

# THAMES HIGH SCHOOL FOCUS

School News and Student Successes



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**-YEAR 13**



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Kia ora tatou

Schools are, by definition, dynamic places. Things are always moving and changing, and no two days seem the same. There is the constant movement of people, students and teachers, between classes as they go about their daily business. Every week we have at least one group going out from the school to visit, discover and learn, or we have an individual or group coming into the school to work with us.

Education is by its very nature an enterprise dependent on people, and the relationships between them. We know from experience that the very best teachers are those who are able to 'connect' with students by establishing a rapport and earning the respect of the students with whom they work. Each day the number of working interactions between teachers and students must number in the tens of thousands, and it is a remarkable tribute (to both students and teachers) that the vast majority of these are positive interactions aimed at improving the learning of students.

A real feature of our school is the quality of the interactions between people, and the lengths that teachers go to, to ensure that positive relationships are preserved. Of course there will always be exceptions, but by-and-large Thames High School is a good place to be for both students and teachers. Both groups are to be congratulated for their contribution to this positive environment during 2008.

As the American writer J.P. Donleavy wrote: "Success is all about the quiet accumulation of small triumphs". This year has, using this definition, seen a huge number of our students achieve a great deal of success. I have been absolutely delighted to see the numbers of our students, from all year levels, achieving highly in their classwork, sporting and cultural activities. Many of our students have accumulated a number of triumphs, some small and some quite large. Our annual Sports Awards, Senior Prizegiving and Junior Prizegiving have been full of examples of this.

This year has seen the debate continue around NCEA. As parents and students come to understand this qualification and the assessment that underpins it more fully, they are becoming more confident of its worth. The introduction of merit and excellence endorsements for NCEA certificates has seen students striving for quality in their assessments. To quote the Greek philosopher Aristotle, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit". Through constantly striving to attain good results, students form the habit of excellence and it has been pleasing to see this in the outcomes many of our students have achieved.

Junior reports have been posted home with the 'Focus' and it has been pleasing to see the academic progress that students have made. These reports reflect the results of the recent examinations as well as student achievement throughout the year.

As a school, we are fortunate to have the support of our community in a number of ways. We have a number of parents and community members who give unselfishly of their time and talent to support students by coaching or managing a sports team. The number of opportunities that we can provide for young people in sport is dependent on people volunteering to take on a coaching or managing role. The success our teams have enjoyed this year is a direct reflection of that support, so thank you once again to all of those who have been able to support us in this way.

We are also very fortunate to have a supportive business community in Thames. This year has seen our work-based learning programme 'Gateway' continue to flourish. Businesses have been

very generous in allowing our students to have work experience placements for both our Gateway and Transition programmes, and the success of these programmes is once again directly related to this generous support.

The school holidays will see a flurry of activity around our school. The boiler replacement project will continue, the gymnasium windows are being replaced, the hall floor is being sanded and re-finished and the C Block windows facing Sealey Street will also be replaced. Planning is underway for ongoing work to happen in C Block during 2009, including replacement of the toilets, interior refurbishment and upgrading of power and data reticulation. We look forward to these improvements in the school's physical environment, for the benefit of all who work here.

Finally, good luck to all of the students who are waiting for the results of their external examinations. These will arrive in January and I hope that you are satisfied with the outcome you receive. Best wishes to all of our students and their families for a safe, restful and happy holiday break.

Arohanui

**Dave Sim**  
**Principal**

**FRITH DRIVER-BURGESS & AMY WHITE - 2009 JOINT DUXES**



## WORK BASED LEARNING

Once again a thanks must go to the Thames and surrounding business community for their ongoing, positive support of the students they have taken on for work based learning. These include the following:

G and C Auto Refinishers	Charcoals Café
All Garden Works	Paper Plus
T and T Childrenswear	Local Hire
The Warehouse	Kopu Engineering
The \$2 Shop	Thames Valley Sandblasters
The SPCA	Thames Tyre Power
McDonalds	Carters Building Supplies
Ford Ultimate Motor Group	Jim Banner
John Davy Tyres	Bin Inn
The Baptist Church	Te Korowai
Starlights Hair Design	Kopu Café
Pak 'N Save	Stirling Sports
The Warehouse Stationery	

# TOTARA SPRINGS CHRISTIAN CENTRE

[www.totarasprings.org.nz/holidaycamps](http://www.totarasprings.org.nz/holidaycamps)

## What are YOU going to be doing this Summer??

Come to Totara Springs and spend your time rock climbing, go karting, swimming, hydrosiding, playing crazy games and heaps more! Bring your friends and come to hang out, have a good time and meet new people!

### Our camp dates are:

Kids Camp	School Year 5-8	19-23 Jan 09	\$170 (OSCAR APPROVED)
Teens Camp	School Year 9-13	14-18 Jan 09	\$170* (if registered before 11 Dec)
Junior Kids Camp	School Year 2-4	14-16 Jan 09	\$135^ (if registered before 11 Dec)



*Totara Springs*  
CHRISTIAN CENTRE 

## **From the PE department...**

Celebrating success... this has been a focus for me this year. I have taken time to have a look at what successes we have achieved this year and what effect it has had on the students involved. AMAZING! It's a human thing! We all like to achieve success in whatever it is we do, and we like it even more when we are recognized for our success. This shows in the way our confidence grows and we set higher goals.

I had a look at some research done on celebrating success and the effect on young students and found a very common pattern. If we give children lots of praise, it tends to give them lots of belief in themselves. Also, promoting positive factors for children is the responsibility of all those who are involved in their lives. So I guess that's us. Too often we engage in complaining about the younger generation rather than looking for the positive and encouraging them.

Five factors emerged as being critical to the success of young people:

- having people in their lives who cared about them
- experiencing stability
- being given high expectations
- receiving encouragement and support
- being able to participate and achieve

We need to all work together to help our children achieve success and to celebrate their successes. In doing so, our future is bound to be more meaningful and positive! We look forward to next year with renewed energy and new goals set for achieving success.

Good luck to Sian Simmons and Mathew with their upcoming wedding in January.

The Physical Education Department would like to wish you a relaxed but active holiday. Have a great Christmas with your families and loved ones. May 2009 be a GREAT one!

## **Jenny Bloom - HOD Physical Education & Health**

### **HILLARY CHALLENGE**



## **SPORT**

We have had a number of sporting successes this term to finish off a great sporting year at Thames High.

### **Basketball**

Congratulations to Richard Barlow and Annabella Assmus who have been selected for the under 17 North Island Team to travel to Port McQuarry for the Pacific Slam Tournament in January.

### **College Games**

Our Athletics team is ready to compete at the Nationals this weekend which is part of the College Games in Hamilton. We have a team of over 40 students competing in the games with Jordan Downes, Shane Hornby, Hoani Yates and Lauren Bromley invited to swim and Melissa Jager and John Prescott invited to shoot. Good luck to all of these students.

### **Cricket**

The first term of cricket has now ended. Our 1st XI continued on from last season's results, winning all their games but going down in the finals to Hamilton Boys High. The team has now been promoted to 1st division in the Waikato competition.

Our Junior Boys Cricket team has had some close games, winning 3 and losing 3.

Congratulations to James Martin and Alfie Rogers who have been selected for the under 15 Waikato-Thames Valley Cricket team and Kieran Taylor for his selection in the under 17 Team.

### **Golf**

A Thames Valley Golf Challenge was held on the 26th-27th November. Thames High and Hauraki Plains College were the only teams who entered, with Hauraki winning the competition. It was a great experience for some of our students as it was their first full round of 18 holes with some students carding personal bests.

### **Rugby**

Congratulations to Karl Rohrlach who has been selected to attend the New Zealand U17 training camp in Hamilton in January. He is one of 80 selected nationally and it is a tremendous achievement to be recognized at this level.

### **Shooting**

Chris Benson, Melissa Jager, John Prescott, Nick Kennard and Andrew Aldrich competed in the South Island and the NZ Secondary Schools' Clay Target Championships held in Christchurch on the 27-29 September. Out of the 38 teams entered, Thames High finished 10th overall.

There were some great individual results with John Prescott in shoot-offs and placed 4th equal in the New Zealand Championships. Melissa Jager won the South Island and the New Zealand single rise Championships. She finished 3rd in the NZ girls single barrel Champs and 4th in the points competition. Melissa also finished 2nd in the South Island and NZ girls Skeet Competition.

### **Windsurfing**

Congratulations to Tim Driver who won the Sir Peter Blake regatta, an outstanding achievement from Tim. He also windsurfed to 2nd place in the annual year 7 to 10 schools regatta recently.

## Tennis

The Thames High School Doubles Champs were held with the following results:

### Junior Girls

Winners	Jessica Millington & Sarah Quirk
Runners Up	Lauren Bromley & Alice Hartley-Danby
Plate	Jessica Danby & Lisa Keleher

### Junior Boys

Winners	Jack Whitfield & Thomas Dwight
Runners Up	Blair Mellor & Sam Cox
Third	Mark Fox & Tom Marriott

### Senior Girls

Winners	Emily Dwight & Keriana Ruru
Runners Up	Hillary Battson & Luise Bollmann
Plate	Courtney Dickie & Sally Marriott

### Senior Boys

Winners	Joe Robertson & Ben Scott
Runners Up	Patrick Wightman & Richard Barlow

## Touch

On the 29th November the Thames Valley Secondary Schools' Tournament was held in Ngatea. Our junior boys and senior mixed teams made it through to the finals unbeaten. The junior boys won an exciting game that went to players having to drop off in extra time against Hauraki Plains. Our Senior Mixed team was beaten by Paeroa in the finals.

Congratulations to Torez Wiperi-Karauria-Heta who has been selected for the Waikato under 17 Touch squad.

## Volleyball

Our two junior Volleyball teams performed outstandingly in their first season of play. The girls finished 3rd out of the 15 teams in their division and the boys finished 6th out of the 11 teams.

Congratulations to Dylan Edwards who has made the Waikato Volleyball under 15 boys' team. A great achievement as volleyball is a new sport to Thames High this year.

## Hillary Challenge



## Board of Trustee Members

### From the Chair... ..

The 2008 academic year is practically over and planning is well underway for 2009. Our school is a kaleidoscope of change. We have farewelled 2008's Year 13 students and next year's Year 9s have had their Orientation Day. How fantastic that so many parents turned up for the morning to see what the school has to offer. Please continue to be supportive of, and simultaneously curious and questioning about, your child's education. This is what a Community High School is all about and it means you can team up (parent /teacher/student) to make a difference.

Included in this last 2008 edition of Focus are the contact details for Board members, and, in the material for new students, you will find how to contact the school for any queries you may have. We hope that parents will have a copy of the immediate contact details for Roopū Teacher/ Whanau Teacher and Year Level Dean for each of their children in a readily accessible place at home. This will facilitate early communication with any concerns.

This year we have seen improvements in NCEA results in many areas. Teachers have analysed these and made changes to programmes where further opportunities for improvement were identified. We are keen to see how this impacts on results.

Many teachers have worked overtime taking catch-up tutorials prior to external exams and then have been frantically marking the work of the Yr 9 & 10 students. They are now looking forward to a well-earned break. On behalf of the entire Board of Trustees I wish them all a happy and peaceful holiday.

To all our students and their families – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Be safe and we look forward to seeing you in 2009.

**Barbara Hennessy**

<b>Chairperson</b> Chair - Community Relations Member - Personnel, Curriculum	Mrs Barbara Hennessy 027 212 4623 hennessybarbara@hotmail.com
<b>Deputy Chairperson &amp; Secretary</b> Chair - Curriculum Member - Personnel	Mrs Sally Poulgrain 868 9678 027 284 1284 poulgrain@paradise.net.nz
<b>Principal</b> Member - Property, Finance, Personnel, Curriculum, Student Welfare	Mr Dave Sim PO Box 706 Thames 868 8688 (bus)
<b>Staff Representative</b>	Mrs Petro Jager PO Box 706 Thames 868 8688 (bus)
<b>Student Representative</b> Member - Student Welfare	Eddy Grant PO Box 706 Thames 868 8688 (bus)
Mr Peter Barker Chair - Finance	PO Box 428 Thames 868 8759 869 0507 (bus) 869 0508 (fax) pba.ca@xtra.co.nz
Mr Cliff Olsen Member - Finance, Property	868 8745 027 671 2276 goroco@clear.net.nz
Mr P C Paul Chair - student Welfare	868 7371 027 647 8769 pc.debbie@clear.net.nz
Mr Peter Richardson Member - Finance, Property	868 9806 021 868 980 peter@comnetsystems.co.nz
Mrs Alison Ruru Chair - Personnel Member - Curriculum	868 2335 027 6999 790 aruru@xtra.co.nz

## **HOST AN EXCHANGE STUDENT**

Hosting is a great way to experience the world without leaving home. STS High School Foundation, a student exchange organization, is seeking volunteer host families for students aged 16 to 18, arriving in January.

Students from Brazil, Canada, Finland and Sweden are keen to become part of your family as a 'kiwi kid'!

Volunteer host families provide a place to sleep, meals and a caring environment. Students attend the local high school, are fully insured and have their own spending money.

STS offers continuous support and a monthly contribution.

To find out more about hosting or about giving your teenager an experience of high school overseas, please call your local rep Lammina on 07 865 9446, Mob 021 555 513 or head office 0800 991 991 for a brochure.

The book 'Pirate Attack' by Dot  
Meharry

is being launched this Saturday  
13th December

at Carson's Bookshop in  
Thames.

Dot will be in store from  
10am-12 noon  
to sign copies.

The Matatoki School production  
of 'Pirate Attack'  
was based on this book.

## FOCUS

**Is available via ... your email!**

State your relationship with the school  
in an email to:

[office@thames-high.school.nz](mailto:office@thames-high.school.nz).

The focus will be emailed as a PDF file which you  
can open with Adobe Acrobat Reader.

The weekly news will also be emailed each week  
as a word document.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS TERM?

### START OF YEAR

<b>January 2009</b>	26	Office re-opens
	27	Office open
	28	Re-enrolment
	29	Re-enrolment
	30	Teacher Only day
<b>February 2009</b>	2	Year 9, 13 students at school
	3	All students at school
	4	All students at school
	5	All students at school
	6	Waitangi Day Public Holiday