

**THE LAUNCH OF “THE PEOPLE OF THE SCHOOL – 125 YEARS OF NAMES AT THE FRIENDS’ SCHOOL” BY THE HONOURABLE PETER UNDERWOOD AC, GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA AND MRS FRANCES UNDERWOOD, THE FARRALL CENTRE, FRIDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2012**

*HE* Thank you very much for asking Frances and me to jointly launch this publication “*The people of the School: 125 Years of Names at Friends’* coordinated by Kathy Rundle and a group of 17 authors. Arranged in alphabetical order, this book sets out the names of 76 Quakers and others, together with accompanying photographs, who have, as is stated in the introduction, “made up the community and influenced and made Friends’ into the School it is today.”

This book constitutes a roll-call of instantly recognisable names – individuals and families famously associated with Friends’ over its 125-year history.

*MU* It is said that the past lives in us, and will be alive in the future, which we are helping to make. As a new recruit in 1979 I found that this was demonstrated on a daily basis, by the many old scholar members of staff in whom the past lived, as if it were the present. They seemed to inhabit a world that was inaccessible to the newcomer. They talked about people with unlikely names such as “cracker”. On the walls there were pictures of people, such as Frank Wells, whose image I pondered on a daily basis, during Sheila Given’s not so brief staff briefs, which happened every day at 8.00 am in that foyer. I remember thinking how out of place this rather solemn, elderly gentleman looked, hanging there

on the wall all by himself, amongst the thriving mass of young life. Knowing nothing about him, or why he was there, I always wanted to rescue him from that wall. Good thing I didn't though, for now, the veil of mystery has been lifted. Thanks to this publication, Frank Wells, Cracker Morris and others like them, who in the past helped to make the future for Friends, have been brought to life and made visible in a very accessible way.

*HE* Now we thought that the way best way to launch this book was read out a few quotes describing some of the people in the book and some of the things they had said and done from time to time, to see how recognisable each of them are. There will of course be a written exam at the end of this process to see how many names you got right. Those who fail to get anything less than a high distinction will be required to buy multiple copies of the book and return next week for a supplementary exam. But seriously, we invite you to listen to each of these quotes because we think that you will agree that they really sum up the deep commitment of so many people to this one institution. It is they who collectively are the essence of The Friends' School.

So, Frances you go first:

*MU* Here is the first quote from the book. "The Friends' School has been blessed with many wonderful and long-serving members of staff during its 125 years but few are remembered and revered as fondly as WHO? She soon developed legend status with her endearing mix of passion for teaching and her solid adherence to dress and decorum

standards. Her regular addresses to the boarder girls are still remembered by many old scholars with a mix of fear and wonder ... Her passion for the English language and her devotion to the fundamental value of education marked her as one of those inspirational mentors who can radically change lives for the better ...”

(Jean Yates p. 118)

*HE* “Despite never coming to Hobart he may well be regarded as one of the founders of the Friends’ School. As chairperson of the London Yearly Meeting Continental Committee, which provided the loan for the establishment of The Friends’ School in Hobart, he was devoted to the development and growth of the new school, helping maintain contact between the new school and the Quaker movement in the UK.”

(Edwin Ransome p. 88)

*MU* “She opened doors and gave hope to those whose future was bleak; she was a person who was involved all her life in helping others.”

(Elizabeth Fry p. 38)

*HE* “He was an inspiration, broadminded, tolerant and charitable with a deep love for the school.”

(Charles Annells p. 3)

*MU* “She did not marry. It is believed her potential husband was killed in World War One. A modern woman, she drove a car, and was a founding member of the Business and Professional Women’s Club Hobart and a member of the Queen Mary Club. For more than thirty

years she was active assisting many causes in the general community – the Kindergarten Union, Crippled Children Society, the management of Lady Gowrie Child Care Centre and the Save the Children Fund. She also supported St Ann’s Home and worked towards raising £50,000 in support of the St Ann’s Eventide Appeal.”

(Ida Mather p. 67)

*HE* “When he smells cooked cabbage he’s transported back to the old Cabbage Classroom ... He explains ... ‘As a new recruit I drew the short straw and ended up teaching in the room which sat directly above the Boarding House kitchen. No other teacher wanted that classroom while cooked cabbage was a regular on the menu downstairs.’”

(Mark Curtis p. 32)

*MU* “A steady and strengthening Quaker influence in troubled times.”

(Alfred Brown p. 14)

*HE* “Arriving in Tasmania in 1909, he was well received at Friends’ High School, as it was then known. He gave several talks at the School, which he described as ‘the bright spot in Australian Quakerism.’ He wrote home: ‘I can truthfully say that though I went out believing in the school, I came back believing in it far more.’”

(Thomas Hodgkin p. 56)

*MU* “She was described as a pioneer in the history of the school and as an active and painstaking teacher who had borne her full share of the

arduous work of laying the foundation on which the School now rests ... She subordinated all her interests and activities to the welfare of the school. Using her own resources and initiative, she not only taught her young pupils, but kept up an interest in them long past their leaving school."

(Margaret Irvine p. 58)

*HE* "When the UK's Great Ayton Friends' School, a Quaker co-education boarding school of about 250 students, advertised a position for a geography teacher, it caught his attention. His application was rejected because the school needed a teacher who could not only teach geography but who could also serve as a mistress in the girls' boarding house."

(Roderic Grosvenor p. 52)

*MU* "She concentrated on curriculum, teaching, professional development and school evaluation while he focused on administration, staffing, planning and finance. They were concerned with carrying on the School in accordance with the principles of Friends and their instigation of a Wednesday morning Meeting for Worship was just one reflection of this."

(Margaret and Michael Bailey p. 11)

*HE* "He was fascinated by electronics and built himself many gadgets, some of which served the School well for many years. One, a stage-light dimmer for plays in the Assembly Hall (now the Drama Theatre) was

used for decades; another was a Tesla Coil used in the physics lab and now in the School Archive collection.”

(Charles Goddard junior p. 42)

**MU** “She was a well-known singer in Tasmania in the 1920s and 1930s ... She took part in many aspects of School life, belonging to Miss Irvine’s Snow Drop Band, participating in School exhibitions and sharing her musical talent during her years at The Friends’ School. She was a brilliant student, a Prefect ... and she also excelled at sport, captaining the school in both cricket and tennis ... In her bequest she wrote that, ‘It is to be used to benefit the School in some way. In what way, I leave you to decide.’”

**HE** “Apart from his devotion to teaching young people, he was committed to peaceful resolution of conflict and was deeply concerned with human rights and social justice. A leader of the Vietnam War Moratorium marches in Hobart, he was a staunch supporter of conscientious objectors and a campaigner for the abolition of capital punishment.”

(Richard Meredith p. 70)

**MU** There is a clue for you in this one. “Many former students remember ‘Stanna’ giving a little talk to new girl prefects at the beginning of the year concluding with the words, ‘You must be above reproach.’”

(Mary Stanfield p. 98)

*HE* “He was a man noted for his truthfulness, punctuality, moderation and generosity. He is said to have had ‘carefulness in weighing his words and faithfulness in keeping them.’ However he was not tolerant of ‘insincerity or hypocrisy.’”

(Henry Propsting p. 87)

*MU* So that is just a snapshot of this wonderful addition to the Friends’ story.

*HE* Whether by their leadership, teaching, financial backing or recording for posterity the histories of the School, these people have over the years and decades, by their words, wisdom and deeds, truly ensured that The Friends’ School is what it is today, an educational institution of outstanding international reputation.

On that note we proudly launch *The people of the School: 125 Years of Names at Friends*, a book by Kathy Rundle and others, attractively set out by a very skilled graphic artist, Julie Hawkins