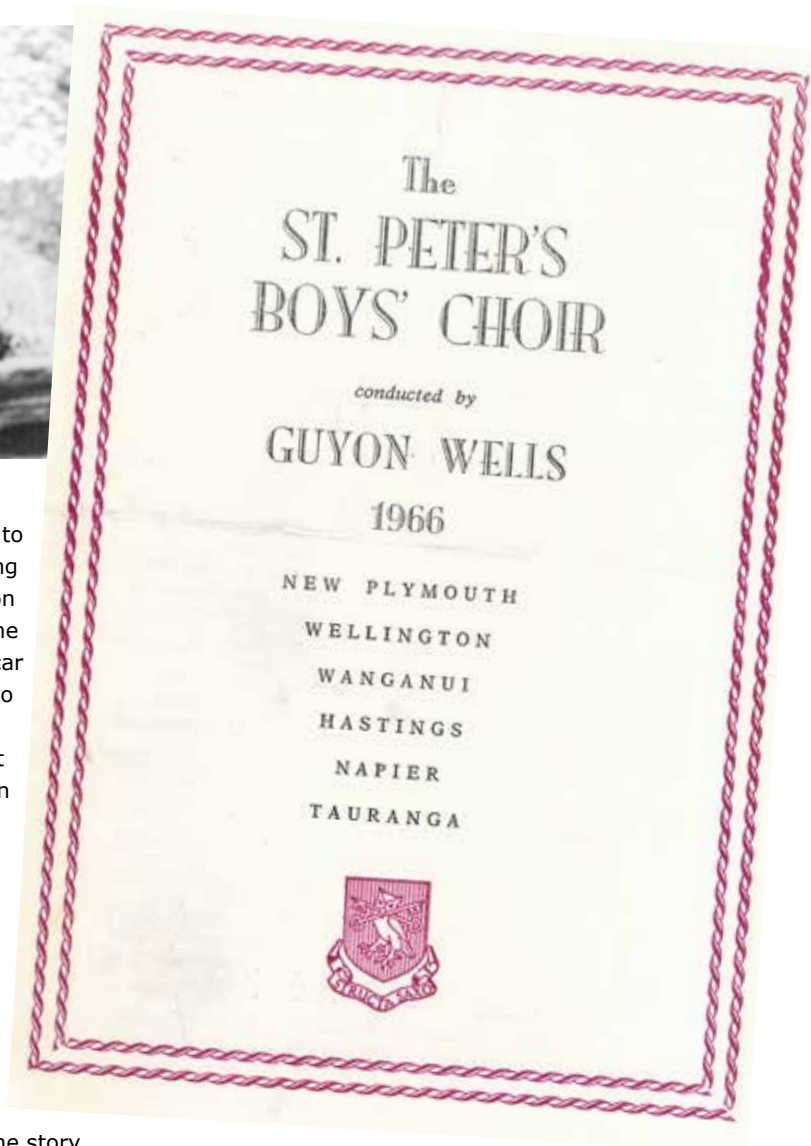
It was David who established the Scholarship for Choristers first awarded to Anthony Brown, who proved himself to be quite outstanding as Head Chorister on many of these occasions. David also appointed Freddie Mellalieu from an English Cathedral to come as a teacher and Tenor for the choir's benefit. There are so many delightful memories that could be recorded here but I choose but a few. Who amongst you has been driven in a splendid Rolls Royce from the Chapel to a Wedding Reception in the Dining Hall? And who amongst you have had the School accorded a half holiday in honour of their first-born child? Such events are very precious for, my wife, Sonia and me.







The tours of many centres throughout the North Island were also full of excitement and opportunity to establish new friendships. There were many amusing happenings around the Choir tours, such as when on a return trip to Wanganui the Press asked David if he had recovered the silver lady from his Rolls Royce car stolen on our previous visit? To which he was able to answer "NO So I had to buy another Rolls!!" Visits for such occasions as to sing Evensong in the old St Mary's Cathedral in Auckland or to fill the Wellington Concert Hall for an evening Recital became almost routine. 1966 was to be the outstanding year of Guyon's influence. After this, the future of both the chapel music and the choral standing were to change in a way that did not offer the same degree of support. It was as a result of these changes that Guyon felt it was time to make a change himself. When a position at the Hamilton Teachers College became available he applied for the appointment and was successful, after which the direction of his musical work in the Waikato becomes part two of the story.



**(Editor comment** – Thanks Guyon for providing an article that will bring back many memories – I am sure we are looking forward to part two of the story in our next edition!). Below is a quote from David Thornton's Headmasters report in the 1967 Chronicle.

*"Mr Wells left at the end of the second term to take up a position at the Hamilton Teachers' College. His contribution to the musical life of the School over a period of nearly seven years was inestimable and the standard attained by his choir unquestioned throughout the country. St Peter's will always owe him a great debt of gratitude."*



*Choir caroling in Cambridge by the light of kerosene lamps*

# Profile

## My Life and Adventures at St Peter's

**Mark Bell (1970-1972)**

My family had emigrated from Melbourne Australia early in 1970 to Hamilton, where my father was invited to take up a technical directorship of the then "New" Hamilton company Trigon plastics owned by the well known Foreman family there. My father had a long history in the flexible packaging business in Melbourne with the WR Grace Co and the Foreman's wanted his expertise, hence the move. My sister and I were 12 at the time.

My first school in NZ along with my twin sister was Melville Intermediate, however the folks were not happy after 1 term and for whatever reason I was shipped off to boarding school and my sister to Peachgrove Intermediate. My father having spent 20 years in the Australian Military felt his youngest son would benefit from some strict schooling and ethics and St Peter's fitted the bill!

I settled into boarding school life in Riddett House, with Mr Bourke as my house master. I recall the tasteful yet functional décor of our dormitory as being green, everything green that is, carpet, drapes, bedlinen, lightshades and blankets. Even my school clothing had little green sew in labels "Bell MC # 127", my cap still survives to this day.

I recall summer mornings the bell would go off, down to the showers, strip off take a towel and down to the pool for a lap, before breakfast. Lining up in the single file in the locker room and being either castigated or congratulated for the number of black or red marks you had on the weekly roster, to many black marks and off to Principle Thornton!.

Meal times were VERY regimented, the dining hall was straight out of Hogwarts castle, with long wooden forms and tables, we would march in single file then stand waiting for the teaching staff before sitting. Classes were what you would expect and discipline strict. Winter mornings in the cloisters, with hot chocolate served was a daily highlight.

My most serious transgression from the school. I joined a group determined to escape the school (I think the movie "The Great Escape" was big at the time) so there I was, off on my bike down Tamahere straight back to Hamilton. In the pouring rain, only to be pulled over by a traffic cop, who promptly told me to get into the car, whereupon I was returned to the school where Dr Thornton and my Parents gave me a very stern talking to!!.

I recall my trip to the Urewera national park for a week of hiking (1971), lugging what seemed to be a huge pack through the forest for a couple of days, being terrified by a swing bridge, (heights are still a problem today!). We ended up having to cart one of our party back at base camp after he fell out of his top bunk on our Hike into the bush.

I can recall a student's father landing his Cessna on the playing fields one time (names I'm afraid I have forgotten). Being taught Rugby by Miss Swears, who we all thought was the coolest teacher, she had a red Falcon Futura I think?. I'm afraid my Aussie Rules upbringing however made Rugby for me, a non-event, so I played cricket and tennis. Cross country runs over hill and down dale during outdoor ed. I still have a small wooden box and bookcase I made in Woodwork (Mr Rush ??). Although my stay perhaps brief (2.5 years), it would be fun to touch base with my class mates from that period and recall our time at the school.

**Mark C Bell, Space Management, ANL Container Line**

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*(Editors Comment – great memories and an open invitation to all classmates to make contact. Looks like time to think about a gathering of "The Thornton Years" old boys at the school?)*



*My class photo – I am 3rd in from the left in the back row*



## St Peter's and after – some thoughts

### Keith Odlin (1966-1970)

I guess you could say that I am a product of the Thornton years as he was my headmaster at St Peter's during my time there. As part of the school choir for most of my time there I recall travelling to concerts in Hamilton in David Thornton's Rolls Royce- luxurious and quiet.

I enjoy the school magazine and am in awe of what the place has become. Ironically during my time there expansion to the College was envisaged and started the year I left- had I been able to stay I would have been in the first class and so a senior in all the following years.

However that was not to be. My third form year was at Rathkeale before finishing out my time at Naenae College.

I joined the RNZAF in 1976, retiring in 1996. Moved to Canada the same year and have been here since. Re-trained as a Paramedic -served as such since. I also re-joined the RCAF in 1999 in the reserves as a CIC officer and am the Commanding Officer of 689 Handley Page Squadron RCACS. We have three children one in Uni, two in College -none I sent to boarding school.

We came back to NZ in 2012 for the first time in 16 years visited St Peter's' on our countrywide odyssey, that brought back memories. I have had no contact with any of those I was at school with. Let me know what you might be interested in. I was pretty young back then (8-12).

It is unlikely I will ever make it back for another visit but the school is definitely part of who I am.

Cheers.

Keith Odlin

Email: k2odlin@ns.sympatico.ca

*(Editors Note – Thanks Keith for your thoughts and memories. I have included your email address and maybe some of your classmates on reading this may drop you a note.)*

### Mark Gould (1971-1972)

I was in the new 3rd Form in 1971 and the new 4th Form in 1972. The newly completed Broadhurst and the school number was 123.

It was my cousin who opened the Rolls Royce door belonging to the Headmaster Mr David Thornton when Mr Broadhurst was welcomed to St Peter's School in 1972.

My cousin is John Ross McGinley (1971-1973) who now lives in Pakuranga, Auckland. He was Head Boy in 1972 in Form 4. My other cousin who attend your school was Robert McGinley (1970-1972) He lives in Pukehina, Bay of Plenty (near Tauranga). My second cousin Roger McHale (1970-1975) was head of Junior School in 1972. He still lives near Rotorua.

In my class was Hugh Waugh (1969-1972), who was a House Prefect and later served as Deputy Head of the School Trust Board. Another class person is Richard Green (1971-1973) who while at school was a prefect of Broadhurst House (1972) and Head of Oliphant (1973). He now lives in Seattle USA and has a sister Glenda who is married to my cousin John McGinley. Another class person was John Barley (1971 to 1975) who was killed on a motor bike accident around 1981. John McGinley and Richard Green were also in the rowing team while at St Peter's.

After leaving St Peter's I attended Western Heights High School (1973 to 1974). I started off in the ANZ Bank, Rotorua, for 5 and half years. As a 19 year old, I suffered 2 bank robberies with one resulted in the death of the Security Officer. I have since been a retailer for 35 years in Rotorua where I still live.

I am at present elected to the Lakes City Council (councillor 3 terms) 4th Term elected at present. Qualified Commissioner Stats Hearings for Council Hearings Consents. Also I was the Past NZ President of Photo marketing of NZ 2000-2004 and Past President of two Rotary Clubs.

Mark Gould, Justice of the Peace of New Zealand.

Email: m\_d\_gould@xtra.co.nz

David Thornton, Mark Hanna, Brian Fitzgerald, with boys



## A Memory from the Matrons

**By Janet Worfolk (1967-1972) in association with Lynn Brock (1971-1972)**

I arrived at St Peter's as the Matron in May 1967 having taken over the position from Betty Tomorrow. I was greeted, as was everyone in those days, by David and Grace Thornton and introduced to their three daughters Cecily, Nicola and Catherine plus several of the boys that were down working with David in the garage at their house. Except for class time there was never a time when David did not have several boys helping him with a variety of projects and for these young boys away from home that was a really important part of their lives.

My accommodation was the bedroom, dressing room and bathroom that had been occupied previously by Mr Broadhurst and I had a sitting room on the top floor. The Assistant Matron had a bedroom, en-suite and sitting room on the corridor above the Headmasters office wing. On that corridor was also two sick bay rooms, a dispensary and a kitchen.

On the top floor as well as my sitting room there were the bedrooms of three tutors. David Graham, Peter Stewart and Jim Chaplin. When Peter Davies left I talked to Mike Brock, that I knew through a group we both belonged to in Cambridge, to consider becoming a tutor. And as you now know that was the beginning of a long association with St Peter's.

After Mrs Walling and Anne Blair in 1971 I appointed Lynn Davis to the position of Assistant Matron and again as you know that also began a long stretch with the school as the wife of Mike Brock. It was also the year that the school began taking boys in the third form and the new secondary house was in the process of being developed.

My first winter at the school was an eye opener. The corridors became sliding rinks due to the amount of condensation that ran down the walls and across the lino floors. The shower area reminded me of a milking shed with metal bars, the boys ran down to the swimming pool for a dip in the nude and next door to the linen room was a bathroom with numerous baths. This was later refurbished and became Ems Dormitory.

The linen room was the hub of my domain, although I also had responsibility for the laundry situated at the end of the dining room wing. When Lynn arrived we had 128 boarders with Peter Hayes being the lucky 128. Because all of the boys were prep school age the work was quite intense. They really could do little for themselves so the clothes were brought from the laundry to the linen room each day and our job was to repair what needed mending, and believe me we became sick of darning socks, we had to put them in the correct lockers and then make up bundles of the clothes that were to be changed that night and line them up in numerical order on the tables in the corridor outside the linen room. The worst day was always sheet change day.

Because of the size of the school it felt like working as part of a family. The house tutors and the matrons worked hand



*Above: Janet Worfolk and Lynn Davis (later Brock) in 1971 photo. Inset: Lynn Brock*

in hand overseen by the House Master Mark Hanna. Without this close bond of all mucking in together life would not have been as pleasant as it was. It was so pleasant that Mike and Peter Stewart would be in my sitting room each night bankrupting me through the amount of cheese and round wine biscuits they ate.

All meals were taken together in the dining room with staff sitting with the boys except for evening dinner when those off duty sat at a top table. The dining room was furnished with oak tables and benches and much of the cutlery was the owls silver with the St Peter's Crest on them.

Life was busy as we had no leave weekends although a couple of times a term parents were able to take their children out on a Sunday between church services but because many of their homes were not around Cambridge many parents would bring a picnic and sit on the lawns, particularly the one outside the Headmasters study.



# Memory

There was a time when we were all expected to be involved in some kind of club after school and for a couple of years Fred Mellaliu, Jane Caithness and I ran a Cub pack that was very well attended. John Caithness and I would be responsible for the monitoring and results of the sports activities held down on the field and we would sit in the room over the hall keeping tabs on all that went on.

When boys became sick they were moved to the sick bay and that took up a lot of time keeping them entertained. At one stage we had all six beds full with boys with the mumps and to keep them occupied Lynn lent them her radio. However, use of that was short lived as David Thornton came up to complain about the noise from a blasting radio. Another incident of note was that one of the boys, when he was in the sick bay, sleep walked out of the window over the front door to David's study and was found by the Chaplain who had a premonition that we needed him across at the school. We had another incident where the day before sports day many of the boys had a stomach bug and our job was to rush around the school clearing up the contents of their stomachs prior to the parents arriving. Boys were allowed to keep their bikes at school as this was a favourite pastime at weekends. They would build ramps and balance precariously on pieces of wood. As you can imagine accidents often happened and on one occasions half the school rushed up calling Matron, Matron, someone's hurt themselves. The boy was brought to the sick bay together with what seemed like half to school. It took persuading to get many of the hangers on out of the sick bay in order to attend to the injured boy. Although it always seemed a catastrophe with a lot of blood many of the incidents were really quite minor.

In 1972 I moved to be the matron of Broadhurst House and Lynn left in the May to marry Mike. At the end of 1972 I decided to go back into social work and began a 26 year career with the Department of Social Welfare/Child Welfare retiring from there in 1999 as National Manager, Residential and Caregiver Services. Lynn has had a variety of roles at St Peter's and today is the Matron of Lippincott House.

*(Editors Comment – great memory, and thanks to Janet and Lynn who worked together for this. I think Lynn still has a huge story to tell (about her life at the school and with Mike Brock) and she is currently still working at the school – maybe the next issue?)*



The Broadhurst team: Mrs J R Falls, matron; I G Campbell, tutor; M C Hanna, housemaster

**Who will ever forget their Matron? It was like a second mother. I have tried to list the Matrons who were there from 1961 to 1978. Have a look and if you know any fond memories or stories you would like to share please send them to me so I can share them around.**

Neil McLaughlin Email neilmcl@xtra.co.nz

## Junior School Matrons

Miss M B. Burgess	1961 to 1963
Miss D.G. Needham	1964
Mrs C.L. Old	1965
Mrs B.D. Tomory	1966
Miss K. Dover	1967
Miss Janet Worfolk	1967 to 1971
Mrs C. Hailstone	1972
Miss J. Greener	1973 to 1974
Mrs H. Packer	1974
Mrs I.F. Opperman	1975 to 977
Mrs O.M. Bartrum	1978

## Senior School Matrons

Miss Janet Worfolk	1972
Mrs J.R. Falls	1973

## Oliphant House Matrons

Mrs A.A. Cooper	1974
Mrs J.G. Moore	1975 to 1978

## Broadhurst House Matrons

Mrs J.R. Falls	1974 to 1978
Mrs N.A. Cox	1976

## Junior School Assistant Matrons

Miss D.G. Needham	1961
Mrs H.I.Thomson	1961
Miss M.C. Mitchener	1962 to 1963
Mrs B.D. Tomory	1965
Miss R.N. Wright	1965
Miss G. Cohen	1966
Miss J. McCormick	1967
Miss C.L. Walling	1967 to 1969
Miss A. Blair	1969 to 1970
Miss L.E. Davis	1971
Mrs J.R. Falls	1972
Miss S. Banks	1973
Miss C.L. Johnson	1973 to 1975
Mrs M. Benbrook	1974 to 1975
Miss C. Leask	1975
Miss M. Haslam	1976 to 1977
Mrs N.A. Cox	1976 to 1978
Miss D.R. Porter	1978

# Alumni

As I said in the first issue, there are many old boys for whom we have no current contact address or information on. Below we have listed some more of these. If you can provide any further information or clues that can help even full Christian names or clues to employment or the like it would greatly assist.

Please either email [neilmcl@xtra.co.nz](mailto:neilmcl@xtra.co.nz), or post to PO Box 331520, Takapuna 0740 NZ. Or ph +64 (0) 21619171 We will publish further names in the next newsletter.

Surname	Given1	Given2	Entry	Left	Surname	Given1	Given2	Entry	Left
Clougher	Lindsay	Laird	1968	1974	Eadon	Lindsay	Charles	1968	1972
Clougher	Stephen		1962	1966	Edgecumbe	J P		1961	1961
Cole	Stephen	D'Arcy	1973	1977	Edward	R J		1965	1965
Conlon	William	Paul	1974	1977	Elliot	M J		1959	1961
Conway	Larry	David Thomas	1975	1975	Ellwood	Tony	Trevheron	1978	1979
Cook	Angus	George	1977	1980	Espie	G J		1964	1965
Cook	S F		1970	1971	Ewen	M C		1958	1962
Cooke	H.V.		1964	1964	Ewen	Paul		1968	1968
Cookson	G.M.		1961	1964	Eyles	Martin	John	1969	1974
Cooper	P.A.		1964	1965	Eyre	Andrew	Keith	1970	1975
Cooper	Christopher	David	1968	1973	Fair	S T		1964	1967
Coppin	Andrew	David Victor	1970	1972	Fair	James		1964	1967
Cornwell	Glen	Peter	1976	1978	Fanning	D J		1968	1968
Cory	Andrew	Robert	1974	1977	Farquhar	J W		1964	1969
Cory-Wright	Andrew	Douglas	1978	1979	Figgins	R. A		1975	1975
Cottle	Richard	Arthur	1974	1975	Findlay	I D		1961	1964
Cowden	Andrew		1974	1974	Findlay	Duncan		1966	1968
Cowden	Jimmy		1974	1974	Finncane	G P M		1963	1964
Cowling	Grant	Roland	1977	1979	Fitzgerald	Ross		1971	1975
Craig	Jonathan		1968	1969	Forbes	Scott	Robbie	1976	1982
Crawford	Cliffe	Beaumont	1970	1975	Ford	Christopher	William	1975	1976
Creedy	Conrad	David	1974	1977	Foreman	Timothy	M	1968	1968
Crosby	David	Allen Keith	1978	1978	Francis	David	Martin	1972	1972
Cunniffe	Mark	Seton	1978	1978	Fraser	B S		1962	1963
Dale	S M		1962	1967	Fraser	J C		1964	1967
Dalton	J P		1964	1967	Fraser	Bernard	James	1975	1975
Dargan	D G		1969	1970	Fraser	Ian		1962	1965
Davies	Lyness	John	1957	1961	Fullertonsmith	Piers	Ronald	1976	1976
Dawson	C W		1961	1965	Fynn	Russell	Clinton	1974	1979
Dawson	Nicholas	David	1973	1975	Galey	Karl	David	1978	1981
De Groot	Herman	Stephen	1970	1975	Gallie	Andrew	Mark	1974	1974
De Groot	William	Albert	1973	1976	Gardner	Michael	John	1971	1973
Dean	N C		1962	1964	Gaylor	Kenneth	Scott	1972	1979
Denniston	J A		1957	1961	Geddes	Rodney		1975	1975
Denovan	A B		1965	1966	Geddes	Shane	John	1976	1976
Denovan	P J		1963	1965	Gibb	Simon	John	1972	1973
Derry	Richard		1974	1976	Gibbons	R J E		1969	1971
Discombe	Robbie	Alec	1977	1979	Gibbons	Glenn	Michael	1978	1979
Donnison	D A J		1970	1971	Gibbons	Terence	Shane	1977	1981
Donovan	P J		1963	1965	gibbs	Timothy	Peter	1978	1981
Doole	Peter		1977	1981	Gilberd	Peter		1964	1965
Downey	Patrick	Guy	1977	1980	Gillies	Ian	Carl	1970	1978
Downey	Ross	Sebastian	1977	1981	Gilpin-Brown	R J		1965	1966
Dowson	Nicholas	David	1973	1975	Gimblett	Paul	Allen	1977	1977
Drinnan	R G		1964	1966	Goodman	David	Stanley	1975	1981
Duffin	Christopher	John	1971	1973	Goodwin	R G		1969	1970
Dugdale	N W		1973	1973	Goss	P R		1970	1971
Dugdale	Clive	Bernard Earle	1973	1974	Gough	N K		1965	1966
Dugdale	Russell	Leslie	1973	1974	Gourley	David	Keith	1971	1971
Dunlop	Stewart	James	1973	1973	Gower	Hamish	Wright	1978	1980
Dwan	William	Thomas	1973	1979	Graham	C J		1965	1966
Dyer	John	Hamilton	1970	1976	Graham	John	Edward	1976	1977
Dyer	Paul		1963	1967	Graham	M D		1962	1965



# Around the World

## Contact from around the world

### Connor Maloney (1973 to 1981)

Your newsletter winged its way to me in Switzerland and I just wanted to express my thanks as thoroughly enjoyed reading it. I was at St Peter's from 1973-1981, encompassing Miss Swears in MS1 through to the seventh form as it was then. I knew DJT pretty well and he was a remarkable man. His yearly passing was very unfortunate. I remember his funeral in Dannevirke well.

Peter Parr his successor actually played just as important a job as DJT in evolving the school through to the successful institution it clearly is today.

Shocked at the deceased list, was at school with and remember too many of those guys.

**Connor Maloney**

**Email: c.maloney@agmanagers.com**

*(Editor's comment – Thanks Connor – I am including this to show that the Thornton Boys can now be found around the world and hopefully encourage some more contributions!! Connor was in Riddet House. He was Head of Riddet House and Deputy Head Boy in 1981. He was also Dux of School in 1981 and obtained a Law Degree from Auckland University.)*

## Short Snippets from Old Boys

### Jonathan Clark (1966-1974)

Just received your David Thornton newsletter (1st Issue). It went to my mothers address in Auckland then she forwarded it on to me here in Honolulu. Great to see the newsletter. I was at the school from 1966 to 1974 so I had some time with David.

I travel to NZ every year. My father, Mr C W Clark, was on the board of directors (1966-1971) and I was the first boy to be accepted for the secondary school. My mother (Mrs E. Dora Clark) was also a school teacher (1954) at the school during Mr Broadhurst's time. My brother Christopher Clark (1968-1977) also went to St Peter's and lives in Pakuranga, so as you can see my family has a lot of history with the school.

**Jonathan Clark**

**Email: khumazoe100@gmail.com**

*(Editors Note – It is great to get all these bits of information. I am using them to help build the school history from this period. Also great that Jonathan has offered to contact me while in NZ and maybe I can get more background – Jonathan was a school prefect in 1971, He attended Massey University on leaving school and his career is as a Field Agricultural Chemical Research Officer).*

### Jeff Adams (1973-1976)

Received this publication (Thornton Years News) in the mail today. Enjoyed your efforts and news for a small target audience. Especially glad to see Mrs Thornton still alive and will definitely drop her a note.

**Jeff Adams 1973 – 1976, Oliphant**

**Email: bnzkiwi@gmail.com**

*(Editors Comment – While at St Peter's was a Prefect in Oliphant in 1976 then obtained a B.M.S. from Waikato University. He currently lives in Arazona USA. Also as I mention elsewhere Grace Thornton has been on the move but would still welcome any contact she is now 11b Bruce Road, Hunterville 4730 Ph 06 322 8225).*



The original auditorium destroyed by fire in 1984

## Shaping St Peter's in the late 60's to mid 90's The Influence of Mark Hanna

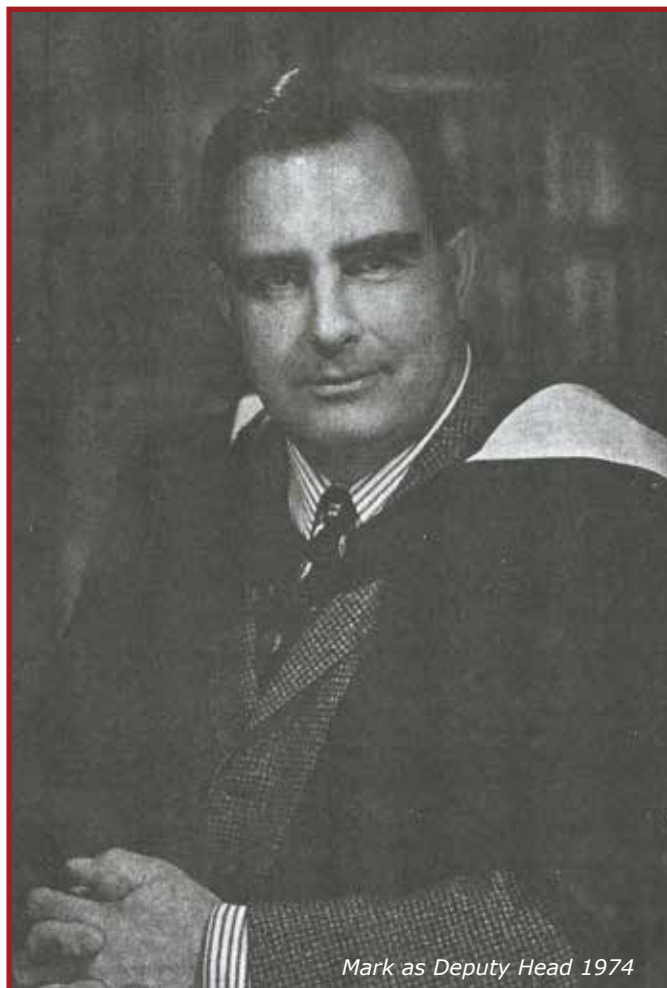
Mark Hanna comes from a family long associated with King's College, Auckland, where his father's memory is perpetuated by the St John's -Sam Hanna Prizes which are awarded annually for mathematics in the upper school.

The oldest of three brothers, Mark, was educated first at Remuera Primary School and then King's School, where he won an Entrance Scholarship to the College. He entered Parnell House as a boarder in 1945 and in due course comfortably passed the normal examinations while at the same time becoming a House Prefect, a C.S.M. and Secretary of the Bird Club. He was also captain of a football team which was distinguished more for its good spirit than for its skillful play or victories. An added interest, time permitting, was the exploration of the Auckland coast and the islands of the Hauraki Gulf in search of birds. Perhaps the climax was the finding by himself and B.D. Heather, another dedicated young ornithologist, in January 1948 of a nest of the rare Stitchbird on Little Barrier.

After leaving school, a year as a law clerk (in the office of Butler, White and Hanna) convinced Mark, that school mastering, not the law, was to be his chosen career. Accordingly in 1951 he returned to King's College as a House Tutor. He was persuaded to serve with the Cadet Corps and was gazetted Second Lieutenant-It was a busy life, for he was also reading for a degree at Auckland University College-as it was then called. In 1955 he returned full time to varsity, completed his degree and graduated B.A.

1956 sees him temporarily back at King's, while he waited to leave for Queens' College, Cambridge, where the new academic year began in October. In between reading history, he was initiated into the subtle art of oarsmanship on the glorified ditch which goes by the name of the River Cam. Having graduated B.A. (Hons.) about midsummer 1958, he flew back to New Zealand to rejoin the staff at King's till the end of the year. He was always welcome there.

The call of 'fresh woods and pastures new' in the South Island took him to Christ's College for the years 1959 to 1963. Here under David Thornton he was House Tutor of Jacobs House. In the Cadet Corps he rose to the rank of Captain. Outside classroom and study, he was busy with the coaching of shooting, rowing and football. The Christchurch interlude provided a valuable broadening of experience. Perhaps Canterbury winters were unpleasantly rigorous; for in 1964 Mark, is back at King's College, acting as Housemaster to the latest addition to the boarding houses, Averill. It is reported of him that "he overcame the trials of being a stranger and guided us capably through the year". When Averill's housemaster returned from overseas leave, Mark assumed duties with the newest of the dayboy houses, Major.



*Mark as Deputy Head 1974*

In 1968 with his appointment to be Housemaster at St Peter's School, Cambridge, he turned his eyes to the delights of the Waikato. A minor revolution was his introduction of rugby football for the whole school. Stirring times lay ahead for St Peter's which was preparing to expand and assume secondary status. In 1972 Mark, became House master of the first senior boarding house-the choice was obvious and natural-and with the help of the Cambridge Rowing Club he introduced rowing. It is to be hoped that the styles of Cambridge, England and Cambridge, New Zealand, are in accord. Mark's task is to see that they are.



*Mark Hanna cutting grass on Toro*





Mark with Nicola Thornton & Kim Kelly



Mark resting



Mark as starter at athletics

Under his guidance boys at St Peter's have been encouraged to take an active interest in the unique natural history of New Zealand. There have been many excursions to 'rough it' in the Urewera National Park.

Mark had been a pillar of St Peter's for 27 years by the time he retired at the end of 1994. He was the first member of staff boys asked about when they returned as Old Boys. Boys like eccentrics, other things being equal, and Mark Hanna was certainly an eccentric and his commitment to St Peter's was obvious to all.

Two areas of St Peter's life particularly benefited from the Hanna methods. Housemastering, all-important in a boarding school, was what gave him the most satisfaction. Boys like what they know, and there were no surprises with Mark: the discipline was firm, friendly, consistent and always leavened by his much appreciated sense of humour. He had high expectations of his prefects and they very seldom let him down. He knew all the boys, and their families, very well. When he retired from Broadhurst his successors did not measure up to the boys' expectations, and Hanna had to go back and restore order. Altogether he was a housemaster for eighteen years.

The **Urewera expeditions** were Hanna's initiative. He introduced many boys (and a good many staff) to the New Zealand outdoors. As important, he added a service component, the track-cutting which re-opened Rua Kenana's Maungapohatu track. Boys learnt to live together for two weeks in a challenging environment -for many it was the most enjoyable experience in their life at St Peter's, even if the food was somewhat predictable; boys did look forward to his famous steamed pudding.

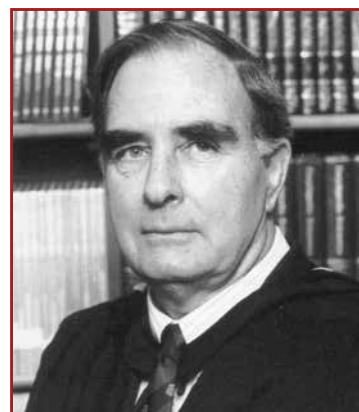
In 1972 Mark had introduced rowing to St Peter's; he went on after his retirement and in 1995 one of

his crews won a gold medal and another a silver at the Maadi Cup regatta. It must have been a great satisfaction to him that under the leadership of John Drummond rowing at St Peter's gained national recognition in the late 80's and early 90's.

Mark had introduced rugby as a compulsory sport in 1968: he felt that with such a small senior school St Peter's could not hope to compete in a range of sports. He was right at the time, but choice won out in the end. He coached rugby for many years, and watching a Hanna practice: no 'skills' coaching, practice games endlessly on the English model, only one ball. Hanna also introduced wrestling -he wrestled boys in the Urewera, with limited success. He helped out in any sport where there was a need, and his shot-gun starting was a frightening feature of athletics sports.

Mark Hanna's degrees in New Zealand and at Cambridge were in history, but he also taught English and maths, which he found 'easier to teach and easier to mark'. Mark served as senior/second master and deputy headmaster: in any such roles he was loyal to the headmaster and a highly efficient administrator.

As Andrew Lorcet wrote in the 1995 Chronicle: '*He is a true gentleman who will be greatly missed by the St Peter's family*'.



Mark after 27 years service

*(Editors comment – This article was made with excerpts from St Peter's Chronicles and the school history book – The Owl Spreads its Wings. I know Mark well – I have been associated with the school since 1987 and he was there while my two sons were at the school. I think he is another of those amazing men that have been so instrumental in shaping the lives that he has been involved with. I doubt if any old boys that he was associated with would not have a few interesting stories to tell about him. But how many of you are aware the feats and achievements he had both at St Peter's and his life in general. (why not share some with me to publish in future newsletters? Mark still lives in Cambridge and was at the 2011 Jubilee reunion at the school. If anyone wants to drop a note to Mark he lives at 4 Buckland Place, Cambridge 3434. Or if you wish email me and I can pass on any messages)*

## David Thornton's contributions to the future of the school in the 1960's

David came to the school with a fresh load of energy and a determination to see his vision through. David had done a good deal more than getting to know the boys, he had given the school buildings a much-needed clean-up. He had undoubtedly built up a much closer relationship with the local area. He had presided over a more martial spirit in games, though the school still lost a good many more matches than they won. He had preserved and even increased out of school activities. In his time the school's choir had built up a national reputation. The roll had increased from 85 when he arrived to 132 by 1970) and day-boys had been introduced. (By 1965 the roll had climbed to 111 – this included six day-boys. In 1968 there were 128, including sixteen day-boys. There were such new institutions as the school fair and the Eisteddfod which brought more parents into the school. The Urewera expeditions had begun. The idea of house tutors had been introduced.

As Nicholas Broderick (pupil 1958 to 1963) said "I believed that David Thornton insisted on better work than even Broadhurst had; and he introduced prep. I was in awe of him, he seemed to know everything that went on. "Digit knows," people would say."

The expansion into a secondary department had been prepared for. David Thornton, a multi-talented man of great charm and warmth, was by 1970 very much accepted as headmaster. Considerable difficulties lay ahead of him, but he had built up a strong staff (including an old friend in Mark Hanna) and he had sound parental support.

It seems that from the beginning of his headmastership David Thornton had hoped that eventually St Peter's would become a secondary as well as a preparatory school. Some new buildings also indicated that the ultimate aim was to begin a secondary department. In 1965 not only was 'an airless, earth-floored, windowless basement' converted into 'a most arty art room', but planning was completed for a

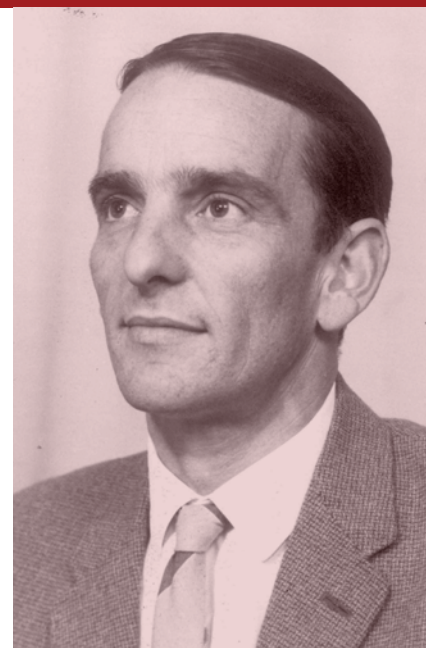
new science laboratory to be installed in the classroom block 'to comply with Education Department requirements for an officially registered third form'. In 1966 the completed laboratory 'has enabled us to claim official Third Form status for Senior Division, and this is a clear indication that our academic standards are high'.

At the 1968 prize-giving Dr Brewis (chairman of the Trust Board) spoke of the feeling of many that the school should 'branch outwards', so that he had decided to retire as chairman (but not as a trustee) because he was 'unwilling to embark on any venture that he might not be able to see through to the finish'.

In 1969 a questionnaire was sent out to parents (asking for their reaction to the school developing a secondary department) and there were said to be 'a gratifying number of responses'.

**THE DECISION OF 18 APRIL 1970.** 'Annual General Meetings of the St Peter's

School Trust Board and St Peter's Limited [were held], at which the decision was taken to formally develop a Secondary Department of the School.' And as such a whole new chapter was to open up for the school and future generations.



*(Editors Comment – thanks to the school history "The Owl Spreads its Wings" for such valuable information and photos of the past – there is so much to tell in the story of David Thornton's years, and I will also explore the histories of some of the key staff in upcoming issues)*

### Editor's Final Thoughts

Well we have made it to issue 2, so we must be doing some things right. Thanks a lot for all who have contacted me and provided their thoughts and written material to publish. What I would really like for the upcoming issues is input from the old boys in the form of profiles of their time at St Peters & also post St Peters with a photo or two where possible. This along with your thoughts and memories of the school, staff and classmates is what will make this interesting. As I have mentioned a will be profiling the staff that were so influential to you all. And finally as I mentioned in the Newsletter Grace Thornton has moved and her new contact details are now 11b Bruce Road, Hunterville, 4730 Ph 06 3228225 and she is delighted to hear what has happened to "her boys".