

# Whangarei Boys' High School OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION (Inc)

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Again I am pleased to comment on what has been a busy year for the Association. On the way we have again experienced the generosity of Old Boys who have freely given their time in running the Association and helping to organise the events we had this year, my thanks to you all. Of course these events would not be successful at all if it were not for the Old Boys who attended them so my thanks to you.

And where would we be without the financial support that has been given to the Association, and the School, by a few Old Boys, in particular Colin Corne (WBHS 1961-65), David Dent (WBHS 1968-70), David Silich (WBHS 1958-62) and David Hutley (WBHS 1955-59). Also the 'behind the scenes' work of Eric Angelo, who, together with a number of prominent Old Boys, had a significant part to play earlier this year in the future of the Old Boys' Association. My sincere thanks to you all on behalf of the Association for your involvement and I look forward to maintaining that connection in the years ahead. All of these men lead very busy lives and we are very appreciative of the input they have had to the operation of the Association.

On a personal note it was particularly pleasing to meet David Silich when he was in the country recently. As I said above, David has been a huge supporter of the Association and it was great to finally be able to put a face to the name I had been hearing of for some time.

While it is appreciated that the Association invariably has to rely on the support from a core of members for help from time to time, it is hoped that we can still improve on the overall membership and involvement within the Association.

A strong Old Boys' Association membership and network has many benefits, not the least of which relates directly to the School and it is this relationship that we intend to build on while at the same time maintaining our independence as a separate entity. We all know of the situation that was created last year when organising the Jubilee without a network of Old Boys behind it and we cannot allow this to happen going forward. All I ask is for Old Boys to get involved with their old school, I know it is something that you will not regret.

The proof in the pudding was the Brunker/Scratton dinner held mid-year that was attended by over 120 people. Many at that dinner had not attended an Old Boys' function previously and if the dinner achieved one thing it was to make more people aware that much can be gained from a good night out with other Old Boys. So briefly the year that was went as follows:

We started out in January by organising a working bee to help paint one of the dormitories at Carruth House.

Next came the school swimming sports and the Old Boys again provided the traditional relay team lead by the evergreen Cliff Brunker. The result of the relay is insignificant (I think Old Boys came second to the teachers) but it is great to get this team along every year.

The annual School ANZAC Day celebration was this year held on April 24th and was attended by about 20 Old Boys. This day is traditionally one of the important ones on the Old Boys' calendar.

Then there was the major event of 2007 as far as Old Boys are concerned. The Brunker/Scratton tribute dinner. There is more on this later in the newsletter but can I just reiterate what a great night it was and again extend my thanks to all those who helped with the organisation of the night. It would also be great if we were able to accommodate our Auckland Old Boys at a function in that city but for now we reflect on the year past.

On September 23rd a group gathered at the Vikings Club at Okara Park to watch Northland take on Counties and then enjoy the hospitality of the Vikings, many of who of course are Old Boys.

The Old Boys' Sports Day was held on October 10th and Old Boys were successful in regaining the Matt Gunson Memorial Trophy through some amazing results. Congratulation to all Old Boys who participated.

These days are only successful due to the fact that Old Boys are able to get some time away from work and join in the day's activities. Without their participation there would not be an Old Boys' sports day so you all have the sincere thanks of both the Old Boys' Association and also the School. It is great to be able to maintain a healthy association between the School and its Old Boys and it is hoped that these games will continue well into the future.

The year's activities concluded with the Old Boys' golf day on Nov 23rd. All in all a busy year for the Association but one that we would like to build on for next year. And we hope we can also spread the social aspect of the Association to other centres so if you have any thoughts on this please give me a call. We know that Whangarei is too far away for many but if we are able to arrange something in your own part of the country we would love to be able to.

Finally I would like to thank Greg Weaver, David Templeton, Murray Inder and Rob Dickie for their input and assistance at Committee level during the year. Without you guys we would not have achieved what we have. I would also like to extend the thanks of the Association to Headmaster Al Kirk for his support and energy.

To all Old Boys out there please get involved with your Association. Without you all we would cease to exist. And on that note please take time to read the item on membership elsewhere in the newsletter as it has an offer that might appeal to prospective members. As a noted poet once said 'The times they are a changing' and so is the Association and we hope to come back in 2008 stronger than before with a new committee and lots to build on from 2007.

**Kevin Salmon**

**President/WBHS Old Boys' Association**

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Cliff Brunker, OBA President Kevin Salmon and Dave Scratton at the tribute dinner.



Darin Robinson (WBHS 1978-81), Sam Johnson (WBHS 1981-85), Cliff Brunker (WBHS 1940-45), Grant Clader (WBHS 1970-71), Ryan Gray (WBHS 1996-99).

## HEADMASTER'S COMMENTS

Apart from one small blip, it has been an excellent year at Whangarei Boys' High School where a number of new initiatives were developed and others consolidated. We began the year with a full staff and we started with a new position – Dean of Maori Students, as well as a number of new initiatives for literacy. This year we took photos of a number of male staff members for Blokes can Read posters reminding boys that it is not only ok, but it is encouraged that they should read.

Prefects undertook a book review in every full assembly throughout the year and again the posters of the Prefects and their books were put on display in the library encouraging boys to read those as well.

The Head of Music Ms Virginia Hill worked particularly hard in raising the profile of Music within the school and this year we excelled – having a full 80 boy Carruth House Choir, along with the formation of the Black Jackets (the Prefects, Captains and Champions choir). We also held the inaugural interwhanau singing competition in term 1 and later in term 3 we had the Talent Quest. One of the key highlights of the year no doubt was our extraordinarily successful mid year concert – with a special guest appearance of 2002 Co-Head-boy Liam Mallett.

The academic results of the school were once again sound and the four scholarships we got were certainly well deserved. The focus on boys being in the school and being involved in activities certainly paid dividends and the number

of boys involved in sports teams and interwhanau activities this year is as great if not bigger than most. Our Dads'n'lads Car Rally involving fathers and sons enjoying an orienteering drive around the Whangarei District was a huge success. The Hostel continued to be full throughout the year and commenced the year with

a brand new paint job and a new roof. We are now in the process of removing the coal fired boiler (which has looked after the Hostel well for 80 years) and finally replacing it with gas – much to the delight of the boys, (and all Old Boys!) who had to feed coal to the boiler! The support the school continues to get from its Old Boys is ever growing and one of the great highlights was the testimonial dinner to retired teaching legends Cliff Brunker and Dave Scratton. The academic, sporting and cultural triumphs – including Milan Kostanich representing New Zealand in London (at the World Shakespeare Festival in 2008) as well as the fact that our Hostel is once again full (with a waiting list) certainly indicate that WBHS is in good heart and we look forward very much to 2008.



**A F Kirk**  
**HEADMASTER**

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES CHAIRMAN



It is good to have the chance to contribute to what will be my first newsletter article as Chairman of the Board of Trustees, having taken up the role in March this year. I recently gave an address to the senior prize-giving and felt that some of the subject matter may be of interest to you.

The previous board had their share of challenges over the last few years and have left the school

in good heart. I would like to acknowledge their efforts and I extend my appreciation to them on your behalf.

Now to this years Board which has a broad range of experience which I believe will serve the school well:

- James Nair, is a Chartered Accountant.
- The PTA representative is Alison Jacobson and Staff representative, Gerardine McCarrison.
- Ann Neha has a nursing background.
- Tony Savage is a practicing solicitor.
- Dick Shepherd has a Military background and is an Old Boy of the School.
- Paki Jones Chairs the Maori Focus Group
- Te Hira Baker is the student representative
- My own background as a Chartered Accountant with some 30 years commercial experience will hopefully add something to the mix.

As a “new kid on the block” I would like to give you some first impressions of the school and the education system generally, or more specifically the funding of it and the seemingly never ending task of making ends meet!

Without adequate resources we cannot run an effective organisation, and our children's education will inevitably suffer. In my view it is just not realistic to expect schools to fund

operating deficits from their own resources. Maybe in election year we can expect some respite or is that just me being cynical!

Another thing which has struck me is the dedication and commitment of the teaching staff. Without exception they put in long hours, are committed to their profession, operate in difficult circumstances at times and don't really get much thanks at the end of the day. I would like to assure them that their efforts are appreciated.

Several construction projects have been completed during the last year.

The provision of a new sick bay facility was a priority project for 2007. The facility has been named “Te Awatea”—the awakening! A fourth computer room for student use has been developed in the old Art room. The female toilets in the staff room received a much needed renovation earlier in the year.

Construction of the new “Joe Morgan” memorial lounge at Carruth House is planned to commence in February 2008 and fundraising is currently underway.

I am certainly appreciative and grateful for all the support the School has received from it's Old Boys, and I hope the relationship that has been built up over the past couple of years will see that support continue. I have come to realise after my first few months in the job that having an active Old Boys' network is important to the overall success of the School and I look forward to having the opportunity to meet a number of you during my time as Chairman.

A special thanks also to Headmaster, Al Kirk whose drive and enthusiasm continues to motivate us all.

Best wishes to all for the festive season and for a successful new year.

Thank you.

**Jim Smillie**  
**CHAIRMAN**



## ARCHIVES...

A major part of the essence of the WBHS Old Boys' Association is to preserve the history of the School and make it freely available to all the School's Old Boys. So along those lines the WBHS Old Boys' Association is pleased to announce that through two grants received from the Lion Foundation and the Trusts Charitable Trust we have been able to purchase the massive collection of photographic negatives that were being held by Graeme and Dorothy Palmer. Many of you will recall that T G Palmer & Sons were the School photographers for many years and these negatives date back as far as 1924 and up to 1973. We are extremely grateful that Dorothy made contact with us before these negatives may have been destroyed and that we were able to purchase them. The School Archives did not have a very extensive record of class photos or sports photos from these eras and it is pleasing that we have been able to help the School update these records.

And the School is also very lucky to have a former teacher by the name of Don Gwilliam who has taken on the task of developing each of these negatives so that we will have a permanent record that can be perused by Old Boys. Certainly also it allows us to offer Old Boys the opportunity to restore any photos they may like to have from years gone by. We are not yet aware of the extent of the negatives and as there are literally hundreds of them it will take a couple of months before we can produce any sort of index for them. However once we do we will be more than happy to see if we can accommodate any Old Boy with a missing photo from yesteryear.

And while we are on the topic, a couple of words about Don Gwilliam. Don is the Archivist here at Whangarei Boys' High School albeit on a volunteer basis. He was a teacher for 30 years from 1973 to 2002 so many of you will have passed through his technical classes. Don has an avid interest in photography so during his time here he took on the added responsibility of photographing as much of the School activities as he could, so we now have a myriad of photos from the mid-seventies to the current days. Don does a lot of the work associated with looking after current school photos wherever they appear on walls in the School and just recently finished a time consuming job in realigning all the photos in the Carruth dining room. He has an indepth knowledge of the School's history so if you need to know something about the School, Don can tell you, and if he can't then it probably isn't worth knowing. The Association would like to acknowledge the work that Don does and thank him for his contribution to the School.

*One issue we will have going forward is to make sure that we store the negatives safely. If anybody has any thoughts on this please get in touch with Greg Weaver.*



*Don Gwilliam, inspecting one of the negatives that have been purchased.*

## CARRUTH HOUSE DORM PAINTING

Back in January 2007 a group of Old Boys gave up some of their time to help paint Dorm 1 of Carruth House. This was an exercise that was long overdue and the end result was a significant improvement. And this was only achieved through volunteers giving up their time over three days to help get the job done and also those others who very kindly donated equipment and money. Of note we should mention David Dent (WBHS 1968-70) who very kindly sent over some funds from Scotland to 'buy the boys a beer' and Shannon Henson (WBHS 1993-95) of Bayleys Real Estate who made a significant contribution towards the paint. Also former teacher Ted Edwards (WBHS 1931-34) who fronted up with a dozen bottles of his finest home brew for the workers to enjoy at the end of the day, and then proceeded to strip off his shirt and get stuck in. Not bad for someone 90-odd years young but it did cause some others palpitations when he shimmied up a ladder to do some cleaning. Good on ya Ted!

Other Old Boys who came along during the three days it took to finish the job were Murray Inder, Dave Templeton, Greg Weaver, Daniel Morales, Zac Leitch and Tim Caldwell. Thank you to you all for putting your hand up.



*Standing left to right; Lou Holloway, Al Kirk, Ted Edwards and sitting in front is teacher Ian Palmer. Photo courtesy of The Whangarei Leader*

# YOUR WBHS OBA COMMITTEE FOR 2008



**Kevin Salmon (WBHS 1975-77)**

I felt like the most average kid in school, 15th out of 31 in 3C, 4C and 5C. I left school and went into the travel industry, a career that I stayed in for 25 years. I am now a sales consultant for Ryan Builders. I have been very fortunate to have travelled the world many times but I have always made Whangarei my home. I am very proud of my connections with the school and have enjoyed my involvement with the association, take some time you might enjoy the experience as well.



**Rob Dickie (WBHS 1944-48)**

I was a Carruth boy keen on rugby, track athletics, and cadets at school. Graduated from The Royal Military College Duntroon in 1952, became a NZ Army officer qualified as a professional engineer and saw service in Vietnam. I retired from the army in 1980 as a Colonel. In 1983 I served a three year contract with the Hong Kong Government, five years with The Ports Authority of Fiji. I now live with my wife Dale on a lifestyle property in Glenbervie. I was awarded an OBE in 1975 and am a retired Fellow of Professional Engineering Institutions in UK, in NZ and HK.



**John Williamson (WBHS 1961-65)**

After years in the farming sector & as a Northtec tutor, I now grow Avocado's, have a dog boarding business & property development. I am involved in a number of community committees & initiatives. Carruth offered me great opportunities academically & in sport which benefited me greatly in my adult life. Initiation traditions of boxing & singing in front of the whole hostel & of the leavers being thrown in the pool in their pyjamas on their last day are lasting memories. You grew up in a very public way!! I was also part of the first school-boy rugby tour to Australia in 1963.



**Mike Lee WBHS (1971-74)**

Had many jobs since leaving WBHS but currently working for local firm Harrison's Carpets. I am currently President of the OBRU and Sports club which started as High School Old Boys. In my years at WBHS I was an average student with a great interest in all things sporting. My main memories are being clipped around the ear by either Bruncker or Scratton for flicking my hair at swimming or having them waiting behind me with the cane when we had to climb the ropes at gym class. I look forward to contributing to the OBA.



**David Templeton (WBHS 1971-73)**

On 07/02/1971, I moved into Carruth House, the following three years help shaped me, some would say not enough. I have fond memories of my colleagues during those years. I enjoy the opportunities to touch base and to keep in contact and the OBA has enabled me to do that. My involvement with the OBA comes from a desire to provide opportunities for all Old Boys to keep in contact, and to raise funds to support the school in ways directed by the OBA. I live in Whangarei and work with Enterprise Northland the Economic Development Agency.



**Aaron Moore (WBHS 1985-89)**

As a keen sportsman I represented the school in Rugby, Basketball & Volleyball. I was a proud member of Carruth House and in 1989 was Deputy Head Prefect of the house. After leaving school in 1989 I studied Applied Arts at Northtec. In 2002 I moved back to Whangarei after living in Hamilton, and now run a creative agency called Fix Creative with my partner Sasha Webb. During our 'spare time' we help coach and run the Northland Little League Baseball club. The club has grown to include over 170 children, NZ's second largest club.



**Greg Weaver (WBHS 1971-75)**

Returned to Whangarei after working in Wellington for 28 years. The rewards of this have been endless and not the least of which has been the chance to meet up with former teachers and old school mates. The new acquaintances I have made simply add to the mix and every Old Boy has a good story to tell about the ol' days. There are good times ahead for the Association and I am glad to be able to contribute.



**Grant Shaw (WBHS 1983-87)**

My best memory was touring Singapore and Malaysia with the 1st XI hockey team. I am now married with ten year old twin boys. I have been working in the banking industry for 20 years and am currently manager of the ASB in Walton Street. I represented Northland in hockey and now help coach young hockey players in Whangarei. I am involved in the Young Enterprise scheme for schools and am a member of the Board of Trustees at our local primary.



**Murray Inder WBHS (1959-63)**

Upon leaving school I took up an apprenticeship with MM Bagent & Co. Ltd, as a hand compositor for five years. I have remained in the printing industry ever since except for a three year stint as a traffic officer in the early 70s'. I have owned printing businesses in Whangarei and Paihia since 1976 culminating with my current business Inprint Graphics, which caters for general printing, graphic design and die cutting.



## MEMBERSHIP

We now have a strong group driving the Association upfront plus a number of other prominent Old Boys behind the scenes and we would like to acknowledge the work that Eric Angelo is doing for us. The Association has taken great heart from the many Old Boys who have participated in or attended events this year, some of who have not been involved for many years. It is this sort of support that we would like to build on.

As mentioned many times over the past year or so, we need not only your participation in events and functions but also the financial support of fully paid members. While we do have a number of Life Members, it is the annual memberships that give us the cashflow to operate. Without them, the Association will struggle to function, it as simple as that.

So what can we do that might trigger your interest in becoming a financial member? If there is anything in particular please let us know. We do have some new initiatives underway that we hope will make membership in the Association an attractive proposition. Specifically they are:

- ◆ Affiliations with other clubs in Whangarei – namely the Vikings Club, Old Boys' Rugby & Sports Club and the Northland Club
- ◆ Discounted Corporate Membership at the Northland Club
- ◆ A copy of the School magazine, Fideliter, each year.

These coupled with the regular updates provided on activities at the School and for the Association, functions and newsletters.

So please do give it some thought. It is great to be able to keep you all in touch with your old School and it is a relationship that most will admit they enjoy being part of. Help us to ensure it continues by becoming a financial member.

### Northland Club

We are pleased to announce that by being a member of the WBHS Old Boys' Association you can, on the odd occasion, avail yourself of the services of the Northland Club in Porowini Ave. However this is not a permanent arrangement as they too wish to boost their membership. So while you are able to make use of their premises on a couple of occasions they would like to promote themselves. As such they have offered OBA Members a special Corporate Membership rate of \$50 (as opposed to the usual \$80) so they can use the premises as much as they want. This level of membership means that you can then have access to over 300 chartered clubs throughout New Zealand so it is a benefit that might also appeal to all Old Boys.

The Association intends making the Northland Club their home base in 2008 so any meetings or functions in Whangarei will be held there. Your support would be fantastic. Perhaps we can set up a regular 'club night' for Old Boys to get together. Please give it some thought and as always your feedback would be welcome.

### Venerable Old Boys

We also wish to establish an elite class of Old Boy within the Association. Not elite as in they are better than the rest of us but elite for what they have done for the Association. They will be known as 'Venerable Old Boys' and as the name suggests these are Old Boys who have earned the respect of the Association through, for example, deed, gift or age. The actual parameters for this have not yet been determined and when they have we will let you know. To a degree it could be like a hall of fame or a who's who for Whangarei Boys' High School Old Boys.

Further on this in the future.

## FUNDRAISING

In 2003, the School embarked on a fundraising campaign to raise money for three building projects identified as essential elements for the School going forward. Now this topic has been raised many times before and we all know that the campaign was nowhere near as successful as hoped although it did manage to raise something like \$350,000. At this juncture it is not intended to go over how this money has been used but to advise you all of a significant change in the structure of how this money is administered.

Through discussion with a number of Old Boys it became apparent that one of the factors in some of the negativity expressed towards the campaign was that Old Boys were not inclined to make donations as they were under the impression that this money just ended up in the School coffers never to be seen again. The first thing we need to do is totally dispel this myth as this is simply not the case and to also assure Old Boys who made a donation for a specific project that your donation will be used for that project. This campaign was overseen by a Steering Committee that comprised mostly Old Boys and was chaired by Bill Mallett, a past Board of Trustees Chairman and also a well known business personality in Whangarei. Any decision for expenditure of any money went through this committee.

However the concern raised by Old Boys was taken on board by the Steering Committee and this leads us to the change that is to take place.

With the Jubilee well and truly behind us and most pledges made under the Jubilee Campaign umbrella now complete, the decision has been made to wind up the Jubilee Campaign Steering Committee and pass the responsibility for the current unexpended funds and for future fundraising to another body. The recommendation of that Committee was that this function should now pass to the WBHS Old Boys' Association.

And the Association has accepted this responsibility.

In essence what this means is that any gift made by an Old Boy in the future will be banked into a WBHS Old Boys' Association account and will be held in trust until the time comes to help the School with any particular project. Again we must assure you that all funds donated will be kept totally separate from current OBA funds as the purpose for raising the money remains the same – to benefit the School which is, and has always been, the major aspect of our constitution.

The WBHS Old Boys' Association will be registering as a Charitable Trust to formalise the whole change and through this we will enforce the Association's constitution. The balance remaining of all funds raised through the Jubilee Campaign will be passed over to an OBA account and any future gifts will be deposited into that account. We anticipate that in future if the School require funds for a particular project or activity then they will approach the OBA and we will help them to find the funds. This is a very significant change and one which we hope will have your full support.

### News Flash!

Of even more significance is the news that the ceiling for tax relief on donations is soon to be lifted. This will mean that donors will be able to claim rebates for the full amount of their donation. This is wonderful news and one we hope might influence you in considering making a financial gift to one of the projects the OBA will be raising funds for.



# ANZAC Day 2007

The annual School ANZAC Day celebration was this year held on April 24th and was attended by about 20 Old Boys. Former teacher and School Archivist Don Gwilliam gave everybody an insight into some of the letters written by Old Boys back to the School while they were serving overseas. These were taken from our Archive collection and certainly provided a time for reflection. Old Boy Doug Morrison read the Ode and the service concluded as normal with the laying of a wreath at the memorial anchor. This day is traditionally one of the important ones on the Old Boys' calendar and we would urge any Old Boy to come along if he is able to.



*The service concluded as normal with the laying of a wreath at the memorial anchor.*



*Headmaster Al Kirk stands at attention as the bagpipes play in the background. Also pictured are Doug Morrison and Ted Edwards.*



*Old Boy Doug Morrison, 102 years young, reads the Ode at this years ANZAC memorial service. All was progressing well until Doug recognised that the Ode in front of him was not correct but he adjusted very quickly. Doug is a regular attendee at the School's ANZAC Day service and we hope to see him there for some years to come.*



*From left to right Old Boys Bruce Palmer, Bruce MacMillan and Noel Griffin after the ANZAC service.*



## OLD BOYS' RUGBY & SPORTS CLUB (Whangarei) Inc.

# A Long Association with WBHS

The Old Boys' Rugby Football Club was formed in March 1922 after a meeting was held at the Whangarei High School on the first day of that month, with Mr HEG Smith being in the chair. The Fidelity magazine of that year records the following:

*"We have much pleasure in recording the re-entry into Whangarei District football of the High School Old Boys' Club. An attempt to form this Club was made a few years ago, but the Club has been in vacation ever since. It behoves those responsible to see to it that our present organisation does not meet with a similar fate."*

*With both a Senior and a Junior team in the field we are not so far able to record a very long list of victories. But what matter? The Seniors had one glorious victory over United-glorious, but not bloodless-but, even if defeat is suffered each Saturday the ardour of the players remains the same, for we know that improvement must come.*

*We, however, are not pleased to see in the ranks of other clubs the faces of our own Old Boys. In country places we expect our Old Boys to help the organisations of their own districts, but in Whangarei there should be more than one Junior team in the field. There are too many defections.*

*See to it, Old Boys! And next season may we have a really strong Club—quality and quantity."*

The first President was Mr R. Lupton who was Headmaster of the High School at the time. Mr Lupton was only President for two years before ill health forced him to resign, both from the Club and also the School. He was elected as Club Patron in 1924. Both HEG Smith and Roger Lupton have long histories with the School with HEG still holding the record as the longest serving teacher ever (1907-47) and Mr Lupton the longest serving Headmaster (1895-1924).

HEG also served on the committee of the club for the first 25 years of its existence as well as serving as NARU treasurer.

The Club was officially called Whangarei High School Old Boys until it became incorporated in 1952 when the name changed to Old Boys' Rugby Football Club (Whangarei) Inc. The uniform for the seniors was set as black jersey, black pants and socks with gold band around top, very much along the lines of School



Old Boys' Senior Team 1936. Of note is the chap on the far left in the back row, one Eric Blow. Most students, and probably teachers alike, knew him as 'Sticky' Blow as he was a teacher at the School for nigh on 30 years. This would have been longer but for World War II and the further study that he undertook at Oxford University after the war. Also for many years he was the voice behind the microphone at many North Auckland games and served on the Whangarei Rugby Committee for 24 successive years. He died in 1974.

colours. High School Old Boys won its first senior championship in 1923 and since then has won another 15 titles under the High School Old Boys and Old Boys' Rugby club banners.

The Club has had three homes in its long history, firstly at Rugby Park and then Riverside Drive (where the Kingsgate Hotel is now) before moving to its present site in Port Road in 1968. Although rugby is the foundation of the club, they have in the past fielded softball and cricket teams in local competitions and presently have three women's netball sides competing in local senior grades.

With the Club's large clubrooms and playing fields being situated next to Okara Park they are in a prime position and are the envy of many clubs. And although the playing fields are leased from the Whangarei District Council, the actual clubrooms are fully owned by the Club. These boast a large entertaining area, modern bar and kitchen facilities and a view second to none. This facility is available to hire for a large variety of functions.

They have a fully committed management team whose main focus is the welfare of its players and supporters as well as promoting sport as a family past time. And the Club is also keen to work closely with Whangarei Boys' High School to maintain and foster a strong rugby association. They have a strong Junior committee which oversees all junior teams and works closely with the Senior Club Management Committee.

The Club's President, Mike Lee, and his Management Committee would like to invite members of the Old Boys' Association to visit the clubrooms before games at Okara Park or indeed on any Saturday there is a home game at Old Boys during the rugby season and avail themselves of the facilities.

This is a wonderful gesture for Whangarei Boys' High School Old Boys and one we hope many will take advantage of so that we can maintain a relationship that has existed for over 85 years.



Old Boys' Senior Team 1954. Winners of the Senior Championship and Frank Collins Cup

## Tribute to Cliff Brunker & Dave Scratton

On July 21st some 120 Whangarei Boys' High School Old Boys, staff, former staff and friends gathered at the Whangarei Golf Club to pay tribute to two former PE teachers of the School, Cliff Brunker and Dave Scratton. As a teaching partnership these two men had affected the lives of over 10,500 boys who passed through the Whangarei Boys' High School gates between 1958 and 1981. The dinner was organised by the WBHS Old Boys' Association as a sign of respect and gratitude for the influence they had had on the lives of so many Old Boys. The evening commenced with welcome speeches from Old Boys' Association President Kevin Salmon and the School Headmaster Mr Al Kirk. At this juncture recognition was also given to all the Senior Champions of the School who were in attendance plus all the Old Boys who were part of that historic relay run to Wellington in 1981.

A number of Old Boys then gave their recollections of time spent with the two men being honoured. These included Roger Main, who presented Dave with an English Commonwealth Games blazer from 1974, Jim Madden, Ross Auld, Bruce Waters, Mark Wilson and Craig Waalkens. Former staff members Eric Parr and Maurie Dean also recalled memories from times teaching with Cliff and Dave.

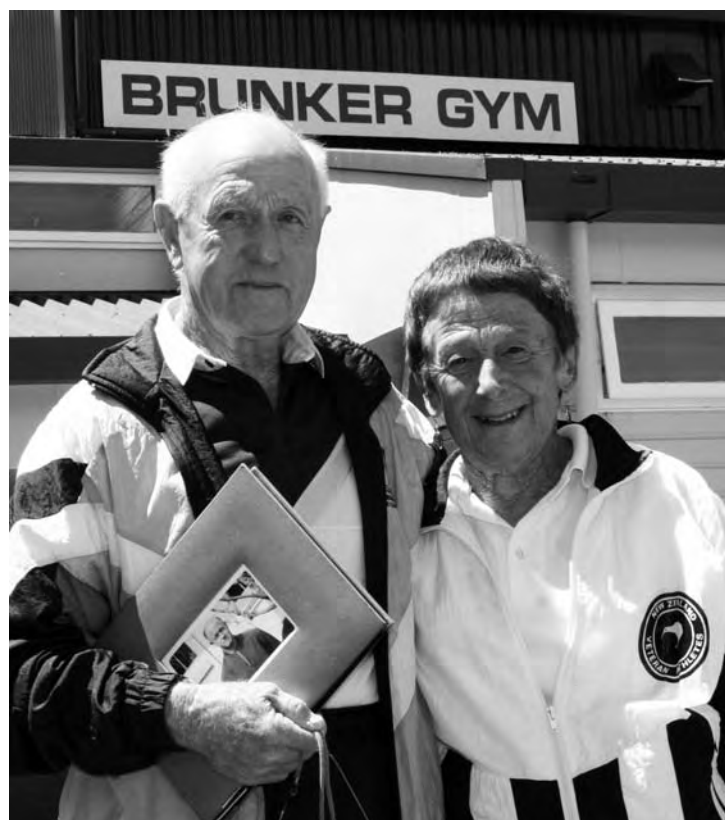
At this stage Kevin Salmon presented Cliff and Dave with Fideliter plaques that had been engraved to mark the occasion. The presentations culminated with Al Kirk announcing that the School's two gymnasiums would be renamed the Brunker Gym and the Scratton Gym as recognition of the huge contribution Cliff and Dave had made to Whangarei Boys' High School.

A formal toast was given by former Deputy Principal Mike Gifford before Cliff and Dave responded to the accolades

that had been made. Each was farewelled from the podium with a standing ovation.

This was certainly a night to remember and one we hope to repeat with other dedications in the future, whether they be in Whangarei or another location. It was a magnificent tribute to two most distinguished men and as proof of the esteem these two men are held in, several Old Boys sent in written tributes from around New Zealand and the world. The Association would like to acknowledge the following for their contribution towards a wonderful occasion. David Templeton, Kevin Salmon, Greg Weaver and Murray Inder for the organisation; Colin Corne and David Hutley for their generous financial support; Sean Brickland for giving up his time to act as MC for the night; the 6 Carruth Boys who came along to act as waiters; Bruce Waters, Jim Madden, Craig Waalkens, Ross Auld, Roger Main, Mark Wilson, Eric Parr and Maurie Dean for sharing your experiences with everyone; to every Old Boy who took the time to send in a written tribute; and finally to everyone who came along and helped us celebrate these two men. Of course it would not have been the success that it was without our guests of honour so a huge thank you to Cliff and Colleen, and Dave and Clarine for their good humour.

Two of the tributes received are repeated here but all tributes were included in two books given to Cliff and Dave when the gyms were formally dedicated. This occurred on November 1st when the 'Brunker Gym' and the 'Skratton Gym' were officially opened by the Headmaster, Mr Al Kirk, in an informal ceremony at the School. The ceremony was kept low key at the request of Cliff and Dave which is testament to the humility of both men. A photo of each man and a plaque referring to his exploits now hang in the entrances of the respective gymnasiums as well as each



*Cliff and Colleen Brunker outside the gymnasium named in Cliff's honour. Cliff is holding the book of tributes that was presented to him on the day.*



*Clarine and Dave Scratton peruse his book of tributes while standing outside the gymnasium named in Dave's honour.*



gym now bearing a huge sign with their names.

*It was a quiet Sunday afternoon at the Hostel the year being either 1958 or 1959. Us hostel lads tended to become bored on Sundays and were usually looking for an exciting diversion, so when word went around that a group of Hells Angels Bikers had parked on the Bypass, a crowd soon gathered on the hill above the creek.*

*Fairly soon a few cheeky comments were made by one or two of the more adventurous boys. After all they felt safe enough on the hill and on school property.*

*Suddenly four of the Bikers appeared from an unexpected direction and us lads found ourselves no longer in possession of the hill. A quick retreat was implemented to an area near the swimming pool with the Bikers in pursuit. After several minutes of standoff somebody went to fetch Dave, who was the duty master that day.*

*Dave burst from the rear door of the prep hall and it was immediately obvious to everyone present that he was a force to be reckoned with. The bikers fled westward, heading for the creek. But one did not flee quickly enough and Dave caught him near the bike-shed behind the Assembly Hall. When we caught up with the action Dave had him backed up against the bike-shed wall with his*



**Colleen and Cliff Brunker.**

*leather jacket bunched up under his chin in one large fist while he explained the time of day to him.*

*The bikers soon disappeared up the bypass, no doubt pleased to put distance between themselves and this wild-man in the green tracksuit who was now standing on the hill, with his arms folded, watching them.*

*That day Dave went from being not just phys-ed teacher and housemaster to us, but he became our hero as well. All the best to Dave and Cliff.*

#### **Doug Windust WBHS 1957-60**

*Both Cliff Brunker and Dave Scratton are inspiring men whose long and dedicated contribution to improving the health of Whangarei youth is now legendary. The personal debt I owe to Cliff Brunker, in particular, is immense and extends far beyond his stunning feat of magic in conjuring (over a 5-year period) a Senior Gymnastics Champion from a frail and bookish third-former who could not manage even a single push-up! My winning of the Ward trophy in my final year at the school was as much a surprise as a personal triumph, perhaps for Cliff as much as for me and my dumb-founded but very pleased parents! But Cliff's gymnastics sessions had a far greater long-term importance and impact on my life; namely, the resulting build-up of my physical strength and stamina, reserves*



**Pictured from left to right Clarine, Roger Main, Dave, Jude and Ross Auld at the dinner.**

*without which I could not possibly have endured through the subsequent years the endless stress and long hours of my professional engineering career as a World Bank consultant in ten different tropical developing countries, nor the physical demands of my present farming, horticulture and forestry projects in Queensland. It is also rather unlikely I would have been able to survive my fairly regular encounters with amoebic dysentery and various other life-threatening tropical diseases nor, indeed, my occasional encounters over the years with life-threatening locals! On one occasion of note, I managed to wrest a machete from the hand of a frenzied madman who suddenly burst into a village meeting intent on decapitating in public his estranged wife (and me as well after I intervened to stop him); - the assailant was much taller than I but, luckily for me, his arms and shoulders had not been through the special Bruncker-hardening process that mine had! Just as had been the case at the 1965 WBHS Gymnastic Championships, the on-lookers were rather surprised that I was the one who emerged the victor! As this incident demonstrates, I owe my life, quite literally, to Cliff Bruncker's excellence as a phys-ed teacher and motivator!*

*I would be honoured if the Old Boys' Association would accept my attached contribution towards the costs of the tribute dinner, together with my congratulations for arranging this so-well-deserved recognition of two great WBHS teachers.*

**Colin P. Corne WBHS 1961-65**



**Past senior gymnastic champions at the dinner are from left Jim Madden, Derek Carver, Cliff Brunker and Ray Marks.**

# TEACHING 2ND GENERATION STUDENTS

The occasion of the Brunker/Scrutton dinner and then the dedication of the two gymnasiums put PE firmly in the limelight for a while as far as Old Boys and the School were concerned. The accolades that were given and stories that were told about those two men were surely occasions that could not be repeated. Well at least not until a certain current PE teacher at the School quipped quite innocently during the gym dedication that he was now teaching 2nd generation family members. Granted this is probably not a unique situation but it certainly makes for an interesting story.

The teacher concerned is Neil Smith and the students who's names cropped up are Kowhai and Ramon Hemara, father and son. We have approached each and they related the following:

## Neil Smith (Teacher 1989–now)



Having joined the staff of Whangarei Boys' High School in 1989 after three years of teaching in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, little did I know that I would still be teaching PE here 19 years later... and still enjoying the job as much as I did all those years ago.

Back then the PE staff comprised Cliff "The Legend" Brunker, Te Wae Piripi and Alan "Stumpy" Lints. I learnt so much from these three and still appreciate the friendship, support and camaraderie of the department of those early days. One of the first classes I taught in 1989 was my Form 5 PE class. I had looked at the roll and knew that the first roll check would be interesting as I had no experience with Maori pronunciation. With my heavy Aussie accent I started the roll. Working my way through the A's, B's, C's and D's my confidence was building as the names seemed to come out as they should with each boy answering with a polite "Yes Sir"... until I arrived at the H's, took a breath and bumbled out "Ko-way He-mara". The boys burst into laughter and I remember looking down at a smiling boy who said "It is Kor-fai sir". The smile on that boy was ever present throughout that year, and the student, who I took a real liking to because of his smile and attitude to physical activity was Kowhai Hemara. Kowhai loved his PE, particularly Touch, thrived on competition and to this day is a student who has a place in my very pleasant memories of those early years at WBHS.

I taught another Hemara as a Year 10 boy in 2005. Ramon was a tall boy, very long hair kept neatly in a pony tail, also very good at Touch, with a real talent for most sports and a constant smile. I didn't make the connection until this year, when as Grey Whanau Leader I had to ring home about Ramon's enjoyment of spending time with his mate Stevie Chapman being greater than his enjoyment of spending time in some classes (I note though that they never ever missed a period of PE). When I looked up the home phone number and parent contact I was pleasantly surprised to see the name of Kowhai Hemara. I had a good catch up with Kowhai.

I suddenly feel older!! Two generations already. Do me a favour Ramon. Wait quite a few years before starting a family. I can imagine a time in the not too distant future when a young

sporting Maori boy with a big smile arrives in my Year 9 class and as I call the roll and get to the H's, I call his name and after he politely replies "Yes Sir" I add "Hey young Hemara, do you know I taught your grandfather?"

## Kowhai Hemara (WBHS 1987–1989)

My name is Dyne Kowhai Hemara. Over 19 years ago I went to Whangarei Boys' High School from 1987 to 1989. I had Neil Smith as my Physical Education teacher in 5th Form. He was very passionate about his teachings in PE and instilled a competitive spirit that brought out our best and helped us to reach our potential. When I was at school I remember my impression of Neil was that he



was very tall and should have been a basketball player. My wife and I became parents at the age of 18 and have a son called Ramon Hemara. He also has attended Whangarei Boys' High School, and had the pleasure of Neil being his Whanau Leader of Grey House. I had to meet with Neil on a matter concerning my son this year (2007). I recognised Neil and was surprised that he was still teaching at the school after 19 years. He remembered who I was and we had a brief catch up. I am proud of his commitment to the school and this shows when he has taught boys and also their children. Well done Neil lets see if you can give the School many more years.

## Ramon Hemara (WBHS 2004–07)

My name is Ramon Hemara. I attended Whangarei Boys' High School from 2004 to 2007. I had Neil Smith as my Whanau Leader (Grey House). I found Mr Smith always supported and encouraged us to try our best and do well, especially in Rugby and Touch Rugby. I enjoy rugby and am very competitive myself in this sport. I have just learnt that Neil also taught my father 19 years ago WOW! I never thought that a teacher would stay at a school and teach that



long. Especially teaching me and had also taught my father. My younger brother Kaydin Hemara will be attending Whangarei Boys' High School in 2009, it will be amazing if he also has Neil as a teacher. I would like to wish Neil well for his future.

## Obituary

It is with sadness that the OBA has to record the passing of 'Mr Entertainment Whangarei' Paul Newberry (WBHS 1937-38). Paul passed away on 23rd December. He will always be remembered for his acrobatics, as owner of Newberry's Funeral home and for his long association with NZ weightlifting. Our condolences go out to his family.



## OLD BOYS REGAIN THE MATT GUNSON MEMORIAL TROPHY



The Old Boys were successful in regaining the Matt Gunson Memorial Trophy through some amazing results on Old Boys' sports day, this year held on October 10th. Not the least of which was the Old Boys' rugby team who gave the School 1st XV a lesson in running rugby winning 45-5 and also the Old Boys' shooters who unexpectedly beat the recently crowned NZ Secondary School champions.

Old Boys also managed to win the soccer 2-0, the hockey 5-4 and the basketball by 9 points. The only loss incurred was at the



indoor cricket where School pipped Old Boys by one run.

After the games there was an aftermatch function in the Assembly Hall where each Old Boys team nominated the School players of the day for each sport. Awards were presented by Headmaster Al Kirk. This was followed by presentation of the Matt Gunson Memorial Trophy to Old Boys' Association Committee Member Dave Templeton who was very gracious in his acceptance speech. Before afternoon tea was served Carruth House performed a haka. Then all players were able to enjoy refreshments from the excellent spread provided, before adjourning to the staff room to enjoy some of the Headmaster's shout that is customary at these functions.

We are hopeful that we can transfer this day to a weekend to make it easier for Old Boys to attend and to also stay afterwards to mingle with other Old Boys and players.



## OLD BOYS' GOLF DAY 2007

This was held on Friday 23rd November in excellent conditions at the Mt Denby course in Whangarei. There was a marvellous field of 87 people playing which was outstanding, although it did cause some headaches for the club authorities as the number exceeded what had been indicated. The result was a longer than usual time to play an 18 hole ambrose with teams of three but, while there were some grumbles in the first couple of hours, things picked up in the 2nd nine and it was apparent that golfers were relieved to get back to the clubrooms for a cup of tea. This year's tournament had a special theme and that was to support the proposed 1st XV trip to Samoa next year. The School organisers were pleased to announce that, through sponsorship and high ticket sales, a total close to \$3,000 was raised towards this trip. Also it was pleasing to see that all golfers who attended the prize giving walked away with a prize. So keep an eye out for this day in 2008 and be sure to put it in your diary.

From a WBHS Old Boys' Association perspective it is noteworthy that the best gross score of 62 (or 10 under par!) went to a team made up predominantly of Old Boys. Predominantly because one of their members was a mate (who just happened to be a scratch golfer). That team was 'Pete's Team' consisting of Pete Weaver (WBHS 1975-79), Duncan Leigh (WBHS 1975-79) and Darren Allen.

We would like to acknowledge the following businesses and individuals who sponsored money and/or prizes for the event: Arnold Franks; Pip Howard & Allens Realty; ASB; Northland Computer Solutions; NAC Insurance; Northland Park Care; RX Plastics; GJ Gardner Homes; International Stevedoring; Lloyd Budd and Bayleys Real Estate; Lion Nathan Sport Club; Northland Vegetation; Pete Wellington; Northland Rugby Union; Wilkinson Sports; Annette Kapa; WBHS Old Boys' Association; Heather Ferguson and Dean Crowe.



*Steph & Paul Butturini, Jan Batger*



*Pete Weaver, Darren King, Duncan Leigh*



*Mike Lee, Craig Gunson, Paul Cotton*

# School News 2007

Below are some of the results of activities held at the School during 2007 and also special mention of some individual performances by the boys. As each year passes the abundance of talent that the School possesses in the performing arts becomes even more evident and the need for better facilities to help them reach their potential becomes even more essential. For the uninitiated as to the School layout these days, the music and drama classes are actually held in the oldest building that exists at either the Girls' or Boys' School, that being the old gymnasium for some, or the old tech block for others. It would be fantastic if we, as the WBHS Old Boys' Association, can find the wherewithall to get a purpose-built facility for these boys to study and perform in.

The Association would like to congratulate all boys who participated on behalf of the School this year, whether it be on the sports field, on the stage or in the classroom. Whatever you were involved in you are maintaining a tradition started many years ago of getting 'stuck in' and carrying on that age old saying – 'Good Boys' High Stuff'. Well done to you all.

## Sports Results



### Hockey

After finishing second in the round robin competition, the 1st XI struggled a little in post-season play and finished the season in 5th position. On the positive side though WBHS had two boys selected for the Northland Senior Men's Hockey Squad.

Congratulations to Tom Keogh and Ferdinand Von Oertzen. Zane Adams was not considered because of injury. Well done guys.

### Rugby

The 1st XV just missed in its bid to retain the Under 18 title they won last year losing 7 -0 to Te Rarawa in the final. However WBHS pride was restored by the JB9 team who won their title. Well done to all players.



### Soccer

Whangarei Boys' High are now officially the Northland Secondary School Soccer Champions. Well done boys.



## Sports Awards

In the ASB Northland Secondary School Sports Awards the School had 28 finalists over 17 different codes. Code winners from Whangarei Boys' High School were:

*Ryan Smith—Athletics track and Cross Country*  
*Simon Knight—Badminton*  
*Joshua Matthews—Cricket*  
*Sam Weston—Cycling*  
*Aiden Carr—Karate*  
*Thomas Nobes—Pistol Shooting*  
*Scott Lewis—Squash*  
*Marcus Hansen—Yachting*  
*Aiden Rudolph—Swimming*

The greatest achievement for the night was that Marcus Hansen won the ASB Northland Secondary Schools Sportsman of the Year award.

The following WBHS students were named as finalists in the Genesis Energy Northland Sportsperson of the Year Awards in their respective codes. This is the premier event on the Northland sporting calendar, celebrating the achievements and service to sport of Northland's sportspeople.

*Ryan Smith—Athletics*  
*Sam Weston—Cycling*  
*Matthew Baird—Karate*  
*Aidan Carr—Karate*  
*Simon Parker—Swimming*

Of these Sam Weston and Aidan Carr were recognised as the best in Northland in their chosen sports.

And finally in the Tai Tokerau Maori Sports Awards WBHS had four finalists out of the eight nominated for the Junior Male Sportsperson Award -Thomas Mackie; Paddy Joe Atkins; Aidan Carr; Aiden Rudolph – with Aidan going on to be named the Ngati Hine Health Trust Junior Male Sportsperson of the Year.

### Athletics

Bledisloe was the overall winner of this years athletics sports with 412 points. Carruth was second on 363, Grey 3rd on 325, Marsden 4th on 312 and Hobson on 234.



There were no new records set and Individual Champions were:

**Junior:** 1st Jessie Wilson (Grey), 2nd Alec Widdowson (Bledisloe), 3rd= Ryan Carter (Bledisloe), Thomas Mackie (Carruth), David Nair (Bledisloe)

**Intermediate:** 1st Symon Whittaker (Bledisloe), 2nd= Jeremy Mitchell (Grey), Damien Clark (Grey)

**Senior:** 1st Steven Percy (Bledisloe), 2nd Royd Hodgson (Bledisloe), 3rd Ryan Smith (Bledisloe)



## Swimming

There were only two Houses in the running for the overall champion with Grey finally getting ahead of Carruth to take the title. Grey finished with 296 points, Carruth 264, then Bledisloe on 169, Hobson 165 and Marsden 160. Obviously very close amongst the also-rans. Individual Champions:



**Senior:** 1st Aaron Millar (Grey), 2nd Simon Parker (Grey), 3rd Martin Baker (Hobson)

**Intermediate:** 1st Aiden Rudolph (Grey), 2nd Dylan French (Carruth), 3rd Nick Wheaton (Carruth)

**Junior:** 1st Michael Cate (Bledisloe), 2nd Lee Corkill (Marsden), 3rd Charlie Bradford (Carruth)

**New Records:** There was an amazing ten new records set. We are unable to list those here but Aaron Millar set four of them, Aiden Rudolph five and Dylan French one. Great effort by all three boys. If you are curious as to whether one of your records is still standing please contact Greg Weaver to check it out.

The WBHS Old Boys' Association was again represented in the traditional end of day relay against the teachers and students through a team organised by Cliff Brunker. We are not sure of the result here but one of the swimmers, Grant Calder, reckons he will make the trip over from Aussie each year just to swim in the event. Now there's dedication for you.

## Cricket

In the past WBHS has nurtured cricket talent that has gone on to higher representative honours including at National level. Names such as Bob Cunis and Matthew Bell spring to mind. Well there has been a young man at the School who has early on signalled his intention to join these men. His name is Henry Cooper and we are astounded to report that he recently scored



a remarkable 180 for the 2nd XI in a Reserve Grade game against the Dargaville club side. As far as we can tell, no-one has recorded as big a score for any Boys' High team in Whangarei senior cricket for the last twenty (and probably many more) years. And Henry's feat is all the more astounding as he is only a Year 9 (or 3rd Form to the oldies) student! And where does this talent come from? Well it was not surprising to hear that he is the son of Old Boy and representative cricketer Barry Cooper (WBHS 1972-76). We look forward to this young man's progress in the years to come.

## Scholastic Results

- ◆ Carruth Head Boy Shaun Kennedy won the zone final of the Rotary sponsored Rishworth Speech contest and finished up 3rd overall at the final in Wellington.

- ◆ The 2007 Dux of the School is Brian Hill and with the proxime accessit Corey Sterling.

- ◆ The Senior Debating Team (Shaun Kennedy, Jamie Chisnall and James van Rooyen) did win the Northland Secondary Schools competition defeating Pompallier College in the final.



- ◆ School bands finished first and second in the "Rock Quest" and the School had seven bands through to the Regional finals.

- ◆ One of our students has once again been successful in the Shakespeare arena. Last year Paul Waggott and Joel Stanners were selected to represent New Zealand in the Shakespeare festival in Australia and this year we have Milan Kostanich who has been selected as one of 24 New Zealand students in the Young Shakespeare Company who will be travelling to London next July to study, rehearse and perform at Shakespeare's Globe. They will also perform at Stratford Upon-Avon during the three week trip. Our congratulations go to Milan.



## Scholarships (2006)

At the start of 2007 the School was pleased to announce that four scholarships had been won by three of our 2006 students – Aaron Kearney won a scholarship in Classics, Paul Waggott (Headboy) won a scholarship in English and Andrew Donald (Dux 2006) picked up two scholarships - one in Latin and one in Statistics and Modelling.

### Other scholarships also included:

WEDG Scholarships (Local businesses): Rhys Dwyer & Mitchell McConaghie. Chancellor Award for Top Maori Scholars (The University of Auckland): Nathan Pitman. Tearaway School Leaver Scholarships (The University of Waikato): Joshua Allan and Jackson Nightingale.

## Final House Result

The House points board displays something that maybe of 'collectable' status for some Old Boys. Not only has Bledisloe triumphed as the top House for the year but Carruth has finished in last place. We are not sure which event is more incredible. Congratulations to all the Bledisloe Boys!



# THEN & NOW...

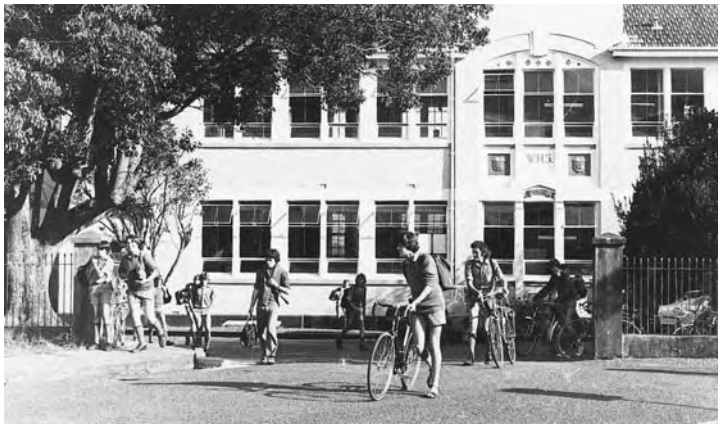
## Bus Parade

Up until the mid-1980s boys were required to attend bus parade in the quad prior to going to buses. A number of the buses in those days were driven by teachers at the School and names like Don Gwilliam, Rod Watson, Mike Curran and Reg Shaw spring to mind as bus drivers in the latter years of this regime. The photo here actually shows the last bus parade that was held as the buses were being 'retired'. The new bus bay that was opened in 2006 is in stark contrast. The boys, and girls, are supposed to line up at their allotted bus and are not allowed to board until the driver, not a teacher, is satisfied that they are 'well behaved'.



## 3.30pm.

Things don't change much from year to year here as once that bell goes at 3.30pm boys are off. The first photo is from 1980 and the 2nd from 2007.



## Fideliter Band

The original Fideliter Band was first formed in 1954 with a band of seven players that grew to 26 in 1955 under the instruction of teacher John Ford. They were often seen playing at the School sports day, barracks week, ANZAC Day and at school music festivals. Their repertoire probably mostly included marches and hymns with a few classics thrown in. This photo is of the 1957 vintage of the band. Compare that to the Fideliter Jazz band as it exists today, well at least in 2004. This photo was taken after the band, which included members from Girls' High, had performed at the Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell for the 2004 Bay of Islands Jazz Festival. Their performance was so good they were recalled for two encores. A credit to the music director and instructor Virginia Hill, a teacher at Whangarei Boys' High School who can be seen seated centre left. The Band continues to entertain at most School functions like prize-givings, assemblies and other social events.





## Tug o' War

In the 1980s Cliff Bruncker supervises the tug of war in the quad. In 2007 things have become a little more civilised and the tug of war is held down on the field.



## Athletics Day

Many will remember the special event that was the annual athletics sports day. There was always a large turnout of spectators and supporters which on occasion reached 2,500-3,000 people. It was certainly an impressive sight to see all the spectators lined down the Western Hills side of the Boys' High field with all their cars lined up elsewhere on the field. The tradition at the conclusion of the sports day was that each House would undertake a ceremonial march past headed by the overall winners from each School. Here we have a picture of the final march past by teams at the end of the day in 1952, in this case it is Marsden House. Fast forward to 2007 and it is a different story. Parents these days are simply too busy working to be able to drop everything and attend a sports day. Also gone are the amalgamated sports with the Girls' School and each school now holds their own sports day. And while these traditions may now be history, the quality of athletes isn't and Whangarei Boys' High School continues to provide some of Northland's top athletes, this year Ryan Smith has been to the fore.



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Working Bee

Well not so much as a working bee but more of a 'database bee' just like we had back in 2005. The purpose of this is two-fold. Firstly, we need to get all the correct new postal codes onto the database by July 2008. We currently have the old ones only and our mail will go nowhere from July if we do not have the right postal codes. Secondly, we need to add the names of Old Boys from recent years to the database. It is anticipated that this will happen on a Saturday morning if we get enough volunteers so if you are able to give the Association some of your time around March or April that would be most appreciated.

Please get in touch with Greg Weaver if you are able to and he will add you to the list and keep you informed of times etc.

### WBHS Old Boys' Association Patron

As we are now getting our house in order with the changes that are taking place leading into 2008, there is one issue that has not been resolved since the OBA was re-instituted some 4 years ago. That is the matter of Patron of the Association. Historically this has been the current Headmaster of the School so it is with pleasure that we can announce that the School's Headmaster Mr Al Kirk has agreed to fulfil this role for us and we welcome him. With

this goes full committee rights and no doubt we will see Al at meetings throughout the year. More importantly we trust that his pockets are not too deep when the time comes.

### Otago University Old Boys

We hear through the grapevine, whose name is David Tod, that WBHS Old Boys are forming a club of their own at Otago University. David tells me that they tried to get one going this year but it was late in the year and with exams just around the corner many of the prospective members chose study over partying. However moves are afoot to give it another go next

year. So if you are attending Otago University, contact Cole Rudolph on 0274641821, email [udco183@student.otago.ac.nz](mailto:udco183@student.otago.ac.nz) or Aaron Kearney on 027 349 2699 email [kearnige@gmail.com](mailto:kearnige@gmail.com).

There is also a Bebo site dedicated to WBHS Old Boys Dunedin so check it out.

The OBA thinks this is a great idea and will give whatever support we can. And we can hardly wait to hear about the successes, or failures, of any Old Boys from the deep south.

### Congratulations to:

Michael Hill (WBHS 1952-55) for hosting a wonderful NZ Golf Open at his Hills course near Arrowtown.

## WBHS CHAMPION SHOOTING TEAM

This year has been an extremely successful one for the Whangarei Boys' High School Clay Target Shooting Teams, culminating in being officially recognised as the best secondary school clay target shooting team in the country. In national competitions the WBHS team won the SPL/Winchester Inter-schools Challenge Trophy for the first time since its inception. The previous holders were Tauranga Boys' High. And to cap it off they were also crowned the New Zealand Secondary School's Clay Target Points Score Teams Event Champions. A lengthy title but these boys are fully deserving of

any accolades that come their way. They have consistently been the best this year not just in Northland, but also at any tournament they went to in other parts of the country.

The No.1 team of Nick Gavin, Daniel Erceg (Captain), Brent Martin, Ethan Erceg & Rhys Were have been simply outstanding this year and one we are sure will be enjoyed by many Old Boys. And if having the best team in the country isn't enough, the WBHS 2nd team also generally finished in the top three in the same competitions, eventually coming 2nd overall in the Northland Fish & Game competition. The

members of the 2nd team were Ian King, Hayden Coote, Hugh McKenzie, Matthew King and Tim Mannion and Jay Luca. A member of that team, Hugh McKenzie, actually won the NZ Kilwell Postal Competition.

All these results speak for themselves and it seems that the School will be well served with shooters in the years to come. We should also acknowledge the



fantastic job done by the parent management team consisting of Chris Erceg, Mike Newson and Annette Erceg whose contribution to the teams' success was huge.

Some may say that a team of champions will always beat a champion team. This might be so in some sports (eg hockey) where individual efforts and players can win games. But in shooting every team member must perform for the team to be successful and in the case of this shooting team Whangarei Boys' High School has a champion team made up of champions. They may not have won the Best Team prize at the ASB secondary school sports awards a month or two ago but as far as the WBHS Old Boys' Association is concerned they are 'simply the best'.



Brent Martin, Rhys Were, Ethan Erceg, Daniel Erceg, Nick Gavin.  
Photo courtesy of the Whangarei Leader.

## TWO SCHOOL STALWARTS RETIRE

*This year sees the School saying farewell to two legends – both long serving Heads of Departments. No doubt there are many Old Boys who will have been part of their classes over the years. The WBHS Old Boys' Association wishes them both all the very best for the future.*

The first is Keith Ross who retires after 28 years service as Head of History. Keith came to the School in 1979 from Christchurch Boys' High School and has done a sterling job as Head of the History Department ever since. He was an active Rugby and Cricket coach for many years as well as a Sports Administrator and he also was the Year 11 Dean for 15 years.



The second legend is Rod Watson. Rod came to WBHS in 1975 as a Science/Chemistry teacher. He leaves as Head of the Science Faculty. Rod has coached numerous Rugby teams, undertaken overseas trips with sports teams, been Year 13 Dean, Bus Controller, Red School Bus Driver, fitness fanatic – the list goes on! During 2007 Rod has tried his hand at selling Real Estate and has decided to take it up fulltime. We wish him every success.



## Newsletter Costs

*Once again we are very grateful for the financial support we have received that has allowed us to produce this newsletter. In this case it is with a very generous gift from Old Boy David Silich without which you would not now be receiving this newsletter. Any contribution that other Old Boys might like to make towards these costs would be very much appreciated. While we have tried to cut costs by printing in one colour and also getting an excellent deal on some paper, NZ Post conspired against us by raising their postage costs during the year and it is simply the cost of despatching 7,000 newsletters once they are printed that sets us back the most. So if you can see your way clear to make a contribution towards these costs, fantastic.*

**Preparation and printing-\$3,625.03**

**Collating and stapling-\$1,516.25**

**Flow wrapping, addressing, postage-\$5,983.75**

*And as far as David Silich is concerned, it would be fair to say that you will become the first member of our Venerable Old Boys' Club.*