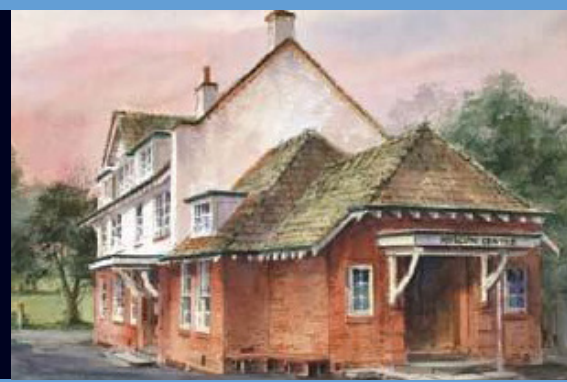


Whanganui Collegiate School Museum and Archives

Private Bag 3002, Whanganui 4541 | museum@collegiate.school.nz

Incorporated Pursuant to the Charitable Trust Act 1957 – Reg No 1714844



NEWSLETTER

Greetings

Again, it was a very busy start to the year with much taking place within the Museum and around the School.

In January we had the Museum open on two occasions as part of the Whanganui Summer Programme with a good number of both local and out of town visitors.

Over the Summer holidays the sports photos and honours boards in Big School were updated as well as cups engraved and labels with names of current holders added to the display cabinets. In the Museum digital copies of the previous year's photos were catalogued and linked to individual Student and Old Boy Girl files on the Register.

Once School was underway we hosted groups of new students and some new staff as part of their orientation.

There has also been a steady flow of items coming into the collection, some of which are featured below.

Recent Additions to the Collection

Trophies of G R Saunders, Headmaster 1878-81



Last year we were contacted by Dr Peter Saunders from the UK advising he was the great grandson of G R Saunders (GRS), the third Headmaster. Peter advised he would be visiting NZ in March

2024 and would like to donate to us a number of trophies won by his great grandfather while at Cambridge University in 1871.

On retiring as Headmaster in 1881 GRS returned to Cambridge and to St Bartholomew's Hospital in London to complete his medical degree, returning to Whanganui to serve the community as a GP. His sons **George Saunders (1890-95)** and **Imlay Saunders (1890-99)** attended WCS, with Imlay sending his son **Alec Saunders (M 1934-35)** – Peter's father.

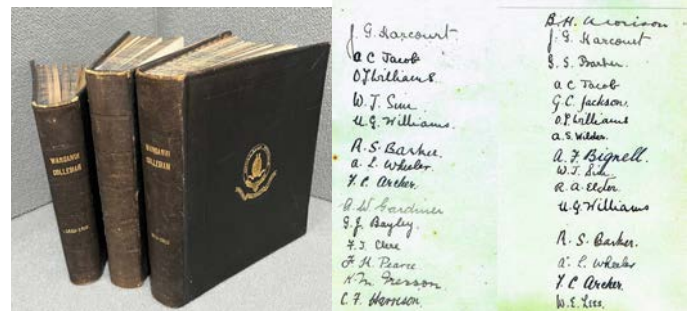
When Peter and his wife Jeanine arrived in March they took a very keen interest in our display featuring his great-grandfather's time as Headmaster and as a local GP. The 1871 trophies were presented at a Big School Assembly



Dr Peter Saunders & HM Wayne Brown

For the full story about Headmaster Saunders' influence on the School and Whanganui is on the WCS website/Community/Museum page or Click [HERE](#)

On retiring in 1909, Headmaster **Walter Empson** (HM since 1888) was presented with a leather-bound set of Collegians, Issues 1 to 79. These were recently offered for sale in the UK by online auction. Whanganui Art Dealer Henry Newrick spotted them, contacted the Museum and the set was secured. Owing to limited funds the Museum Trust does not usually purchase items, however, we considered Empson's set of Collegians as unique. They are in excellent condition, with the inside covers signed by the prefects of 1908-09.



With the purchase price being \$1,800 the Museum invites readers to contribute to the cost by donating to the Trust's account ANZ 06-0793-0262210-00, Reference your name. A Tax deduction receipt will be issued.

In 2026 – just two years away –

WCS hosts the 100th Quadrangular Rugby Tournament, along with reunions of 1st XV teams

WANTED - 1st XV photos of 1937, 1974, 1982



Lisa Weekes and Tanya Chaplow, granddaughters of **Arthur Weekes (DB 1915-18)** visited when we were open for the Summer Programme. They returned a couple of months later to donate his five book prizes, autograph book, 1917-18 1st XV cap, 1918 rowing cap, original School cap, boater hat band and his Hurworth cap, plus a range of photographs and negatives.

Lisa Weekes & Tanya Chaplow with the collection



We were contacted by the Wellington office DLA Architects, now located in five cities around New Zealand, who were celebrating 50 years in business. Given **Bruce Dickson (M 1954-57)** was a founding partner in Whanganui they had decided to



celebrate their 50th in the city and were keen to see some of Bruce's early work at WCS. We set up a display of plans and models in the Museum and gave the group a tour of our heritage campus.

WW II Army Uniform



In March we were visited by Julie Kerr (nee Nancarrow) who had attended the 2023 Anzac Service and placed the cross of her Uncle **Hewitt Nancarrow (M/H 1932-35)**, killed at Sangro, Italy on 2 December 1943. Julie very kindly donated two of his Army uniform jackets.



Earlier in the war, when General Freyberg VC, Commander of the Allied Forces, met up with General Leclerc, Commander of the Free French Forces there was a

language problem. The call went out for anyone in the 22nd Battalion who could speak French. Up stepped WCS Old Boy **Captain D H Nancarrow** to act as interpreter.

ANZAC Service and Display

A special display featuring related items and memorabilia was mounted in the Museum.



Susie Watts and her daughters Sarah and Brigid attended the service to place the cross of Susie's father **Arthur Wheeler (S 1929-33)** who was killed in action near Cherbourg in February 1944. They were delighted to see the cricket cap of Susie's grandfather **A L Wheeler (WCS 1904-09)** on display in the Uniform Room.





Guest speaker at the Anzac service was Squadron Leader **James Peters (Hy 2001-05)**. Having joined the RNZAF in 2006 James has served around the globe in a variety of

roles. He is experienced across a range of aircraft including P-3 Orion and T-6 Texan. He was a member of the RNZAF Black Falcons aerobatic display team.

2001-10 Reunion

The Museum was a hive of activity with Old Boys and Girls viewing the display and looking up their records in the Register Database.



Ron Backhouse (Gn 63-67) responded to a call in our last newsletter for a Gilligan House cricket cap. This completes the collection of House cricket caps. Thanks Ron.



Lyla Brown (Gw 2018-2022) donated her rowing cap - special as it is the newer style of cap and the first girl's cap to come into the collection. Lyla very kindly also offered her Colours blazer however we have a range of blazers with limited room to display.



Jesse Stegmann (E & G 2000-04) visited early in the year and donated a range of hockey shirts used by him and his brother **Ben Stegmann (G 2003-07)** during their days playing for the Boys' 1st Hockey XI.



Ursula Walker, widow of Master **David (Jonny) Walker 1961-77** visited from the UK and kindly donated David's Wanganui Hockey Assn Umpires Badge.



We were delighted to have a visit from **Jeremy Heath-Caldwell (Gn 1975-76)**. Readers of our June 2023 Newsletter will recall the cover story of how Jeremy had spotted the silver Ink well and cigarette box of Old Boy Lord Arthur Porritt at an auction, purchased them and donated them to the Museum.



Simon Reed (H 1962-65), now residing in Whanganui, is a regular visitor and has given a number of items over the years. His latest donation is an old 'Drill Musket' as used by School cadets in the late 1800s early 1900s.

The 1972 1st XV Reunion celebrated winning the Moascar Cup in 1972 and was organised to coincide with the game v New Plymouth BHS this year. The Museum benefited greatly from the reunion. The 1972 captain **Philip Young (G 1968-72)** did a significant amount of research of the



Collegians and has presented a booklet of WCS XV statistics listing things such as most games played and points scored, as well as updating all team lists.

Phil's WCS Rugby booklet – copies available from the Museum Trust museum@collegiate.school.nz



Team member **Frank Collier (G 1968-72)** gave a selection of photos plus his collection of Quadrangular Tournament programmes and **David Dorrington (E 1968-72)** donated his 1972 Rugby Cap.

WANTED

old Grey and Gilligan rugby jerseys | House running singlets for all houses
Early items of Godwin and Bishops sports uniforms.

Some of the team were delighted to meet up with **Janet Irvine** when in the Museum.



A collection of items of **George Adams (WCS 1900-02)** given by his grandson **Alastair McGregor (M 1967-71)** Adams was the manager of the 1938 All Blacks tour of Australia and later President of NZ Rugby.

Family of **Neil Corballis (S1950-54)** have kindly donated his 1st XI Cricket blazer and his grand daughter **Sally's (Gw 2008-12)** Music blazer.



Ed Jull (H 1954-58) donated his and his father **Frank Jull's (H 1922-25)** collection, colours badges programmes etc This joins their rugby and rowing caps given earlier.



Roger Murphy (S 1964-67) visited and we were able to show him swimming trophies that had been dominated by his forebears, brothers R K Murphy and R C Murphy in the 1890s.

Hard on the heels of the 72 XV reunion in May came the 50 years of Football (Soccer) celebrations. The 50 year celebration was the catalyst for a dedicated group led by **Ian Rogers (P 1977-81)** to write a book covering the first 50 years. The Museum supplied digital copies of the Collegians plus many photos. However, a big thanks goes to Barb Saunders in the School office for the production of the book.

The family of **Bob Williams (S 1945-48)** visited with



Nicola, Jane and Barbara seen here holding the Walter Empson Cup for the Old Boys' race that had been won on two occasions by his brother and

Nicola's father **Bunty Williams (S 1943-45)**.



Ian presents a copy of the book to the Museum



Visiting from the Gold Coast was **Richard Hodge (M 1962-65)** along with Whanganui friend Peter Follows well known to the WCS community as the owner of London's Menswear supplier of WCS uniforms for many years.

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WANTED - 1st XV photos of 1937, 1974, 1982**

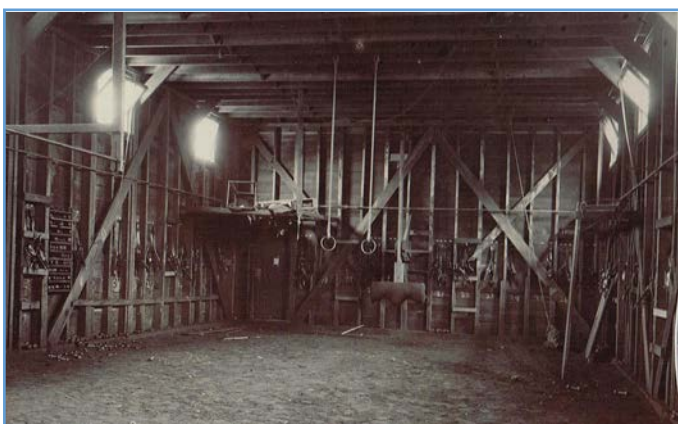


LOOKING BACK

Published from 1883, the Collegian magazine published three issues per year of between 12 & 20 pages; from 1924 two issues p.a. of 30 pages, then annually by 1970 with 75 pages.

125 Years Ago - 1899

The Sandow workout system was instituted in the School Gymnasium from Term 1. Eugen Sandow, a pioneering figure in the world of physical fitness and bodybuilding in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was often referred to as the *"Father of Modern Bodybuilding"*. His workout routine, developed during a time when modern exercise science was in its infancy, emphasised principles such as progressive overload, proper form, and balanced muscle development.



Note the earth floor in Gymnasium

The Collegian had published a comparative table of average weight, height and chest measurements from the last eight years, for 13, 14, 15 & 16 year-old boys.

Coaching of forwards from various Football teams (as rugby was called back then) was expected to be improved by the erection of a "scrumming machine" in the Gymnasium. Fifteen teams played during the season.

Golf: Over 60 had taken up the sport, not counting the Masters.

Carpentry workshop: Some fifty members attended with some even making School desks for themselves.

A Fossilising Club has been founded "for the purpose of unearthing antediluvian remains which crop out at intervals on Shakespeare Cliff".



Rowing – in the annual Boat Race v Wanganui Rowing Club, WCS won by two lengths. The crew comprised W G Saxby (stroke) 11st 2 (70.76kg); W T Ritchie (2) 10st 12 (68.95kg); A S C Anderson (3) 13st (82.55kg); J F D Hewitt (bow) 10st 2 (64.41kg); A L Christie, Cox. (Since 1886 WCS had won 9 and WRC 5)

Swimming Sports – The surname Murphy - either R C or R K - featured as winners in eight events (out of 15).



On 30 July fire broke out not long after midnight in the Masters' room, with the alarm being given from the dormitory immediately overhead. A fire drill a few days before meant everyone knew to quietly file out, and although attempts were made which prevented it spreading further, the arrival of the Fire Brigade quelled the flames. As a result, most of the Masters had to appear without their robes of office for the rest of the term.

100 Years Ago – 1924

With the economic situation improving, it was decided that **Harvey House** be re-opened, although at that stage with "only two dormitories in use", however it was felt that "the steady upward trend of wool prices and the bright commercial outlook in general indicate that we have no fear of its closing down again in the immediate future"

A three manual organ was ordered for the Chapel, to be built by E Lawton, Aberdeen for 2750 pounds. It was stated at the time that it would be erected by February 1925 & dedicated at Easter.

WANTED

old **Grey** and **Gilligan** rugby jerseys | House running singlets for all houses
Early items of **Godwin** and **Bishops** sports uniforms.

Having stated the need for a **pulpit in the Chapel**, the Headmaster noted that the item "had been generously presented by Mr H F Christie in memory of his son, **Dr Allan Leslie Christie (WCS 1898-1906)**, who died on military medical service during the influenza epidemic of 1918. *In Memoriam* records that "he studied medicine at Edinburgh after leaving school in 1906, and on the declaration of war was a resident surgeon at the Royal Infirmary. Three weeks later he volunteered for service and was granted a commission in the R.A.M.C. He served for two years at the front when his health became impaired owing to overwork and privations, as a result of which he was invalided to England. After two month's rest and promotion to captaincy, he returned to France, but his health again failed, and he was compelled to go back to England for the second time. While there he joined the N.Z.M.C., and was given work at the Walton-on-Thames



hospital, where he remained for nine months before returning to this country. On arrival in New Zealand he received an appointment at Featherston Camp, and contracting influenza there, died on November 9th, 1918." He was buried at Aramoho Cemetery, Whanganui.

"The School is gradually being fitted with electric light. Last holidays the alteration from gas to electricity was effected throughout the Big School. The Hall has two frosted hanging lights, with side lights round the walls, and each classroom has three fifty-candle power lights. The improvement both in light and convenience is most appreciable".

At the **Easter sports** the School and the Old Boys competed against each other in football (rugby), rowing, swimming, 1st & 2nd XI cricket, tennis and tug of war.

The death of Old Boy **Bruce Haultain Morison (1901-08)** was noted. Head Prefect in 1908, he was also captain of the 1st XV, stroke of the VIII, a member of the Shooting VIII, Heavyweight Boxing Champion, runner-up for the Swimming Championship and tied for the Senior Athletic Championship. In World War I he served with the Main Body of the NZEF on Gallipoli and in France. Mentioned in despatches and wounded three times he also gained the MC. Assistant District Commissioner in Uganda, he died from pneumonia on 22 February aged 36. In his memory



the Morison Trophy was presented by his father; for the best all-round sportsman, it is still awarded 100 years later.

At last a rule has been made which regulates the variety of tie worn in the School.

Wide-end ties may only be worn by prefects.



75 Years Ago – 1949



Headmaster Mr Frank Gilligan "on February 26th set off on his long-overdue holiday", having led the School since 1936 and through the War years. In his absence Chaplain Rev H W Austin was Acting-Headmaster.

From the Section *Now and Then*, with the heading "Deadly Serious", there appeared a perspective on sport... "From time to time, when

the School has lost a match or two in cricket or football or a boat race, there are people who rush into criticism of the coaches. These critics do not always trouble to inform themselves fully about all the factors involved. The results of games cannot always, thank heaven, be based on mathematical considerations, but it should be remembered, for instance, that the numbers in this School are now always much less than the numbers in any of the other Schools with whom we have regular matches, Te Aute College excepted. Also, there are occasional years when a larger number of senior boys leave than usual. But what does it matter, anyway? The more seriously we take our games the more our sense of humour and sense of proportion seem to wilt. We have travelled a long way from the light-hearted abandon of village cricket. A dropped catch is now a tragedy, when it ought to be a joke. We live in an age of dreary statistics and now they seem likely to submerge the finest of games. Can't we have a little less of the solemn parade-ground atmosphere and a bit more light-hearted spontaneous enjoyment? In short, can't we still "play" our games?"

And with regard to cultural pursuits, the following ... "The school day is always full, and musical and dramatic rehearsals have to be held at odd moments. They have to take second place to other and older-established activities

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WANTED - 1st XV photos of 1937, 1974, 1982**



and so boys are not always available when they are needed. This is a serious problem and probably most schools have it. Athletic and social and cultural activities are all intrinsically valuable but there is a danger that boys may live in a constant whirl of activity so that they have little time to develop the poise and ordered planning of their time which they will need so badly in an increasingly hectic world. There is the problem: what is the solution?"

Gilbert & Sullivan's **HMS Pinafore** was produced by the Dramatic Society assisted by the School Choir and Orchestra. "Although at all times the players lacked the finish associated with professional productions of G & S, they more than made up for it by the terrific spirit, verve, and enjoyment with which each played his part".

The Camera Club reports that "while quite well-equipped (enlarger, a printing box, dishes, some chemicals and two good dark-rooms), membership is now low, and money for upkeep is insufficient".

In the **Printing Room** an electric motor was installed... which soon proved its worth in the printing of the Inter-Collegiate Football Tournament programmes...which a large number were printed, having been wholly set-up by member in their own spare time. Two years' supply (10,000) of Order Cards were printed, also a large quantity of House Pads. 350 copies of a News Sheet were issued each week; a two-colour programme was produced for HMS Pinafore.



The Pipe Band went to New Plymouth mid-March to compete in the NZ Pipe Band Championships and were placed second in the Street Marching Competition for B Grade Bands. Drum Major Vernon was third in the Staff-



Swinging Competition and fourth in the Drum-Major's Display. G E Riesterer returned to School to lead the Band as Pipe Major.

The **1st XV** match with Te Aute College had to be cancelled this year on account of the floods in Hawke's Bay.

50 Years Ago – 1974

Headmaster T U Wells was at the helm, with his Deputy B F Long and Second Master P W Wilson. The Houses were led by I M Davis, Selwyn; J M Wallace, Grey; D R Walker, Hadfield; P B S Dickenson, Harvey; J V Bishop, Marris; G T Martel, Gilligan and P N Irvine, Empson. The Common Room photo for the year shows 30 male and two (part-time) females.

Seven boys gained approval for a "Crawlathon" to set a record for the Guinness Book of Records. With sponsorship both from locals and parents attending the Easter sports, the attempt began enthusiastically on Easter Monday at 4.15. In continual rain student Aubry Dodd proved to be the "last man kneeling" after 26 laps setting the official record at 10,400 metres (2000m ahead of the old mark) – raising \$600 each for the School's Music Department and the IHC.



"The influence of the new Head of Sport Alec McNab was being felt not only in the School but also in the wider field of Wanganui athletics".

1974 saw the "emergence of a rapidly-growing brass band", albeit without instruments for the first term! Funds from the Crawlathon and other donations allowed purchase of two cornets, one trumpet, two tenor horns and two euphoniums, while four senior trumpeters were already contributing to the Band and to Chapel Services.

WANTED

old **Grey** and **Gilligan** rugby jerseys | House running singlets for all houses
Early items of **Godwin** and **Bishops** sports uniforms.





Cross Country was offered for the first time as a sport option in winter term. The WCS team gained first place at the Mt Cook Airlines National Schools Championships in Christchurch on June 15, and were unbeaten throughout their season.



At the end of the year the distinctive School caps were abolished, but long hairstyles continued to be acceptable.

25 Years Ago – 1999

As well as the former Marris and Porritt day boys now being attached to either Empson, Selwyn, Grey, Hadfield or Harvey Houses, 1999 was notable for two “firsts” - **the inaugural year of Bishops House, and the Head of School position becoming shared.**

Named in honour of the many Bishops of the Anglican Church who had served the School over the previous 145 years, the new House was led by Housemaster Mrs Ann Jackson from the UK. Five Year 13 girls transferred from Godwin to provide student leadership, while the inaugural intake comprised 20 at Year 11, 13 at Year 10 and 25 at Year 9. The girls consolidated their presence by winning Inter-House Music at their very first attempt!



Bishops - House Song



The 1999 Heads of School: Henry Tatham & Anna Cutfield

Although girls had been admitted since 1991, the Head of School position was amended in 1999 to reflect the School's move to full co-education, with the joint appointment of **Henry Tatham and Anna Cutfield.**

In 1999 **Jolene Henry (Gw 1999-2000)**, (current Bishops Housemaster) was selected for the NZ Under 21 Netball team which toured the UK, the beginning of a notable career in that sport.



*NETBALL 1999 – Senior A
Back: Mrs M Keelty (Coach) L R Graham J R Henry T A F Jackson
Front: A T R Erueti K J Moore N T U Scott (Capt) T C Brisbane K L Swart*

Richard Bourne
Chairman
WCS Museum Trust

Frances Gibbons
Museum Archivist

The Museum Trust welcomes feedback. Your comments and questions may be sent to:

Email museum@collegiate.school.nz | Ph: 0274 812 324

or write to: WCS Museum, Private Bag 3002, WHANGANUI

Online Presence: We continue to add items to our pages on the NZ Museums website:

[WCS Museum on Ehive](#) [HERE](#)

The WCS Museum Trust is a registered Charitable Trust and relies solely on the generosity of Old Boys and Girls and Philanthropic Trusts for its funding. Donations are tax deductible.

To make a donation deposit to ANZ **06 0793 0262210 00** (Ref your Name).

If you are aware of a Trust that may respond positively to an application for funding, please contact **Richard Bourne** museum@collegiate.school.nz

