



HELEN MARGARET MORAN became the first teacher of needlework at King Edward Technical College in 1928. The decision to bring such a highly qualified teacher to Dunedin had far-reaching effects.

She was born in Inverness, Scotland, educated at its Royal Academy, and continued her education at a Belgian convent and then in France. Travelling extensively in America, she took courses in needlework and ladies' tailoring, gaining seven diplomas in needlework.

While in America she taught French and German to members of their diplomatic corps. After World War 1 she went to a London training college where one of her tutors was Mrs Kathleen Harris, an acknowledged pioneer of the 1920s crafts revival, who trained many embroidery teachers.

At King Edward college, Miss **Moran** taught day pupils, adult evening classes, and third-year art specialist students from the teachers training college.

Her teaching ability was remarkable.

She often had capacity classes with 30 to 40 pupils, both daytime and evenings.

During World War 2 she visited soldiers in Dunedin Hospital, teaching them embroidery as an occupational therapy.

Miss **Moran** retired in 1957, but continued with other work.

She was in charge of linen at St Joseph's Cathedral and made many beautiful vestments for the clergy.

Another interest was the Otago Museum textile collection, to which she donated many items, now the "**Helen M. Moran** Collection".

She gave broadcast talks, judged at various shows and displays, tutored groups at Balclutha, Oamaru, Gore and Invercargill, arranged displays at Dunedin Public Art Gallery, and was a member of the Dunedin Art Society for many years, exhibiting several times.

While tutoring with the university extension the idea developed to form an Otago embroiderers guild, affiliated to the Embroiderers Guild, London, of which Miss Moran was a member.

It held its first meeting on January 16, 1961, with Miss Moran as its first president. She donated many of her books and teaching aids, and encouraged members to keep abreast of overseas innovations, also encouraging them to undertake special projects for the beautification of the city.

Miss Moran had a profound influence on the development of embroidery in Otago which ultimately spread through the whole of New Zealand.

She died in Dunedin on December 26, 1974, aged 82 years, and is commemorated by a small stone on her grave in Dunedin's Andersons Bay Cemetery.