



Suffrage stories

Elizabeth was born near Kaiapoi and attended Christchurch Girls' High School where she was a star pupil. Following high school, she attended Canterbury College, graduating with a B.A. in 1882. She became a teacher at Christchurch Girls' High the following year and this is the address from which she signed the 1893 Women's Suffrage Petition.

In 1901, Elizabeth became the Principal of Southland Girls' High School. After marrying John Forrester in 1906, she moved to Ōamaru. During World War I, Elizabeth was Secretary of the Ōamaru Red Cross. Under her leadership, the Branch raised £10,000 – the equivalent of over \$1.1 million dollars today! In recognition of her efforts she was given an MBE in 1918.

Elizabeth continued to be active in public life. She founded the North Otago Women's Club in 1924. During the Depression of the 1930s she was the first president of the Women Citizens' Relief Committee. She was also the first woman to serve on the Waitaki Hospital board, from 1931 to 1939. When she died in 1940 her obituary noted that she was 'without doubt, the most outstanding woman personality in the history of Ōamaru'.

Elizabeth Forrester nee Stevenson

1870-1940



■ Elizabeth Forrester. Credit: 3043, North Otago Museum.



HERITAGE NEW ZEALAND
POUHERE TAONGA