

HONOS PER ARDUA

2021



Huntley School
MARTON, NEW ZEALAND

News for Old Boys and Girls, Parents and Friends of Huntley School

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This magazine is produced by the Huntley Old Boys and Girls Association. If you would like to contribute or advertise in future issues of Honos Per Ardua, we'd love to hear from you at obga@huntley.school.nz.

FROM THE HEADMASTER

I am thrilled with the academic progress all of our students have made over the past year.

There has been much said about the decline in science, mathematics, reading, and writing nationwide over the past few years. After the enforced lockdown period in 2020, learning was certainly looking bleak for students across the country. Across New Zealand in 2019, pre Covid-19, just 35% of year 8 students achieved 'at' or 'above' the national curriculum expectation in writing. 56% of year 8 students achieved 'at' or 'above' in reading and 45% were 'at' or 'above' in mathematics. Only 20% of year 8 students achieved 'at' or 'above' in science.

Compare this to our school where in 2020, 96% of our year 8 students were achieving at or above expectations in science, 90% in reading, 58% in writing and 80% in mathematics, even after the lockdown period. This is due to the real education we offer; small classroom sizes, specialist teachers and a culture where it's cool to do your very best academically.

Our teachers raise student achievement by conferencing with them, teaching them, playing games with and against them, setting goals, holding class meetings and learning what makes them tick. And it does not stop in the confines of a four walled classroom. Our staff eat lunch with the students and help them with table manners and good eating habits. Staff are required to coach sport and run activities from 3.30pm to 5.00pm every day. They are committed to their teams and have high expectations. It is not uncommon to see teachers rolling their arm over in the nets, cycling alongside students, hitting balls on the tennis courts or accompanying them on the piano. Our duty staff eat breakfast and dinner with the boarders, supervise prep and spend time with them during the evening and on weekends.

All these facets of a Huntley education help us to get to know the students in our care. We know how they performed in a recent test, what food they dislike, how many runs they scored on Saturday, how many positives they have and who they like to hang out with. My staff and I pride ourselves on being the best we can, are passionate about what we do, and care about the students. You won't find a harder working team.

The success, strength and development of Huntley school is dependent on the roll and the roll is very much dependent on the strength of the school, and our ability to deliver an educational experience without parallel. We can't have one without the other. 2021 is proving to be a very exciting and potentially breakout year. Our starting roll of 140 at the beginning of 2021 has already grown to 150 (at the time of writing). A long held school and board



target has been reached. It is also extremely pleasing to see that years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are now full, and that girls now make up nearly 50% of the school.

It is important that we do not rest on our laurels and we keep moving forward. We are about to embark on an exciting five years as we develop our new strategic plan that will take us through to 2026. Old Boys and Old Girls often ask me what has changed about the school. There have been a multitude of changes, some small and some big, but these are too numerous to list. So instead I answer, what doesn't change is our number one rule... **Honos Per Ardua**. Honour through toil. This means we instil a desire to strive for success, to face challenges head on, to expect high standards, live our school values and to give our best in every endeavour. Some things should never change.

Sam Edwards
Headmaster
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BOARD TALK



Board Chairman
Duncan Johnston

The last 12 months were a mixture of massive challenges and great rewards for Huntley school.

The COVID-19 lockdown certainly provided many operational, educational and financial challenges for the school. I was extremely proud of how the school dealt with all of these complex and unprecedented issues. My thanks to our Headmaster, Mr Sam Edwards, and the Senior Management Team (SMT), the PFH and the BOT for their time and efforts in developing policies that would support our whole school community during what was a very uncertain time.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Edwards and our wonderful staff for delivering such a comprehensive remote learning programme during the Level 3 and 4 alert levels. Many of us developed a greater appreciation for the difficult and at times, challenging aspects that a teaching career entails.

During the past 12 months the Board and SMT have also completed a strategic review, led by education strategy specialist, Mr Garry Carnachan. This was an opportunity to reconnect, reaffirm, review and reset our strategic plan through until the end of 2021. Mr Carnachan was extremely impressed with the “high level of interest and engagement” by the Board and SMT. Mr Carnachan will again lead a strategic planning session in the latter half of this year as we seek to develop our strategy for 2022 and beyond.

The updating and digitising of our school and Board policy and procedural documentation has been recently completed. Our newly adopted Sweet Process programme ensures that our processes are a ‘living document’ that forms an interactive part of the management of Huntley School. This has been a massive project and I would like to thank all those that have been involved in completing this task.

Our ten year capital works programme continued over the year with various maintenance tasks and capital

items being completed and purchased and excitedly, the new dorm entry and upgraded girls bathroom project was recently completed and formally opened on Friday 4 June. This much needed addition to our wonderful boarding house would not have been possible without the incredible support of our PFH, the Old Boys and Girls Association (via our 90 sleeps fundraising drive), the Endowment Trust, Pub Charity, the Board of Trustees, the Betty Mayne Foundation, the Rangitikei District Council and the greater Huntley school community.

I echo Sam’s excitement about our roll target being reached and how pleasing it is to see the growing number of girls at our school. I’m delighted that parents are choosing to invest in a Huntley education for their children. However, bigger does not automatically guarantee better. We know that we have to keep delivering and improving on the Huntley traditions of exceptional teaching and learning and instilling the values that we all appreciate and expect from a Huntley education.

After what has been a very different and at times challenging past year, I’d like to reiterate my thanks to Mr Edwards and our dedicated staff, our parents and caregivers, our incredible PFH, our Endowment Trust, the Old Boys and Girls Association and the Board for all your efforts. Huntley school is a very special place because of all the work and support of these very special people.

Duncan Johnston
Board Chairman
021 479 127

Board members:
Duncan Johnston,
Charles Duncan,
Sam Trotter,
Rob Craig,
Shauna Graham,
Cath Cranstone,
Martin O’Grady.

HUNTLEY 125

SAVE THE DATE: 4-6 MARCH 2022



Huntley 125 Committee: Henry Boon (2006-2007), Pip Trotter, Sam Trotter (1981-1984), Sam Edwards, Nicki Crowley, Hayden Trotter (1982-1986) and Duncan Johnston.

COVID-19 may have put a halt to our 2021 Jubilee, but the celebrations are still going ahead, just a year later. All Huntley Old Boys, Old Girls and friends of the school are invited to join us on 4-6 March 2022 to celebrate 125 years of Huntley.

Ticket sales will officially open **Friday 1 October, 2021.**

THE PROGRAMME*

Friday 4 March

4pm: Registration open

School tours with a current Huntley student

5pm-7pm: Cocktail Party on Headmasters' Lawn

Saturday 5 March

9am-3pm: Huntley in Action Day

Old Boys and Girls will be able to choose from a range of activities to rekindle those memories of their school days.

- 20/20 and Pickhandle Cricket matches
- Tennis matches
- BBQ and picnic lunch options
- Decade photographs
- School tours with a current Huntley student

6pm: Jubilee Dinner at Awapuni Racecourse in Palmerston North

Sunday 6 March

10am: Chapel service at Huntley School followed by morning tea and the cutting of the Jubilee cake.

*More details and ticket prices will be available at launch.

Make sure you are on the mailing list for all Jubilee communication, please register at huntley.school.nz/jubilee.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW BOARDING HOUSE



As the oldest preparatory boarding school in New Zealand, Huntley has a proud history of providing a caring and happy environment for our students. Through boarding, students maximise their time at Huntley, make lifelong friendships and reap the full benefit of the opportunities we offer.

Creating a boarding house that caters to the differing needs of boys and girls was Huntley's final step in becoming a truly co-educational school.

The 90 Sleeps Project was completed in May 2021 and saw the refurbishment of the existing boarding facilities to provide a more natural separation of the boys' and girls' zones. A new foyer now provides a neutral entry point to the building, so the girls no longer have to enter through their toilets or the boys through a narrow side building entry. A new girls' toilet and shower block, a sick bay and a matron's office have also been added.

We now have a welcoming place for students and their families to enter when they make Huntley their home away from home. As an independent school, we do not receive funding from the government to make such

improvements. We're indebted to the generous past and present Huntley families who have supported this project and enable us to continue providing first-class facilities for our students.

On Friday 4 June our students, Huntley families and some of our generous donors gathered to officially open our new dormitory entrance. The building was opened by Old Boy 756, **Neil Monro (1940-1944)**, who served on the Huntley Board of Trustees for 18 years and the Huntley Endowment Trust for more than 40 years. He shared amazing stories of his time at Huntley during World War II. You can read more about Neil on Page 24. Mrs Stewart then blessed the building before guests entered to check out the new facilities.

A huge thank you to our generous donors who have been acknowledged on our Donor Board. If you would like to contribute to this project, we are able to retrospectively add to our Donor Board. For our project contribution options and to donate, please visit www.huntley.school.nz/90-sleeps-project.



DORMITORY ENTRANCE PROJECT DONORS BOARD



Many thanks to our donors:

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Huntley School Endowment Trust

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The Petro Family
Craig Family
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Anonymous



HEAD BOY AND HEAD GIRL

THORNTON AND MAGGIE

Thornton Humphrey, or Thorny as his mates call him, is from Feilding and has been a boarder at Huntley for two years. He is Huntley's 2021 Head Boy.

His favourite thing about Huntley is that as students, they're busy all the time.

"There are so many opportunities to try new things and I love sport. At the weekends you'll find me on the tennis courts or playing cricket with my mates."

Thornton plays tennis in the summer and is captain of the Top 8. He plays rugby in the winter and can play either lock, flanker or No.8.

Being named as Head Boy was definitely a highlight of 2021. "I was surprised and pretty stoked."

Making it to No 1 in the tennis Top 8 also rated pretty highly. "I only really started playing tennis when I came to Huntley last year. Mr Leary and my Monday lessons with Kurt McNamara have helped my game a lot."

Thornton says what he'll miss most about Huntley is obviously his mates but also the small class sizes. "It's been great for my learning. I had over 30 students in my class at my old school, so it's completely different."

Maths with Mr Hall and Science with Mr Buys are his favourite subjects and it's not surprising that he wants to be an engineer.

"I'm not sure what speciality but I love building stuff. I think I get that from my dad. He likes building cars."

2021 Head Girl, Maggie Pearce, is from Fordell. She's the third and final sibling in the Pearce family to come to Huntley after her older brothers Angus and George. She boards and absolutely loves it. It's her favourite thing about Huntley, but she only lives 20 minutes from Huntley so goes home most weekends.

"Living and being with my friends all the time is awesome and I love sport, so my afternoons are always filled up!"

Maggie is wing attack in the A netball team and has her netball colours. She also has her colours for cricket and has been a member of the 1st XI girls' Pink Caps for the last two years. She's one of their star bowlers and took five wickets in one game. She's played lots of different schools all over New Zealand including St Margaret's, Woodford House, St George's, and St Peter's Cambridge. The Pink Caps have won most of those matches.

Her coach is Mr Andrew Reynolds-Rowe, who also teaches her favourite subject, PE. She is in 8DH, the top streamed year 8 class and thinks Mr Duncan Hall is a great teacher.

"I'm starting to like Maths more. Mr Hall is my teacher for Maths, English and Social Studies and he's helped me a lot."

Being Head Girl has been a highlight this year, something Maggie never expected. "I was so surprised when my name was called out, I had no idea."

She was also really excited to get one of the leads in the Year 8 Musical, High School Musical. Maggie was Sharpay. "I was a little bit nervous having to sing and dance and memorise heaps of lines but it was really fun."

Maggie has her sights set on being a farmer. She is from a dairy farm, but they have a few sheep so she's not quite sure which way she'll go just yet.

She'll miss Huntley when she moves onto Whanganui Collegiate next year, particularly how tight-knit it is. "It's so cool that we know everyone's name and we're mates with everyone in the school, not just our year group."



ISABELLE

Isabelle has a busy life at Huntley. She plays the piano, sings in the school choir and she plays hockey in winter and cricket in summer.

Isabelle had a pretty good idea of what life at Huntley was like before she started in year 7 – she followed in the footsteps of her older sister, Honor and brother, Jack.

Even though her home is in New Plymouth, Isabelle says boarding is the best thing about Huntley.

“Waking up every morning with everyone around you and walking off to school together – it’s such a cool experience.”

Isabelle was awarded a cultural scholarship after auditioning in 2020. She says singing a

song and playing a piece on the piano was a bit nerve-wracking, but nowadays you’ll find Isabelle frequently on the stage playing piano, dancing and in the school choir.

“I passed my Grade 1 exam this year, but what I really like is playing pop music and Mr Booth, my piano teacher, is really good and he’s taught me heaps of new chords.”

Isabelle has set her sights on playing for the Huntley Pink Caps 1st XI cricket team in 2022, but the competition is stiff.

“I think it’s good that there are more girls here now. It’s more competitive and we have to try really hard to get into teams.”



TAMA

Year 8 student, Tama, is a gun rugby and cricket player. He's also very handy with a golf club and plays off a ten handicap.

"I used to go to primary school in the Wairarapa and my teammate's brother would come and watch us play rugby and tell us about his awesome school in Marton. I looked Huntley up on the internet and told Mum and Dad I was desperate to go."

Tama's parents took him along to a Huntley Open Day and he couldn't believe there was a school with everything he loved doing in one place – woodwork classes, a mountain bike track, a gym to play in and an orchard full of huts!

He applied for and was awarded a boarding scholarship to Huntley for two years.

Life at Huntley for Tama is busy, but he wouldn't have it any other way.

His parents live about two hours away so he's a full boarder and loves that he gets to hang out with his mates every day.

"We get to go on outings in the weekends to the

Lido or Cloud 9 or we kick a ball around or ride our bikes on the mountain bike track if we're at school."

Tama has colours for cricket and rugby. He plays in the 1st XI cricket team in summer. He's a pace bowler and generally bats at No 4 or 5. He was stoked when he got a 50 at the beginning of the season.

In the winter you'll find him starting at first five for the 1st XV. He's taken over the kicking duties this year.

Tama is in 8AR. "That's Mr Reynolds-Rowe's class. He's also my 1st XV Coach so we spend a bit of time together. When I started at Huntley last year, I was at Level 2 for English. I've worked up to Level 4. And we didn't have the opportunity to learn a language at my old school. I did French in year 7 and this year I'm learning Spanish.

Asked what the future holds, "I'm going to board at Rathkeale next year. I've been awarded an all-round Excellence Scholarship. I'll miss my Huntley mates, but it will be cool to be closer to my parents who live at Castlepoint. I guess I'll get to use my surfboard a bit more."



YULANA

Yulana is year 7 and this is her first year at Huntley.

Yulana performed really well in her scholarship entrance exam and was awarded an academic scholarship for two years.

She is relishing the broad range of subjects she can take at Huntley. She's learning French and gets to try out subjects like woodwork and music. She says having specialist teachers for every subject is really good, especially science which she wasn't able to do at her old school.

She is in the top stream year 7 class with Miss McCullough.

"It's great learning with other kids who are at your level and there are only 20 students in our class which means we get lots of one-on-one help."

Because she's living full time with her friends in boarding, Yulana says she has more time to get ready in the mornings and she loves not having to get in the car to go to school.

"You don't have to bring a packed lunch to school. My favourite lunch is the wedges – they are great because they have cheese, bacon and sour cream on them."

For someone that was awarded an academic scholarship to attend Huntley, Yulana sure does play a lot of sport.

As soon as she arrived at Huntley this year she signed up for triathlon. She was stoked to represent Huntley at the New Zealand Schools Triathlon Championships in March and romped home in 7th place for the Under 12 girls.

In winter Yulana is one of the three girls who play in the Huntley 1st XI for hockey.

"My favourite thing about Huntley is the sport. Everybody plays a sport even if they have never played it before they came here."

FEEDING HUNGRY HUNTLEY KIDS

Chontelle Rauhihi, Catering Manager

Chontelle Rauhihi's enthusiasm is infectious. Her kitchen is full of laughter and her food gets rave reviews from both Huntley staff and students. She has been wowing them with her culinary skills for nearly three years now. Chontelle knew when she took the job she had the experience and training to make a real difference here. She wanted the dining hall to be an extension of the school, not just somewhere the kids went to eat. She's definitely achieved that. The students can't get enough of her delicious food or her company.

Chontelle began her culinary journey as an apprentice at Ruth Pretty in Te Horo, where she trained for four years. From there she took a sous chef position in Otaki and was quickly promoted to Head Chef. Looking to add another string to her bow, Chontelle took on the Catering Manager role at the Otaki based Maori University (Wananga). Chontelle knew that if she upskilled herself to train and work in catering, restaurants and mass production, she'd always be employable. She jumped at the chance to work at Fletcher House in Auckland where she could utilise skills in all three of those areas, before family bought her back to the Manawatu. It was then that the Huntley Catering Manager job came up. A great stroke of luck for Huntley and Chontelle.

She's fully immersed herself in the school and has developed fantastic relationships with the students. She looks forward to her toast kids coming in at 7.15am every morning, two rostered on per day. She's had to move the start time forward though, she was finding the kids just wanted to chat and chat. Once she's caught up on what's what in the dorms, in the classroom and on the sports field, it's down to work. She's got the kids well trained. Once toast duty and breakfast is over, they voluntarily stay behind to help set up the dining room and are quick to point out any areas where she's missed a spot cleaning up. She keeps an eye on them too and will frequently wander down to the classroom block to check in on any demerits and classroom success to raise with them in the lunch line or at Monday's alternatives cooking class. She has up to eight kids in her kitchen at a time and while they make some yummy food, Chontelle believes it's just as important that they learn about basic food hygiene and the importance of things like hairnets, hand-washing and aprons in a commercial kitchen. They also have the opportunity to research and write out recipes before tackling them the following week.

Chontelle's very goal driven and since taking on the role has tried to introduce something new in the dining room each year. New on the menu is Friday cooked breakfast, she has the kids eating new and different food groups, and she's recently had blinds installed in the dining room to make it more comfortable for her diners. She is very



Chontelle and her 2IC, Rachael Marshall.

wary she is feeding 8-13 year olds and aims to provide homely, but healthy food. Recipes from nutritionists ensure she's serving a balanced diet and she monitors how many sugars and fats the students are getting. If she's serving something sweet for morning tea one day, it will be savoury on the menu the next. The best indicator for her is what's coming back on the kids' plates. Most of the time it's absolutely nothing, and that's exactly how she wants it. In fact, she's had to decrease her bread order as the kids are filling up on her tasty, nutritious meals instead of reaching for the carbs. White bread is out, brown bread is in. Chontelle's rationale is that it's all about healthier choices. She wants to empower the kids to make better food choices and serving only brown bread is a no brainer for her. "I say to the kids, would you prefer the piece of lolly cake you had for morning tea or a piece of white bread? You can't have both so you have to choose one. They're more than happy to eat brown bread."

Chontelle and her team of five are now running like a well-oiled machine. It's a busy job feeding 2,275 hungry mouths a week (we did the math!) Asked how she would describe the meals her kitchen feeds Huntley boys and girls, she said '100%'. That's always the goal. Because if she doesn't like it, how can she expect the kids to.

Chontelle and her team of

5

(Baker, 2IC, Cooks and Front of House)

FEED

2,275

hungry mouths each week

\$1500

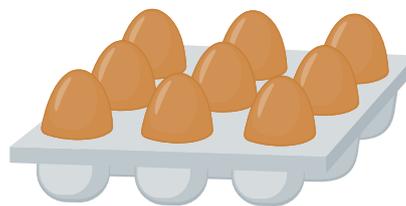


on vegetables each week



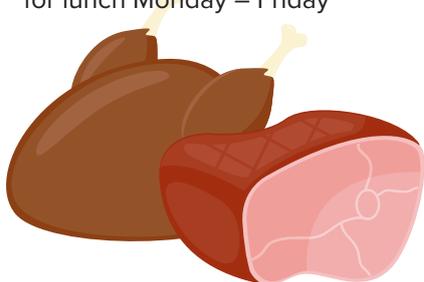
167

for lunch Monday – Friday



315

eggs each week



15kgs

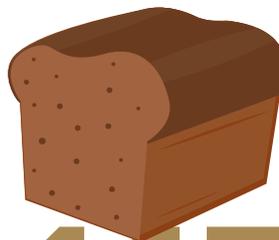
of pork each week (on average)

35kgs

of chicken each week (on average)

25kgs

of beef each week (on average)



145

loaves of brown bread per week (on average)

The kids top

3

meals are:
Mac & Cheese
Butter Chicken
Nachos

Serve

12

kids with special dietary requirements:

1 x Type 1 Diabetic
1 x Coeliac
1 x DF/GF
4 x GF
3 x Nut Allergies
1 x Halal
1 x Vegetarian

THANKS!

We're grateful to the generous parents and Old Boys who have donated meat to our kitchen this year.

A big thank you to:

Hugh Hare who donated 80kg of beef sausages

Nick and Annabel Whisker who made a significant contribution of beef mince

Duncan and Jane Wilson who donated 200kgs of beef mince

Mac Gulliver for donating boxes of custom labelled Huntley honey

Our Suppliers: Bidfoods, Gilmours, Riverlea



2021 PREP MATCH RESULTS



TERM 1

Wellesley

- Top VIII Tennis lost 4-8
- 2nd VI Tennis won 7-2
- Colts Cricket lost by 208 runs
- 3rd XI Cricket lost by 9 runs
- 2nd XI Cricket won by 8 wickets
- 1st XI Cricket lost by 52 runs

Queen Margaret College

Pink Caps 1st XI won by 8 runs

St Peter's Cambridge

- Pink Caps 1st XI Cricket won by 34 runs and 28 runs in their two games
- 1st XI Cricket lost by 5 wickets
- 2nd XI Cricket won by 16 runs
- Top VIII Tennis lost 3-9

TERM 2

Winter Co-Ed Cup - Played at St George's in Whanganui

- 1st XI Hockey won v St Mark's 23-0
- Netball won v St Mark's 35-7

- 1st XI Football won v Hadlow 3-1
- 1st XI Hockey won v Hadlow 2-0
- Netball won v Hadlow

- 1st XI Hockey won v St George's 1-0
- 1st XI Football lost v St George's 3-4

Waihi

- 1st XV Rugby lost 21-22
- 1st XI Football lost 1-2
- 1st XI Hockey lost 0-5
- Netball won 22-14

St Peter's Cambridge

- 1st XV Rugby won 27-21
- Netball won 28-18
- 1st XI Football lost 1-6
- Girl's XI Football lost 0-16
- 1st XI Hockey lost 0-2

A LIFETIME LOVE OF MUSIC

ALISON STEWART, QSM

For Reverend Alison Stewart (QSM), music is more than a career – it is her life. She has been involved with choral music in New Zealand for more than 45 years and has mentored thousands of budding musicians and performed around the world. Her dedication to music was recognised in the 2020 New Year Honours with a Queen’s Service Medal. Mrs Stewart modestly says she’s just been doing what she loves.

Alison was doing lunch duty in the Huntley Dining Hall at the end of August when she received an email from the Department of Cabinet and Prime Minister. She didn’t quite believe it when she read that she was being offered a Queen’s Service Medal. She was sworn to secrecy and it wasn’t until she received an official letter from the Governor General and a few days later, a letter from Jacinda Adern, that she let herself think it could be true. It came as a complete surprise and she still talks about the experience as very surreal and humbling.

Her daughters, Rebecca and Judith, came to visit at Christmas and she convinced them to stay until New Year’s Eve so they could share her special moment with her. She may have given in on the 30th and told them why she was insisting they stay.

Mrs Stewart’s accomplishments are impressive and her service to music long-standing. Alison is the chairwoman of the Wellington branch of the Royal School of Church Music New Zealand and has led its choir school for several years. She regularly travelled with choirs and organises national talent for high-profile performances. One of her most memorable international treks included taking the Ambassador Choir from Palmerston North to the United States, where it performed in venues across Montana and Salt Lake City. As well as serving local church choirs as an accompanist, she has been musical director of the Palmerston North Choral Society since 2003. And she is still the musical director of the women’s chamber choir, Camerata, that she formed in 1997.

But it is here at Huntley that she has made the biggest impact, sharing her love of music with our Huntley boys and girls for the last 27 years in her role as Director of Music.

Alison likens music to sports and reminds her choir students they’re working together as a team. “Ever since Mather and Wilson started Huntley, the three main teams here at school have been cricket, rugby and the choir. The choir is the team that trains every day – right up until the last day of school for their last performance.”

As well as being the Director of Music, Alison has been Huntley’s Chaplain for the last 21 years and she says her two roles go hand in hand. She feels very lucky every time she sits down to play the Huntley organ, installed in



the Chapel by Charles Mather, a talented organist, soon after the Chapel was built.

Alison is finding that with the introduction of girls to Huntley, she has even more students to share her love of music with. When girls were introduced in 2014, she ran separate boys and girls choirs but they have since merged and there is a healthy 50/50 split. Alison notes that a student’s eagerness to sing or play an instrument often depends what primary school they have attended, but she loves being able to give all Huntley kids the opportunity to explore music. “Music makes the kids smile. I really like getting them to sing and do it together. A lot of them don’t even know they can sing until they try.”

After nearly three decades at Huntley, she has a lifetime of memories stored away. One of her absolute favourites though was the Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat production she and Barb Pratt put on in 2004. **Tim Stewart (2002-2004)** was Joseph and she recalls a cast of amazingly talented kids.

After years of productions, choir practises and chapel services, one thing remains. She loves working at Huntley and she’s adamant there are plenty more students to share her love of music with yet.



HUNTLEY OBGA UPDATE

It has certainly been an interesting last 12 months as the world continues to battle with the COVID-19 pandemic. From an Old Boys and Girls perspective, it is fantastic to see that in this environment, Huntley School continues to thrive and grow. Congratulations to the Headmaster and his staff for their tireless work over this extremely difficult period, it is a testament to you all that the School remains in such good heart. By being true to our long-held values, Huntley remains a first choice educator for young girls and boys from the local Rangitikei community and beyond.

If there is one lesson to take away from these unprecedented times, it is being able to identify what is really important in life. Friendships made at Huntley School are lifelong and enduring, they stand the test of time and everything that is thrown at them. It is these lifelong friendships that the Huntley OBGA is committed to, helping you keep connected with each another and with the School.

Unfortunately we had to cancel or postpone a number of events of late including the Rangitikei 4WD fundraiser, the Pickhandle Challenge and of course our 125th Jubilee. It is still a difficult time to organise large events with confidence, but we are looking to get things back on track and aim to make the 125th celebrations in March 2022 even bigger and better. Our focus will be to help the organising committee contact as many of you

as possible and encourage you to come back to your old school for this event.

I appreciate that we all live busy lives, but I can assure you it will be well worth the effort to return to Marton next March. It is an amazing opportunity to come back to your old School, to reminisce and walk those corridors of long ago, to recognise an old school friend, to laugh and remember, to make new friends, and to relive those battles on the sports fields and in the orchard!

We were able to play the third instalment of our Pick-handle Challenge earlier this year and it was great to welcome a number of old students back to Huntley, many who hadn't been back since they left. My thanks to **Henry Boon (2006-2007)** for organising the Manawatu team. We look forward to seeing you back for a rematch in March as part of the Jubilee celebrations.

Finally, please take the time to update your details with the School so that we can keep you fully informed about all OBGA events and Huntley news. You can do that here; huntley.school.nz/contact-obga.

See you in March 2022.

Ed Sherriff (1981-1984)

OBGA Chairman

021 704 778

edsherriff@farmside.co.nz

THE NEXT GENERATION

CONNECTIONS OF HUNTLEY OLD BOYS AND GIRLS

Our Huntley OBGA continue to be great supporters of our school.

Here are all our students whose siblings, fathers, uncles, grandfathers or great-grandfathers attended Huntley.



RANGITIKEI VS MANAWATU PICKHANDLE CHALLENGE

SUNDAY 28 MARCH, 2021



Following on from the previous two challenges – Wellington in 2018, and Auckland in 2019 – a team of Manawatu Old Boys returned to Huntley School to try their hand at playing Pickhandle cricket. While significantly younger than their Rangitikei counterparts, only **Hamish Davidson (1988-1989)** had a previous Pickhandle cap, which would be a telling factor later in the day.

After a warm welcome by Headmaster, Sam Edwards, the rules were finalised for the day's play, with a 35-over game determined for the Pickhandle Challenge. **Henry Boon (2006-2007)** called correctly at the toss and asked opposing captain Ed Sherriff to have a bat, maybe seeing a bit of assistance in the hard and dry pitch for the morning session, or maybe just uncertain about batting first with lack of Pickhandle experience.

Ed Sherriff (1981-1984) went early to his playmakers, with **Rob Craig (1984-1985)** and **Scott Parkes (1995-1996)** opening the batting for Rangitikei, with Craig proving a little disappointing this year, only hitting a four off the first ball in contrast to the first ball six against Auckland. New 2021 rules meant everyone had to bowl this year and it was obvious it was going to be a matter of seeing off the cricketers and waiting for run scoring opportunities. However, some early tight lines saw both Craig and Parkes gone early. Skip's son, **Sam Sherriff (1995-1996)**, was in at No 3 and hit a quick 24 to keep the run rate going, and debutant **Ollie Gordon (2002-2003)** got ten off two scoring shots before being bowled by a straight one from his old Marton Saracens teammate, **Jarrod Calkin (1996-1997)**. Looking a little fragile at 60 for 4, **Astie Williamson (1983-1985)** and the

veteran **Paul McLean (1977-1979)** then settled things down with some sensible batting to get the score to 118 before one of the Cousins' twins struck with consecutive deliveries to remove them both, Williamson scoring 26 and McLean 30. Also on debut, **Hayden Trotter (1982-1986)**, then played a vital role in the bottom order to end up on 30 valuable runs, unfortunately receiving little support from older brother, **Sam Trotter (1981-1984)**, or his skipper, Sherriff. Rangitikei was eventually bowled out for 154 in the 29th over. **Nick Grogan (2005-2006)** was the pick of the Manawatu bowlers finishing with 2- 14, the Cousins combined for 3 wickets, and Calkin also snared a couple. **Harry Clinton-Baker (2006-2007)** and Davidson finished with a wicket apiece. It was a good effort by Manawatu to restrict Rangitikei to less than 200 and at that stage, one would think they were surely in with a chance of lifting the trophy with a solid batting effort. However, the Rangitikei veterans knew that with accurate bowling they could take advantage of the newcomers first time batting with a rather thin piece of oak.

Manawatu looked to press the advantage early by putting their star batsmen Calkin and Boon in first. They needed a good start to calm the nerves of the batters to follow. Sensing that the match was in the balance early, skipper Sherriff, in a rare moment of inspiration, asked Gordon to take the new ball. Gordon relished the opportunity to get even with Calkin and despite not having bowled for ten years, produced a nasty yorker which saw the stumps knocked over on the fifth ball of the over, followed by another beauty that removed Clinton-Baker for a golden duck. When Hayden Trotter then removed Boon in the next over, Manawatu suddenly had three batsmen in the shed for only three runs. However the calm and composed **Scott Mitchell (2006-2007)**, along with **Julius Cousins (2004-2006)**, set about rebuilding the innings. Julius used his former hockey skills well to score a sensible 17 before being removed by a sharp catch from Craig off the skipper's bowling. Hayden Trotter then struck again to remove Julius's twin brother, **Guido Cousins (2004-2006)**, before **Josh Gloyn (2014-2015)** was run out when taking off for a non-existent run. Mitchell was still keeping the score ticking along and Grogan offered some support until Gordon came back on, bowling him and Davidson in quick succession. Last man standing, Mitchell, continued to frustrate the bowlers and brought up a well-deserved 54 before Williamson and Parkes (having ended up at deep leg slip given he was too tired to run back to his usual position after retrieving another one from the boundary) combined with some innovative fielding changes to finally remove the dangerman.

Manawatu were all out for 90 and it was an emphatic win for the veteran Rangitikei side over the Manawatu young guns. Rangitikei were awarded the Pickhandle trophy,



OBSA Chairman, Ed Sherriff, and Captain of the Manawatu team, Henry Boon, shaking hands before the toss.

and Scott Mitchell was named Manawatu's player of the day for his knock of 54, and Ollie Gordon for Rangitikei with superb bowling figures of 4-3.

Following the main event, an 18-over game was played with Manawatu batting first reaching a competitive target of 118 (Mitchell 27, Clinton Baker 24). Rangitikei looked to be in control of the second game also but some tight bowling at the death saw them finish four runs short (Sam Trotter 35, McLean 25) allowing Manawatu to hold their heads a little higher at the after-match function.

The teams were:

RANGITIKEI

Ed Sherriff (1981-1984)
Sam Sherriff (2011-2014)
Sam Trotter (1981-1984)
Hayden Trotter (1982-1986)
Paul McLean (1977-1979)
Astie Williamson (1983-1985)
Scott Parkes (1995-1996)
Ollie Gordon (2002-2003)
Rob Craig (1984-1985)

MANAWATU

Henry Boon (2006-2007)
Scott Mitchell (2006-2007)
Guido Cousins (2004-2006)
Julius Cousins (2004-2006)
Hamish Davidson (1988-1989)
Nick Grogan (2005-2006)
Harry Clinton-Baker (2006-2007)
Jarrold Calkin (1996-1997)
Josh Gloyn (2014-2015)

As part of the 2022 Jubilee celebrations, we intend to hold a Pickhandle 20/20 competition involving up to six teams. If you would like to play, keep an eye out on the Jubilee communications later in the year or email your interest to obga@huntley.school.nz.

THE 'CLASS OF 2015' REUNION

November 2020



It was great to catch up with recent Old Boys and Girls at our annual Year 13 reunion. Past Parents, Old Boys and Old Girls enjoyed reconnecting over drinks and dinner before they all went their separate ways after school. We then welcomed **Sophie McVerry (2014-2015)** and **James Craig (2014-2015)** back to school again as our Prize giv-

ing speakers in December. Sophie was Deputy Head Girl at Nga Tawa in 2020 and is now studying at the University of Canterbury where she was awarded \$16,000 worth of scholarships. James was Head Boy at Whanganui Collegiate in 2020 and is studying law and finance at the University of Otago.

BIRTHS

Aaron and Sharadha Vincent
Rory and Mikalah McAloon
Dan and Jacqui Cottrell
Tom and Trudi Duncan
Jack and Roanna Jefferd
William and Samantha Kane
Simon and Lauren Clinton-Baker
Andrew and Ani Leggett
Patrick and Sophie Henderson
Oliver and Janine Gordon
George and Emma Shannon
Jack and Stacey Murphy
James Donald and Dee Walters
Nick Wright and Gemma Harper
Ted and Becca Jefferd
Tom and Jamie Bridgewater
Mark and Katie Shand

Janek
Riley
Zach
Guy
Posey and Alfie
Madeleine
Bill
Isabella
Rupert
Chloe
Maggie
Miles
Millie
Fleur
Bobbi
Cooper
Maisie

November 2018
October 2019
April 2020
September 2020
September 2020
December 2020
January 2021
January 2021
February 2021
February 2021
March 2021
March 2021
April 2021
April 2021
April 2021
May 2021
May 2021

WE REMEMBER

Douglas MacDiarmid

Old Boy #660

"I regard myself as an expressionist painter, one who expresses the visual rhythm of things."

Douglas MacDiarmid (1922 – 26 August 2020) was an acclaimed New Zealand expatriate painter, known particularly for his mastery of colour and diversity of approach.

Douglas Kerr MacDiarmid was born in Taihape on 14 November 1922, the younger son of Dr Gordon and Mary (nee Tolme) MacDiarmid. He attended Taihape School, Huntley Preparatory School, Marton, and Timaru Boys High School. Douglas drew and painted from a young age, enthralled by sensuality and the beauty of landscapes and the human form, and had a fervour for the ancient world as the source of our civilisation, culture and language. These are influences that imbued his work.

He graduated from Canterbury College, Christchurch with an arts degree in Music, English Literature, Languages and Philosophy, while undertaking World War II home military service. Douglas "came alive" there in an older circle of creative thinkers, his self-taught appetite for painting fired by mentors Evelyn Page, Rita Angus, Theo Schoon and Leo Bensemann and his view of the world increasingly shaped by exiled Jewish intellectuals from Europe.

In 1946, MacDiarmid left New Zealand to "devour the world", paying serious attention to master artists whose work he admired – from Giotto and El Greco to Matisse, van Gogh and English discoveries such as John Piper. He returned in 1949-50, before settling permanently in France to dedicate his life to paint. Gradually, through hardship and tragedy, Douglas forged an international reputation but came home regularly. Between 1949 and 2018, there were 41 solo exhibitions in New Zealand alone.

His paintings are owned by French and New Zealand governments, the City of Paris, 20 New Zealand public art galleries, and are found in private collections across the world, including New Zealand, Australia, the United States, France, Portugal, Belgium, England, Scotland, Greece, Switzerland, Morocco, Scandinavia, South Africa, China, Hong Kong, South America, Korea, Tahiti and Georgia.



In 1990, Douglas was brought back to New Zealand as an official guest and a solo exhibiting artist for the nation's Sesquicentennial celebrations in Wellington. He was declared a 'New Zealand Living Cultural Treasure' on that visit, and his portrait was one of the first five painted for the fledgling New Zealand Portrait Gallery.

The last of his extraordinarily creative post-war generation, he painted every day in his Montmartre, Paris studio and exhibited regularly well into his nineties. At the time of his death, aged almost 98, he was recognised by art historians as New Zealand's longest-lived and longest-working painter. He is also considered to be one of the most technically and formally accomplished, imaginative, and intellectually and philosophically sophisticated artists to emerge from this country, as well as a published novelist and poet.

His illustrated biography, 'Colours of a Life: The life and times of Douglas MacDiarmid' by Anna Cahill was published in Auckland in 2018. An earlier art history monograph 'MacDiarmid' by Dr Nelly Finet appeared in 2002, in English and French editions, to coincide with Douglas' 80th birthday exhibitions in Paris and New Zealand.

Apart from the great masters, modern painters he esteemed include Atlan, Alechinsky, Nicholas de Staël and Zao Wou-Ki. Refusing steadfastly to be pigeonholed, his work is varied, colourful, evocative.

Plans for a collaborative art trail of his work in public art galleries in New Zealand are planned to celebrate his 100th anniversary in November 2022, and will be supported by the publication of a small book of MacDiarmid letter extracts and poems.

Supplied by Anna Cahill

DEATHS

	Years at Huntley
John Ashworth	1941-1943
Edward (George) Simpson	1946-1950
Ritchard Gosling	1993-1994
Michael Alexander	1941-1945
James Huang	2003-2006
Douglas MacDiarmid	1934
Murray Goss	1961
Richard Tylee	1944 - 1947
Michael Godfrey	1943 – 1946
Keith Ewen	1934 - 1938
Henry (Brian) Crawford	1937 - 1941
William (Bill) Hallwright	1928-1930

Died

6 August 2015, aged 84
3 November 2018, aged 73
29 May 2019, aged 37
2020, aged 88
12 August 2020, aged 27
26 August 2020, aged 97
23 December 2020, aged 72
14 October 2020, aged 86
14 December 2020, aged 87
18 January 2021, aged 96
11 April 2021, aged 94
27 May 2021, aged 103



Mikalah (O’Riley) McAloon and Rory McAloon on their wedding day at Makoura Lodge.

MARRIAGES

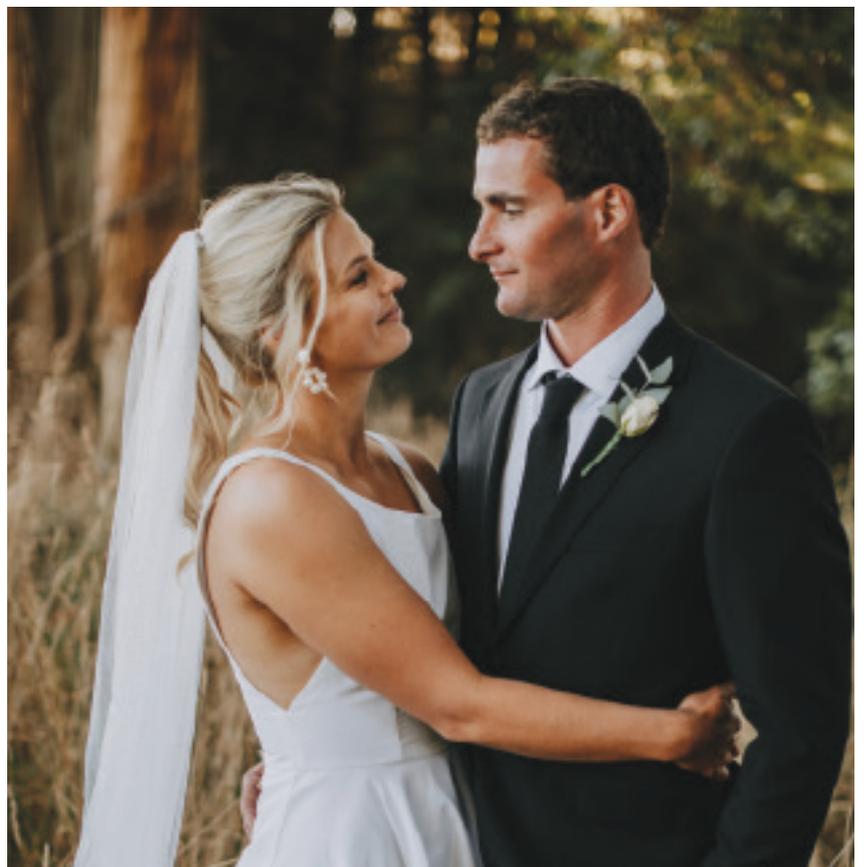
Aaron Vincent to Sharadha Weerasinghe	November 2017
Rory McAloon to Mikalah O’Riley	March 2019
Tom Grogan to Charlotte Grayling	December 2020
Nick Grogan to Kelly Toon	January 2021
James Elmslie to Samantha Dodd	February 2021
Fraser Middleton to Lana O’Neill	February 2021
Jacob Moore to Anna Holmes	February 2021
Julius Cousins to Angela Wilmshurst	March 2021
Pete Spilman to Sanneke Neal	March 2021
Will Stewardson-Hill to Kamal Guron	March 2021
Mark Duncan to Sally Manthel	March 2021
Jack Hurley to Emma Lourie	March 2021
Richard Simpson to Bec Meyer	March 2021
Tom Donald to Alex Falloon	April 2021

Tom Grogan (2001-2002) married Charlotte Grayling in December 2020. His brother **Nick Grogan (2005-2006)**, and **Hamish Meads (2001-2002)** stood by his side.





Jack Hurley (2006-2007) married Emma Lourie at Orlando Country in March 2021. His brother, **Sam Hurley (2001-2003)** and **Ted Shannon (2004-2005)** were part of the bridal party.



Mark Duncan (2002-2004) married Sally Manthel in March 2021. His brothers, **Tom Duncan (1996-1997)** and **Sam Duncan (1999-1999)**, along with **Ted Shannon (2004-2005)** were some of his groomsmen.

NEIL MONRO

Old Boy #756



At 90 years young, Neil Monro (1940-1944) is as sharp as a tack and still running. He needs to keep fit for Tuesday morning tennis at the Manawatu Tennis Club. He makes his bed every morning with the pillowcase opening facing away from the door, just like his Huntley matron taught him. It's just one of the fond memories he shared with Headmaster, Sam Edwards, over a cuppa recently.

Back in 1940, it was common for boys to go to Huntley for five years. Neil recalls **Richard Galpin (1939-1945)** even being there for seven. Every Sunday, after Chapel, the fire drill would sound. Neil believes being able to come down a ladder without treading on the fingers of the person below you is a good skill to learn. Thankfully, he hasn't had to use it and the Huntley buildings are no longer a fire risk.

Back then, Chapel took place every morning and twice on a Sunday. There was even Chapel practice. Although he didn't don a choir robe, Neil acknowledges it was Chapel that introduced him and probably hundreds of boys since, to music.

Cricket was a non-negotiable summer sporting activity at Huntley in the 1940s. Every day before dinner (lunch), boys would head to the field to practise their bowling. They'd line up a single stump made from a manuka branch and lay a tin can lid on the ground where a good length ball should land. They'd get one point for hitting the stump and one point for hitting the lid. Tennis balls were banned, and the ball had to be hit with a straight bat. Neil was good at cricket and was vice-captain of the 1st XI in his final year. They didn't get to play too many fixtures though, as it was war time and there were restrictions on travelling.

The Huntley 1st XI was to be the pinnacle of Neil's cricket career. Later in life he came to enjoy individual sports like tennis, squash, and golf, but never rugby. He played at Huntley as it was a non-negotiable winter sporting activity, but he was only a small boy and, in his words, "couldn't take the knocks."

It was an interesting time to be at boarding school with infection rife - measles, mumps and chicken pox all did the rounds. There was a scarlet fever outbreak in Neil's final year at Huntley. At one time, a whole ward at Whanganui Hospital occupied Huntley boys. Neil and a few mates who felt fine and were just in for observation, chose to run riot through the hospital instead of staying confined to the ward.

He didn't get into trouble that time, but there were other instances where he came off second best. Often you remember the punishment not the crime, but Neil clearly remembers the reason for his first and only 'jam spoon' delivered by Mr Sherriff. He was talking in the passage and was hauled outside along with four others and lined up. It was slightly more painful than the '10-minute sit down' or 'paddocks' the Prefects dished out, or the time Mr Rix-Trott made him stay behind in class and learn "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears" off by heart.

'Jam nights' were much more anticipated than 'jam spoons.' This was when the boys were able to take their own jam to the dining room two nights a week to spread on their bread - a treat, given it was war time, butter was rationed and the molasses offered every other night wasn't quite as appealing as jam.

It seems life at Huntley was a bit more rugged than today's



Neil top left.

experience. Neil remembers frequently having chill blains on his hands and feet after drying with wet towels (a far cry from today's heated towel rails). The boys bathed once a week, two boys to a bath. There were two showers which they lined up to use in the morning – one hot and one cold. You stood under one to wash, the other to rinse, quickly.

While the mountain bike track and huts entertain Huntley boys and girls today, Neil and his mates spent their free time digging trenches and trying to get things to grow in the school garden. In case of an invasion, they all had a haversack with rations (maybe a tin of bully beef and some chocolate) hung up by the pavilion. A sign of a different time.

After Huntley, Neil went on to Whanganui Collegiate. Neil claims that the only thing of note he did while at Collegiate was run 20 times around the Collegiate block for a wager. The wager was ten shillings. His run, when measured the next day, was 300m more than a marathon. Not surprisingly for teenage boys, no one paid up, but the Headmaster did start calling him Pheidippides after that. The story of Pheidippides is worth googling.

After school, Neil found his way into Accounting and after working in Palmerston North, he moved to Wellington to complete his qualification and get some work experience. It was there that he met and married his lovely wife, Jenny. They're celebrating 65 years of marriage this year. They have three children: Belinda, Penny and **Andrew (1972-1974)**.

Huntley hadn't really been on Neil's radar in the years since he'd left, but when **Geoff Church (1941-1945)** invited him to a working bee in the early 1970s, he went along to help. He recalls spotting former Huntley Headmaster, Bret Butler, from a distance and thinking he looked far too young to



Fire drill practise.

be Headmaster and much more like one of the boys. The working bee reignited his association with Huntley and he enrolled Andrew to start in 1972. Neil then joined the Huntley Board of Trustees in 1975 and he was a member for 18 years.

During his tenure on the Board, Neil along with **Goff Briant (1946-1951)** and **Alexander Paterson (1937-1940)**, were responsible for forming the Endowment Trust, a growing fund that has supported the school over a number of years. Neil has just retired as a trustee after 40 years. His immense contribution and involvement has meant a number of young boys, and now girls, have benefited from a Huntley education and will continue to do so in the years to come.

Neil was asked to open Huntley's new dormitory entrance in June and he'll be at the Jubilee next March (look out for him on the tennis court!) After an 80-year association with Huntley, he wouldn't miss it. He has red and black running through his veins.

THE BOYS ARE BACK

Ben Strang and Josh Gloyn - Old Boys #3890 & #3921

JOSH

My schooling was laid out from day dot. I was always going to come to Huntley and then go on to College House and Palmerston North Boys' High School, just like my dad, **Todd Gloyn (1979-1981)** and his brothers, **Blake Gloyn (1980-1982)** and **Hamish Gloyn (1986-1987)**.

I loved Palmy Boys. We had a great year group, more of a brotherhood. I was a School Prefect and a College House Prefect. I'd planned to go on a big O.E at the end of 2020 and have a gap year, but COVID-19 put a stop to that. I have a sister at Huntley currently, **Yulana Gloyn (2021-2022)** and Mum is on the PFH. She knew Sam was struggling to get tutors with the borders closed and let him know I was interested. I started in February and live onsite. I work Monday to Friday and Saturday mornings, and spend most of my time in the classroom, supporting the teachers. I'm really enjoying working with the kids.

Things haven't changed too much since I was here. The names of the dorms are different and the dorm I was in is now a girls' dorm, but I'd seen those changes first-hand having had Yolanda and my two other sisters, **Eilidh Gloyn (2017-2018)** and **Summer Gloyn (2019-2020)**, come through Huntley after me.

I've got great memories of my time at Huntley. I was Deputy Head Boy and was mad keen on hockey and tennis. I did have a short stint in the 3rd XI with Anton (Buys) but cricket wasn't for me. When I see Anton in the staff room now, he's like "you should have played cricket." I obviously didn't make much of an impression.

When I was in year 7, I was lucky enough to go on the South Island Tour to play hockey. Barb (Pratt) was my coach. Sam (Edwards) was my year 7 class teacher. It was a little weird when I started as a tutor calling them 'Barb' and 'Sam', but I'm used to it now. I remember hearing Charlotte's (McCullough) leaving speech when I was in year 8. Turns out she couldn't stay away either! I also remember spending every freezing cold day of the Marton winter when I was year 8 in the gym practicing table tennis. I was devastated when I didn't win the table tennis comp.

I was a bit nervous to see Dave (Leary) to be honest. I had a bit of a run in with him when I was year 8. I'm not sure if he remembers. It was something to do with tennis and I stormed off in a 12-year-old rage. I hid in the gym until school finished and then went and found him and apologised and shook his hand. We haven't talked about it. Maybe we will when he reads this.

It's cool that **Ben Strang (2013-2014)** has come back as a tutor too. He was the year ahead of me. He was in the 1st XI and they went undefeated in his year 8 season. I remember a guy in my hockey team trying to tell his mate **Sam Sherriff (2011-2014)** that hockey was cooler than rugby. Sam rounded up his front row mates, **Ben** and **Alex Graham (2010-2014)**, to prove his point. Those boys were obviously a bit bigger than we were and us hockey boys backed down pretty quickly. Funny what you remember.

I'm loving being back at Huntley and am learning lots of life skills. I'm still keen to go overseas, one day, but in the meantime, it's great being able to give back to my old school.



BEN

My first year at Huntley was the last year of just boys. So, I was in year 8 when girls were introduced. It was an interesting time. We had to be a bit more careful with the lad-like behaviour, but the girls made us try harder in the classroom and introduced a new perspective, especially with sport and drama.

I loved being a boarder and lived for the weekends when I could just hang out with my mates, build huts and throw a rugby ball around. My brother, **Henry Strang (2015-2016)** was the same. Our grandfather, **William Strang (1949-1952)** and great-grandfather **Arthur Strang (1910-1913)** also came to Huntley.

I think the biggest thing Huntley taught me was how to set up my day. Get up, make your bed, have a plan. It's stood me in good stead for having a crack at semi-professional rugby. I'm not sure I'd be as organised otherwise. There were lots of positives about Huntley though. Things like instilling good values and a good attitude. And boarding definitely prepared me for moving away from home.

After Huntley I went on to Whanganui Collegiate. I was Head of Hadfield and Vice-Captain of the 1st XV. I play hooker. Making the New Zealand Schools' Rugby team was a highlight of my secondary schooling. Unfortunately, the Aussies beat us, but we got the win against Fiji. I trained really hard and was stoked to get a Manawatu Rugby Contract when I left school. Between rugby, studying Sports and Exercise Development at Massey University and being a tutor here, life is pretty busy.

I'm working Tuesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons at Huntley. I'm a Resource Coach for all rugby teams and was the 3rd XI cricket coach in Term 1. I'm grateful for the opportunity to put into action what I'm studying.

It was a bit weird hanging out in the staff room to begin with. Sam (Edwards) was a cool Deputy Principal, but we can now banter away about Manawatu club rugby. His yarns about playing for Te Kawau (the real blokes) are classic.

The plan is to give rugby a decent crack, but I'd also like to be a PE teacher. Working at Huntley seems like a step in the right direction.

A KID WITH A DREAM

Ruben Love - Old Boy #3822



My earliest memory of rugby was the first game I ever played. I was four years old, and I'm not sure how or why I even remember it. But I knocked my tooth out. My gum was bleeding, the pain was horrific, and I left the field crying in front of my friends – leaving the match not just without my tooth, but without my pride and dignity too. I walked off the field holding Mum's hand in tears thinking, "I'm never playing this stupid game again." And that wouldn't be the last time I made that declaration. In fact, when I think about my journey towards becoming a professional rugby player, it's remarkable I even got here.

THE BEGINNING OF SOMETHING SPECIAL

Despite my shaky introduction, rugby became my life as a kid. Growing up in Waikanae down on the Kapiti Coast, most of my days were spent with my best buddies on our scooters down at the local skate park, going to school, then playing rugby on Saturdays. When I was at Kapanui School, the Hurricanes came for a visit. I remember seeing Piri Weepu and being too scared to ask him to sign my rugby ball. The whole lunch time they sat on the back of a Ford Falcon with the boot open, and I just sat there looking at them thinking, "Wow... I want to be one of those guys." I never asked Piri to sign my ball and for days after that I kicked myself. "Man, I really wish Piri signed my ball." I was obsessed with the Hurricanes as a kid.

Playing for Waikanae Rugby Club, every year we got posters of the Hurricanes and I'd hang them up on my wall. I'd draw a little stick figure of myself standing next to Cory Jane. It was just all rugby in Waikanae. That and touch

were the only two sports I knew of. Despite watching the All Blacks when they were on and standing up to do the national anthem and the Haka, I never really idolised any of the players. As a kid, Dad was always my favourite player. He played for the Maori All Blacks and I much preferred watching old VCR tapes of him playing for the Manawatu Turbos when he was 65kgs.

On my tenth birthday, Mum and Dad shouted me to a Hurricanes game. I remember walking across the concourse with my two best friends next to me, holding my Dad's hand. I couldn't tell you much about the game, or even if they won or lost, but I got a photo with Aaron Cruden and that day was the fondest memory of rugby I have. Just a kid going to watch his favourite game, played by his favourite team. I've never forgotten how I felt that day.

AN ACCIDENTAL CRICKETER

When I turned 11, I headed off to Huntley for year 7 and 8. When I arrived, I was told I had to pick a summer and a winter sport so I asked for rugby and touch. They must have laughed at me. There was no touch here. It was either cricket, softball, or tennis. I was shocked, but I had to pick one and I only had two weeks to do it. I saw tennis and thought it looked pretty boring, and I didn't want to travel to Palmerston North for 40 minutes every day to play and train. I looked at softball, saw one of the tryouts, saw what they had to wear and thought, "Nah I'm not a fan of that." So that only left cricket. I went to the nets at lunchtime in bare feet and chucked on my friend's pads and grabbed his bat. He was bowling with a proper ball and one of the first

deliveries I faced hit me right on the toe. I screamed and ran straight to the matron's office. I started to think maybe I just had really bad luck when it came to new sports. And I really didn't know anything about cricket.

My younger brother Logan and I would occasionally play in the backyard at home. We had one of the yellow Milo sets and I remember if one of us got out, the other one would be trying to smack the other one with the bat. Aside from that, Dad would occasionally flick the Black Caps on the TV if they were playing - but I never really watched them growing up. So it's pretty weird how cricket progressed for me when I look back at how it all started.

"BRO, DO YOU WANT TO WICKET KEEP?"

When I left Huntley, I enrolled to go to Palmerston North Boys' High School. With cricket, there weren't many guys at the trials, so I managed to scrape through to the Year 9 A team. I was a batter that batted eight, and bowled third change, so I was probably just in there for my fielding. But I loved it. I loved the element of anticipation, and the athleticism you needed to be a good fielder. I'd be up for hours after school catching balls or trying to recreate famous run outs. In year 10, the wicketkeeper in our team started to get back problems and during a game our coach came into the huddle with a pair of gloves in his hand and said, "Who wants to keep?" No one put their hand up. He literally threw the gloves at me, almost like a movie scene. I wasn't really doing much batting and bowling so thought maybe this could be good.

My first game was a year 10 tournament in Napier and we were playing against Lindisfarne. I dropped more balls than I caught and missed three stumpings in a row. Coming off I thought, "I hate this sport, I never want to wicket keep again." I was asking the boys in the background, "Bro, do you want to wicket keep?" No one said yes so I had to stick with it if I wanted to keep playing cricket.

I've always been a fan of working hard - at any sport. I'd go home and practice hitting balls and always get Dad to throw down to me. But I really knew nothing about wicket keeping. It wasn't until I was in Year 12 that I realised what it was all about and had some good coaches around me which really helped me to grow. I made the 1st XI that year and suddenly things started to click.

A TRIP TO THE PARK

I hadn't forgotten about rugby. I watched the 1st XV at Palmy Boys since I was 12 years old and in year 9 I remember watching Jordie Barrett and Du'Plessis Kirifi play. There was no dream of being an All Black, a Hurricane, or even a Turbo at that point. I just wanted to play for the Palmerston North Boys 1st XV. Going through year 9 and 10, I was always the smallest kid on the team - often playing halfback. I had no size, no speed, an average step, and an average pass. I always idolised that 1st XV, but I never thought I'd get there, and in year 11 I decided not to sign up for rugby. I didn't really enjoy playing at that point and I thought the 1st XV could use me better as a supporter.

My father was on the Board of Trustees at the time, and he somehow found out in the background that I hadn't signed

up for rugby. One Saturday morning, I asked him if he could take me to the cricket nets because I really wanted to work on my batting. I loved to train how I played, so I woke up, got into my cricket whites, and packed my bag. I was excited. It was a Saturday morning and I was getting ready to go and hit some cricket balls with my Dad. We hopped in the car and started driving, but we went straight past the cricket nets. I said, "What are you doing? The cricket nets are that way and we're driving this way?" "We're just going to some different ones," he said. We kept driving for a bit before pulling over at this local park. I recognised a bunch of rugby guys from school warming up. It was the under 16 "C team" that was playing against a touring Australian side. I still had my whites on, and I jumped out of the car wondering what on earth we were doing. Dad turned to me and said, "You can either walk home, or you can go and play for them." I didn't really have a choice. I took my whites off, jumped into a rugby strip, and came off the bench.

I can't remember how the game went, but for some reason I signed up to play for one more year. I moved into first five, and even though it was an average grade, and the skill level wasn't very high, I began to enjoy the sport again and had some great friends in the team. I ended up having a lot of fun and it motivated me to train in the off-season. I worked my butt off in the six months following that season, and when it came to winter of my year 12 year, three of the outside backs in the 1st XV dropped out of school.

That opened up a spot for me, and I genuinely believe if they stuck around, I would have never made the team. Not a chance. It's crazy. It's not until you look back at it now and you go, "Man, it just had to be fate." And I'm so grateful to my Dad. He's pushed me a lot. On days when I didn't want to be pushed, he made sure I kept going - not in a forceful way, but in a mentoring way. Because of that trip to the park, I got to put on the jersey that I had revered throughout my high school years. Because of that trip to the park, I am where I am today.

A FUTURE IN THE BALANCE

My final year of school got a bit hectic. There was a bit of hype around the fact I wanted to be the first person since Jeff Wilson to make the NZ Under 19 cricket team and the New Zealand Secondary Schools rugby team. I was fortunate enough to be picked for the Under 19 team pretty early in 2019, but they had a tour of Australia in June - right in the middle of rugby season. They said if I wanted to go, I had to stop playing rugby for ten weeks leading up to the tour. And fair enough. They didn't want someone selected for the NZ Under 19 cricket team getting injured playing 1st XV rugby. It was still a tough pill to swallow because in my eyes it was going to really hinder my ability to make the Secondary Schools' rugby team.

In all honesty, when those ten weeks came around, I just wanted to get cricket done so I could have a good crack at the Schools' team. I had to play waterboy for a few weeks and that was hard. It was my final year, the year that I was going to have a really great season with my mates and just enjoy it because once you finish your final year, that's it.

You've only got 8-10 games, and then rugby will never be the same once you leave high school. When I got back from the tour, I only had about five or six games left in the rugby season. We played well and I got the call that I had made the team, which was a really special moment for me and my family. In July, I also received an offer from the Wellington Lions to sign on following high school.

I delayed signing because things really ramped up towards the end of the year. Bangladesh were coming over to New Zealand for an under 19 tour, there were camps for that in Christchurch as well as camps for the Secondary Schools in Palmerston North at the same time. I knew I had to make a choice then and there. It wasn't going to be the be all and end all, but it was a big decision to make because it was going to hinder where I was going post-school.

Just before the Bangladesh tour was named, I sent a letter to New Zealand Cricket saying I was pulling out of the tour, the Under 19 World Cup, and basically all cricket in general. It was one of the hardest decisions of my life. My best memories of high school were days where I was stuck out on the field in a two-day match with a bunch of my mates. Even if we were getting smoked, or winning by a lot, those were the best days of my life. I wrestled with it a lot. There were nights where I'd go, "I really want to play cricket." And then the next night I'd be saying, "Actually it's gotta be rugby."

And I get asked this question all the time, "Could you have given up rugby?" The answer always stays the same. Rugby has been in my life the whole way through. I've found most of my joy and passion through playing it. I miss cricket a lot - not in the sense of playing it, but the camaraderie that you have with the boys. But it was the right decision. The more sustainable pathway was always rugby. And while going to the World Cup would have been awesome, as it went, I had the opportunity to train with the Hurricanes for the week at the same time I would have been over there playing.

INTO THE LION'S DEN

Transitioning from high school rugby to Mitre 10 Cup was incredibly tough. I found the first year really hard and seeing how professional everything was, it was quite daunting. It's a massive step up from 1st XV to that. The amount of mistakes I made throughout the whole Lions season on the field really got to me. Off the field I was good around training, nutrition etc. but on the field I hadn't developed yet. Skilfully and mentally I just wasn't there.

I found it hard keeping up with the other players. There were days when I'd come home and really question if it was for me. I think a lot of players go through that, and you can see why the mental side of the game is so bloody hard, especially at such a young age. I had to work on that hard stuff on my own. I was flatting just with a childhood friend at the time, and a lot of those challenges

I had to face alone.

Talking to my friends and my partner, I came to see that rugby wasn't the be all and end all. A lot of the times if I had a bad practice or felt down about rugby, I came away thinking I wasn't a great person. But it was changing that mindset to, "Rugby is just a game and I can put everything into that, but as soon as I'm away from it, I need the balance to be a good person off the field."

Those are a lot of things you have to find out on your own, you can't find it through anyone else. It's an internal change. But it was bloody tough, and I owe a lot to my support crew, my family, my friends, and my partner. And I had small motivations along the way. I got to train with the Hurricanes for a week before last year's Super Rugby Aotearoa season. It was really eye opening seeing everything that goes on and what goes into building the Hurricanes - a team I've loved since being a kid.

Slowly but surely, I started to find my feet and had the confidence to express myself a bit more - trying to implement some of my footwork and speed into games that I hadn't at the start of the season because I was so hesitant. I owe that to the coaches and the players for always having my back. A lot of them know how difficult it can be being in that environment at a young age trying to go away from your natural game and become a "perfect player". It just took me a while to realise that being yourself is the reason you got the opportunity in the first place.

A POWERPOINT PRESENTATION TO REMEMBER

Midway through the Lions season I was offered a contract to join the Hurricanes. You can imagine how monumental that was for me and my family. In a way you could say it was surprising. I mean, if it can happen to me, it can happen to anyone. I wasn't supposed to be the golden boy going through high school, and remember, I thought I was better suited as a supporter, not a player. But here I was sitting in a hotel meeting room with all the Hurricanes coaches around me, and they had a big PowerPoint to make a massive deal of it. They said, "Here's the contract." Mum, Dad, and I just sat there thinking, "What the heck is going on?!" I remember walking out of the hotel and saying, "Did that really just happen?" Then it sunk in. I'm a Hurricane.

I had a few days off and went back to Palmy before heading straight into training. My whole mindset was, "I've got to be good. I don't want to be that guy that turns up and lets the team down or is the guy that isn't pulling their weight." Putting the pen to paper definitely gave me confidence after the year that I had, and it was a real motivator for me to want to get better - and get better quick.

At the club, there were a lot of guys who really helped bring me under their wing. Du'Plessis Kirifi has helped me a lot and been a big part in me fitting in at the Canes.



Ruben top right in the 2012 Huntley 1st XV.



My locker is also right next to Jordie Barrett, and obviously having him there is pretty handy - getting to pick his brains before and after trainings. The other one is TJ Perenara, who was here last year with me. He's just awesome. I wish he was still around. You see how great he is on the field, and off the field there's no duplicity in how he goes about his work. How you think he is, is exactly who he is - a great guy, and an even a better leader. And of course, Ardie took me under his wing. He understands what it's like coming in as a 19-year-old, so he was able to influence me a lot.

I owe my parents a lot of thanks too for teaching me how to work hard. They worked tirelessly to support me, my brothers, and my sister. All through my life I've always seen my Dad working, not necessarily as a job, but around the house and always making time to play with me and my younger brother.

FROM STICK FIGURE TO STARTING FIRST-FIVE

Everything culminated in a call I got in April on a Sunday afternoon. As soon as I hung up the phone I ran to my parents and said, "I'm starting at 10 against the Crusaders." We were sitting down for 30 minutes just trying to comprehend what was going on. As soon as we got over that, I got my book out and started reading and solidifying my role. It was one of the most stressful weeks of my life. Doing training, coming back to the flat, watching film, going through my book. Just making sure I was bone-deep in my preparation. You quickly learn that even though the game is so much different at Super Rugby level, the fundamentals are still the same. Run, kick, pass. All those things you've known since you were four years old.

And it helps when you've got the class of guys like Ngani Laumape and Jordie Barrett outside you. All those guys made it more comfortable for me. But I was going up against Richie Mo'unga - arguably the best first-five in the world. My friends were sending a lot of media stuff through during the week and I guess there was a lot of stuff about how the Hurricanes were throwing this 19-year-old kid into the deep end. I just didn't take any notice. My mindset was, "If I can do this, I can do anything." Just to have a crack - win or lose - the sun will come up on Monday. But there

were two moments I'll remember for the rest of my life.

The first was running out, feeling the heat of the flames as they went up, sprinting out of the tunnel, and hearing the crowd. The same crowd that I was once a part of growing up as a kid.

The other one was when Julian Savea scored the try off the kick-off, and the crowd just went off. I remember turning around and going back to halfway and everyone was just standing up and the flames were going, the sun was out, and it was like a movie scene giving me goosebumps. This was the moment I had dreamed of for 19 years of my life. And I got to celebrate it with my Mum, Dad, and family in the stands after the game. It was all pretty surreal - making my Super Rugby debut, playing for the Hurricanes, and playing against Richie who I had a chance to chat with after the game - and even though we didn't get the win, I felt like it was a huge step up for me, and my confidence.

IF I CAN DO IT, ANYONE CAN

Imagine what would have happened if that four-year-old boy gave up on rugby because of his broken tooth. Or if the 15-year-old kid decided to stick it to his Dad and walk home in his cricket whites instead of going to play rugby in the park. What would have happened if the lure of an Under 19 Cricket World Cup was too much for a kid who didn't think rugby could be his career - he just loved playing and loved being with his mates. If I can do it, anyone can. I was never special, I was never different to anyone else. I just played because I loved it. It wasn't always easy. And sometimes you question why you do it, but I try and keep two things in my mind as a professional rugby player. Firstly, never forget to enjoy it. That's the most important thing.

And the other one I think about quite a lot is, do it for that 10-year-old kid who used to walk down the concourse holding his Dad's hand. The feeling I got getting the signatures from the players and taking photos with Aaron Cruden... I was that kid. The biggest fan. If there is ever a kid who wants a signature or a photo, I'll make sure they'll never miss out. Because I know exactly what it's like to be that kid.

*As told to afterthewhistle.co.nz.

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