



NEW PLYMOUTH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL
TE KURA TAMATĀNE O NGĀMOTU

ASSEMBLY

10th August, 2015

I would like to read out this superb email I was sent this week.

On behalf of my 87 year old father I would like to acknowledge and thank two of your students for their help yesterday please. My father found that he had a flat tyre near the cemetery yesterday afternoon and two students from your school stopped and spent some time helping him. They changed his tyre for him superbly. Dad offered them a small sum of money afterwards but they said there was no need and they were pleased they could help.

Cam Kahui-Green YR 13 and Peter Faga YR 11 were the names of the boys. Well done, very impressive.

A key part of our school crest is a bird. Not just any bird. But a Huia. I am proud that most of you know that it is a Huia. Many old boys, and I include myself in this didn't know it was a Huia when we were at school.

From the drawing on the crest it could have been a magpie or some kind of a crow to us.

So you know it is a Huia, but do you really *know* the Huia?

The Huia was deemed extinct in 1907. The Huia was extremely valuable and significant to Maori for their skins and long striking tail feathers. This was one of the reasons for its disappearance. The Huia for Maori is a symbol of nobility and high endeavour. Values readily identifiable and still relevant to our school today.

I am not sure if you also know that the Huia on our crest is appropriately the female variety. The female Huia has a distinctive curved beak. The male Huia has a short break and is nowhere near as striking. Plain, simplistic, and not as nice to look at. A bit like all of us blokes really.

BE THE EXAMPLE



We don't know why the female Huia was originally chosen on the crest but we can guess.

NPBHS originally began as NPHS. We had boys and girls at our school in 1882. Maybe that's why the female Huia was chosen? However, in 1882 there was no mountain, Huia or pongas on the crest. Just the letters NPHS and the motto as we know it on our current crest. Our current crest with the Huia, mountain and ponga originated in 1911.

NPGHS share our current crest meaning they have the female Huia on their crest also.

Whatever the reason it was chosen, I am delighted the Huia is female.

I think it reinforces that while we are a boys school, women are very important and influential in our lives.

Part of being a good man, a NPBHS man, is to always treat women equally, with respect and humanity. The female Huia is the foundation of our crest. Women are often the foundation of our lives and foundation of our families.

It is not cool to disrespect women, it is not tough nor admirable to hurt women physically or emotionally. We all have influential women in our lives, women we protect and support at all times.

Any time you are unsure how to treat women; think about the many great women you know and admire. They may be your mother, grandmother, teacher, sister or friend. How would you like them to be treated? How would you feel if someone disrespected them? I know for a fact you wouldn't like it or stand for it.

Every woman is someone else's mother, daughter, friend, partner or relative.

Television, movies, MTV, and YouTube, unfortunately from time to time provide poor role modelling for you around women. They sometimes glorify, publicise, promote and make light of disrespecting or compromising women.

It is a shame society and many different channels of media use poor taste and convey the wrong messages to youth and society in general about women.

However, we are more mature than the advertisers, the stars and companies who get it wrong. Have the courage and conviction to not be swayed nor misled into demonstrating the wrong behaviours towards women. Do what's right, be chivalrous (which essentially means have manners). Treat them as you would expect to be treated.



NPBHS boys and men, also open doors for women, allowing them through doorways before them. Address them as Miss, Ms or Mrs are attentive and helpful. We offer to carry items, support them and protect them.

We use appropriate language, gestures and body language around women. Having self control is manly, its tough that's what good men do. We respect their personal space and feelings and never make women uncomfortable in either what we say, or do.

It could be as simple as not swearing, or whistling at, or offering to open a door, helping a mother carry a pushchair up a footpath, offering your jacket to your girlfriend if it's cold, a seat on the bus, helping an elderly lady across the road.

Another simple example is when we have women at our assembly, we don't whistle or leer or jeer we are good men and act like good men.

You should think ahead, be thoughtful, be aware of your actions and behaviour around women and be ready at all times to show initiative and be that good man.

Don't just be the example yourself but have the guts to put right others who are not doing the right thing. Tell your friends to not swear in front of women, tell your friends you aren't impressed with their sexism, sexist jokes, condescending behaviour or ill treatment of women.

The NPBHS crest should be a constant reminder to you. The female Huia you wear on your chest is the perfect place and symbolism to ensure you treat women as you wish to be treated, and the important place and influence they have in all our lives.

Be chivalrous, be that good man.

School stand.

