

Thorndon School Newsletter

17/2009

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We don't stop playing because we grow old, we grow old because we stop playing.
George Bernard Shaw

Action List

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|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Have you returned the 2 nd language survey? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't forget school banking tomorrow | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Junior School Information session on Tuesday. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you sent in a nomination for the board? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you returned your curriculum feedback? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you registered for the holiday programme? | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Dear Parents

Kia ora.

Those of us with a keen interest in the game they play in heaven will be looking ahead with some concern to the rest of the test season and hoping for redemption on Saturday night. Being incurably optimistic and just a little one eyed I am predicting a home victory, the margin being unimportant.

Last week I mentioned that staff were off to see our Year 7/8 children compete in Stage Challenge, joining parents and siblings of every child in our Stage Challenge group. Thorndon had a great deal of support! It was a huge night with 11 schools participating, 8 of them colleges, 2 of them intermediates with Thorndon as the only primary school. I was amazed at the quality of our performance and enormously proud of what our children produced. The top three schools, Wellington East Girls College, Wellington Girls College and, the winner, Wellington Boys College, put on wonderful performances. Even allowing for a little personal bias though, I felt that our children were streets ahead of both the intermediates, better than some of the secondary schools and at least on a par with others. The quality of their performance was reflected in the four awards for excellence they got in various categories. There will be massive relief on the part of the teachers that it is over but everyone concerned should be feeling extremely pleased and proud. Congratulations to the whole senior school and thank you particularly to Rebecca Brown and Jay Smith but also to all the other staff and parents who had an input into the performance. I would have photos but there was a very strict policy of no photography or videoing so we will have to wait for the official photos. This is an experience that will; stay with the children.

We are nearly ready to move into Rooms 10 and 11 in the White House and both rooms will be occupied by the holidays meaning that the new entrants will also have shifted into their new rooms. The playground area seems to have come to a standstill at the moment but work will begin again in the next week or two so that all can be ready for the start of the new term. There will be some sort of social event early in the term to allow parents to come in and have a look at the new rooms and the play area and we will let you know as soon as we have a date. Before then we need to empty the containers and find homes for all the "stuff" that we have stored. It is exciting to have reached this stage and we all look forward to this part of the programme finishing. There is more to come however with tenders closing on Friday for the redevelopment of the Reading Recovery Room and server room. This should not take long and will give us some more much needed storage and resource space.

Last week I mentioned some work that two of our children had done for the Royal Society and promised to put these two pieces in the newsletter. They are in this week and I hope that you get as much enjoyment from reading these as I did. Hannah's in particular shows a highly individual and idiosyncratic personal voice.

Bill Sutton

THORNDON SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Board Elections

A reminder that nominations for the two vacant positions created by the resignations of Anaru Mill and Karen Scott-Howman close on Saturday, June 20.

Remaining on the board are Mandy Hancock, Carol Weston and Carleen Needham with Rebecca Brown, the staff representative and myself as principal.

Postal nominations should be postmarked no later than 12:00 noon on Saturday 20th.

Term 2 Calendar

Jun 23	BoT Meeting.
Jun 23	Junior Curriculum information – Assessment.
Jun 24	Invitational Chess Competition.
Jun 25	Curriculum Consultation.
Jun 25	Enviro Group visiting NZTA.
Jun 29	Dental Caravan on site.
Jun 29	Y 4-8 to performance at Capital E.
Jul 1	Wellington High School Open Evening.
Jul 3	Term Ends.
Jul 20	Term 3 starts.

Contact Details

We will try to get contact lists out on Friday so you have one last chance to respond. If you **do not** want your details to appear **please return the attached slip tomorrow.**

I have been asked if these contact details can go to children within the particular syndicate as these groups work closely together, often cross grouping for particular activities.

This seems very sensible so instead of 10 separate class lists we will send out the following lists.

- Year 1 – Rooms 1 and 2
- Year 1/2 - Rooms 3 and 4.
- Year 3/4 – Rooms 5, 6, 7
- Year 5/6 – Rooms 8, 10
- Year 7/8 – Rooms 9, 11

These numbers refer to the new rooms that some classes will be moving into over the next fortnight.

Rooms 10 and 11 are the two likely to cause a little confusion. Room 10 is the top floor of the White House and is Jane Stocker's room with a Y 5/6 class. Room 11 is the bottom floor of the White House and is Rebecca Brown's Y7/8 class. Room 1 will hold Sue Holman and her new entrants and Beth Huntington will be in Room 2, also with new entrants.

Consultation Meetings.

We have one more consultation meeting on the new curriculum this term and then we will sit down and analyse the information we have got from parents.

This is another step towards establishing our local curriculum and over the rest of the year we will be putting together our thoughts and your thoughts to develop this to the point where we have a dynamic and workable document. Dynamic because it will change as new information becomes available, new approaches are introduced, new research is published and new understandings are developed.

This term's sessions have been a very quick walk through the curriculum, its intentions and content and the changes that are coming. Short sessions have meant there has been little opportunity for real interaction. With the understanding I hope parents have gained meetings planned for next term should be more interactive, allowing much more time for discussion and the exchange of ideas.

As part of the meetings we have held this term I have asked parents to provide us with some feedback on some of the ideas discussed. The response has been less than overwhelming, reinforcing my somewhat jaundiced view of homework! We are keen to get this feedback either on the forms provided at the time or by email. Please don't feel that it is too late.

Contact List

Please ensure that my contact details are **not** included on my child's class contact list.

Name _____ Child's Name _____

Room _____

Information Sessions

Junior school staff will be holding their last parent information session next week when Alistair du Chatenier will talk about Assessment.

Numbers attending have been consistent and the feedback we have received has all been positive. There are still quite a number of new entrants to start this year and we will assess the need to offer these sessions again later in the year.

Tuesday June 23, 1:30pm in the staffroom.

Holiday Programme

Please make sure to let Jude or Sara know if you are intending to enrol your child in the holiday programme they are running.

The programme will be strictly limited to 30 children and Jude and Sara have planned a programme which you can obtain from them.

Please remember that this programme is not OSACR approved so will not attract any subsidy from WINZ.

Second Language Learning

We have had only a few returns from parents to let us know what languages they believe are important to our children. Because there is a requirement on schools to offer this option at Year 7/8 level – at this stage – it is important that we get some feeling for what the community would like to be made available in the school.

There is always the caveat that what we make available will always be influenced by the resources we have available.

Please feel free to email your thoughts and comments on this or any other school question.

3 Way Conferences

All classes except the New Entrants will be holding their 3 way conferences between the beginning of next week and the end of the second week of Term Two.

These student led conferences are an important component of the school's reporting programme and we aim for a 100% attendance by all parents. Your children will be heavily involved in the conferences and at the more senior levels of the school, will lead them, talking about what they have achieved and offering evidence of their learning. You have the opportunity to talk to them about this learning and to offer your comments, praise, encouragement and suggestions on what has been achieved and where to go next. There is an opportunity to work with your child and the teacher to set some goals for the rest of the year.

Teachers will provide you within a few days with a summary of what has been discussed at the conference and this will help inform the written report which comes home later in the year.

This year we are trying a new and different booking system. Using a web site you can book a time online. The site is:

www.schoolinterviews.co.nz

There are two pass codes. If your child is in Rooms 3, 4, 8, 9 or 10 (Jane Stocker) you use the code **MSDR6**

If your child is in Rooms 11 (Rebecca Brown) 5, 6, or 7 you use the code **SE465**

We are anxious that all parents take the opportunity to attend. It means a great deal to children and sends a positive message to them about how much their parent's value what they do at school.

Second Language Learning

If the school is offering a second language I would prefer it to be one the following (in order of preference)

Name _____ Child's name and Room _____

Swine Flu

While there seems to be some recognition, notably in Australia, that the threat posed by the swine flu pandemic may be less severe than was thought to be the case, there are still risks for schools. Schools provide the type of environment in which infectious diseases and infections can flourish so it is really important that children who are unwell are not sent to school. This applies at all times but at the moment we are all being rather more vigilant because of this flu.

I know that some families are going overseas during the holidays and repeat the most recent advice from the Ministry of Health which is that if students are well and symptom free after returning from an affected area overseas they can return to school and do not need to remain at home for any period after arriving back in the country. There is a risk that if an infected student returns to school and is in contact with other students and staff for even a short period, the whole school could be affected. Please monitor your family's health closely as you return from overseas and if there are even the slightest flu symptoms, do not send your son or daughter back to school until you have first telephoned to check with your doctor, or checked through the MOH Healthline 0800 611 116.

While whole school closure appears less likely now it would still be very useful if everyone could make sure that all contact information is up to date.

Money

The end of term is approaching and we always ask that all outstanding accounts are brought up to date before the last day. Besides After School Care there is money owing from some families for term activities, tech (senior classes) and self defence (senior girls). It would be very helpful if these could be paid before Friday 3 July.

Perhaps this is the right time to remind everyone about the school donation too. We have collected \$25,500 so far which is better than 50% of our budgeted figure but still quite a way from our target of \$35,000. It would be nice to see some more of these donations come in.

Holiday Programme

Katherine Mansfield Birthplace

**SCHOOL HOLIDAY
CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOPS**

Developing a Personal Voice

Writer and teacher

Norman Bilbrough

will work with 10 – 12 year old intermediate students to develop their ideas and skills in creative writing.

Venue: Katherine Mansfield Birthplace
25 Tinakori Rd,
Thorndon

Date: Wednesday 8th July 2009

Workshop 1: 9.30 – 12.00am

Workshop 2 (repeat): 1.30 – 4.00pm

Fee: \$25.00/student

Space is limited so reservations are essential.

Ph/fax: (04) 473 7268. Email:

kmbirthplace@xtra.co.nz

**School Holiday Programme
Netball Skills Clinic**



Where?

Newlands Intermediate, Bracken Rd, Newlands

Who for?

All Students up to year 8

What will we do?

Netball skills, injury prevention and management, nutrition, guest speakers, fun!

When is it?

July 8-10 and 13-15 and 16-17

10:00am - 2:00pm each day

Limit: 32 students per group **Cost:** \$25.00 per day

Bring: Netball shoes, drink bottle, suitable clothing, lunch and snacks, a great attitude.

Contact: Neil Hargreaves 477 6066 or neil.acorn@xtra.co.nz

Please book early!

What will scientists be doing in 50 years?

Dear Future Person,

Well, I sincerely hope you are from the future. If you've gone and read this before the time capsule is supposed to be opened, then I shun you, and I curse you to ride into hell on a motorbike made from hedgehogs while reading Modern Buildings – Their Planning, Construction and Development (Vol. 4). However, for the meantime, we shall assume that you are from 2059, and not a horrible, lazy cheater. What I want to know is – What's the future like? Of course, I'll be there already and dead famous, (preferably for winning Lotto's First Division seventeen times running). But I'm not there now - except I am. Well, not the "me" who's writing these words, but the "me" who's written these words.

If this were the nineties, I'd probably be going on about how Y2K had struck nearly three score years ago. But as it turned out, it was just a big wind up. Still, I suppose every era likes to predict doom and disaster. The ancient Aztecs, for example, thought that this world would come to an end in the year 2012, but, if you're reading this, there's a fairly good chance that hasn't happened.

I want the future to be better than the present. Less pollution, no war, and Miley Cyrus to have been pushed off a cliff. Probably, you will have invented the Librarianificator, i.e. all librarians who patronise you by asking such questions as "Are you getting these out for your mother, dear?" will be instantly vaporised. Well, probably not - there wouldn't be any librarians left. Or very few. I reckon computers with artificial intelligence aren't that far off. And probably jet packs where it doesn't cost ten thousand dollars a minute to use them. Yeah, they'll be like cars – everyone will have one but they'll run on solar power instead of fossil fuel or something we haven't thought of yet. Probably neurology would have let us use more than two percent of our brains and we could all float and use telekinesis and stuff. That would be cool.

Do you remember Dolly the cloned sheep? She's probably from before your time but that, my friend, is what I am here for. She was born on the 5th July, 1996, which makes her a Cancer. The reason she's dead famous is because she was the first mammal to be cloned from an adult cell - a mammary to be exact. Her name is Dolly after Dolly Parton, who is not lacking in the mammary department. I mean really, does she get stuck in doorways. But, I'm straying off topic. Cloning, Dolly died when she was six years old although sheep of her breed have an average lifespan of eleven to twelve years. Mind you, it doesn't end there. In January of this year, scientists in Northern Spain cloned a Pyrenean Ibex, which was officially declared extinct in the year 2000. The ibex died soon after it was born due to defects in its lungs but that might not be the end of it. They still have moa bones, don't they? Couldn't we have moas roaming the streets nibbling the tops off Pohutukawa trees. I bet you do know. Oh, and the PM will have sold one overseas for an inordinate sum of money.

Another development in the field of science and one of my personal favourites is the development of the World Wide Web. In 1991 the internet was developed by a Mr Tim Berners – Lee. In the nineties there were very few websites and the whole thing was regarded as a novelty. However in this day and age there are over 2 billion Google searches performed daily. Do you still use the internet or something else entirely? I don't know, but I can't wait to find out.

Yours Sincerely,

Hannah Saul (Y8)

2059

I believe that in 2059 scientists will be inventing invisibility. It might work by bending light around objects so they appear to be invisible, or it could work by using microscopic cameras linked to microscopic T.V screens projecting the image of what is behind the object. It could help people be safer. It could help protect our precious items from theft. However it could encourage theft because thieves would no longer have to worry about people seeing them, and we might injure ourselves severely because we could not see what would be in our way.

Scientists will still almost certainly be inventing ways to make our lives better.

Connor Smith (Y4)