

through the gates



NEWSLETTER FOR THE
NEW PLYMOUTH BOYS' HIGH
SCHOOL COMMUNITY

www.npbhs.school.nz

VOLUME 11 APRIL 2004



OLD BOY GENEROSITY LEADS TO DUAL OPENINGS

Friday, November 21, 2003 was a very exciting day for the school. The Fookes Pavilion and Bree Recording Studio were officially opened with many staff, friends of the school and Old Boys in attendance.

The Fookes Pavilion

Firstly, special thanks to Alister Fookes and Ann Reeves (nee Fookes) for their help in finding so many of the relatives of Vicary Cracroft Fookes and wife, Eunice. It was a wonderful occasion and a real bonus to get so many of the family together.

Present were David Fookes, Ann Reeves and Manning, Alister Fookes and daughter Lindy, Bruce Newcomb and Beth Josephs, Dr Tom Fookes and son Ian and Christine Miller (nee Fookes).

The Fookes name was very prominent in the early days of Taranaki life and in the early times of New Plymouth Boys' High School. They were strong in the professions – medical, commercial and educational. They featured greatly in early Taranakians – in sport, academia and music.

The school played a big part in the life of Vicary Cracroft Fookes. Vic, as he was known to many, was a day boy from 1919-23 and excelled at music and shooting.

He continued to show a passionate interest in the school after leaving and often talked of Bill Moyes, whom he admired greatly. He was at school when Carrington House was built and the school won the Imperial Shield for .303 shooting. He was also aware of the scholarly success of Sir Ronald Syme and Monty Barak and talked about this with the likes of Brian Sykes and John Symes (President of Auckland Old Boys) and Tom Ryder.

Vic became unwell and died in 1985. The Old Boys' and, in particular, Brian and John (and Tom) continued to call on his widow, Eunice. She made it very clear that she had always been impressed by the depth of feeling her late husband had for his school and that 'as it was in a state of recovery' she wished to arrange a modest bequest from the estate. Tom, Brian and John recommended that such a bequest be made to the Centennial Trust Fund, in a 1986 meeting, in line with the wishes of Vic. Eunice's health deteriorated and she ended her days in a nursing home in 1995.

In discussion with Eunice, Tom Ryder consistently specified the needs of the hostel and Vic's love of sport and recreation and that both needs would be met by the addition of squash courts to the Gully Pavilion. Both subjects appealed to her.

The school and Centennial Trust had many meetings on the subject and eventually decided that the project to develop the Gully Pavilion further would be a wonderful use of the bequest. Special thanks to The Boards of Trustees, under the chairmanships of Neil Wolfe, John Eagles, Geoff Ward and Warren Batchelar, for their foresight in building the original Gully Pavilion and extending it to the 'Fookes Pavilion'.

The Fookes family members unveiled a plaque that commemorates two wonderful people and their generosity to the community of NPBS and beyond.

Reunions for 2004

These reunions are open to all Old Boys, parents and friends of the school and their partners.

Waverley

Thursday May 13, 5.30-7.30pm
at the Waverley Rugby Football
Clubrooms.

*(This replaces the Wanganui reunion
advertised in the November 2003 issue.
The Collegiate game will now be held on
Wednesday, 18 August.)*

Bay of Plenty

Saturday, 19 June 5.30-7.30 at
Fahy's Motorlodge, Cameron
Road, Greerton - after the
Tauranga Boys' College game.

Wellington

Wednesday, 23 June 5.30-
7.30pm at The Malthouse, 47
Willis Street, Wellington - after
the St Pat's game.

New Plymouth 1963-64 1st XV

Saturday, 7 August at the Fookes
Pavilion immediately after the
Napier BHS game.

125th JUBILEE 6 - 10 April 2007

Preparations have begun for the
school's 125th Jubilee to be held
at Easter Weekend, 2007.
Please keep your diaries free.

lynn Bublitz is putting together
a project team - volunteers
welcome.

And Tom Ryder is underway
with a commemorative Jubilee
project.

The renovations, at a cost of \$640,000 have increased the size of the existing two changing rooms, added two more changing rooms, added storage space, increased the size of the function room considerably and put in two squash courts and changing rooms. This is for the use of rugby, soccer and hockey and is seen as a community and functions facility. The costs have been met by the generosity of Vic Fookes (1919-23) and wife Eunice, Old Boys' donations and Lotteries funding.

I am certain that they would be delighted with the end result in assisting recreation in the school and, in particular, meeting the needs of hostel boys.

It was wonderful to see the Fookes family together as they had a big influence in early New Plymouth and were very significant in the formative days of NPBHS.

The Bree Recording Studio

In 1984, Herbert Russell Bree died, leaving \$10,000 to the school. The intention was very specific –

'I express the wish, but without creating a binding direction in that regard, that should the said High School not own a good organ at my death, then the said Board of Governors use all or part of this legacy, as they see fit, to purchase, such a good organ for use in the Assembly Hall and in the tuition of students who display a willingness to learn to play such an instrument.'

The Bree Organ fund was set up, but no need was found for such an organ. It became obvious that the needs in music had changed and legal proceedings confirmed that the funds could be used for other purposes involved with Music.

The Bree Recording Studio was conceived as a wonderful addition to the needs of a modern music department. Thanks must go to the work of Jocelyn Beath and, in particular, Stewart Maunder in his design and building. The \$10,000 grew to \$40,000, which has given us a high quality recording facility for our boys to record their compositions.

Mr Bree may have only been at school for a short time (1923-24), but the music of the school must have made an indelible impression – he is mentioned in the 'Taranakian' as conductor of the orchestra in 3A and 4A – at a very young age, it would seem.

We are obviously delighted that Mr Bree saw fit to leave money to the school and also thrilled to have Mrs Doreen Bree and her two daughters at NPBHS to see the Bree Recording Studio and help us with the official opening.

Mrs Bree unveiled the commemorative plaque and said a few words.

The Board of Trustees hosted a social function for all our guests from the families, the school community and friends, which was enjoyed immensely by all.

L R French-Wright, Headmaster



*Vicary Cracraft Fookes
(1919-23)*



Eunice Fookes



Above: The Fookes family watch as David unveils the plaque in the Fookes Pavilion.



Left: Mrs Doreen Bree unveils the plaque for the Bree Recording Studio while Warren Batchelor, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, looks on.

Round The Traps with Max Carroll

Congratulations to Matthew Crow (1987) who has recently been promoted to the rank of Major in the Signals Corps.

Good to see posters of Midge Marsden (1958-62) and his harmonica decorating Waihi Beach in late January.

Roger Dickie (1960-63) is a member of the Waverley Golf Club. However it seems to me he spends more time on courses in California, Queenstown, Gulf Harbour, Wairakei, Kauri Cliffs etc than he does on his home course.

I bumped into John (Mickey) Gilmer (1969-73) the other day. He told me that he did not play regular, competitive rugby in the 2003 season, so he has probably finally hung up his boots.

Murray (Muzza) Watts, Taranaki Rugby Centurion and All Black wing three-quarter, and on our staff since 1978, has teamed with present coach, Colin Maihi (1977-82, Staff 1997- present day) to guide the 1st XV this season.

Geoff Old (1969-73) returned to New Zealand for a few days in order to watch his son, Stephen, captain the NZ Olympic Under-23 soccer team in Auckland.

Good to see two recent Old Boys, Blair Corlett (1993-97) and Reuben Creery (1995-99) on the teaching staff of NPBHS this year.

Congratulations and good luck to Brett Goodin (1999-2000). Brett has been named to play in the national squad which is to compete in the World Under-19 rugby championships in South Africa.

Farrell Te Mata (1958-62) this year joins Ian Foster to coach the Chiefs Super 12 team.

In May the school loses its popular deputy principal. Michael (Mac) McMenamin has been appointed Principal of Freyberg College in Palmerston North. We wish him well. Congratulations to Assistant Principal Bruce Bayly who will take over this role.

Michael Paulin (1969-73) has recently received a \$555,000 Marsden Fund Grant to assist him in his research into fitting a robot with a bionic brain. Michael works with experts from NASA towards improving the capabilities of robots on the moon and on Mars.

After graduating from the Elam School of Fine Arts, Duane Agate (1988-92) has made a niche for himself in the film industry as a scenic artist. He was proud to return to Taranaki to make an important contribution in the making of 'The Last Samurai'.

Board of Trustees Report

During any given year there are various occasions to celebrate for NPBHS. Very occasionally there is an event which has special significance not only for the school but also the Old Boys. 2003 saw such an event.

Toward the end of the year we were privileged to have the official opening of two fantastic additions to the school facilities. Both the Bree Recording Studio and Fookes Pavilion openings were held on the same afternoon with a combined celebration and it was a truly magnificent occasion. Redevelopment of the music suite involved alterations to create a dedicated recording studio and the addition of a host of electronic wizardry which would be the envy of most commercial studios. These new facilities were made possible by a bequest in 1984 from a former pupil Mr Herbert Bree. We were thrilled to have members of the Bree family in attendance to officially open the Bree Recording Studio.

Later in the afternoon we were also delighted to have many members of the Fookes family join us to officially open the newly extended Fookes Pavilion (previously the Gully Pavilion). A significant bequest from the estate of the late Vicary Cracraft Fookes, who attended NPBHS as a day boy from 1919-23, enabled an extension to the existing pavilion and creation of a fantastic sporting facility. Additional changing rooms and toilets, a redeveloped lounge area as well as two new squash courts have been incorporated in the existing building to create a significantly more functional facility.

Such generous bequests enable NPBHS to provide additional facilities that significantly enhance the opportunities for our students and we owe a very special thank you to the Bree and Fookes' estates.

Other property developments currently in the planning stages include strengthening and refurbishment of the Moyes hostel and redevelopment of the Cramond Wing. Both of these are very significant undertakings and the Board is working carefully through the process of making them happen. Moyes refurbishment is planned to occur toward the end of this year while Cramond redevelopment is still some way off. We have recently held meetings with the top property staff in the Ministry of Education and while we still have plenty of work to do to ensure we can achieve our desired outcome, we essentially gained agreement in principle from the MoE that our proposal is sound and fiscally prudent.

On more academic themes NPBHS remains a leader in achievement with the introduction of Levels 1 & 2 of NCEA. We also remain the school of choice for an ever increasing number of families wanting the best for their sons. We have recently had MoE approval for an increase in our optimum roll to 1340 pupils. This is a significant increase and is a clear demonstration that the MoE recognise and value the performance of NPBHS.

As this newsletter goes to press elections for the next Board of Trustees are about to be held and consequently this will be the final contribution from the current Board. Providing sound governance for any school is a challenging task and it is not to be taken lightly as decisions taken today can, and often do, have long lasting and far reaching consequences. Whilst this may seem an onerous duty for which to volunteer, in the case of NPBHS it is a very rewarding and enjoyable one. We are very fortunate to have sound leadership and senior management at NPBHS as well as dedicated and committed staff who consistently perform well in excess of the minimum required. The leadership, management and staff of NPBHS have made the work of the BOT easy and straight forward and we owe them all a debt of gratitude.

In particular the Headmaster, Mr Lyal French-Wright deserves a special mention. Lyal is a man of incredible energy and dedication, totally committed to the school and his staff, supporting them with unwavering loyalty. The Headmaster is also the leader of NPBHS, the front man who represents the public face of the school and he does this job with ease. It has been a pleasure to work alongside Lyal – he is a consummate professional.

NPBHS has a long and proud tradition of achievement and success producing well balanced young men with a sound all round education. The school is well placed to continue this fine record and maintain its position as a leading school of choice in New Zealand for parents wanting the best for their sons.

Best wishes and kind regards,

Warren Batchelar, Chairman NPBHS Board of Trustees

Round the Traps continued

Congratulations to the following who have recently been selected into their respective age group teams to represent New Zealand in the Oceanic In-Line Hockey Championships: Shane Kemsley (1996-2000) Senior Men, Alex Harvey (1997-2000) 20-and-under age group, and Alexander Novak, a current student, in the 14-and-under age group.

Hayden Goodrick (1997-1999) continues to hone his yachting skills having recently returned from a sailing contract in San Diego to be part of a New Zealand Under-25 team.

What a dream start in Super 12 rugby for Todd Feather (1991-95). The first time he touched the ball for the Queensland Reds he waded through the Highlanders' defence and scored between the posts.

Graeme Duff (1960-65) featured on television recently. Unfortunately his fishing lodge at Turangi suffered in the recent flooding of the Tongariro River. Good luck for the clean-up Graeme. Tight lines!

Congratulations to Ali Jordan – and bad luck! Congratulations on achieving a successful season as coach of the Taranaki cricket team and bad luck that an excellent season wasn't rounded off by bringing home the Hawke Cup from Mid-Canterbury. The team for the challenge involved the following Old Boys: Alistar Jordan (1963-65) Selector /Coach, Gordon Giddy (Staff 1979-present day and long-serving coach of the 1st XI) Manager, Matthew Broadmore (1991-95) Captain, Mark Cleaver (1994-98), Chris Cruikshank (1999-2003), Kane Rowson (1993-97), Jamie Watkins (1990-94), Leith Johnson (1992-95) and Kent Jordan (1995-2000).

ROLL BACK THE YEARS..THE REUNION OF '63

Forty years were almost a lifetime of the imagination as thirty former pupils of 6A, 1963, and their teachers gathered in the impressive Boarders' Lounge on the Saturday afternoon of labour weekend. An amusing and nostalgic return as we identified faces, swapped years and caught up with people we thought had disappeared from our lives forever. Former staff from '63 who attended included Bob Hollibaugh, Max Carroll, Dave Whaley, Ted Meach, Ken Jones, Alan Wilson, Louis Jennings and Robin Sinclair.

It was hard to keep up with the anecdotes and the reminiscences we had all been through. But the photographs were the hard evidence, along with lines on the faces, and a sense that somehow we all still had much in common. Certainly as the stories flowed, memories of being at Boys' High in the early 1960's had obviously been etched on our consciousness, as indelible and hilarious as ever.

An excellent dinner that night, with partners and teachers, at the Plymouth International Hotel meant the catching up could continue. This was enhanced by Dr Crispin Hobbs' (Chicago) superb collection of personal memorabilia, in absolutely mint condition, packed into an original 1963 school case. In fact one wonders if 'Fish' Hollibaugh hadn't done a pre-emptive move to make sure things were up to scratch! They included original copies of homework notebooks, school reports, calendars, and carefully recorded 'quotable quotes' from staff, many of whom are gone but not forgotten, and who reputedly achieved some of the best exam results in the country, from some very 'fuzzy fellows' indeed.

On Sunday morning, staff member David Morsay, also part of our 'mob', guided us on a most enjoyable tour around the school where more dramatic and amusing events were recalled: from class canyons, to lull clubs and clubs. It all sounded somewhat Shakespearian!

Everyone was impressed by the condition of the building, the classrooms and the grounds, which are significantly improved compared to the early 60's. Certainly there was the feeling that they must be amongst the best environs of any secondary school in the country, and a credit to the Board and school management.

The condition of the old building (Pavilion Hall) was just as impressive its own, although it wasn't quite the same without the steps under the honours board. Maybe it was something to do with the thousands of boys over the years who have sung, studied, lit torch paper, been entertained, laughed, and learnt to grow up and not be 'foetus droppings'. Maybe too, it was something to do with older adults, like ourselves, yellow and wisdomand respect!

To conclude the Reunion of '63, ex-companions Bruce Hookham and Peter Wolfbauer generously hosted 40 Old Boys, partners and former staff for a superb luncheon at their home in Clevedon. A fitting finale to a weekend of memories.

Thanks for coming, particularly those from the UK, USA and Australia, and to Gail and Max in the school Development Office. Maybe we'll all meet again someday!

Andy Kilbey



Always - Bruce Hookham and Crispin Hobbs



Andy Kilbey



Always from left - Ian Kilbey, Bill Wilbott, Christine Kitchin and Stephen Roll



Always from left - Dudley Wright, Neil Ponsford, David Morsay and Christine Poynter



Left - Bob Hollibaugh and Brian Hosmer



Always - Ex teachers at the reunion dinner from left - Max Carroll (1951/51), Dave Whaley (1963/66), Robin Sinclair (1958/59), Alan Wilson (1958/59) and Ted Meach (1951/53)



Left - Keith Carruthers and Dave Whaley



Always - Neil Ponsford and Bruce Hookham

Super Lotion

Henry Harshb

Super E Liquid Creams

100% Natural, Fragrance Free, Water Resistant
 Creams - 100% Natural Fragrance Free, Water Resistant
 Creams - 100% Natural Fragrance Free, Water Resistant

HEADMASTER'S REPORT

2004 will be a year where a number of very important proposals will come to fruition and will dictate the shape of the school for the foreseeable future.

In the past few years I have continued to report record roll numbers, but there has to be a limit. "Big for big's sake" is not a sound footing to build a school on. The start of the year saw 1,350 boys at school (205 in the hostel) a significant increase over 2003. This was predicted by us in November of last year and we were able to make the necessary staffing and resource decisions for the start of 2004. I believe the increase, in the main, is due to:



Lyal French-Wright

- i) transfers from other schools
- ii) new families moving into the New Plymouth area from other parts of New Zealand and overseas. There is a real vibrancy about the city that will be long term
- iii) boys staying at school longer - in Years 12/13 (Forms 6/7). This is because we are offering courses that are suitable for a wider range of boys' abilities and interests and their realisation that they should remain in formal education as long as possible.

All of this is exciting, but it has put enormous pressure on buildings and resourcing long-term. The result is that the school is in danger of being overcrowded, and if it were not for buildings that the school owns we would be in crisis now. The Ministry of Education has a responsibility to ensure that schools have adequate facilities and that overcrowding does not occur. With this in mind, an Enrolment Scheme will be put in place, to stop overcrowding in the future - it will start in 2005. The optimum roll has been set at 1,340, which means we will get extra buildings, but also that we will have a geographical zone created. We are in the process of drawing this up at present.

In reality, those accepted as boarders have a guaranteed place in the school. Those within the zone are guaranteed a place - they have an absolute right to attend a 'reasonably convenient boys' school'. For those outside the zone, they will be accepted in the following order of priority:

- i) brothers of current boys
- ii) brothers of former boys
- iii) sons of board employees
- iv) all other boys

If there are more applicants in priority groups i-iv, than there are places available, then there will be a ballot.

How much pressure this will put on places will not be known until applications are received. Considerable, I imagine.

While I accept that the enrolment scheme is needed and accept that 1,340 is a reasonable optimum roll, I do have some real reservations about the priority conditions for out of zone applicants. It quite deliberately (by legislation) disenfranchises a number of families who, quite rightly, through historical association, feel a close empathy with NPBHS. Also, families who believe that the ethos of the school is in tune with their personal ethos, have no priority. If these families live out of zone and do not have hostel places, then they will be at the mercy of the ballot, if numbers dictate it needs to be used.

It is always a reassuring feeling when new facilities are opened that add to the wealth of experiences for our boys. The generosity of Old Boys has been to the fore, with a number of recent openings and works in progress. My thanks go to so many individuals who contributed to the appeal or who have made separate bequests, for your support and confidence in the school.

At the end of last year the Fookes Pavilion and Bree Recording Studio were opened (see front page) and soon the tennis courts at the head of McNaught Field will have an artificial turf installed. We are well advanced to start the refurbishment of Moyes House - new strengthening technology allows us to keep the exterior but modernise and change the configuration inside. As well as this, the BOT and Ministry of Education are at a crucial stage in the redevelopment of the Cramond Wing which, hopefully, will include a considerable number of new classrooms due to roll growth. In the next 'Through the Gates' I should be able to report an imminent start to this.

I thank all of you, the Old Boys, for your continued commitment to your old school. We will continue to promote reunions, both at school and in your areas and look forward to meeting with you again. We are starting to build towards the 125th at Easter in 2007. This will be a 'must' on any Old Boys' calendar and there will be a wide range of events to cater for all attendees.

My particular thanks go to Max Carroll for his unflinching dedication, Gail Woodward for her important work in the Development Office, the Old Boys' Association Committee under Geoff Hall (and thank Kevin Taylor for his commitment over the past two years as President) and all other Old Boys who go that extra mile to make things happen.

The school is indebted to you all.

L R French-Wright, Headmaster

NPBHS OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION New Plymouth branch



Geoff Hall

As this is my first President's report I think it is an opportune time to give you a brief background on me.

My name is Geoff Hall. I attended Boys' High as a day boy 1979-83. During my time at school I was lucky enough to be taught by some superb teachers, play for both the 1st XV rugby and 1st XI cricket teams, meet some lifelong friends and have the opportunity to develop leadership skills.

In fact I thought Boys' High was such a great place I decided to return in 1990 and have not left since. Returning to my old school provided me with a lot of interesting feelings. I still remember having the same fear of Tom's office, struggling not to call Max 'sir', enjoying the same old assembly 'sermons', listening to teachers' opinions of students rather than students' of teachers, getting the tingle down my spine when watching rugby and the haka on the Gully and being able to bust the queue in the tuckshop.

During my teaching time at Boys' High I have taught English and Geography, been in charge of the Learning Support Department, coached rugby from the 1st XV down and edited the Taranakian. Currently, I am the head of the Hostel and the school's literacy leader.

My passions in life are my family, rugby, music, cooking and teaching.

Our Annual Dinner was held in October and while the numbers were down there were enough for a quick AGM. This was Kevin Taylor's last as president and I would like to thank Kevin for all of the hard work he has put into the Association over the last two years. He is most definitely a proud Old Boy. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Brian Sykes for all the work he has done over the years. Brian is a bloke who works tirelessly without any fuss.

The following Office bearers were elected:

Patron - Tom Ryder, President - Geoff Hall, Past President - Kevin Taylor,
Senior Vice President - Todd Wolfe, Junior Vice President - Colin Maihi,
Secretary - Paul Anderson, Treasurer - Brian Bellringer, Headmaster's rep
- Kevin Gladhill, Executive - Lynn Bublitz and Peter Darney.

Following our dinner we were privileged to listen to Sir Ewen Jamieson, New Zealand's ex-Chief of Defence Forces. Sir Ewen's address was a fascinating account of New Zealand's defence policy during David Lange's time as prime minister and during the time of the Gulf War. Sir Ewen is a proud Old Boy and it was an honour to have him as our guest speaker.

In November our Annual Golf Tournament was held at Ngamotu. The following trophies were won by:

1st Net: McNaught Cup - Bob Thompson
Best Stableford: Alexander Tray - Max Maaka
1st Gross: Powell Cup - Michael Carr

Special mention needs to be made of Michael Carr's booming drive on the 18th, Dean Magon's extraordinary 2 on the 6th and Bruce Sutton's ability to talk while still playing a shot. Thanks to Colin Maihi for his superb organisation and to our sponsors. A special thank you to Justine Darney and Ian Jones for their help in taking entries and starting the groups.

Planning for the 125th Jubilee is well underway. Lynn Bublitz has his committee working away at building the weekend's events. Tom Ryder has assembled a very impressive array of writers to start work on the Jubilee's official publication. This book will provide us all with an interesting account of some of this school's Old Boys.

I am looking forward to the challenges this role will present over the next two years. I would encourage all Old Boys around the country to become active and financial members of our school's Old Boys' Associations and to support all school and Old Boys' events that are organised throughout the year. Please make regular visits to our website www.npbhs.school.nz, and keep an eye on your local papers for upcoming event information.

Yours in School

Geoff Hall, President NP Branch NPBHS Old Boys' Association

Obituary: 'Dobby' Murray Dobson (1958-60, Staff 1970-2003)



On leaving school Murray Dobson served a carpentry and joinery apprenticeship, worked in the draughting office of the Taranaki Education Board, and then joined the technical staff of NPBHS in 1970. For the next 34 years Dobby taught hundreds of boys woodwork and technical drawing and he became a moderator of the old School Certificate and current NCEA examinations.

He brought to the school a wealth of experience from spheres other than teaching. Dobbie was a territorial sergeant in the WWCT Regiment and his expertise in the bush and on the parade ground was greatly appreciated by his CO and his fellow officers. Murray became the adjutant of the school's battalion and as Major Dobson he later commanded the NP City Open Cadet Unit.

Dobbie was a bandsman. Throughout his time at school he gave invaluable support to many aspects of music in the school and he was also renowned for the sets he produced, and his backstage management of a number of plays and musicals.

Headmasters Iyal French-Wright and Tom Ryder in their eulogies told of Dobby's contribution to NPBHS and the school paid an impressive tribute to a popular teacher by lining Coronation Avenue as the hearse passed by the school. Numerous friends and colleagues gave him a fitting farewell.

Max Carroll

NEW ZEALAND MADE SCREWS
MADE TO ORDER OR EX STOCK
Screw Manufacturer - screwprod@stra.co.nz



Special attention for Pridham Guys
Screw Productions Ltd
12 Davies St, Rotorua
Ph 07-348 8050 Fax 07 347 1274

An Old Boy Reflects

Lance McEldowney 1958-62

Reflections (or, perhaps, ramblings of an old codger)

I was caught in a maze of bewildered third-formers queuing for aptitude tests at the NPBHS Assembly Hall (now Pridham Hall).

It was early 1958, and word got round that new headmaster Jack Webster was a disciplinarian.

He had high expectations for all boys, and proved tough dealing with any perceived slackness, but I remember him as a fair, dedicated professional of his time, determined to develop the School's reputation academically and maintain its high standards in sport. His untimely death in a car accident years later was tragic.

Caning and school cadets were ways of imposing discipline and building 'character' in those days. I resiled from both, but don't believe either did me harm. Teachers today have to work smarter without resorting to corporal punishment.

Inspiring pupils to 'self discipline' and to develop personal traits such as concern for others, as well as self reliance and independence of thought, are harder tasks for teachers nowadays. I think NPBHS does a good job preparing boys for society; making them aware that individuals have responsibilities as well as rights.

As a dayboy at school I developed many friendships with boarders as well as with dayboys. Numerous rugby and rowing trips throughout the country were memorable, as was the annual Day Boy/Boarders clash in rugby. It was always closely fought, with no quarter given or expected.

Having a catchment from throughout New Zealand and beyond to draw on does add to the special diverse makeup of NPBHS, and means mixing of boys from various social and ethnic backgrounds.

Friendships developed at school are renewed periodically at reunions, the most recent being the '40 Years On' reunion in 2002, attended by about 50 old boys and partners, and masters of that period, Noel Lynch, Max Carroll, and the late J J Stewart.

Barry Boon 1946-1951

The school and the country was emerging from the shadows of a World War. We had one of the largest boarding establishments in New Zealand under Headmaster McNaught, a distinguished soldier. George Bertrand had been a leader in the Maori Battalion.

Strict discipline was expected. Charles Brenstrum gave us in 3CL a forceful introduction to Latin. Boxing was compulsory. The steeplechase finished up the steep slopes of the 8th fairway at Ngamotu. That was 1946.

Rugby flourished. The 1st XV enjoyed a remarkable period of five years undefeated in the annual college matches under coach Vic Kerr until 1950 when J J Stewart took over that role. Among the many talented players of the era were future All Black captains A R (Ponty) Reid and John Graham. Brian Novak led the outstanding 1949 side.

Cricket also had success with Terry Sweeney coaching the 1st XI. A real highlight of 1949 was the half-day holiday to celebrate Martin Donnelly's magnificent double century at Lords, during the New Zealand tour of England.

PE teacher, Noel Bowden, represented Taranaki in tennis and rugby, playing full back against the Lions in a spectacular match at Rugby Park in 1950.

We were fortunate to have many dedicated teachers who encouraged the pursuit of excellence in sport and scholarship. I remember with special affection Arthur Papps and Wit Alexander who gave us a sense of pride in the school, and an enduring love of classical and English literature.

Music was in the hands of W E (Jungle) Forrest, a first class teacher who organised some memorable concerts in the Opera House.

Despite being without television, cell phones, e-mail or the internet, our era produced many who went on to make their mark in commerce, in the professions, in education, in politics and in the public service.

More Round the Traps

John Moffatt (1974-78) is teaching in Whangarei.

Welcome back to S/Sgt Dean Esaiah (1997-99) who has spent the last year with the NZ Armed forces in Iraq helping to re-build the country after the US-led invasion.

Good luck to Tim Cleaver (1995-99). He will represent New Zealand in the World Student Beach Volleyball Championships in Thailand.

Snapped!!

Old Boys and friends of the school enjoyed themselves at the social function following the official openings of the Fookes Pavilion and the Bree Recording Studio.



Above: Brian Bellringer (1947-53) and John Armstrong, former MP for New Plymouth.



Above: Bruce Newcomb (1950) and David Fookes (1950-53).



Above: Manning Reeves (1947-51), Max Carroll (Staff 1958-91) and his wife, Bev. In the background is New Plymouth Mayor, Peter Tennant.



Above: Staff members Justin Hyde (1979-82, Staff since 1995) left, John Sims and Terry Heaps (1973-77, Staff since 1981). Terry is the proof-reader of our newsletter and we are very grateful for his skill in this area.

Upcoming Reunions

1951 Moyes House Third Formers

Don Elliot is planning this reunion for 25-27 June 2004 at Tatum Park, 10km south of Levin on SH1.

We have been unable to locate the following Old Boys:

Mick Dillon (ex-Awakino)
Brian Bargh (ex-Pio Pio)
T G Sommerville (ex-Taihape)
Ron Wallen

If you can help, please contact Don –
Phone: 06 368 5500
or E-mail: dandyelliot@xtra.co.nz

Or The Development Office -

Address:
Private Bag 2028, New Plymouth
Phone/Fax: 06 759 8836
or E-mail:
development@npbhs.school.nz

1963-64 1st XV

This reunion will be held in New Plymouth on the weekend of 7-8 August. It is being organised by Ian Stewart and Tom Wilson.

Details are still being finalised and relevant Old Boys will be notified by letter.

Editor's Note:

Max and Gail in the Development Office welcome any items of interest to Old Boys that we could include in our newsletter. We also value any feedback on the newsletters.

The School In 2004

Total Roll	1322	
Number In Year 13 (Seventh Form)	157	Plus 4 year 14s
Third Form Intake	315	
Number of Fee Paying Students	11	
Number who travel from Stratford, Waitara, Okato and points-in-between to attend NPBHS	250	
Total Boarding Roll	205	
Number of Full-time Teaching Staff	79	
Number of Part-time Staff	3	
Instrumental Music Teachers	8	
Ancillary Staff	17	
Number of Old Boys on Staff	15	
Overseas Students as Percentage of Total Roll	1.5%	

NPBHS OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION - New Plymouth Branch SUBSCRIPTION - 2004 CALENDAR YEAR

This time is upon us to again request your support. This year we are introducing two categories of subscription:

- (a) Subscription and The Taranakian \$25.00
(b) Subscription only \$20.00

(Editor's note: All Old Boys receive 'Through the Gates' regardless of whether they are members of the Old Boys' Association or not.)

Full Name _____

Address: _____

Please detach this form, indicate which option you would like and return with your cheque to:

Brian Bellringer, Treasurer NPBHS Old Boys' Association, PO Box 8021, New Plymouth

Paul Anderson, Secretary NPBHS Old Boys' Association

WITHIN AND BEYOND THE GATES

In the November issue of last year, Kevin Taylor, Past President of the Old Boys' Association, referred to a project mounted for the 125th Jubilee, Easter 2007. That project has now taken a clearer shape and to mark the celebration, the Old Boys' Association Inc. adopted the idea of publishing a sequel to Wit Alexander's "The First Hundred Years". It will be edited by Jim Tucker, Director of the School of Journalism of the Western Institute of Technology, and Tom Ryder is the project manager.

The book will be notable for recording the stories of Old Boys, high achievers and ordinary claps, and telling their stories to a degree not attempted in the centennial history. It is proposed that the publication will comprise *three* sections with the research and writing responsibilities carried out by a range of Old Boys and staff members, past and present, who have all maintained close links with the school. The *first* section of the book will bring the history of the school up to date and the *second* will deal with a selection of Old Boys, broadly reflecting careers and special interests. The *third* will focus on the school's links with New Plymouth and Taranaki and will deal with a range of Old Boys who entered the trades, offices, farming and small business, architecture, engineering, teaching, the public service, local body politics, sports and service clubs, etc. Fifteen folk have been approached to research and write and, without exception, all have committed themselves to the cause.

No one is under any illusions about the difficulty of the challenge. Very few schools have attempted such a task for obvious reasons. There are problems of selection, gathering information, ensuring as far as possible its accuracy, writing and illustrating the stories and at the same time producing a book that will do justice to the school while proving to be a good read!

Everyone is agreed that the project will best succeed by giving Old Boys themselves the chance to contribute and to help ensure that the book does justice to the raw material available. Time is already against us, with material on Old Boys from the earliest years either difficult or impossible to access. That is all the more reason to proceed now while we have contact with some 4000 Old Boys who can provide information on men from all walks of life and era.

This notice then, is not only to keep you informed, it is an appeal for assistance in getting thorough and representative coverage of our Old Boys. The last thing we want to face when the task is done, is that we have overlooked this man or that and 'What a shame!'

On the back of this sheet, please record the names of up to ten Old Boys you would expect, or like, to see featuring or mentioned in the book. Include your own name and contact details, and the names of your nominees, along with as many of their details that you can provide. Also include a few notes explaining your choice, recording what engages your attention, marks the man out and why it is a story worth sharing.

Please don't decide to get around to this later. We need your responses as soon as possible, either to confirm a selection already made or because it is a lead that must be followed up.

*Geoff Hall, President &
Tom Ryder, Patron of the
NPTW Old Boys' Association*

Please complete and return:

The Development Office
New Plymouth Boys' High School
Private Bag 2028
NEW PLYMOUTH

Phone/Fax 06 759 8836
E-mail: development@nptwbo.co.nz

Your full name:

Address:

Phone: Fax:

E-Mail Address:

The nominous section is on the reverse.

Please fold form to nominate more than six Old Boys by adding an additional sheet of paper.

Nominees Information *(Please provide as much detail as you can. Add an additional sheet of paper if necessary)*

1. Full Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____ E-mail Address _____
Years at NPHHS: To _____ to _____ Career _____
Why did you select this person? _____

2. Full Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____ E-mail Address _____
Years at NPHHS: To _____ to _____ Career _____
Why did you select this person? _____

3. Full Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____ E-mail Address _____
Years at NPHHS: To _____ to _____ Career _____
Why did you select this person? _____

4. Full Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____ E-mail Address _____
Years at NPHHS: To _____ to _____ Career _____
Why did you select this person? _____

5. Full Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____ E-mail Address _____
Years at NPHHS: To _____ to _____ Career _____
Why did you select this person? _____

6. Full Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____ E-mail Address _____
Years at NPHHS: To _____ to _____ Career _____
Why did you select this person? _____
