

## Starlight

### Principal's April Newsletter

**Eleven busy weeks** are behind us now, with emphasis on the busy. In my end of term address, there was a resounding 'Yes' from the audience when they were asked if they were ready for the holidays. It is my hope that all students and staff have a well-earned restful break

**It is always heartening** to acknowledge the service that members of our community give. One such soul is Doug Davidson. Doug was presented with a Paul Harris Fellowship for



services to Rotary, especially the choir and the community. Doug leads a very busy life outside our school including being a representative on the Royal New Zealand Ballet Council, and as a now life member of the Masterton Amateur Theatrical Society.

We are proud of our Head of Years 7 and 8. Doug's efforts outside the classroom are paralleled by his efforts within.

Pictured here with his wife,

Wendy, and the Rotary President Rob Cameron, Doug has every reason to feel elated.

**Continuing in a theatrical vein, the Sheilah Winn Shakespeare** regionals were recently held at Kuranui College. The competition was evident as each school took the stage with a five minute, and fifteen-minute ensemble. As a long-time fan of the Bard, it was an absolute delight to see what each group created for the stage. Of course, my greatest desire was to see victory for St Matthew's and Senior College, but I must give garlands to the acting, and directing talent, that exists in the Wairarapa. Applause is due to our very own thespians and those who guided them: Mr Tim Clarke and Mrs Rosemary Taylor (St Matthew's) and Mrs Joanne Simpson (Rathkeale & St Matthew's).

The final scores for the Wairarapa regionals:

- Barbara Vinten Memorial Shield for comedy — Max Walden (Chanel College).
- Speech Communication Association Cup for delivery of text –Thomas Laybourn (Kuranui College).
- Direct entry to National Shakespeare Schools Production — Andriette Erasmus (Chanel College).
- Best stage combat — Rathkeale College/St Matthew's Collegiate.
- Best ensemble — Solway College.
- Spirit of the stage — Chanel College.

- Student direction — Amber Spicer (Kuranui College).
- Five-minute student-directed scene selected to go to nationals — Rathkeale College/St Matthew's Collegiate.
- Fifteen-minute teacher-directed scene selected to go to nationals — Kuranui College.

Congratulations to the following St Matthew's students: Eden Eldred and Sarah Saunders who were in the 5 minute *Antony and Cleopatra* Rathkeale/ St Matt's Shakespeare; Milly France, Ingrid Gerritsen, Maysie Pyatt, Emily Richards, Frankie Finn-Reason, and Briana Smith who were in the 15 minute *Romeo and Juliet*; Carys Gibbs, Isabella Willemstein, Juliet Tipler-Clemett, Catherine Riach, Alexandra Buchanan, Libby Dalziell, Annie Barnard, Ella Johnson, Milla-Rose Byron, Jessie Parker, Julie Barrow, Lorena Haab, Paige Hirst, and Elizabeth Toovey in *King Lear*. We acknowledge Isabella Falconer, who was unable to perform due to illness.

**Winter is the season of colds, and sports related injuries.** Compass Health have made the following information available to schools. Winter sports season is underway so injuries are inevitable in any sport, but there are ways to avoid getting hurt on the field, turf or court this winter.

Here are some tips for keeping off the bench and on the field this season.

- Warm up before sports games or exercise – to play better and be kind to your muscles.
- Cool down and stretch afterwards – to avoid cramp and muscle injuries.
- Drink before, during and after sport – to keep energy levels up during the game.
- Wear a mouth guard, shin pads and other protective gear – your body will thank you for it!
- Watch out for others – on the field or court.
- Exercise in between games – to keep fitness levels up.
- For sprains and strains, follow the RICED guidelines: **R**est, **I**ce, **C**ompression, **E**levation and get a **D**iagnosis if needed.

If an injury does happen, call your medical centre to see if they can help. If it's at the weekend, the Wairarapa After Hours service based at Masterton Medical is open 9am-5pm. Contact them on 06 370 0011 or call Healthline on 0800 611 116 for free medical advice 24 hours a day.

**From our Sports area, we bid farewell to** Miss Adela Knottenbelt (Miss K), on the Thursday of the last week of school. She and Fraser have decided that this is their time to see the world, about which we are of course envious.

Adela has been a big personality in Sports and contributed a great deal to this arena of our school life. She was great with the girls and they appreciated her involvement in their areas of sporting passion. We will look with keen interest to see where Adela will end up; we have no doubt there are significant things ahead for her.

**We welcome to the role of Sports Coordinator Mrs Rachel Shearing**, who begins with us at the start of Term two. She and her husband have made Martinborough home for themselves and their children.

Rachel brings with her a passion for sport and some significant sporting credentials as a former NZ Junior Softball representative, NZ Indoor Netball representative, Premier 2 Netball Wellington representative, and a member of the Shakers Development squad. Rachel also brings with her experience in the Sports Industry of working for Sport Wellington and College Netball.

We are looking forward to what Rachel will bring to sport in St Matthew's, and the Wairarapa.

**Coming up we have our Open Evening** on May 6. The school's inaugural event was last year



so we look forward with excited anticipation to this year's event. I thank those young women who have volunteered to give service this evening as guides. The event will allow us to showcase who we are and all the wonderful things we do in our school in the academic, cultural, sporting, and spiritual dimensions.

Growing Boarding continues to be our thrust with the emphasis on the fact we can take care of your daughters in the safe and secure environment of the school. We drive her to her orthodontist, ballet lesson, and offsite practices; we make sure she is doing her prep each night; we assist in realising the benefits of daily chores; we encourage her to be the best sister she can be; we 'feed and water' her; and we endeavour to be a 'home away from home'.

**Security cameras, as a reminder**, are operational in the school. We have cameras in all three driveways (includes Hoy Cottage), and around the pool area. The pool is locked over the break, and into the winter term.

We are also installing exterior bollard lighting to illuminate the paths around the school in the hours of darkness. This will be an added security measure, but it will also make traversing the school a safer experience.

**Sean Dancer is a current international coach working for Hockey New Zealand** which includes NZ U21 women's head coach. Sean has been an Australian men's representative and was previously coaching in Wellington for many years as their Regional Development Officer. He coached Capital Women's and Men's U18's, U21 teams and NHL teams while he was in Wellington.



Sean Dancer agreed to come to St Matthews to run a 3-day high performance coaching clinic with a 23-young women squad during April.

We believe having Sean available to come to help take our top 23 hockey players to a new level was invaluable for both the girls individually and for St Matthews Hockey. We hope to have Sean run this clinic at the same or similar time each year for St Matthews.

Cassandra Dawson our Head of Hockey spoke about the benefits for all who attended the clinic. We look forward to seeing them exploiting the training they received in the Hockey season ahead.

**Taratahi and UCOL** invited me to attend their Graduation ceremonies. I was inspired by how both these arenas of learning inspired our youth to follow their desired pathways, and to then achieve their successes.

The pride in their successes were evident on the faces of the graduands, but they were shared equally by their families.

**I recently attended the SPANZ** (Secondary Principals' Association) Conference in Wellington. Apart from networking with other Principals, it is also an enlightening professional development experience.

There were several top-notch speakers, who I encourage you to seek out on Ted Talks. Speakers of interest: Yong Zhao- a Distinguished Professor in the School of Education at the University of Kansas, and professorial fellow at the Mitchell Institute for Health and Education Policy, Victoria University in Australia; Tim Bell- Professor in the Department of Computer Science and Software engineering at the University of Canterbury; Marcus Akuhata- Brown- former Head of Commonwealth Youth Caucus; and his Honour Judge Andrew Beecroft- Children's Commissioner.

What connected all their addresses was 'He tangata, he tangata, he tangata'; 'It is people, it is people', and the relevance of what we are learning in schools in this global society.

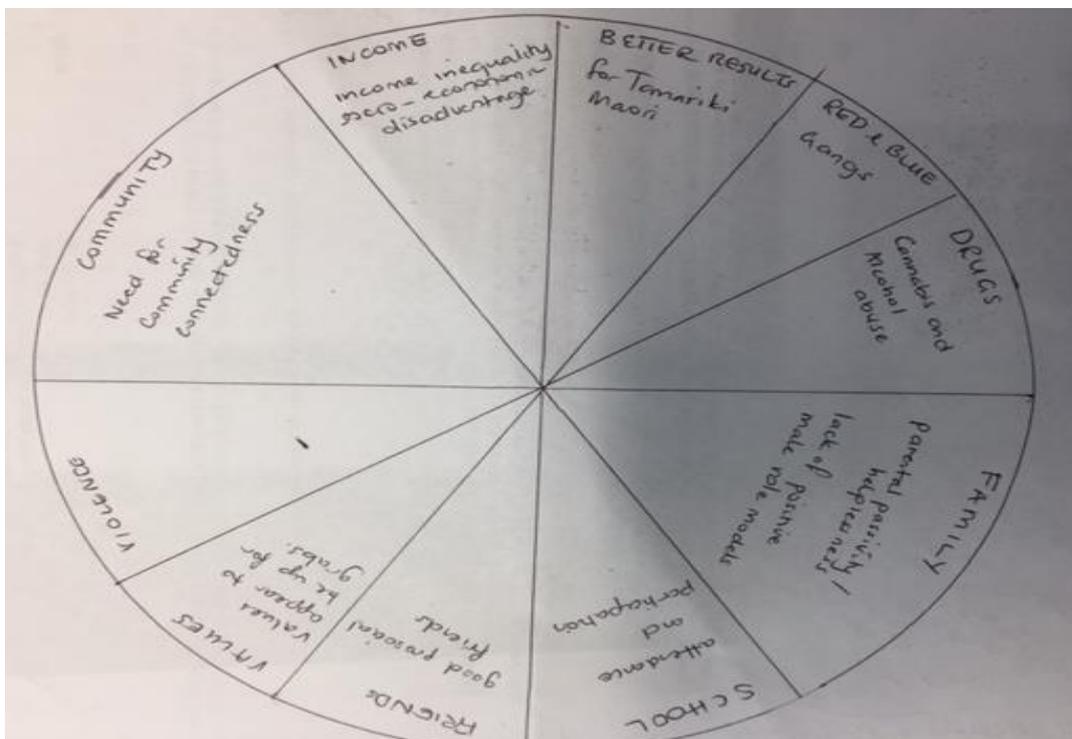
Yong Zhao pointed out to us that in Education- Human value is our job. We have to remember to ask ourselves every day; 'How can we help every student to be great and unique?'. I am reminded that every talent is valuable, and that as teachers we should be curators of learning and opportunity.

I have heard Marcus Akuhata-Brown speak many times, and every time I feel moved and inspired. What he left us all with was the message of the need to lift off the glass lids of low expectations and achievements. I was reminded that with positive encouragement, intuitive goal setting and having the courage to break out of comfort zones we can all lead lives of excitement and purpose.

Digital Technologies is appearing in school curricula around the world- and St Matthew's is no different. Tim Bell asked us- what's the purpose of introducing it, especially to young students? How does it relate to the rest of the curriculum? This is a question we are asking as we explore our BYOD pedagogy to create answers.

Judge Beecroft, encouraged and confirmed my belief many years ago, that it is our job to keep children in education. He reminded us that there are issues facing young people- quite different in some cases from those we faced years ago. I left knowing that we need to have better outcomes for youth, and that 'is it just a nip and tuck, or is radical surgery required?'

Judge Beecroft saw 10 issues facing youth today about which we need to be aware (apologies- you will need to turn the page to read them):



We hope to meet with you to discuss some of those which press on us most.

**An email will come your way next week** with a Survey Monkey opportunity. I am wanting your feedback about how we are delivering on our strategic goals and plans. Please look out for this and help us to do what we do better for our girls.

**St Matthew's, Rathkeale, Hadlow, Mauriceville, St Patricks, Makoura,** and several other schools are part of the SWAG (Super Whanau Advisory Group). Being part of this group has many benefits for us : to connect to the history of the land via the local iwi, to hear the stories from the voices of the tangata-whenua, to incorporate the stories and history into our curriculum in an authentic way, to enable us to reach beyond to understand Maori, and to teach us to work together as educators.

In education, we value and endeavour to grow our cultural competencies. Helping us to navigate this journey has been made easier through the SWAG. Our involvement with the Kahungunu Strategy has, and is, assisting us to meet the expectations of the partnership of the Treaty of Waitangi. I have valued the visits to Marae in and around the Wairarapa. Our most recent was to Te Ore Ore Marae where a connection was made for me between Rangitaane and Kahungnu. I would be the first to admit I still have much to learn, so it is pleasing that there are many around and about who have the oral history to share.

**Kahungunu History saw quite a number of us on April 8,** including my fellow Principal Michael Mercer from Hadlow, arriving at Aratoi for a 5:30am Powhiri.



As titled opposite, the exhibition saw the return, display, and sharing of Kahungunu taonga.

In partnership with local iwi Ngati Kahungunu , this large exhibition is to redress the 'long and rich history of the Wairarapa region through the eyes of the narrative of mana whenua.'

The exhibition covers the entire exhibition space of Aratoi. There are taonga from private and public collections for all to enjoy'.

Major congratulations to Barbara Roydhouse (Chair of Aratoi), Susanna Shadbolt (Acting Director of Aratoi), Kahungunu Iwi, and the museum team, for the work and effort involved.

The hope is that everyone will visit, and more especially that every school student in the Wairarapa will visit the exhibition at least once between its opening and September 3.

**Finally- we remember old girl, Greta Vollebregt** , who at the tender age of 24 passed away in these holidays. Our love and prayers are with Rebecca and Leo, and Greta's sisters in their time of mourning.