



Melville High News

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Issue 2

March 2012

Featuring . . .

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Swimming Sports – a fun day of events. . . more on page 8

OPC Great Barrier Island – activity-packed week . . . more on page 15 and 16

Absence Line

Phone 843 5212

Text 027 287 2428

Please phone or text the above numbers if your child is absent from school for any reason. No note is required on return to school if you phone or text in.

PARENT REPORT EVENING

Wednesday 21 March

3.30 pm-6.00 pm

School Hall

All parents/caregivers are invited to meet with their child's teachers to discuss their progress. An Interim Report is enclosed with this newsletter. **An appointment system will operate** so please return the enclosed reply so that teachers can see as many parents as possible. Please make the most of this opportunity.



YEAR 9 CAMP

All Year 9 students have had the opportunity to participate in a wonderful Outdoor Education activity at the Karapiro Domain. Students from 9RL, 9SW and 9RU spent the first two and a half days of last week under canvas with students from 9ED, 9FA and 9RS spending the last two and a half days beside Lake Karapiro.

The students were engaged in a full range of activities including, cycling, hiking up the beautiful Mount Mangatautari, kayaking, swimming, triathlon and a visit to Karapiro dam. The facilities are tremendous and reflect the investment made by the region in the 2011 World Rowing Champs. The school values the opportunity to engage with our students who are new to the school, in learning activities outside the classroom.

Students thoroughly enjoyed the venue, the tasks and responsibilities. Not so popular was the hard ground and the 5.30 am noise of the keen secondary schools rowers.

Melville High School has an established tradition of EOTC with well over a third of our students undertaking such activities this year. We are very fortunate that we receive widespread community and parent support to resource these activities. I very much appreciate the input and effort of staff into planning, preparing and implementing such exciting and eventful weeks. Special thanks go to Mr. John Ledson, SLT Year 9, and Mr Phillip Smiler, Year 9 Dean, for staying the whole week at camp.

Creating Pathways to a Positive Future

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Tena koutou katoa

Student success is the primary goal of the Board and staff of Melville High School. Students work best when there is a close partnership between school and home. In an effort to build and sustain this relationship at Melville High School we have three formal reporting opportunities each year. The first of these reporting occasions gets underway next week when an interview opportunity is provided in response to our interim reports which we have included with this newsletter. There are two more written reports, one at mid-year and the final report at the end of the year.

Next week's interviews will be in the hall between 3:30 – 6.00 pm. on Wednesday 21st. All staff welcome the opportunity to meet with parents to discuss their children's progress. While this is a formal interview occasion, we welcome the opportunity to discuss the progress of students at any time during the year.

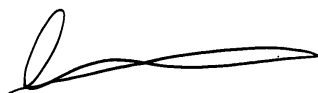
The Board of Trustees are currently active in seeking feedback from parents on the framework and values to guide the school through the next decade so please complete their on-line survey.

I have again had the pleasure of spending some time with students on camp. The Year 9 camp at Karapiro this past week has been an overwhelming success. Many thanks are extended to the staff who support such activities. The thanks go not only to those teachers who willingly gave up the comfort of their nice warm beds for the tenting experience but also to the staff who covered for their colleagues back at school. It is a unique opportunity for students and staff alike to get to know one another.

This first term is all but complete and I would like to acknowledge the effort of staff in managing the start to the year. The late enrolments, the new Deaning structure, the introduction of new NCEA standards at Level 2 and the like all produce challenges. I am very pleased the way our staff, and especially our new staff, have responded to this situation.

Finally, this year the school has experienced a slight increase in the roll with particularly an increase in the Year 9 enrolments. The official March 1st school roll is 610.

Kia Ora



Clive Hamill
Principal

RAFT RACE COUNTDOWN

Students are reminded that the Annual Raft Race down the Waikato River gets underway on **Tuesday 3 April**. All rafts need to pass scrutiny on the day and all participants are required to wear life jackets and helmets and prove their swimming skills. All students need to complete the documentation and entry forms. These are available from our Sports Co-ordinator, Russell Wilson.



Great Memories from 2010 Raft Race

Rafts depart from The Narrows boat ramp at 9.30 am. The trip lasts approximately two hours and concludes with a barbeque at the Grantham Street boat ramp. Families are encouraged to assist and support their children in the construction of rafts.



Raft for sale

REPORTS AND PARENT INTERVIEWS

In order to provide an opportunity for parents to discuss their child's progress with teachers, Parent/Teacher Interviews will be held on Wednesday 21 March. Included with this newsletter is a one page Interim Report which gives a brief indication of areas of success and possible areas of challenge for each student. The reports are not designed to provide extensive feedback on the progress and achievement of students, rather it is a tentative statement about how students are settling in to the school year.

The Interviews provides an opportunity to ask questions, seek clarification and plan collective strategies forward. The Interim Report is included with this newsletter. We cordially invite you to attend and hope that you will take the opportunity to meet the teachers. Deans, Senior Leadership staff and Board members will also be available during this time.

An appointment system will operate, so please return the appointment sheet included so that teachers can see as many parents as possible within the five-minute intervals. (You can also download a copy from our website).

Parents are reminded that we welcome the opportunity to talk to you about the progress of your child at any time, not just during formal report evenings. Appointments can be made through the school office for this purpose.

There will be an opportunity at the report evening for parents to provide some feedback to the Board on its future direction through a confidential on-line survey that will take only a few minutes to complete. On the Boards behalf I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you all to take some time next Wednesday to record your comments. Every parent or whanau member who completes a survey receives a raffle ticket for a \$40.00 Pizza prize.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNIFORM

This year, all Year 9 and Year 10 students are required to wear the new Physical Education uniform. This consists of a green shirt and red shorts. It has been pleasing to see the majority of students having already purchased theirs. Students that have yet to purchase the new Physical Education uniform are required to purchase theirs from the school uniform shop as soon as possible. If there are any issues in meeting this expectation, please communicate this to your child's teacher. I encourage your child to label their uniform so that it is easily identifiable.

I have received considerable positive feedback from parents and members of the public about the new look.

RTLb- NEW STRUCTURE

This year all Hamilton, and schools in close proximity to Hamilton, will be part of the new Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLb) Cluster 16 based out of Nawton Primary School. The Cluster 16 represents part of the new collaboration between the Ministry of Education and Special Education.

Currently there are 75 primary, intermediate, middle and high schools, including 27 RTLb's, being serviced by RTLb Cluster 16.

Major focus of the RTLb Cluster 16 will be on raising student achievement for:

- a. Māori students
- b. Pasifika students
- c. Students with special needs

In the short term there will be no change in the location of RTLb's. For us this means that Vinny Ridgeway remains based out of Melville High School and already we note that we are gaining service support from Tania Mills (ex MHS), former MHS RTLb Tracey Lee Perry-Davis and Raana Te Weehi from the Melville Intermediate.

Parents are reminded that they can request the support of the services of an RTLb for their child. Please make contact in the first instance with Matua Vinny.

If you wish to find out more about the changes the appropriate national URL is <http://rtlb.tiki.org.nz/Cluster-management/RTLb-toolkit>.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS FOR NCEA ASSESSMENTS

Students who have disabilities which could affect their performance in internal and external exams can apply for special assistance. This could take the form of extra time in exams, enlarged text for sight impaired students, a reader and/or writer, a laptop, seating away from other students, etc. We need to make applications soon. Please contact Mrs Tuck if you think your child might qualify for this extra support. Independent test results as well as learning support during high school are the minimum requirement.

CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP

The school is implementing, a revised Curriculum Leadership structure. Within the school this is managed by Deputy Principal Dave McNulty. Supporting Dave in this role are: the **Leaders of Curriculum** who each lead a curriculum area; the **Heads of Curriculum** who have responsibility for prescribed subject areas; and an advisory committee, the Curriculum Leadership Team. The role of the Leaders of Curriculum is to discuss and research curriculum challenges and opportunities and make appropriate recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the curriculum aims and objectives set out in the school's Charter and ***New Zealand Curriculum are met.*** The group will consider a balance of curriculum policy, development, implementation, assessment and evaluation issues.

The Heads of Curriculum will be responsible to their appropriate Leader of Curriculum. The leaders of the Futures and Learning Initiatives Departments, who have a role in the provision of specialist learning and tutoring, will be included in this group.

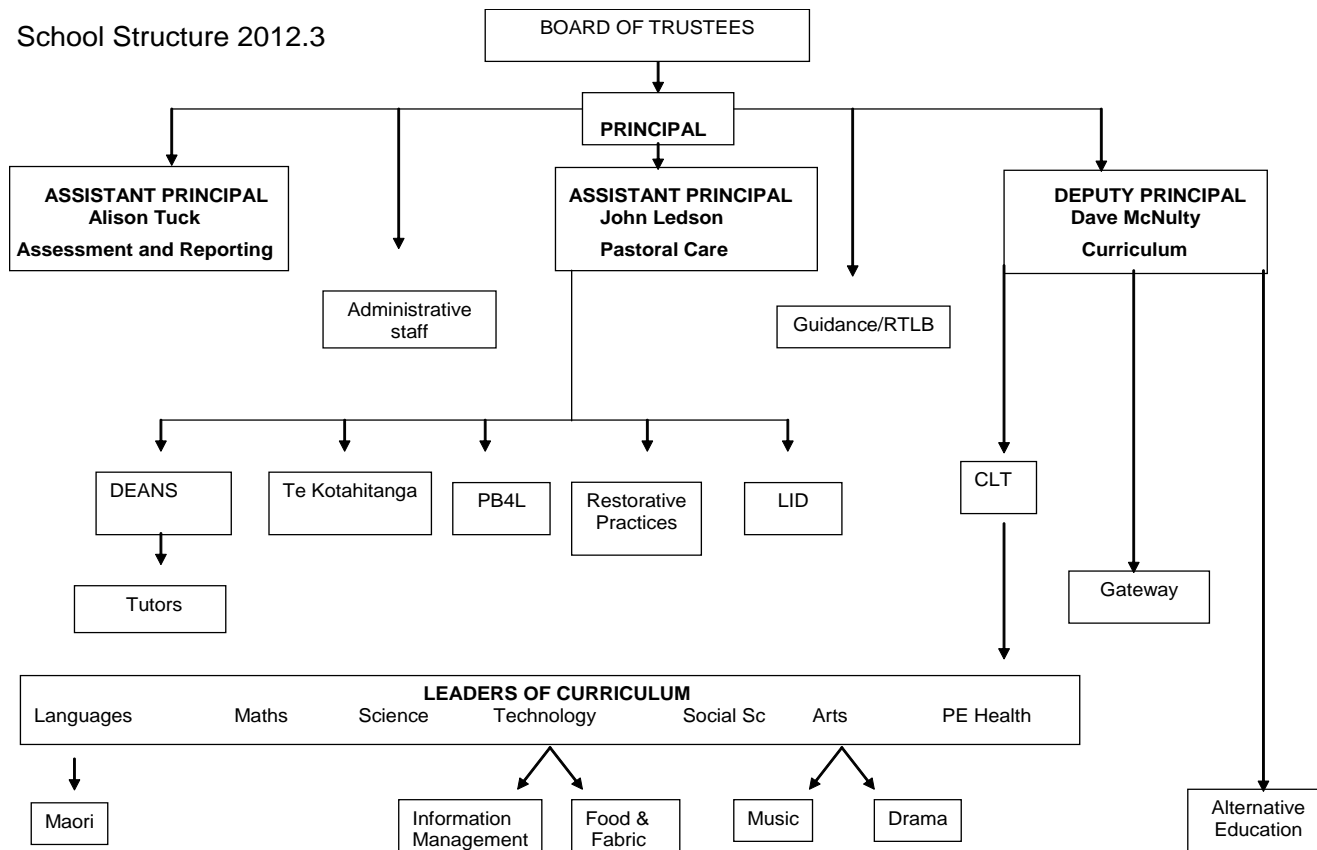
LEADERS OF CURRICULUM

Principal:	Clive Hamill	HA
Deputy Principal:	Dave McNulty	MC
Assistant Principal:	Alison Tuck	TC
Assistant Principal:	John Ledson	LD
English & Languages:	Margaret Black	BK
Mathematics:	Daya Chandra	CH
Physical Education/Health:	Michael Edwards	ED
Science:	Sangita Achary	AC
Social Sciences:	Bill Russell	RU
Technology:	John Robinson	RO
Arts: (Visual)	Lester Silver	SI

HEADS OF CURRICULUM

Drama	Kathleen Christian	CI
Food & Fabric	Elizabeth Ross	RS
Information Management:	John Cardownie	CD
Māori Studies:	Te Mana Rollo	RL
Music:	Trevor Faville	FA
Futures	Ruth Searancke	SE
Learning Initiatives	Rosie Jones	JO

The following diagram outlines the framework and lines of responsibility which are being adopted in the revised structure. The catalyst for this change was a recommendation from ERO that we consider sharpening our focus on curriculum delivery.



WELCOMING OUR NEW RECEPTIONIST



Claire Lincoln has recently joined us as our new school receptionist. For the past six years she has been working in the Student Services Centre at Te Awamutu College. She is also a busy mum of three children but finds time to enjoy photography, reading, art and other family activities.



Reaching out to our community every two months.

Contacts:

Advertising:

Russell Wilson 021 126 3324

ruswil@orcon.net.nz

Editorial:

Kathleen Christian - 843 4529

ci@melville-high.school.nz

Community Listings:

Trish Cree- 843 0010

trish.cree@hcc.govt.nz

MATHS HOMEWORK/TUTORIAL SESSION

Years 11 and 12 students needing extra assistance in Mathematics with homework or otherwise, should go to J8 with Mrs Chandra **every Tuesday from 3.30 pm-4.30 pm**. Make the most of this opportunity.

UNIFORM SHOP

END OF LINE HALF PRICE UNIFORM Limited stock and sizes

Long Sleeve Skivvies	\$5.00
Girls Long Sleeve Blouses	\$25.00
Boys Long Sleeve Shirts	\$25.00
Girls Trousers	\$15.00

STUDENT ID CARDS

ID cards are now able to be pre-ordered from the Student Services Centre. They are \$7.00 each and need to be pre-ordered by Wednesday 21 March. The current ID cards expire at the end of March.

RCN E-cycle

Name our e-Waste Robot

and Win a Kindle Fire!

RCN e-Cycle's 6-foot tall electronic waste (e-Waste) robot needs a name and they're hoping you can help them! They are looking for a name for their robot made from recycled e-Waste. The winner will be the person who comes up with the most fun and descriptive name... one that matches the robot's personality and voice, and that is linked to e-Waste recycling.

CONTEST DATES: Monday 19 March to Friday 30 March

WINNER ANNOUNCED: Wednesday 4 April

TO ENTER: Log on to www.e-cycle.co.nz and click on the contest banner

TO HELP YOU GET STARTED: Think about the names of some of your other super heroes. Spend a bit of time learning about e-Waste on www.e-cycle.co.nz to see if you can find a name that works.

PARENTS: This contest is open to all ages and children can submit as many names as they like. You are more than welcome to help your child.



Sports @MLV



Athletics

Cameron (pictured right) has a lot to smile about these days. He has set goals to prepare for major Athletics Championships competing in what he likes best, sprinting.

After his initial successes at Central Zones, Waikato/Bay of Plenty and North Islands Secondary Schools Championships, Cameron focused on improving his technique in preparation for the 2011 NZSSAA Track and Field Championships held in Wellington.

The months of hard work, determination and dedication paid off as Cameron gained a Bronze in 100m and Silver in 200m Sprint events for AWD ID.

When asked what he liked about Athletics, Cameron said, "I just like to run fast. I like it when the others (competitors) are coming up around me; I just push harder to get ahead."

Aside from his sprint and strength training sessions at school, Cameron works with other athletes who have similar goals to compete at a National level. Cameron's rivals have also been his training partners at weekly training sessions held at Porritt Stadium. He combined with them to enter the 4 x 100m Relay at the 2011 NISSAA, winning the event for Waikato/Bay of Plenty convincingly. Cameron says, "It's good going to the track and being with my mates. We have fun but I still try really hard to beat them."

Cameron is currently setting his sights on improving his times at the upcoming Central Zones then Waikato Bay of Plenty Secondary Schools events. He is hopeful of gaining selection to compete at NISSAA Track and Field Championships on 31 March 31 and 1 April, then will take a break and later in the year start preparations for the NZSSAA to be held at Dunedin in December.

Cameron has become a role model and inspiration to his fellow students at the Melville Secondary Satellite of Patricia Avenue School. He has no shortage of willing training partners there and is always keen to model his improved technique to his peers.

D Merifield, Patricia Avenue Teacher



Cameron Blackett in winning form

Cricket

We have a number of students playing for teams from the Melville Cricket Club. They are playing in various senior and secondary school teams in the wider Waikato competitions. The highlight performance so far was **Ben Ashley** scoring 72 runs off 38 balls against the Te Aroha 1st XI.

The school team was scheduled to play St John's College in the first round of the Gillette Cup but the game was rained out.

Football

The Football teams have started training for the season. The Junior Boys will be training on Mondays after school with coach, Darren Alexander; the girls will be training on Tuesdays with coach, Hata Puriri and the senior boys will be training on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Rugby

Both the 1st XV and the Under 15 squads have started their training for the winter season. The 1st XV is being coached by Paul Nathan and the Under 15's by Paul Harmer.

The Senior Boys recently hosted a contingent of boys from Onomichi Guakuen in Japan. The Japanese, in New Zealand as part of an education programme, spent time with local coaches Alf Daniels and Paul Nathan, and then had an opposed training with the Melville High School boys.

EXCELLING AT ATHLETICS!

The school held another very successful athletics day at Porritt Stadium on 20 February. There were good participation rates and very close competition in most events.

Students came dressed in their house colours (blue, green, red and yellow) and many took the opportunity to dress in entertaining and imaginative costumes.

The highlight of the athletics sports was the setting of three new school records:

Caidyn set a new time for the Junior Boys' 200m.

Kalib beat the old Intermediate Boys' 3000m record by 1 minute and 8 seconds. He also equaled the Senior Boys' 3000m record time.

Piahana broke the Senior Boys' Shot Put record that was set in 2001 by .78m.

Champion House

Runner-up House

Wharauora

Tirohanga

Champion Titles

Junior Girls

Keali

Junior Boys

Caidyn

Intermediate Girls

Annalise

Intermediate Boys

Kalib

Senior Girls

Jessica

Senior Boys

Ryan

Congratulations to all our students for their excellent participation and successes!

R Wilson, Sports Co-ordinator

ZONE ATHLETICS

We took a contingent of 30 students to compete at the Central Zone Athletics. The Central Zone is made up of Hamilton schools as well as schools from the surrounding areas of Cambridge, Morrinsville, Ngaruawahia and Huntly. Melville High School students gained some very creditable results:

Piahana

1st Senior Boys Shot Put

Cameron

1st Boys AWD 100m

1st Boys AWD 200m

Teancum

2nd Senior Boys Long Jump

Matthew

2nd Boys AWD 400m

3rd Boys AWD 200m

Ashley

3rd Intermediate Boys Javelin

Deshan

3rd Boys AWD 400m

Reno

3rd Boys AWD 100m

4th Boys AWD 200m

Kalib

4th Intermediate Boys 3000m

Joshua

4th Intermediate Boys Shot Put

Scott

4th Boys AWD 400m

All of these athletes have been invited to compete at the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Secondary Schools Athletics Championships in Tauranga.

R Wilson, Sports Co-ordinator



SWIMMING SPORTS A SPLASH!

The 2012 swimming sports were held at the Municipal Pools on Thursday 16 February. It was a bright, sunny HOT day!! The competitive swimmers were very enthusiastic in the morning and marshalling was carried out efficiently.

Mr Edwards' timekeepers performed exceptionally well and Annaliese McKinley's team earned the coveted "Chocolate Fish" award. This happens when all three timekeepers on a lane get exactly the same time on their watches. This is quite a rare feat and generally only happens once or twice at a swim meet, so they did very well on their first time to achieve this.

The highlight of the day was when the whole school arrived for the Aqua Sports section of the competition. This is a house competition and competition in the various events is fierce. The swimmers compete in a House lemming length, a treasure hunt, rugby jersey relay, walk the plank and the flying house relay.

Special event of the day is the Staff vs Year 13 relay. This event is always hotly contested and this year, just when it looked like the staff were going to win by a length, Mr Christian gave the Year 13 team a sporting break by forgetting how far 25 metres really is and nek minit – the Year 13 team got away to win for the first time ever!!

The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all and results are as follows:

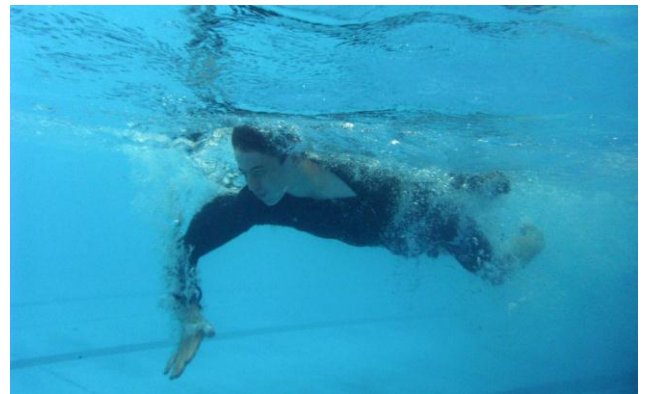
Champion House Wharaurora

Champion Titles

Junior Girls	Ngapeka
Junior Boys	James
Intermediate Girls	Morgan
Intermediate Boys	Reisharn
Senior Girls	Nicola I
Senior Boys	Adriaan

Well done, everyone – it was a day full of fun!

A Tuck, Assistant Principal



Deans

Deans are available regarding any subject or behaviour concerns you may have about your child. Phone messages will be responded to at their earliest convenience.

Student Services Centre

- Notification of change of details
- First aid
- Student sign out/in for appointments
- Lost property
- Fees payments

Stationery/Uniform Shop

Opening hours

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

11.00 am – 11.30 am

Guidance Counsellors

Students and families are invited to make appointments with our counsellor during tutor time each day or by phone (843 4529 ext 939).

Careers Adviser

Students and parents are welcome to make appointments with Mrs Searancke for advice on courses and careers (843 4529 ext 953).

HEADZUP

Headzup is a young leader's conference involving student leaders from a wide range of schools in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions.

The programme involved learning skills that enabled us to become more productive leaders. We were fortunate enough to hear from high calibre speakers such as Robert Diamond and other successful role models in their field of expertise. We, the four Melville High student leaders, participated in many challenging activities and worked as a team to accomplish given tasks under limited conditions. Cooking pikelets, filming an interview, writing formal letters, constructing a tower out of rubbish seemed to be a normal part of the day.

Overall, Headzup was a worthwhile experience and we hope that we will be able to implement our newly gained skills.

Isaac, Head Boy

Jordan, Deputy Head Boy



In February, the Year 12 Geography class went on their annual field trip to Tongariro National Park. This trip is designed to support the external standard AS 90331, Explain a large natural landscape. The trip was a three-day, two-night experience and involved walks through bush and over the 50 metre thick ancient lava flows, and data collection in the amazing Mangatepopo Valley. On the first evening the group was spoken to by a Department of Conservation expert on the National Park who gave the students vast amounts of valuable firsthand knowledge.

The second day was spent trekking up the Whakapapa Valley to the Silica Rapids to understand what natural processes made the valley and why the rapids look the way they do. In the afternoon, they went on a walk to see the amazing Taranaki Falls. This, for the students, was the highlight of the trip as the falls are amazing. Water crashes 50 metres to the ground off an ancient lava flow. The third day was spent hiking into the world famous Mangatepopo Valley to analyse the effect of glaciers and to study plant succession. All the outdoor activities were done in rain and the students and teachers were wet and cold the whole trip. No one complained; everyone loved the experience. The students also learned valuable social skills, having to cook and clean for themselves. Overall this was a highly successful experience for all involved. The school would like to say a huge thank you to Skotel, (accommodation), the Department of Conservation, Mrs Rintoul and Alana Marsh.

J Warren, Year 12 Geography Teacher

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY BREAKFAST

On Thursday 8 March, we attended an International Women's Day breakfast hosted by the Zonta Club of Hamilton Waikato. The themes of the meeting were connecting girls, inspiring futures and showing that equality means business. After a delicious 7am Sierra café breakfast, guest speaker, Bridgette O'Sullivan (former Ambassador for Auckland Racing Club) spoke about her life experiences. She has recently become ambassador for "Child Matters" (formerly Institute for Child Protection Studies) which focuses on education to prevent child abuse in New Zealand. It was a fantastic opportunity being inspired by successful women and gaining further relationships with the Head Girls of other Hamilton schools.

Nakita, Head Girl

Terri-Anna, Deputy Head Girl

YEAR 13 GEOGRAPHY WHIRITOA BEACH TRIP

The Year 13 Geography class went on its annual field trip to Whiritoa beach last week. This trip is to assist the students in their preparation for the externally assessed standard AS 90701, Analyse natural processes in the context of a geographic environment.



The trip was a huge success with the students gathering important information about sand dunes and the interaction between coastal and fluvial processes. This beach is an amazing place to visit with a vast array of natural features to examine, such as the famous "blow hole" and "lagoon".



The students learned heaps and also had a great time. A big thanks to Ethan and Bill from the Whiritoa Surf club, (where we stayed) who were kind enough to keep an eye on us as we went swimming.

J Warren, Year 13 Geography Teacher

2012 TERM 1 CALENDAR

MARCH

Week 8

Wed 21 Waikato Secondary Schools
Swimming Championships
PARENT REPORT
EVENING 3.30 pm-6.00 pm

Week 9

Tues 27 Board Meeting, 5.00 pm

APRIL

Week 10

Tues 3 Year 10 Vision Testing
Raft Race
Thurs 5 Last day of Term 1

TERM 2

Week 1

Tues 24 Board Meeting, 5.00 pm
Wed 25 **ANZAC DAY**

MAY

Week 3

Fri 11 Newsletter posted

Week 5

Tues 22 Board Meeting, 5.00 pm
Australasian Computer
Skills Exam

JUNE

Week 7

Mon 4 **QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY**

Week 8

Tues 12 Reports posted
Newsletter posted
Fri 15 **TEACHER ONLY DAY**

Week 9

Wed 20 **PARENT REPORT**
EVENING 3.30 pm-6.00 pm

Week 10

Tues 26 Board Meeting, 5.00 pm
Fri 29 Last day of Term

2012 TERM DATES

Term 1 31 January - 5 April
Term 2 23 April - 29 June
Term 3 16 July - 28 September
Term 4 15 October - 10 December

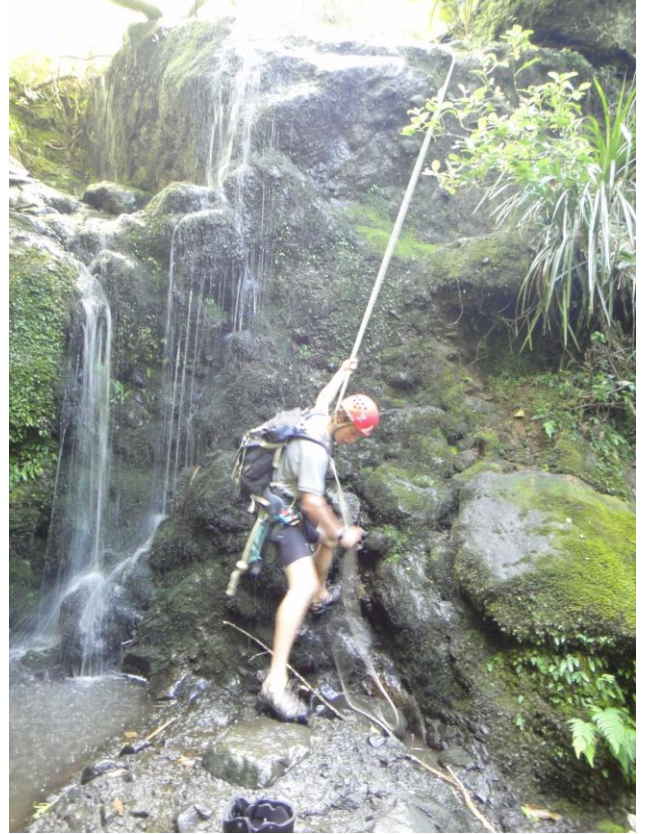
YEAR 10 VISION TESTING

Vision Technicians will be visiting Melville High School on Tuesday 3 April as part of a national programme to screen all Year 10 students. The object of this programme is to identify previously undetected vision defects. This will not be a complete vision examination but a simple screening test. When an unsatisfactory result is obtained, parents or caregivers will be advised to seek further advice. There will be a letter going home regarding this programme closer to the time of examination. If you do not wish your child to take part in this vision check programme, or your child is currently under specialist care for a vision defect, please return the tear-off slip on the letter.

OPC GREAT BARRIER ISLAND ADVENTURE CHALLENGE WEEK

Sunday 26 February-Friday 2 March

The day finally arrived – the day to go on the OPC Great Barrier Island trip. Travis, Thamer and I arrived at 10.30 am on Sunday morning with all our gear, only to find an empty bus bay. Thinking we were late, we roamed around the school trying to find everyone. It was getting closer and closer to 11.00 am and Mr Edwards still hadn't arrived. We watched as a flash big bus pulled up with people inside all wearing what seemed like Adidas labelled shirts. Then emerging from the bus was Jamie Mackintosh, captain of the Otago Highlanders, who had played the previous night against the Chiefs. We watched in amazement as some of our favourite rugby players dismounted the bus. We hurried over with Thamer's camera and approached a group of them and asked for a photo. We were answered with, "Yeah of course", by a very familiar face and prolific All Black, Hosea Gear. In the photo as well were Buxton Popoali'i and Lima Sopoaga. Still buzzing with excitement, Hosea turns to me and asks, "Where are you going?" I replied, "Oh, we're going to Great Barrier Island for a sports trip"! Still in shock, I asked him the same question. They were going to the Gallagher Aquatic Centre for a swim, before flying back to Dunedin. We took photos with other players and went back to where our gear was as we waited for everybody else to arrive. When Mr Edwards and the rest of the crew finally arrived, we loaded up the van and left for Auckland Airport, stopping in Huntly at the supermarket so we could buy some snacks and munchies for the trip (Mr Edwards broke the record for the biggest spend on chocolate and lollies – a grand total of \$140). We arrived at the airport, unloaded our gear onto trolleys and watched as Mr Edwards sprinted to check us in for our flight. After we had finished checking our bags we made our way into the terminal with some of us being extra nervous, as some hadn't been on a plane before. We came out of the terminal to see what seemed like a small blue metal box with wings – this turned out to be our plane. We climbed into the plane in fours, because the plane was so small, we couldn't all fit in it at once. Once inside, the pilot warned us that the ride over would be bumpy and loud. He wasn't joking!



Monday started the day with waking up early at 7.00 am – so that we weren't late for breakfast. A while later we met with our instructor for the week, Tom, who took us upstairs in the Big Shed for a quick briefing for the week ahead and set up a group contract. After gear was issued for the week, we put kayaks on the water and set off for our coasteering mission at Green Island. The coasteering at Green Island was a lot of fun – clambering along the rocks and bombing off high points into the water below, when we couldn't walk any further. The highlight was snorkelling amongst a pod of dolphins and hauling up vast amounts of kina. Our kayak back to the OPC centre that afternoon was straight into a head wind – this was tough going but gave us confidence that we could handle anything the rest of the week could throw at us.

On Tuesday, we loaded up the surf kayaks and went to Whangapoua Beach, to learn the art of surf kayaking. Conditions were perfect and despite a few wipe outs and crashes into other people, we were professionals after a few hours. In the afternoon, we kayaked across to the other side of the beach for some more snorkelling – the fish were that friendly we could touch them!

On Wednesday, we spent the day at the Three Kings, where we rockclimbed, traversed and abseiled the whole day. All challenges were conquered today!

Thursday was a pretty average day, weather wise. We had to do our kayak assessment in the bay which involved performing wet exits and

Continued next page



OPC GREAT BARRIER ISLAND ADVENTURE CHALLENGE WEEK

Continued from previous page

rescues. The high winds meant that there were some decent swells to negotiate – we tipped out without even needing to try! After successfully completing our final assessment, we packed our tramping packs with all our overnight gear and tramped to 'Mike's Beach'! What an amazing setting – a beautiful sandy beach with perfect rolling surf breaks (Mr Edwards was gutted he didn't bring his surfboard!). We set up camp and then had the rest of the evening to chill out.

Friday started at 5.30 am in order to pack up our tents and get back to base at OPC. This was a struggle! After cleaning up and packing away our hire gear, it was back on the plane and flying back to Auckland Airport. After a quick stop at Pokeno for an ice cream, we were back in Hamilton. Our awesome week was over. We had so much fun.

We would all like to thank the following people and organisations that helped us get to OPC Great Barrier: Shelly Christensen from OPC Tongariro, Pub Charity and The Gallagher Group. Finally, on behalf of Brodie, Ben, Thamer, Phillip, Travis, Susan, Sage, Louise and Stephanie, a massive thank you to Mr Edwards – you put a lot of work into making the trip happen for us. We can't thank you enough (we are sorry about all the pranks we played on you though).

Tiro, Year 11 student

