

The Early Medical Women of New Zealand

Stories from graduates: 1896 – 1967

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University of Otago third year medical students, 1959

Featuring women medical students: [Anne Cowie](#), Maureen Joan Lester, Mary Lou Harvey, Dorothy Jean Kral, Ngaire Jean Twose, Jocelyn Mabel Mulinder, [Helen Robyn Hewland](#), [Mary Cameron](#), [Meon Carolyn Shand](#), Dorothy Haydn Bell

Welcome to the Early Medical Women of New Zealand: 1896–1967 project. Today, approximately half of all New Zealand medical graduates are women. However, it was not always this way. The first woman to graduate from a New Zealand medical school was Dr Emily Siedeberg in 1896, followed by Dr Margaret Cruickshank in 1897. Each year for the next twenty years there were very few female graduates. Despite the accomplishments these “pioneer” women achieved, many faced discrimination during their studies, while applying for jobs, and within their places of work.

We are collecting stories about New Zealand’s early female doctors so that we can preserve our earliest medical history and honour those who paved the way for women to practise medicine today.

Our project solely focuses on the women who graduated from the first New Zealand medical school – the Otago Medical School – between 1896 and 1967. We have placed this parameter on our study as the University of Auckland School of Medicine was established in 1968.

Explore this website to read about our country’s pioneering women in medicine.

Under the “**Biographies**” tab you will find all of the biographies we have written to date. These can be sorted by graduation year or you can search for a specific graduate in the search bar at the top of the page.

You can also find an entire list of the graduates we are profiling under the “**Graduate Roll**” tab.

Please note that these biographies are primarily based on personal reflections conveyed through interviews with the graduates and/or their families and do not reflect the views of the Otago Medical School, any other graduates, or the University of Auckland.

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CONTRIBUTE STORIES

Do you have a story, photos, or information to share about New Zealand’s early medical women?

Please contact us!

Email:
earlymedwomen@auckland.ac.nz

GRADUATION YEAR

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