

# Alere Flammam

The newsletter of the Lisgar Alumni Association Volume XXVII • 1<sup>st</sup> Issue • Winter 2012

### Jamaica Youth Orchestra Changes Lives

peaking from Jamaica, where Ann McNamee (1972) moved to teach music at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts in 2006, she confesses to having been more into sports than into music during her student days at Lisgar. Indeed, the caption under her graduation photo indicates she was a member of the senior volleyball, basketball, and track and field teams, as well as president of the Girls' Athletic Association. Yet she was also a member of the orchestra, in which she played viola, and it is through another orchestra that Ann is today helping turn around the lives of Jamaican youth.

A prophetic note appeared under Ann's engaging smile in her graduation photo: "take me to Jamaica where the rum comes from." This became a reality when she returned to take up the music teaching post in her native country, which she had left in 1962. Approached subsequently in 2009 by the Organization of American States (OAS), she agreed to accept the volunteer position of Director of the National Youth Orchestra of Jamaica. The OAS wished to establish programs in Jamaica, Haiti, and St. Lucia based on the "El Sistema" model to help "atrisk" students from challenged backgrounds discover "another way of

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being," encouraging social justice through music. The lessons would be offered free of charge, with transportation and a snack provided. Ann believed it was a good idea, but in the beginning was the main facilitator. As she says, she did everything—and this was over and above her day job!

Students came mainly from the rough Spanish Town and Maxfield Avenue areas in Kingston. While music was the medium, the primary objective was to promote behaviour modification through goal setting and team building. Three years on, Ann speaks of the reward of seeing the students beginning to understand how to read music, and to play. The orchestra provides them a safe haven and a surrogate family. Her team has now grown to include three hired administrators. while Ann remains the Music Director and is a member of the Board in addition to maintaining a minor teaching position. The orchestra numbers eighty students and occasionally performs for events such as receptions for embassies or sponsoring companies. A new centre has been established at Kingston College, on the eastern side of Kingston.

Speaking of the challenges of the job, Ann concedes that the students and their parents "think differently," and that some Jamaicans would not do the job that she and her colleagues are doing because of safety concerns. However, she feels their constituency "looks out for them," as they realize they are doing something for the chil-



MUSIC TO CHANGE LIVES: Ann McNamee (1972), who returned to her native Jamaica in 2006, works with a student as Music Director for the National Youth Orchestra of Jamaica.

dren. She notes also that parents see a positive change in their children's behaviour and that the children themselves develop a sense of pride when they see their progress and realize that they play a contributing role in the orchestra.

Of course, the needs are many, especially with the OAS no longer providing funding. However, other groups and individuals have stepped into the breach by providing new and used musical instruments, orchestral music, and monetary donations. Ann points out that even providing reeds for the wind instruments for that many students represents a significant cost.

What Ann has been able to accomplish—and continues to accomplish—is impressive. She has changed not only her own game but that of those she serves. And it is obviously a winning one.

[Editor's note: Visit our website for a link to a short video about the orchestra. The Ottawa contact for donations is vgilpin@sympatico.ca, (613) 715-9962.]

#### Your Alumni Association needs you to write for Alere Flammam!

We are always looking for writers to contribute to the newsletter. Whether you have a piece in mind to develop, or might be open to having a story assigned to you to research and write, we would like to hear from you! Please contact us at alumni@lisgar.net or (866) 236-1450 to talk about contributing to the Association in this or any other way.

#### Members' Forum

#### Members' Forum

Ruth Larsen (Lockhart, 1939) emailed: Isobel Pitkethly (Lockhart, 1929), the first winner of the award for General Proficiency in Athletics will be 100 years old on September 1, 2011. For the past year, Isobel has lived at Carleton Lodge as her mobility, vision, and hearing have diminished. However, her memory and sense of humour are still very much intact and she enjoys keeping up with Lisgar activities through Alere Flammam.

*Marilyn Burns (1947) wrote:* I would love to hear from anyone who graduated with me. I graduated from Queens in 1951 and have lived in Niagara Falls ever since.

Beth McLaren (Hanson, 1949) wrote: I look forward twice a year to your newsletters and always find some news relating back to my Lisgar days. After I read the news I send it back to Ottawa to my sister Jean, who also attended Lisgar.

Bonnie Stuart (Eaton, 1957) wrote: I just wanted to let you know that I am alive and well and living in West Vancouver. My family moved to the west coast in 1958 and it took some

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(Position vacant)

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time for me to forgive them as I missed my friends at school terribly. However, I did settle in and after nursing school at Vancouver General Hospital, I got married and have lived here ever since. Many thanks for all the work that you do to keep everyone informed. It was and I guess still is an amazing high school.

Judy Wedderspoon (Plumptre, 1959) wrote: I recently spent a very short and happy time with Boudy van Oort (1957) and his wife in their home in Victoria. He went from Lisgar to Carleton and was their first ever Rhodes Scholar. He has recently privately published a book called *Tjideng Reunion* about his experiences as a child internee in Indonesia during WWII; it should be added to the Lisgar library. We reminisced at length about our time at Lisgar. While we both enjoyed our time there, we didn't really realize what a superb school it was until after we had left and looked back vears later.

Anita Ruivo (1983) wrote: After living abroad for 20 years, I walked by the "Doors Open" event by fluke this past weekend. The tour of the school took me on an emotional and fabulous journey, which I am most thankful for.

Heather Macdougall (1999) and Jeremy Taylor (1999), high school sweethearts, are delighted to announce the birth of their first child, Zoe Valentine Macdougall Taylor, in Montreal on June 15, 2011. Proud alumni family members include uncle Greg Macdougall (1996) and aunts Amelia Lyon (2003) and Jessie Lyon (2005).

Anne Thackray wrote: Thanks for the copy of Alere Flammam, which I enjoyed very much. I was surprised though to see that Lisgar "has to deflect the constant criticism that the school was elite." A lot of people nowadays use "elite" solely as a negative criticism, but need all the "elite" education we can get in today's soci-

#### In Memoriam

**ABRAHAMSON**, Roy (1939) died November 18, 2010, at the age of 88. His wife Carol wrote that Roy often spoke to her about his days at Lisgar with great fondness.

**DOROFI**, John Charles (1955) died January 9, 2012, at the age of 74. He is survived by his wife Aleksandra, children Jonathan, David, and James, and siblings Betty Komarnisky (1960) and Nicholas Dorofi.

**DUNLOP**, James (1950) died November 18, 2010 in Oakville.

HALL, Patricia Moore (Young, 1956) died on October 4, 2011, at the age of 72, in Muncie, IN. She was Head Girl in her final year at Lisgar, and graduated from Queen's before moving to Indiana to marry her first husband, B. Allen McCormiak. She received a Masters of Arts in Chemistry from Ball State University.

**MACKINNON**, Mary (1976) lost a battle with cancer July 25, 2010, at the age of 51. During her time at Lisgar, Mary was a three-time participant on Lisgar's Reach for the Top team, as well as a member of the orchestra for two years. She is survived by her three siblings Donald (1975), Joan (1969), and James (1967), and her mother Marion, who worked on the 1970s "Save Lisgar" campaign.

**MASSÉ**, Arthur (1949) passed away on June 8, 2011, at the age of 79, in Liverpool, NS. Following his years at Lisgar, he went on to the Central School of Drama in London, England. His acting career, under the name Paul Massie, included work in film, stage, and television, including a British "Best New Actor" award for his role in "Orders to Kill." He then went on to teach performing arts at the University of South Florida in Tampa, where he won a "Best Teacher" award and was named a Professor Emeritus.

ety. Good luck to Lisgar in providing it. How about contacting past math enthusiasts at Lisgar to make donations to a fund supplying iPod Touch thingies for use by math students? The iPods could belong to the school, and be turned in at the end of the year for Following his retirement, he moved to the South Shore in Nova Scotia, where he continued to pursue his interest in writing. The University of Florida has honoured his memory by setting up a Theatre School Fellowship and naming one of its theatres after him.

LINLEY, Judy (Smith, 1967).

MCLEAN, Marjorie (1940) died December 4, 2010, at the age of 80.

**QUAIN**, Joan (Chrysler, 1942) died August 13, 2010, at the age of 87. Survived by her four children Bob, Ian (1969), Geoff, and Catherine, Joan had many fond memories from her days at Lisgar. She was also an avid contributor to alumni activities.

**RUEDY**, Elisabeth (1947) died July 11, 2010. She is survived by her husband Yves, children Nicole, Catherine, sister Susette Stuart (Ruedy, 1954), and brother John (1950).

**SCHOENHERR**, Art (1962) enjoyed his many friends from Lisgar during his high school years. Thanks to Gord Pranski, he saw many of them again over the years, at November dinners. He taught high school in Cochrane, Ontario for four years. When he and wife Jane moved to Smiths Falls in 1972 he taught there and then in Perth. He especially enjoyed the co-op program. His father-in-law Graham Hudson (1930) also graduated from Lisgar as did his nephew Morgan Hudson (2011).

**SEYMOUR**, H. Llewellyn (Lyn) (1942) died April 16, 2011. Survived by his wife Katie and children Janet and Heather, Llyn graduated from Queen's in Engineering Physics and worked for the Defence Research Board and National Defence.

SMITH, Judy (Linley, 1967).

**THOMPSON**, Mary (Ingram, 1937). ■

next year's math students to use. I loathed math, but I enclose a donation to get the ball rolling.

Bruce Sells (1948) wrote from his bome in Perth, ON: Each time I receive the alumni newsletter I am

#### Members' Forum

reminded, although more than half a century has passed, of many incidents as if they occurred yesterday. As a student who lived in Gatineau Mills, I commuted by bus to Ottawa to attend Lisgar. As many alumni have often attested, we were fortunate to attend a high school with such high standards and dedicated teachers.

In addition to strong academic programs there were also extracurricular activities which helped define Lisgar as a community to which students were happy to belong. One of those community activities was the Friday "Fun Nights," held in the gymnasium, during which you had the opportunity of influencing your clumsy foot-work on an unsuspecting girl with whom you wished to dance. On one such occasion I learned during the dance that the bridge (then called the Inter-provincial) was on fire. Someone suggested that in order for me to return to Gatineau Mills, I would have to walk on water. Not being particularly religious, and since it was not January or February, I declined!

Student involvement in "Football Fridays" also added to the creation of school spirit and although our teams were not always successful the attendees were consistently enthusiastic. I believe that Lisgar Collegiate's continued success as a scholastic leader can be attributed in part to its recognition



STARRING ROLE: Alumni Association Chair Rod Hagglund (1965) played King Lear in the Glebe Neighbourhood Activities Group's production this spring. We were impressed with his beard. that proper emphasis on the social aspects of life assists in student achievement expecially when strong academic programs are present.

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Gordon Henderson (1949) passed along some suggestions for future newsletters: Where are they now? List showing number of Lisgar graduates sorted by province and country. Represented in our database, in order of declining numbers, are Canada, US, UK, Australia. France, Italy, Switzerland, Thailand, Belgium, Brazil, British West Indies, China, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Poland, and Russia. Name and place of the oldest living Lisgar graduate. Invite readers to suggest names. The oldest graduating class we have represented in our database is 1925, with one alumnus, Charles Ryan of Barrie, ON. Second-oldest is 1927 with Viola Smith, of Ottawa.

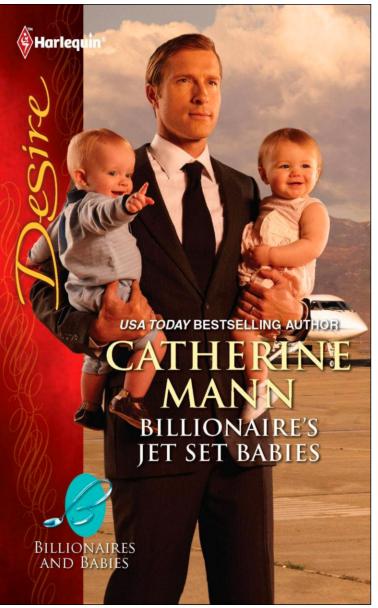
Frances Nikkel (Massé, 1953) wrote to tell us about the passing of her brother Arthur: I have enjoyed getting and reading the newsletter since reading our other brother's obituary, and I thought we'd add our second family loss and another Lisgar grad note to the alumni news. My sisters graduated; I finished my last Latin credit at Moncton College in Toronto but I am a "Life" member.

Bob Hawkins (1963) e-mailed: I was very pleased to be able to read your newsletter and learn of the activities of the Association. I still have many fond memories of my time at Lisgar so long ago. Unfortunately I now live in Vancouver and my visits to Ottawa are few. Is there any mechanism whereby I can contact any of my old classmates? If I can help the Alumni Association in any way from out in BC I'd be willing to try. If you would like to get in touch with Bob, e-mail us and we will put you in touch.

Joanne Jobn (1977) wrote to tell us of her plans to organize a 35th reunion for the Class of 1977: I am in the process of consulting with some of my friends who have also expressed an interest in forming a planning committee. We would like to bring together the class of '77 but also a few of the students who graduated the year before. For more information, contact joannemarciajobn@gmail.com.

*Goran Starcevic (1966) e-mailed:* I attended in the school year of 1965-66. I was registered in grade 9 in a five-year arts and science course. My vice principal was J.P. Livesley. Now after almost 50 years I can say this was the best school I attended. I would be very happy if I could contact my classmates. Unfortunately I remember only the name of Janett Crawford. Many greetings from Serbia and merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Congratulations to Lisgar music teacher Richard Arrigo, who received the Baillie Award from Queen's University. The Award allows a graduating Queen's student to nominate a teacher from their secondary school who had a decisive and formative influence on the student's decision to attend Queen's. Mr. Arrigo was nominated by Keltie Gale (2006). She wrote that he "never doubted our abilities to exceed what we were reaching for and offered all the support that was necessary for us to get there."



LISGAR'S VERY OWN FABIO: Gary Goba (1988) was recently on the cover of a Harlequin romance.

#### Features

#### From the Lisgar Archives: Notes from "Down Below"

From Joy Heft

Some ince the last newsletter, two more books have been added to the collection by Lisgar alumni authors which is housed in the school library: Leo Kamen's (1969, known while at Lisgar as Leo Ilgacs) *Rolling the Bones*, a memoir, and Marlyn Horsdal's (1960, known while at Lisgar as Maralyn Horsdal) *Sweetness from Asbes*, a novel set in Vancouver, West Africa, and Ottawa, where a character attends "a great old school at the corner of Lisgar and the Driveway." Thanks to both for these donations.

This year's Remembrance Day displays were the collaboration of Art teacher Sheri Grant and History teacher Sherry Jarvis, with supplemental material from the archives and school library. Ms. Jarvis' class provided posters chronicling the wartime records of veterans they had researched through the National Archives Lest We Forget Program.

The Alumni showcase also has a Remembrance Day display highlighting two former Lisgar students. Flight Sgt. Pilot James Garfield MacKay (1936) enlisted in the R.C.A.F. in August 1940 and died on operations November 5, 1941 at age 22. Information, including the original clipping announcing his death and a photo of him prior to departure, was sent by Sherry Dingsdale, a former member of the L.C.I. office staff. Dr. Irving Farmer (Hap) Kennedy (1939), the other alumnus highlighted, wrote a book entitled Black Crosses Off My Wingtip, chronicling his wartime experiences. Hap was a fighter pilot for both the R.A.F. and the R.C.A.F. and was awarded two Distinguished Flying Crosses, being one of only 213 men to have received this distinction for "an act of valour, courage, or devotion to duty performed whilst flying in active operations against the enemy." Hap was shot down over France in 1944 and survived with the help of some farm children and eventually the French underground until he returned to England, where he learned his brother had not survived. Dr. Kennedy received a French Legion of Honour award in 2004. He practised medicine with the Inuit through the Department of Northern Affairs until 1961 when he returned to his home town of Cumberland to work as a general practitioner for thirty-seven years. He died this past year at age 88.

The guest speaker for this year's ceremony was George (Peewee) Perrin (1938). Upon graduation, he entered Queen's University to study Engineering, but after one year, he enlisted in the navy. After the war, he returned to university and completed a degree in economics and commerce. George spoke mainly about his happy years at Lisgar and the pranks he and his contemporaries had pulled at school. One prank involved depositing a car in the main lobby of the school, which the students had to dismantle when they were caught. The main point brought home to students was that those who went off to war were not unlike themselves in age, activites, or antics, a sobering thought since many did not return.

Finally, we were recently reminded of the origin of the beautiful wood carved memorial above the library doors when Tania Jewkowicz, who supply taught at Lisgar, told some staff members that her father, Steve Jewkowicz, was its artist and donated it to the school. Steve, a member of the care staff for many years, was born "Stefan" in Belarussia in 1917, during the German occupation. He received only the standard minimum schooling of four years. Learning carpentry at seventeen, he helped his brother build houses. After emigrating to Canada in 1949, Steve worked for the school board from 1951 until 1976, when a fall from a ladder broke his back and ended his career. He wrote: "Out of a girls' gym I made two classrooms, an office, a storeroom and a toilet, a geography room, and a library." For this accomplishment he received a citation on the recommendation of Mr. Stuart, an architect who admired his work, and the two subsequently became friends. Neil Petrie, Lisgar's current Office Administrator, recalls that Steve carved the memorial at home and donated it to the school in



MASTER CARVER: Member of the care staff Steve Jewkowicz, who carved the memorial above the library doors, in the 1974 *Vox Lycei*.

gratitude for the opportunity he had to create a successful life for himself and his family in Canada. Tania remains proud of her father's work, and rightly so! Let us know if you have any memories of transformation of the girls' gym.



WAR MEMORIAL: The wood carving above the doors to Lisgar's library was done by a care staff member who worked for the school board for 25 years.

#### Features

## Wartime Origins of Lisgar's Orchestra

isgar's orchestra is a well-known Depart of life at Lisgar, but its beginnings are less familiar. In 1915, when heavy casualty lists began coming from Europe, the war was starting to reveal its tragic toll. Students and staff had began gathering together in the newly built assembly hall shortly after the turn of the century for morning exercises, and it was during these exercises that these lists of those members of the Lisgar family who would not be returning home was read. As those familiar with the history of the First World War know, Canadian casualties were very heavy due to front-line participation in hard-fought battles. Indeed, plaques in the main hall record the names of more than 100 former Lisgar students and staff who lost their lives in the war.

Coming together every morning to share their grief, a group of students requested to end morning exercises by singing some patriotic songs to honour the soldiers fighting in trenches a world away. The first orchestra was a small group of musically gifted students who could accompany the singing. Soon, it was a regular part of morning exercises. At first, the small student orchestra was augmented by older musicians for special occasions and concerts, and the addition of adult musicians gave students a chance to learn from professionals. From these humble beginnings, the idea of a permanent orchestra began to grow, and in 1917 Lisgar had the first regular school orchestra in Ontario.

At the beginning, the school orchestra did not have any of its own

instruments or equipment. During the 1918 school year, Lisgar Principal Dr. McDougall brought a student petition to the school board asking for money to buy musical equipment, and in 1919 the position of a permanent director of music was created. The instruments bought with the money from the student petition may be familiar to many alumni as they were still in use when music was first taught as a classroom subject in 1937.

With the new instruments, the orchestra was fully integrated into many school activities, and Lisgar's annual concert became a popular event on the Ottawa music scene. During one memorable concert in 1924, a large earthquake hit the city and toppled the tower of the Museum of Nature. The concert at Lisgar, however, continued with barely a pause. One student recalled that "even though the piano floated away from the accompanist and the stage props did a rumba all their own, Miss Roxie Carrier, who was singing a solo at the time, paused long enough in her performance to say, 'Sit still please. It's just an earthquake."

The Lisgar Orchestra is still going strong and has been complemented by a string ensemble and an intermediatelevel orchestra. The senior orchestra, along with the senior band, have undertaken a number of international tours in recent decades, including one this spring to England. The music department has also recorded several CDs (1999, 2002, and 2003), which can be purchased through the Alumni Association.



EARLY ORCHESTRA: "Few can realize or appreciate the amount of labour entailed in bringing music to the degree of perfection in which it was rendered by the Orchestra this year," said the 1919 Vox Lycei.

#### Features

#### 100 Years Ago: Fourth Floor Rifle Range

Jisgar's infamous attic rifle range was established 100 years ago this fall. The 1912 *Vox Lycei* reported the following:

An Indoor Rifle Range has been fitted up in the attic at the east end of the school. It was opened on Tuesday, November 12, by Dr. McDougall, who fired the first shot over it.

The range supplies a long-felt want for our cadets, as now they will be able to practice shooting all winter. The afternoons for practice are Tuesdays and Thursdays, with extra practices on Saturday mornings for those making a certain score or over on the days mentioned. Each section of the Cadet Corps will have a practice every second week, and it is hoped that, by the time spring arrives, the boys will be in good condition to uphold the honour of the O.C.I. on the outdoor ranges.

Two teams have been entered in the Indoor Series of the Canadian Rifle League, one each in the "Miniature" and "Gallery" Series for Cadets, and, by present indications, the 94th Cadet Corps should be well up in the prize lists when the final scores are counted. There have been



GIRLS' RIFLE CLUB: Walter Mann (teacher 1933-1968) helps Lisgar girls with their their shooting in this undated photo from the mid-1940s. Shown are Nancy Danby (1946), Helen Carson (1946), and Mary Howe (1946). Do you know who the other two girls shown are? Please wite in and let us know!

some good scores made already and there is keen competition between the sections.

Owing to the limited target accommodation, the use of the range has been restricted to members of the Cadet Corps.

By 1933, it was compulsory for all boys at Lisgar to become members of the Cadet Corps, and so through the remainder of the 1930s and until shortly after the end of the Second World War all Lisgar boys would have used the rifle range. It was also used by the Girls Rifle Club, which in 1914, its first year, had 24 members. "If the girls keep up their record of high scores," reported the *Vox* in that year, "it will be necessary for the Cadet Corps to look to their laurels." •



1932 GIRLS' SHOOTING TEAM: "These girls have practiced faithfully, twice a week, since January," reported the *Vox Lycei*, "and now eight of them have been chosen for the team, to shoot in the competition with Glebe." Their coach was fellow student and Cadet Corps officer Clifford Forsythe.

#### 2011 Donors

Charles Akben-Marchand (2003) Jamie Benidickson (1967) Alan Bennett (1959) Paul Bennett (1973) William Broughton (1953) Brian Burke (1974) Ron Burrows (1951) Lorna Calderwood (Graham, 1952) Beatrice Campbell (1942) Connie Chan Janus Cihlar (1999) Jana Clarke (Stepan, 1959) Adrienne Clarkson (Poy, 1956) Richard Drolet (1957) Ken Eades (1958) J. Richard Foran (1953) Mary Rose Gagne (Robert, 1955) James Graham (1935) Alexandra Gruca-MacAulay (Gruca, 1978) Joan Gullen (Hanley, 1948) Ian Halliday (1945) Jean Hemphill (Hathaway, 1947) Gordon Henderson (1949) Barry Holt (1950) Marlvn Horsdal (1960) Neil Johnstone (1956) Allan Jones (1957) Douglas Jones (1965) Chris Kilpatrick (Gnaedinger, 1962) Fairlie Kinnecom (Macdonald, 1968) John Lamont (1974) Barrie Laughton (1961) Helen Lee (Way-Nee, 1944) Valerie Leesing (DeLaute, 1953) Ross MacDonald (1966) Elizabeth McLaren (Hanson, 1949) Robert McMichael (1976) Ioan Matthews-Khan (1950) Herb Meincke (1950) William Melanson (teacher 1968-1999) Keith Mills (1944) Sally Morris (Hodgkin, 1955) Alice Nakanishi (1983) Violet Patterson (McAteer, 1950) Margaret Pinero (Isnor, 1952) David Pinhey (1955) Stirling Ross (1948) **Rajiv Samant** Earl Schaubel (1953) Ida Schjelderup (Hundevad, 1946) Bruce Sells (1948) Dorothy Shannon (Harvey, 1948) Robert & Sally Short (Hardy, 1958) Elizabeth Simms (Delaute, 1959) **Eleanor Smith** Anne Thackray (1969) Andrea Tortora (1975) Jean Trudel (1942) Beverly Whyte (Blake, 1959) Charlotte Witty (1945) Manley Wolochow

#### Life Members

We are delighted to report that 16 alumni have become Life Members since the last issue of *Alere Flammam*. They are:

Benidickson, Jamie (1967) Ross Bradley (1951) William Broughton (1953) Tim Chaplin (2000) Pamela Fines (Sutherland, 1956) Peter Goddard (2007) Alexandra Gruca-MacAulay Marlyn Horsdal (1960) Karen Knight (1990) Catherine Malone (May, 1951) Paul Leslie (1951) Anita Ruivo (1983) Heather Steele (McLaine, 1952) Rowena Tolson Grant Wanzel (1959) Gillian Wood (McPherson, 1967)