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Academic Spotlight

Lisette Burrows BPhEd 1984



Lisette is the **first woman in New Zealand to become an Associate Professor of Physical Education Pedagogy**. She has been teaching and researching at the School of Physical Education since 1991, having previously been a tree-pruner, journalist-photographer, school teacher, researcher, runner, fencer, basketballer, hockey player, gymnast, swimmer, tennis player, rock-climber, tramper and canoeist! But now, at the end of her working day, she's happy supping wine, 'surfing' the tiny waves at Waikouaiti Beach and pottering around in her kayak.

Her professional interests are firmly centred on social justice in schools, with a focus on how Physical Education makes both friends and enemies of young people.

Lisette's passion for working with postgraduate students has been recognised with two recent '**Top Ten Supervisor of the Year**' awards from the Otago University Students Association. Having taught at the School for 18 years, she is now bordering on 'old-timer' status - and is happy with that label!

Back to Paradise

Some folk say "you can never go back" ... but you can! 24 years after her undergraduate Camp experience, Lisette was part of the first group of current School staff to spend a few days in the Garden of Eden hut, relaxing and enjoying dainty day-walks with colleagues whilst the current intake of students did the hard slog on their 6-day camping journeys. **Geoff Ockwell**, a peer of Lisette's from BPhEd and current Camp Coordinator, would like to provide the opportunity for all academic, general and technical staff to "do the Camp thing" during their time at the School.



School staff at Paradise, Feb 2009. L to R:
Pamela Smith, Diane Steffens, Lisette Burrows

Howzat for a Brilliant Career?

Gren Alabaster DipPhEd 1956

We caught up with Gren and asked him to give us the low-down on his career as an elite sportsman and a fine teacher.

“I really enjoyed my time at PE School. We were a group of 36 to begin with: it was like having lots of brothers and sisters who got along well with each other. I made lots of friends, in particular **Sel Evans, Jim Hay, Derek Gilbert, Pete Wilson and Len Amore**. The girls were fun to be with and the lecturers were a good and abiding influence - **Prof Smithells, Joe Wallace, Annette Golding and Peter Cameron**. I remember wonderful times at Trotters Gorge on Camp and the challenge of new and different subjects from those we had wrestled with at school.”

After graduation, Gren began teaching, first at Shirley Boys' High and Te Aroha College, then a great **14 years at Southland Boys' High**, where he eventually became Head of PE and **established a school-wide adventure camping scheme** which replaced Cadet training. After a two-year spell in farming and insurance, Gren taught at Aparima College and became Deputy Principal there, before moving on to become Principal at Waiiau College for the last 8 years of his working life, where he focused on **special needs teaching, transition education and excellence in academic learning**.



Gren bowling for Otago



In batting action

A Stellar Sportsman

Gren was a first-class left-hand batsman and right-arm off-break bowler for Otago, Canterbury and Northern Districts. He made the **fastest century in NZ 1st Class cricket** in 1971, was **NZ Cricket Almanack Player of the Year** in 1972, played in the **NZ team for the tour to Australia** in 1973, and received the **Windsor Cup for Outstanding Bowling Achievement** in 1975.

After he finished playing, he went on to be **NZ Coach** and a **NZ Selector** in the 1980s.

He also had a parallel career in Basketball. He was an Otago University and NZ Universities Blue, was **selected for NZ** in 1954, and also played for Otago, Canterbury and Southland.

“In 2004, after ten years retirement in Alexandra, my wife Robyn and I embarked on a two-year campervan tour around New Zealand, before settling down in Oxford, North Canterbury.

I turned 75 this year, and life is just great. We receive visits from the children, and of course the grandchildren, who are spread around the world now, in Whangarei, Melbourne and Voulx (France).

I am a keen golfer with a 7 to 9 handicap, and help to run veterans golf in my part of North Canterbury. I also enjoy reading, trout fishing, caravanning and organic vegetable gardening. **I still follow the cricket on TV**, especially test matches and 50-over one-dayers.”



Gren, pictured with wife Robyn and a grandchild, is now enjoying retirement

Wall of Fame

Nominations Close 31 October



Since its inception in 1948, graduates of the School of Physical Education at the University of Otago have excelled in sport, education, recreation, outdoor education, research, dance and business. We believe those achievements deserve celebration and recognition with a permanent display gracing the School walls.

The Wall of Fame was established in 2006 to recognise and preserve the outstanding achievements of Otago Physical Education graduates, and their subsequent influence on our community and country. Those inducted have played major roles in their respective fields as performers, researchers, administrators, coaches, teachers and leaders. Thousands of Physical Education students have passed through the hallways of the School, so to be singled out as one of our best is truly an honour that will serve as an inspiration for generations to come. **So, who will be our inductees in May 2010?**

You are encouraged to nominate Physical Education colleagues who you believe fit the criteria for consideration for the School of Physical Education Wall of Fame. Please download a nomination form and complete as much information as possible. We will research the rest.

[Click here to visit the Wall of Fame website and download a nomination form](#)

Email your completed nomination form to pe.wof@otago.ac.nz

2008 Inductees



Sylvia Potts



Robyn Broughton



Grant Cushman



Lyn Gunson



Mike McGarry

Partners In Excellence

The School of Physical Education, in partnership with The Motorsport New Zealand Scholarship Trust and NZ Academy of Sport South Island, delivers a tailored high performance driver academy to the rising talent of NZ motorsport.

The programme, started in 2004 and held at The School of Physical Education, focuses on equipping drivers with the skills required to cope with the intense demands of world-class motorsport competition.

During the programme, the selected drivers are put through their paces in a series of challenging physical and mental tests which aim to expose them to the realities of high-performance racing. They also attend several educational seminars developed by the School which cover physiology, mental skills training, nutrition, media training and life management skills - all designed to help them reach the peak of their potential.

Graduates of the camp (held 5 - 10 July this year) gain access to a two-year, individually tailored programme of support services, including an additional two day graduate camp at the completion of year one, which allows for further upskilling and reassessments.

Most of the training days run from 7am to 9pm, so it's a real test of stamina, not only for the drivers but for all staff involved!

Class of 2009:

Nicholas Cassidy, winner of the Speedsport Scholarship, finished second in Formula First in his first season's racing.

Simon and **Mitch Evans**, brothers who both contested the Formula Ford championship. After a second place in the championship, Mitch also shone in the Formula Ford events at the Australian Grand Prix.

Ben Jagger, currently competing in the 2WD NZ Rally Championship in a Ford Fiesta and already achieving good results.

Damon Leitch, who has contested two seasons in Formula Ford with good results.

Joshua Marston, currently competing in the NZ Rally Championship in a Lancer Evo 8.

Jamie McNee just completed his second season in Formula Ford after a successful karting career.

Mathew Penrose, another successful karter who contested the Formula Ford championship in 2008/09.

Martin Short, former NZ kart champion contesting the Formula Ford championship.





Physedders Hitting The Heights

This is the latest career news from alumni who have sent us newsletter feedback. As you will see, Physedders are a diverse and successful lot intent on sharing a wee slice of NZ with the world ...

2005 Rock Climbing prac in Wanaka; let us know if this fearless soul is you!

Robert Mangan (DipPhEd 1980) is Principal of Tauranga Boys' College.

Peter Howatt (DipPhEd 1971) and MSc, Phd, FPHAA, FAAHB is Director of Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer Control at Curtin University, Perth, Australia.

Joanne Lynch (BPhEd 1997) is based in Abu Dhabi, UAE working in marketing for the Abu Dhabi Golf Club, which hosts a professional tour event.

Heather Van Skike (née Grayburn) (DipPhEd 1980) moved to California on a basketball scholarship, completed her Masters in 1985 and has been a personal trainer ever since.

Grant Harrison (BPhEd 1989) is Vice President of the Innovation Center Humana in Louisville, Kentucky, USA, and has launched a bicycle hire scheme which aims to get 50,000 bikes to a dozen US cities within 3 years and improve users' health and fitness.

Pat Fox (BPhEd 1987) works at the Human Performance Centre at London South Bank University, UK.

David Silver (BPhEd 1989) is President of BiotechEast Co Ltd in Taiwan.

Grant Cushman (DipPhEd 1970) is Professor of Parks, Recreation and Tourism at Lincoln University, Canterbury, and is also on our Wall of Fame, in recognition of his fine athletics career (see page 3 of this newsletter).

Angie Swan (BPhEd 2003) is currently working as a paediatric dietician in London, and will be spending most of 2010 working in Canada.

Amanda Jennings (BPhEd 1996) is Head of Brand and Marketing for the 2012 London Olympics.

Roger Waddell (DipPhEd 1981) is Education for Sustainability (Environmental Education) Adviser to Schools at Canterbury University.

The **NetCommunities** website will be a forum for you to exchange news and views with other alumni - full details in Issue 4 of this newsletter.