

50 years on



Wellsford celebrates secondary school's first half century

Past pupils throughout the decades will have plenty in common when they get together at Rodney College's 50th reunion from February 17-19 and the registration deadline has been extended as word spreads.

Reunion magazine coordinator Jo Dawson says reviewing records to compile a snapshot of every year of the school's history has been challenging but fascinating, highlighting long-running school traditions, outstanding individual and team achievements, clubs and activities alongside cameos of past pupils and teachers.

She was impressed to discover the large number of long-serving staff teaching at the school for 25 years plus, who helped develop the school's strong sense of community, providing a common thread among students across the years.

"Some of them would have taught three generations of the same family." Wellsford high school students were initially accommodated in two churches, with a paddock as a playground. They later joined with the district's primary school students before gaining standalone secondary status as Wellsford District High School on the current site in 1962. Students and staff decided on the name change to Rodney College in 1970.

Facilities developed over the years

on its generous 11-12 hectare site include a hall in 1968, a technology department, music room, clothing room and library in 1969 and a long-awaited Olympic-sized, swimming pool in 1988 as well as a gym, whare and horticulture indoor growing complex.

Today, the school has around 25 classrooms, 40 staff and 330 students,

a level it has steadily maintained for a number of years. Around 40 staff preside over small class sizes and achieve a good academic record, consistently achieving NCEA results around 15-20 percent above the national average.

Principal Dave Ormandy says the college continues to be a close-knit school keen to retain and develop

links with its local community.

Celebrations kick off with a wine and cheese meet and greet on Friday evening and extend through the weekend with school tours, sporting clashes, a dinner dance on Saturday night, a church service and more. For registrations and information contact the school on 423 6030 or visit www.rodneycollege.school.nz

Former college pupils excel on national stage

Rodney College has turned out some inspirational and diverse talents over the years, as these brief snapshots of a few past pupils testify.

Kelly Logue 1991-95

In 1999 Kelly became the first female strike jet pilot for the Royal New Zealand Air Force. Keen on flying, even while at school, Kelly put herself through 100 flying hours with the Kaipara Aero Club by relief milking and driving balers and tractors during the holidays.

Glen Inger 1977-80

In 2011 Glen was 47th equal on the National Business Review's Rich List, worth an estimated \$95 million. In 1987, as a 25-year-old he left his Woolworth's manager's job and teamed up with, then small-time trader, Stephen Tindall, over 17 years helping

grow The Warehouse from hand-to-mouth cashflow to annual sales of more than \$2.2 billion. He owns 39 farms and properties, his Journey's End (Taporā) holdings include a 266ha forestry block and he and wife Joanne also own a \$4.3 million Takapuna home and a resort in Fiji.

Greg Partington 1970-74

Greg created leading NZ advertising agency, Ogilvy, owns dairy farm and farm stay operation, Waitapu Farms in Tomarata and has made major financial and practical contributions to the college as well as sponsoring the local Hospice annual wearable arts show. The Ogilvy Intern Scholarship funds the recipient's university studies as well as providing holiday work and a job at Ogilvy on completion of their degree.

Rene Ranger 2000-2002

Rodney College's first All Black, Rene played in the Northland U21 team, NZ Sevens teams and Northland Air New Zealand before gaining selection for the Blues and Junior All Blacks on his way to All Black selection and three caps against Wales, South Africa and Australia. He currently represents Northland in the ITM Cup and the Blues in the Super 15.

Grant Edwards 1982-86

A Lincoln University graduate and Rhodes scholar Grant completed a doctorate at Oxford University. An Under-21 NZ hockey player, he also competed in two European Cup finals for Reading, and coached the Welsh men's team and in the English National League. He returned to

continued next page

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RODNEY COLLEGE REUNION

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Ex pupils excel

from page 26

Lincoln University as a lecturer in Plant Science and in 2009 became Professor of Dairy Production. He is also a member of the Science Advisory Group for the Implementation of the Biosecurity Science Strategy.

Helen TeHira 1988-92

Helen completed a BA before taking a position with the United Nations working on human rights in Philippines, Nepal, Panama and Palestine. She now has a position with Auckland Council.

Natalie Crook 1989-93

After completing a communications degree, Natalie co-hosted 91ZM's Breakfast show with Marcus Lush. She worked for TVNZ's Breakfast programme, One News and Fair Go, and presented TV news in Newcastle. In 2009 she married former All Black Carl Hayman and they now live in France.

James Rolfe 2000-04

Former head boy, James completed law and history degrees at Auckland University and worked as a restaurant manager before being elected Wellsford subdivision representative on the new Rodney Local Board at the age of 24.

Suzanne McFadden 1981-85

After an Auckland Institute of Technology journalism course Suzanne had jobs on the Bay of Plenty Times and NZ Herald. She won two Qantas



Kelly Logue. Photo, Geoff Sloan

Media Awards for Sports Feature Writer of the Year.

Sam Pinder 1992-96

Sam played in the college First XV and captained both the Northland Secondary Schools team and the Northland Under 19 team. He has a degree in physical education from Auckland College of Education, played professional rugby for the Glasgow Warriors and Scotland as scrum half, and now coaches the Causeway Bay Rams in Hong Kong.

Bevan Gibbs 1988-92

Bevan played in the NZ Men's hockey squad and also excelled in cricket and golf. He was in the boys' 1st XI cricket and hockey teams for three years running, as well as being involved in rugby, badminton and basketball. He achieved university sporting "Blues" in hockey and cricket and is now Hockey NZ's regional development manager for Northland.

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