

Recorded: 17 MAY 2021

Interviewer: Carolyn Squires [former pupil of Tarras School]

Abstracter: Liz Holland

File 01

0.42 File Identification NOELENE ANN PULLAR

2.00 Family background, 1 of 6 children, Dunedin.
Bayfield High 1961 – First Day Pupil
Learnt Violin, Dunedin Technical College- biked
Delivered papers in community - 8 years of age
Self-reliant -caught trolley buses; biking to places.
Much safer time
2nd oldest child

DESCRIBES.

5.29 Father REGINALD WALTER BROWN – parents from Northern
Ireland
Mother RETA GWENDOLINE BROWN nee DAVIES-parents from
Wales
Siblings:
DAPHNE -Adelaide
NOELENE
LORRAINE–Dairy Farmer
LINDSAY REGINALD WALTER] -Farmer
RUSSELL -Kerikeri
SHARON ROSE–School Teacher

DETAILS.

6.32 POST SCHOOL EDUCATION:
First teaching class -18 years of age
Biked 4 miles - DUNEDIN TEACHERS COLLEGE, [2 years]
Teaching posts practical learning, Dunedin Schools.
[EXPRESSION] “Activity based learning is the best learning” –
teaching philosophy

EMPLOYMENT

PA (Probationary Assistants) Year at GREEN ISLAND SCHOOL,
DUNEDIN [1year]
REID PARK SCHOOL MOSGIEL [2 Years] – low socioeconomic area,
300 pupils from 1 street –MURRAY STREET. Decile 1 school.
1 child with rickets, another child scavenged for crusts , apple
cores.
Met husband at this school.
47 years teaching.

DESCRIBES

11.29 Husband, "Bill" WILLIAM DAVID PULLAR
Gained temporary position at BENHAR, then both offered a 2-year position in WANAKA as "country service". Country Service required to ascend promotional ladder.
Bill, Deputy Principal, Primary Part
Noelene, STJC- Supervisor/Senior Teacher of Junior Classes
Both gained promotion without moving - Wanaka a growth area.
Wanaka School Started as "District High"[School] in early 1970s, then to "Area School" then split into 2 schools, WANAKA PRIMARY SCHOOL and MOUNT ASPIRING COLLEGE.

15.15 TARRAS SCHOOL – first teacher to commute, and first female Principal. Taught 5yrs [Year 1] to Year 8 [12-13 year olds]
WANAKA PRIMARY SCHOOL – had different promotions. School ground cleared and now houses. [Until 1989]

Recalls being first Female Principal at Tarras School and commuting to work.

1989 "TOMORROWS SCHOOLS" came into New Zealand education-involved a lot of paperwork. New curriculum for all subjects.

Former School Committees replaced by BOARDS OF TRUSTEES.

JOHN ANNAN- Board Chair who died tragically. Slipped on ice, drowned in water tank.

LESLEY FAULKES taught junior class, Noelene senior classes. Shared classes –Lesley art, Noelene music.

Children often travelled 1 hour to school e.g. CLOUDY PEAK STATION. Students from LINDAS PASS to BENDIGO STATION, ARDGOUR STATION areas.

Decile 10 School, pupils privileged with activities, horse riding, music lessons, to Dunedin for swimming lessons.

DESCRIBES

22.30 Challenges of small school
Role dropped from 1970s - Ministry of Works and Rabbit Board families left area.
Initially 35 students, declined numbers. A new teacher came with 6 children; another family moved into district with 8 boys - lived School House and in Caravan.
2004 SHREK discovered. JOHN PERRIAM owner. Noelene and children wrote a book on SHREK [merino wether sheep on BENDIGO STATION, escaped shearing 7 years, finally shorn 60 lbs wool] Sold 40,000 copies and still on sale. Raised \$150,000 from SHREK PROJECT.
Ministry of Education reviewed school for closure. (2012)
Community strongly supported the school.[Remained open.]

EXPLAINS

- 28.17 Teacher Exchange Programmes
MARY BUZZELL came from CALIFORNIA, USA taught at Wanaka Primary. Lived 6 months in Wanaka, 6 months in San Jose - visited TARRAS and wanted to teach (voluntary teacher) [Had polio as a child and told a very special story called 'Mary's Story' Showed children her polio affected legs. Promoted vaccine very effectively.]
- BILL PULLAR retired from teaching [2005], started a garden project at Tarras School and taught students. One of first primary schools to become an "Enviro School". Planted vegetables, fruit trees, strawberries.
Rabbits - CALICIVIRUS controlled them.

DESCRIBES

- 32.30 MENTIONS CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE - [February 2010]
Lights swinging; children oblivious -outside continued playing.
- 33.50 "FOUR SCHOOLS" -Book on the history of school
BENDIGO SCHOOL 1875-1925
ARDGOUR SCHOOL 1919-1940
LINDAS PASS SCHOOL 1932-1943
TARRAS SCHOOL 1885-

DETAILS

- 34.51 TONY HUNTER, teacher 1983 -1989 "Country kids are special kids and arrive at school ready and love learning"
Good resources, table tennis, bats, balls, swimming pool- children were privileged. Ran historic tour as a fundraiser - 1400 people. Farmers from stations BENDIGO, CLOUDY PEAK, LONG PEAK, CLUDEN presented a talk. 2001. [An original pupil, June Paterson. who had attended The Lindis Pass School spoke at the event. Told the audience how they had to put the ink wells on top of the pot belly stove in the mornings to melt the ink.]
LAKE WANAKA FLOOD. That same day; Tarras had a sewage flood from the septic tank. [Teachers, Parents, and Board of Trustees had to clean up before school could open.]

DESCRIBES

- 38.52 Refurbished [2010].Veranda added and maintained its charm, included the wagon wheels for photographic opportunities.
5.5 acres - had a Flying Fox. Children from 8 plus could use. Built by NZ Army at Noelene's request.

Some lessons taken together. Bought sliding doors from Wanaka Primary to enlarge an area and make school hall, shared teaching space. Used for Community meetings.
2009 Swimming Pool refurbished – reduced travelling time for parents and children; brought in [swimming] coaches; open weekends, during summer holidays.

Tarras children very sporty. LUCY ANNAN had Otago running record [for many years.]
Introduced T-Ball competition in Central Otago, very successful.
“Capture the Flag” game, very popular for children all ages.
“Go Home, Stay Home”.
Recalled pupils climbing trees -40 Foot Conifer TOM DAVIS at top.
Referred to Health and Safety
[Interviewer , CAROLYN SQUIRES] recalled story – TOM DAVIS, SAM PURVIS, JIM BLACKMORE constructed crates to jump over. Tom broke his arm.

- 47.45 Went to CHINA while principal – relief teacher. Taught 8 year olds in holiday programme. SHANGHAI School. Reading, maths, writing science, introduced games. Parents didn’t approve of games. After school music, ballet. Worked very hard compared with New Zealand children.
- 51.03 Weekend Sports- Netball team- Teachers did draws, parents transported students. Shared responsibility. JAN GIBSON Hockey coach.
Art competitions –did well. Tourists visited. One offered \$200, but they accepted \$50.
ERO (EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE) evidence of art questioned, not enough paperwork. [Tarras school actually excelled at Art when it came to the practical side.]
- 54.33 School Camps regularly to different places, whole school went. DUNEDIN, CHRISTCHURCH, QUEENSTOWN, COLUMBA, POUNAWEA, BERWICK, NEVIS RIVER, WAINAKARUA, MT COOK, LINDIS RIVER.
Year 7 + 8 from MOUNT ASPIRING COLLEGE joined them.
Floundering middle of night.
Health + Safety restricted activities, camps ended.
Students gained secondary education at boarding schools : ST HILDAS, JOHN McGLASHEN, COLUMBA, [DUNEDIN] WAIHI later many to MOUNT ASPIRING COLLEGE [WANAKA] became popular.
- 58.14 “BENDIGO BRIDE” play written by BILL PULLAR from SCHOOL JOURNAL. True story. NOELENE wrote music. MARTIN CURTIS guest singer. Toured MEMORIAL HALL CROMWELL; HAWEA; WANAKA TOWN CENTRE; TARRAS HALL. All students in it.
Highlight of Noelene’s time at TARRAS.

- 1.00.23 Potbelly stoves; built up gas; sparks on carpets. Parents chopped up firewood, children stacked it. Replaced with Wood Burners, now? Heat Pumps.
- 1.02.16 1990s Curriculum changed "TOMORROWS SCHOOLS". Large curriculum documents. Courses for teachers to educate them. 2013 back to small curriculum, more flexible. Many teachers left profession during the "TOMORROW SCHOOLS" era. NZ slipped in world standards, especially Maths. The M.O.E. didn't ask teachers or NZEI- New Zealand Education Institute.
- 1.06. 25 Started 1989 and finished 2014 at Tarras School. Over 47 years did not have a boring day. Interviewer commented on her calm manner. Noelene thought being 1 of 6 children helped her "not sweat the small stuff". {EXPRESSION] Accidentally locked in toilet. Tarras an iconic rural school. Principal at MAKARORA and Noelene swapped schools twice so pupils exposed to different talents – Technology/Arts. Digital skills –LYNETTE CRAY, school secretary; ANDREA HARVEY, teacher. Every child had own computer- sponsored through "SHREK" money. Enjoys watching pupils grow up- encounters next generation with her grandchildren. Time capsule buried for 2035. First time capsule lifted at 125 year celebration.
- 1.17. 10 FINISH INTERVIEW