

## **Marion Fearnside**

Wootten – Noldt Family attending Canterbury Girls.

My name is Marion Fearnside (nee Noldt). I attended Canterbury Girls High School from 1958 to 1960. I was one of the girls in the first intake of 1st Year when the School became a High School after being a Domestic Science School. I have been a member of the Cantabrian Girls Ex Students Association since its very beginning and at one stage was one of the Vice Presidents.

I was class A3 where half the girls did History and the other half Geography. I was in the Geography section.

My very real recollection of High School, I was a very shy girl and the first week in our English class with Miss Beverley Townsend, the English Mistress, Mrs Maddocks came in and introduced herself. She said she would ask a question and point to a girl, who was to state their name and the answer. Of course she chose me. I cannot recall the question, but I can recall that I did not know the answer. She asked my name again and said that I should discover the answer to the question.

I had no idea that this was Miss Townsend's first year of teaching, but the following Monday, again Mrs Maddocks came into the class, again asked questions and again chose me. Of course I still did not know the answer, and was very nervous and this added to my awkwardness.

This went on for several weeks and eventually I asked my father one Sunday to write me a note as I did not want to attend school the next day. When asked, I explained why. He said that I had to attend school and he would write a note to the teacher. When he asked her name and I said Mrs Maddocks he started laughing. He wrote the note to her and said I was to give it to Mrs Maddocks only if she came into the class.

Of course, the next day being Monday, Mrs Maddocks came into the class and again chose me to answer a question. I stood up and said I did not know the answer, however, my father asked me to give you this, and duly handed over the note.

To this day I do not know what was in the note, as my father would not tell me, but Mrs Maddocks did not return weekly to our English class. I presume much to the relief of Miss Townsend.

My family attended a family night at my grandmother's place a few weeks later and she asked me how high school was going. I informed her of the above and she and the rest of my father's brothers and sisters started laughing.

It appears that Mrs Maddocks taught my father before she was married and he was not an angel at school only behaving himself on a Wednesday, the day the Mrs Maddocks came to his place for dinner so that she and my grandmother could attend the midweek church and prayer meeting at the local church together.

My mother, Grace Noldt (nee Wootten) also attended Canterbury Girls from 1922-1923. She attended when it was a Superior School. She had to leave in 1923 as her youngest sister Joyce was born in 1922 and she was required to help her mother and also fulfil her duties by earning money as a Piano teacher. My mother was also a 'sickly child' and it was discovered later in life that she had suffered from TB. She was the oldest attending member of the Ex Student's Association until her passing in 1997.

Her two sisters, Hope and Joyce also attended Canterbury Girls, although Joy will be the only one at the Domestic Science School.

All three sisters have passed away now, but I believe that Hope was not an angel at school and Joyce had to put up with comparisons of her sister and had a hard time with her teachers.

A teacher, Miss Brenda See lived 5 houses up the street from my house and she and her mother were personal friends of my mother and her two sisters. I often came home with my friend, Faye Crockett who lived just passed Miss See and as I had my hat and gloves off when passing her house, I was often in 'trouble' for not having my complete uniform on until I reached home. We soon learnt.

My first employer after attending Technical College, was Fanny Haken. After taking the position as a junior stenographer at her family company in St Peters I discovered that she grew up with my mother and also attended Canterbury Girls Superior School with her. What a coincidence.

Even though I left Canterbury Girls at 14 years of age after the Intermediate Certificate and because a Private Secretary, in my 40's I attended UTS and obtained a Bachelor of Education in Adult Education. I taught at TAFE and also taught the lecturers at the Fijian Institute of Technology, now the Fijian National University.

So as you can see, my mother, two aunts and I attended Canterbury Girls and also Mrs Maddocks taught my father when he was a young boy.

Thank you for reading my story.



1959, Class 2A Left to Right

Lynette Hewlett, Marion Noldt (Author), Joan Butler, Miss Robyn Savage (Teacher), Helen Clark, Rita Jackson and Maria Groch.



Grace Wootten



Joyce, Hope and Grace (nee) Wootten 1950



Grace & Hope Wootten and  
Fammy Haken – 1920