

# Thorndon School Newsletter

37/2008

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"Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning, but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instil in us."

## Action List – one last attempt to get a few loose ends tidied up.

Have you paid the school donation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have you ordered any water?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you returned the report survey?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have all accounts been settled?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Kia ora tatou

The last newsletter of the year! I notice that the number at the top is only 37 but I am sure that we have had more than 37 weeks this year. It certainly feels like it. The lower than normal numbers must be due to the way the weeks fell.

Every year is busy but some seem to be busier than others and this one, especially in this last term, is one of those. It is interesting talking with principals from other schools to hear that everyone feels the same but that no-one can quite put a finger on why this should be so. Regardless of the reasons, it is observably obvious that both staff and pupils are extremely tired and ready for some time in the sun and away from work. We will all hope for a long hot summer break so we can be vitamin D enriched and return refreshed and ready for a new year.

Last night the Year 8 pupils had their Leavers' Dinner and received their certificates and books. This is always a time to reflect on the particular cohort we are sending on to secondary schools all over the wider Wellington area. This group has been one of the most settled and involved we have had for some time and the growth in maturity between last year and this has been even more marked than usual. I am sure that if they take with them the attitudes they have displayed here and the competencies they have developed they should all succeed at college in one way or another. Each year I invite the Year 8 pupils to come back and let us know how they are getting on and this applies to all pupils who are leaving. It is one of life's great pleasures for teachers to meet up with former pupils and hear how they have been getting on so we look forward to hearing how this group gets on as they move through their secondary schooling.

Today we held our final assembly for the year, an assembly with a very full programme. In 2006 we introduced two awards to be given to Year 8 pupils. The first of these is the Sports Award which is given to the pupil who is the best all round sports person, demonstrating skills in a range of sporting activities but also showing leadership and epitomising sportsmanship and fair play. The other is the Principal's Award which goes to the person who is judged to be the best all round Year 8 pupil for the year, showing leadership, academic ability, initiative, co-operation and a willingness to accept responsibility, the qualities identified in the values and key competencies in the curriculum.

This year the Sports Award has been won by Tailah Love and the Principal's Award by Lydia Whiting. Congratulations to both of them. They have fulfilled every requirement we were looking for and have been wonderful role models for their peers as well as for younger children in the school. They both have those qualities which should see them have very successful secondary school careers and they have both made very significant contributions to the senior school group and to the school as a whole.

There were a number of other awards made and the recipients are listed later in the newsletter.

Well, we only have Friday morning to negotiate before school closes. I would like to wish you all a happy Christmas and New Year and a relaxing summer break. We will see you all in the New Year. I will be checking my email during the holiday so if anyone needs to contact me that is the way to do it.

Bill Sutton

**Successes**

Every now and again, as well as celebrating the successes of the children in the school, we allow ourselves to bask in the reflected glory of the success of previous pupils.

Alistair went to the junior prize giving at Wellington High the other night and there were at least 2 of our children who received awards. Alana Cooper and Kiwa Paku both received several awards for excellence – for being in the top 3 for a subject area - and we have since learned that Anna Harcourt was dux of the school.

At Wellington Girls College, Steph Bremner in Year 10 received a gold award for academic effort; Jasmine Pitkethley in Year 11 was awarded distinction in English, distinction in Chinese and a gold award for academic effort. Adelaide Gleadow, also in Year 11, was awarded distinction in English and History as well as a gold award for academic effort.

Two other former pupils, Gina Crampton and Esther Lees, will be prefects or committee leaders next year.

At Onslow College Luciana Julian-Brougham has been awarded a Victoria School Leavers Scholarship for Academic Excellence.

We send our congratulations and best wishes to all these past pupils as well as to any others who may have enjoyed similar success which we have not heard about.

When our Year 8 children leave they go to many different schools and I am sure that there are others who will also have had significant success in their secondary schools. At the moment we rely on interested parents and a little luck to find these things out and it would be nice if we could develop a system for capturing this sort of information so that we can share it with our own school community. If anyone has any ideas we would love to hear them.

**Holiday Job Wanted**

16 year old college student

Available for holiday work  
From January 12<sup>th</sup>

Great with Children

Phone 476 2832 – ask for Alice

**Classrooms 09.**

I have mentioned already that the building programme and the nature of the school roll will result in some changed locations for next year. We believe we have these all worked out now in a way that creates the least disruption once the year has started. What it does mean is that all year levels change their location next year and that three classes will have to change places again at the end of Term 1 when our new classroom is finished.

We will begin with 10 rooms and Beth Huntington will not have a class for the first term, freeing her to do a lot of other work across the junior syndicate. At the start of 2009 then the classes will be in the following rooms.

**Term 1**

Room 1	Y 7/8	Rebecca Brown
Room 2	Y 5/6	Jane Stocker
Room 3	Y 1/2	Zeeta Andrew
Room 4	Y 1/2	Krista Huber
Room 5	Y 3/4	Rebecca Nicholls
Room 6	Y 3/4	Niamh King
Room 7	Y 3/4	Alistair du Chatenier
Room 8	Y 5/6	Meta Beyers
Room 9	Y 7/8	Jay Smith
Art Room	Y 1	Sue Holman

When the term finishes, Beth will be setting up Room1 as a new Year 1 room and Sue Holman will move to Room 2 from the Art Room where she will have spent the first term. This means that Rooms 1 – 4 will house all our Year 1 and 2 children.

Rebecca Brown will move her Year 7/8 class to the new classroom and Jane Stocker will move her Year 5/6 class to Room 10.

The Year 3/4 team will be in Rooms 5 – 7 and the middle and senior school will be grouped around the library.

**Term 2**

Room 1	Y 1	Beth Huntington
Room 2	Y 1	Sue Holman
Room 3	Y 1/2	Zeeta Andrew
Room 4	Y 1/2	Krista Huber
Room 5	Y 3/4	Rebecca Nicholls
Room 6	Y 3/4	Niamh King
Room 7	Y 3/4	Alistair du Chatenier
Room 8	Y 5/6	Meta Beyers
Room 9	Y 7/8	Jay Smith
Room 10	Y 5/6	Jane Stocker
Room 11	Y 7/8	Rebecca Brown

**Term 1 Calendar 2009**

There is quite a lot here already and more will be added as soon as we get back!

Feb 2	Teacher Only Day
Feb 3	Teacher Only Day
Feb 4	Term Begins
Feb 6	Waitangi Day – School closed
Feb 18	School Picnic
Feb 24	BoT Meeting
Mar 11	Y 1-3 to Capital E Arts Festival
Mar 17	Y 4-8 to Capital E Arts Festival
Mar 18	School Swimming Sports
Mar 31	BoT Meeting
Apr 3	Inquiry Unit Parent Presentation.
Apr 8	Last day of term for children.
Apr 9	Teacher Only Day.
Apr 27	Term 2 begins.

**Awards**

Principals Award Nominations

Lydia Whiting  
Mithunanan Sathiyandra  
Lilly Simpson

Sports Award Nominations

Tailah Love  
Lilliana Wiles  
Alex Bremner

Citizenship Awards

These are given to those children who have helped around the school in many ways and who have done it off their own bat, willingly, cheerfully and effectively.

Olive Brown	Georgina Lomax-Sawyers
James Gooch	Alex Bremner
Rebecca Harris	Ryan O'Fallon
Thomas Self	Hannah Saul
Kate Appleton	Patricia Posadas
Asia Brownlie	Lydia Whiting
Liam Anthony	Charlotte Edwards
Lilly Simpson	Amara Khan-Evans
Lilliana Wiles	Natana Wallace-Parata
Caitlin Mold	Zac Boyle

Congratulations and thank you to all of you for all the work you have done over this year.

**Lost Property**

Tomorrow is the last opportunity you have to check and claim items of lost property as anything left at the end of term will be gathered up and taken to one of the various welfare organisations.

We will put things out on display in the hall in the morning so children can go through and check.

**Stationery**

As we did last year, we have arranged for stationery to be provided by School Supplies. You can order the stationery online and instructions will be coming home (as soon as we have them) to tell you what to do. To make sure you get the right list you will need to know what year group your child is in and this was in the class/room lists that we sent home last week.

If you would rather buy stationery from somewhere else you can access the lists by visiting the School Supplies website to find out what books and equipment your child will need.

**Chess Champion**

Chess has continued to grow in strength in the school with a large group meeting in the library each week, a smaller group receiving weekly coaching from a professional coach and a school tournament involving over 80 children.

The title of Chess Champion for this year goes to Logan Jeffries, repeating his success of last year. Congratulations Logan.

**Short Story Competition**

Earlier in 2009 Year 7/8 pupils entered work for a short story competition which I had the privilege of judging, not an easy task. The stories were all quite different and all displayed differing characteristics. In the end, because I had to, I picked out a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> but everyone who entered deserves congratulations. We will be putting these stories together in a book but time has run away from us so it will be a task for next year.

1 <sup>st</sup>	Lydia Whiting
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Hannah Saul
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Yasmeen McNab-Anand

Congratulations to all three – and yes, we did have some stories by boys – just not quite as good this year.

THORNDON SCHOOL - CHAIRPERSONS REPORT 2008

Kia ora Koutou

In the 5 or so years that I've been a school Board member I've seen challenges and changes that reflect our positive dynamic growth as a successful learning centre. The Board I'm part of now operates differently from the one I first joined, and it's predominate composition of professional women makes it a highly capable and well informed governance unit.

I must start by thanking the teaching and management team at Thorndon – they are the engine room of the school and I know that there have been some testing times during the year. The end of the first term was an example, when the team had to adapt and regroup with the unexpected departure of two staff members.

The fruits of their effort and the effort of our kids with the support of their parents are reflected in the all important outcome of "student achievement". Our standardised testing regime revealed that from Term 1 to Term 4, achievement levels, which were already high, grew significantly and are generally well above the national averages in all cohorts in both the numeracy and literacy areas.

As a Maori parent I am particularly pleased that our Maori students are performing as well as their non-Maori counterparts, a feature of our success that's not typical throughout the country

In 2008, we were reviewed again as part of ERO's review cycle. I'm pleased to say that although we were pulled up on some relatively minor management compliance matters, the important aspects of our ERO report relating to learning outcomes for our kids, were very positive.

I'm not sure what other parents think, but I believe Thorndon School has a culture that sets our kids apart from others. I think the diversity of our community, the attitude and personality of our staff, and the types of things our kids learn and the ways they are encouraged to learn them contribute to this. Most encouraging is that I think we achieve our vision as articulated in our school charter "to develop independent and caring thinkers and learners".

Some of the inspiring achievements for Thorndon School in 2008 are as follows:

- Set-up of blogs so that our kids could publish their thoughts online;
- Took the school's art out into the community for our Art Week.
- Held a wonderful Art exhibition at Wholly Bagels
- Produced movies and published them on You Tube
- Participated:
  - In a national Radio Script Writing Competition gaining second place.
  - In the National Young Designers Competition taking first place in the Architecture section and reaching the finals of the Cultural Fashion section.
  - In the Wellington Regional Science Fair with 2 awards
  - In the BP Technology Challenge taking third place in the Junior Section.
- Completed the full requirements for the EnviroSchools bronze award
- Had our Sports Squad address the Wellington Wairarapa Regional Principals Conference
- Produced the Wellington Junior Chess Champion and under 9 champion
- Won the Knoche Cup back from Brooklyn School and were Netball champions in the Northern Region.
- Engaged in an extremely wide ranging and successful extension and enrichment programme.
- Organised a very enjoyable and successful school camp for our senior students.

The quality of our staff is another major factor in our successes with the kids. The external recognition received by some of our core staff team members for their achievements is testament to this. Examples include:

- Alistair being accepted onto a national course for Aspiring Principals and invited to lead a writing course for children in Upper Hutt schools.
- Rebecca being on the management team for a National Arts Course and Krista being a member of the management team for a National Dance Course.

And finally, I couldn't end this report without mentioning the Thorndon Fair. The major event in every year with which we have the most intense love-hate relationship.

We hate it because it takes up so much of our time and energy for months leading up to the first weekend in December every year. It is absolutely gruelling and those at the centre of its organisation - Carleen Needham, Carol Shortis, Jacqui McVie, Carol Weston, Jo Freeman and Kelly Falconer deserve to be decorated for their unflinching efforts, right down to the 12 hour shifts they do on the day. Likewise, Bill and his team of staff, the parents and the kids who all pitch in to make the Fair a bigger and better event every year.

So that's why we hate it.

We love it because it is a Wellington institution and we are proud to say that we manage the largest street fair in the Country once every year – and after more than 25 years it is our institution. That's why we love it. Oh – and there's the fact that it earned us nearly \$60,000 this year – twice as much as most previous years and a symbol of our success generally – I reckon.

Ngā mihi mō te Kirihimete

Anaru Mill