



*In Loving Memory of*

**ALEXANDRIA WENDY MACLENNAN**

*26 October 1951 - 25 December 2007*



**Oratia Community Church**  
Cnr West Coast & Parker Roads, Oratia

Monday, 31 December 2007, at 11am

As I drove up to Alexandria's church trying to find a place to park my car I was met with the lament of the bagpipes. The piper, Lewis Turrell, international famed piper, was playing on the slopping, close cropped lawn towards the back of the church.

Straight away one knew that this is not going to be easy, especially as the wail of the pipes was pulling on the heart strings of the people trying to crowd inside Oratia's Community Church.

Long before the 11 AM start, there was standing room only both inside the church, its lobby - people spilling onto the drive way where the hearse was parked after delivering its precious passenger, to her place of honour – front and centre of the church where Alexandria had worshipped her Lord for many years.

Referees, in their dress shirts, from all age groups representing decades of service, to the Referee's Association gathered with Alexandria's family and friends to provide comforted and consolation.

A testimony of love and respect to the women who has been responsible for the recruitment and development of so many of the referees present and absent, in spite of the holiday season those present numbered in the scores and fully understood that many of those who wanted to be there simply could not.

The service was officiated by Reverend Stephen Brooker and carried along with eulogies of remembrance by Ngaire Wilson, Glen Maclennan, Otahuhu College Representative, Ken Wallace from NZ Soccer Referee's Association, Les Coffman from Soccer2 Referee's Association; Les's words of remembrance:

*Good Morning – Wendy and I go back a long way I have very fond memories of Wendy, I am a senior member of the Auckland referees Association and recall Wendy joining the Association in the 1980's as a referee.*

*In 1991 she became the Association Secretary until the formation of the Federations.*

*She also held the position of Secretary to the Northern Referee's Board when I was Chairman and proved very capable in both positions – efficient in everything she did!*

*She was a tireless worker in any task given to her; she invariably had the answer to any question thrown her way.*

*A typical school; ma-am approach, she was a stickler for crossing the T's and dotting the I's! When the Associations were re-organised into Federations Alexandria took up the position of Federation 2, R.D.O and with her enthusiasm recruited a large number of new referees, many who are here today.*

*Wendy was the instigator on my being awarded the Queen's Service Medal; she spend hours corresponding with the Prime Minister's office , members of Parliament and many Soccer Personnel, she would not take no for an answer till gaining her goal -----yes I have a lot to thank Wendy for-----!*

*Maybe this ode will characterise Wendy –*

*Wendy stood at the Golden gate her head bowed very low she softly asked the man of the fate which way she had to go.*

*What have you done St Peter asked, to seek admission here?*

*I have been a Soccer Referee for many years.*

*A referee St Peter cried and gently tolled the bell, come right inside and choose your harp, you've had your share of hell.*

Tinana Kairua wrote the following but shared the reading of it with Sarah, Kelly and Renée:

*Thank you for letting me share a brief testament with you today on behalf of the students from Otahuhu College and all the young referees who Alexandria was a major influence in our lives*

*I've been blessed to have known Alexandria MacLennan both as a former student at Otahuhu College and as a Soccer Referee for the Auckland Football Federation (Formally Soccer2) for the last 4 years.*

*I've always called Alexandria Ms because that's what we called her at Otahuhu College.*

*In fact she had me committed to Otahuhu College even before Mum and Dad had a chance to think about which college to send me to.*

*She was very proud of the fact that I was going to Kings College next year which she was so very happy to provide references to support my scholarship application.*

*As young referees, WE NEVER SAY NO to Ms, but we know that she's always fair, firm and very protective of all her young referees, in fact all students at the school. She is very proud of everyone at Otahuhu College and in particular GREY HOUSE*

*In the Soccer Referees association, Ms is also very protective, caring and always looking after the new referees young and not so young. The new and young referees myself included, she would tuck under her wing for guidance and direction. Those of us who have made a rapid climb to the top of our respective levels in refereeing owe it all to her dedication, commitment, and her tutorship. We also found out very quickly why she's also affectionately known as the DRAGON...VERY QUICKLY. She always wants things done HER WAY or NO WAY. The word NO (which she says it with feelings) is very prominent on her vocabulary list and on many many occasions had been known to start a sentence with... NO YOU CAN'T but we know underneath all that, she's really a softie.*

*We also got to know and experience her brave and considerate demeanour. Her battle with her illness never got in the way of her teaching and refereeing commitments. She was a very brave woman All of us here have never met anyone like her and we will never ever come across another one like her again in this lifetime. She is a role model, a mother, guardian, mentor and a great friend to us all and we are all so thankful. She is a truly remarkable and wonderful woman always thinking about other peoples needs first.*

*Today we close the last page of this special chapter in our lives and tomorrow we will open a new page and chapter but without our beloved Alexandria, so*

*let us remember and cherish the special times we all spent together when she was alive and let it be her memories etched in our hearts and minds.*

*Finally, if I may quote from the Scriptures, from the book of Psalms, Chapter 23, verses 4 and 6.*

*"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

*To Alexandria's Family and Friends, Your Loss is our Loss and even though Alexandria is no longer with us, I believe she has the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide her through her long long journey.*

*Goodbye and Farewell Ms... We will miss you... Rest in Peace*

*Thank you and may God bless you all.*

With the hymns 'Amazing' Grace and 'The Old Rugged Cross' throughout the service including a reading of Ps 139: 1-11 by Zoe Evison, the farewell church service concluded.

The Piper Lewis Turrell again took up his position to pipe the casket out of the church and to the car.

By the time Alexandria had been carried out of the church lobby a guard of honour made up of uniformed referees was arrayed and Alexandria was walked between two lines of referees, again a token of love and respect towards a fallen comrade who was well deserving of such an honour – hardly a dry eye could be seen!

The piper, now in front of the car ready to escort Alexandria off the church grounds, stopped playing.

In place of the pipes came the panting, heaving and foot stomping of the Otahuhu College Old Boys Haka group.

If emotions were controlled under the pressure of the sound of the pipes, no one could any longer resist the power and emotional statement of this high tribute being made to Alexandria.

With the Haka, for many the flood gates opened and hot tears streamed down. Among the most grieving were the young referees both young women and young men who were not ashamed to own their tears and to manifest their grief - all openly wept!

Flowers were laid on the casket and many said and expressed their final farewell, touching the casket and walking away considering their personal and profound sense of loss.

As the car slowly pulled away, this reporter, stepped behind the car, and with the three long traditional blasts of the referees whistle, declared, "Game Over!"

The car slowly moved off with the piper walking ahead, and then at last Alexandria was gone.

The family extended a warm and very welcomed invitation to refreshments in the church hall where old friends and referees of every generation were catching up and supporting each other.

Some one once said, "Show me a hero and I will show you a tragedy."

The passing of Alexandria (Wendy) MacLennan is a tragic loss to her family, friends and to the New Zealand Football Referees, who could calculate such a tragedy?

For further comments and words of remembrance please go to the Auckland Football Federation web site, where David A. Parker CEO of Auckland Football Federation makes tribute and where Trevor M Gill also contributes, to celebrate Alexandria's life.