

## STORIES FROM THE ARCHIVES:

### Who is the Anderson in Anderson House?

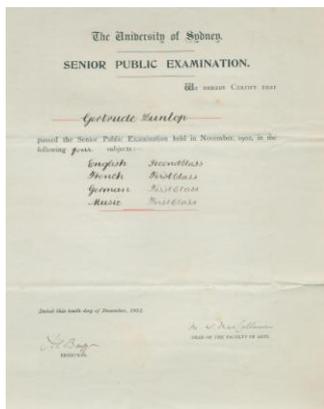
The name “Anderson” has been associated with PLC Sydney for well over a century, but who exactly was Mrs E.O. Anderson?

As Gertrude Dunlop, she was a student at PLC from 1898 to 1903. She was academically gifted and her name was often on the Roll of Honour published each term in the *Aurora Australis*. She also received prizes on Speech Day: French, Music, Piano, English, History and Geography.

She was a member of the Student Christian Union and the “A” tennis team. In 1902, the year basketball was introduced in the College, she played for the Day Girls. Indeed, she was ready for play on 3 June 1902, when a severe hailstorm – some of the hailstones “were as large as eggs” – prevented the game from even starting.



Gertrude Dunlop  
as a student in 1900



The Senior University Examination was similar to the Higher School Certificate of today

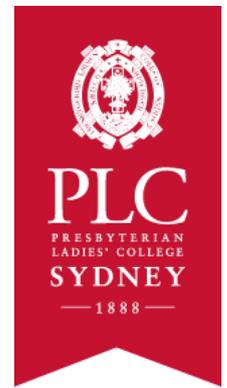


One of two certificates awarded to Gertrude Dunlop by the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music

Gertrude sat both the Junior and Senior University Examinations. Although she matriculated for university, she did not attend. She finished her education in 1903 and in 1904 enjoyed what we would now term a “gap year”. In January she sailed on the *India* for a “twelve months’ sojourn abroad”. Her continental tour included France and England, at least, and later she visited Egypt and the Nile.

Her marriage to Elias Outram Anderson took place at St James Church, Burwood, in 1910. Upon the death of her father, John Sym Dunlop (who was a member of College Council from 1902 to 1912), Mr Anderson took over the management of Edwards Dunlop, wholesale stationers and paper merchants with branches in Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Newcastle.

The Andersons had three children; the two daughters, Margaret and Gertrude, attended PLC Sydney. Gertrude was School Captain in 1939.



Mrs Anderson was an active member of the Ex-Students' Union, serving as President from 1928-1932, again in 1936-1937, and then Patroness from 1941 until 1985.

Perhaps she is best remembered for the petition she and Miss Clayton presented to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1931 calling for ex-students of the College to be able to be members of the College Council. At the time it did not seem an anomaly for a girls' school to be run and managed entirely by men. The petition pointed out that "Ex-students would bring to the Council the enthusiasm born of a deep and abiding love for the College" and that "girls are embryo women, and the feminine point of view must be considered". The petition was considered favourably and as a consequence Mrs Anderson, Mrs Mary Fischer and Miss Mildred Rees became members of College Council. Mrs Anderson served in that position until her retirement in 1958.



*Mrs E.O. Anderson, c1964*

The Andersons gave generously to the College by means of the building fund, a scholarship and in converting the old laundry into the Anderson Room. Today we honour Gertrude Anderson in Anderson House, established in 1968 with its motto "Semper constans – Stand sure".

That PLC Sydney was close to Mrs E. O Anderson's heart is demonstrated in her definition of the College:  
The place where we started with hope, and finished with love  
and faith; a place of happiness to which we return from time  
to time, and always find her arms stretched out to us in welcome.

Debby Cramer, Archivist, 2016

Sources: Series 18 Ex-Students Box 182 Folder Gertrude Dunlop (Mrs E.O. Anderson)