

Rock Runner

The magazine of the Rathkeale Old Boys' Association

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Editorial

Jonathan Watt (2005-09)

I told myself that I would never be a teacher. Then, when I became a teacher, I told myself that I would never return to Rathkeale. And yet – here I am. An English teacher teaching in the same rooms that I was once taught in myself almost fifteen years ago. I am not sure that I believe in fate – but I cannot deny that there must have been something strong pulling me back here. As a student, my days at Rathkeale College were genuinely some of the best in my life. I was lucky enough to make a group of friends with whom I still keep in touch with to this day; lucky to have amazing teachers, some of whom I now work with, and be able to take advantage of every opportunity Rathkeale had to offer. Finally, one cannot talk about Rathkeale without mentioning its campus, of course, which is just as beautiful today as it was when I was here as a student.



As a teacher who is also an Old Boy, and there are a few of us here, I am in the unique position to be able to talk to boys about what it was like ‘when I was in their shoes.’ The most common question that I get in regard to this is – what’s changed? And my answer to this question usually disappoints, because my answer is simply – not much. Yes, buildings have been renovated and refurbished, staff and students have come and gone, new traditions have risen in the place of old ones. The school has moved with the times and modernised – wherever improvements could be made, they have been. However, when I say ‘not much’ – what I mean is that the heart and soul of the school remain the same. The Rathkeale College I knew and grew to love was a place where young men were proud to attend and be educated; a place where students wanted to learn and did their very best; a place where teachers also did their absolute best to help each and every student. The school has always been small, and at times, it has almost felt like a family in that way. It was a place where everyone worked together to help each other out – where strengths and weaknesses complimented each other. Today – none of this has changed. Rathkeale College is still this place and as such it is a place that I am proud to teach at and be an Old Boy of.

So, at the end of the day – I am glad. I am glad that I became a teacher and I am glad that I returned to Rathkeale. As the newly appointed Editor of the Rock Runner, I look forward to getting in touch with Old Boys from all over the country and hearing about their experiences of Rathkeale. I am excited to be able to learn from both those who came before and those who came after me, and in particular, look forward to the day when maybe students that I have taught start reading and appearing in the Rock Runner themselves as our newest Old Boys.

Jonathan Watt
Editor

Do you have a story for the next issue of the *Rock Runner*?
We'd love to hear from you.
Please get in touch at: jww@rathkeale.school.nz

President's Report

Ed Cox (1983-87)



It is my pleasure to write this, my first President's column for our flagship publication, the Rock Runner. 2023 has been a good year for your Association as we continue to take small, but steady, steps towards taking up the role we see for the Old Boys – to benefit our members and benefit Rathkeale. Some of the key initiatives that we have developed over the past several years have again demonstrated their worth as ROBA events, and there are exciting new developments emerging for the first time.

One of my first reflections when taking on the President's role was the debt of gratitude we owe to our immediate Past President, Grant Harper. The Old Boys have existed since the 1960s and our organisation's shape and profile have reflected the expectations and the energy of the Old Boys involved through different times. Grant's leadership from 2016 to 2022 will be remembered as a time of great uplifting, setting a vision of what we should be in the 21st century and putting in place many of the

foundations for that. As I step into the role, I am often reminded of how much Grant did for us, not only in setting a new direction but also on a day-to-day basis, and always with his quiet, courteous manner and the mana he has. When he asked me what I would like him to do for ROBA once he stood down, I was greatly relieved when he accepted a roving brief of Editor at Large and just being there. Thankfully, Grant has continued as an energetic committee member this year.

Our Association is run by a committed committee listed below whose quiet determination and good company make running ROBA one of the better parts of the week. Gratitude is due to our Vice President, Blair Ewington. As a Rathkeale staff member, he is our ‘man on the ground’ when it comes to organising any event we are hosting at the college. More importantly, however, Blair's drive for getting things done is the engine room of our committee. Tristan Armitage has played an important role this year as Secretary, bringing a commercial focus to our

initiatives and, as ever, Scott Andrew as Treasurer is the holder of the purse strings. Outside our office holders, Stuart McKenzie, Richard White, Andrew Sims, Tim Falloon and David Aitken have all made important contributions this year and we have enjoyed good support from others at individual events.

The first highlight of 2023 for ROBA was awarding an Old Boys' Honours Tie to Sir Maarten Wevers (1965-1969) for his outstanding career as one of New Zealand's top public servants. This was the second

ROBA Executive & Regional Committee Representatives 2023

John Taylor	Patron
Edward Cox	President Wellington
Blair Ewington	Vice President Wairarapa
Tristan Armitage	Secretary Wairarapa
Scott Andrew	Treasurer Wairarapa
Grant Harper	Executive Wairarapa
Stuart McKenzie	Executive Wairarapa
Tim Falloon	Executive Wairarapa
Andrew Sims	Executive Wairarapa
Richard White	Executive Wairarapa
David Aitken	Executive Auckland
Jamie Treadwell	Hawke's Bay
George Pottinger	Canterbury
Philip Harcourt	United Kingdom

Honours Tie we have awarded and again demonstrated, to my mind, the value of this initiative, both to Old Boys themselves and to the school. Granting the award in an assembly presents an example to the students of what those that have gone before them have achieved, and the extent of the goals that they can set for themselves. In this way, the award ties back to one of the Pillars in the Quad – that the Good Rathkeale Man knows he stands on the shoulders of those that have gone before him. Sir Maarten recalled the slightly chilling moment when he, as the lead official for the APEC Conference in 1999 in New Zealand, chaired 23 world leaders in a meeting, and shook the hand of the then relatively unknown new Russian leader, Vladimir Putin. At the end of his speech the boys gave Sir Maarten a rousing haka as a mark of respect and connection to someone was here over 50 years before them. An important part of the Old Boys' Honours Tie award is the gifting to the school of a photographic portrait of the recipient for permanent display as an ongoing example to future students. Sir Maarten's portrait now hangs in the school auditorium.

The Decade Reunions at King's Birthday were, overall, a great success. 2023 was for all those who left Rathkeale in 1973, 1983, 1993, 2003 and 2013. The numbers proved difficult for 1973, but credit must be given to John Peel, who still attended and determinedly had a year group photo on his own. 1983 was supplemented by the 1981 and 1982 groups whose own reunions had been deferred by Covid-19. They were always going to be a strong group and they ensured the

weekend's success. Fully integrating this event with the St Matthews Old Girls (SMOGA) was another step forward.

For me, however, perhaps the most poignant event of the weekend was the chapel service held to remember Absent Friends. On a beautiful crisp Saturday morning, nearly 50 Old Boys gathered in St Martin's Chapel on the Close for a simple service and an opportunity to talk about those of our members who had passed away, the strength with which their memories were held and, in some cases, the lessons that needed to be learned from their passing. Names well known, and others less so, were spoken. The Old Boys has several roles to play for the benefit of its members, but that service showed that the opportunity to reflect, talk and support, is a valuable one.

Another highlight of the year was the Whanganui Collegiate fixture at Rathkeale on a typically cold and wet June Wairarapa day. We hosted the after-match function for Collegiate Old Boys and the players' parents with the Rathkeale Rugby Club and the College. It was a great event, with good numbers from each side and great spirit as the speeches recalled the traditional rivalries between the two schools. It was great to see Guy Uttley and the 1989 group who make the fixture their annual get together.

This year we have put particular emphasis on ensuring the Leavers of 2023 are engaged with ROBA, and will hopefully stay that way. We hosted the annual Leavers' Dinner in early November and this year, for the first time, we will be at the

Leavers' Ball, alongside SMOGA, literally, but also symbolically, buying our new members their first drink. Increasingly, we are looking at events that these new members will be at in their early years out of school, including College Days at those universities that hold them, and considering how we can keep connected with these young men as they start their lives out of college. They all know that in 2033 they have their first Decade Reunion, but at their recent dinner, we encouraged them to get together as a year group before then and we will support them doing so.

Arguably this year's most exciting development has been the launch of the ROBA 4WD Tour which will have its first iteration in Easter of 2024. Please see the link at the end of this report for more information. This is a fantastic concept, taking participants through spectacular Wairarapa farms and forests that they would not otherwise be able to access with hosted fundraising



and accommodation at Rathkeale for both nights. Thanks to Stuart McKenzie who leads our 4WD subcommittee in the significant task of organising what, we hope, will become a permanent income generator for ROBA. Already, we have registrations for over 40 vehicles.

The proceeds from the 4WD tour will hopefully put ROBA on a more sustainable financial footing and allow us to improve the benefits we provide to our members and to the college. One of those will be increasing our scholarship program from our current single Entrance Scholarship to the son of an Old Boy, to provide a more meaningful support for others to enjoy the same opportunities we had at Rathkeale.

This year we have also made our directory on the website fully searchable by all members. This is invaluable when trying to contact other members. It also reminds me of two important facts. The first, that while we have approximately 5000 or more members, we only have accurate email contact details for a little over 2000. While great efforts have been made in the past by the likes of Chris Gane, and more recently our own Blair Ewington, one of the great challenges for ROBA will be whether we can ever regain contact with a substantial portion of those 'lost' members. The second, is that 2023 is the first year that the grandsons of Old Boys have started at Rathkeale. Congratulations to the Nicol and McGruddy families on that milestone.

During the year I have had various opportunities to express to Old Boys, and to the school, what the purpose of ROBA is. Our rules are all well out of date (and due for re-drafting as part of the new Incorporated Society's legislation) but they do speak of two objects – to advance the welfare and development of Rathkeale College and to foster "social contact between.. old pupils". Quaint, but essentially right. During our history, I understand there have, at times, been different foci by different committees as to where the Old Boys' energies should go – is it just to the Old Boys themselves, or is supporting the school also important? For several years we had a strategic plan with a vision that included that ROBA be both a meaningful support to the College and a network to benefit Old Boys socially, professionally, in business and in their children's education through the Trinity System. Recently, I expressed our purpose as helping Old Boys enjoy all the benefits of having spent their most important years at Rathkeale. That can be through reunions, social functions, business networking, following or helping the College, or special interests in the college. Put plainly, ROBA aims to support our common interests outside the school gates. Ultimately, we have to follow our objects and, when we re-draft them, I would like to see the twin elements of benefiting our members and the College clearly expressed. Neither really make sense, to my mind, without the other.

Important to both those aims is our building relationships with the other organisations in the Rathkeale

community. We enjoy a very good working relationship with the College. The Principal, Mr Martin O'Grady, gives us great support. Increasingly, we are working in parallel with SMOGA for major events and we are keen to give, and garner, greater support from other organisations such as the Friends, the Rathkeale Rugby Club, the Old Boys Cricket Club, the Ruamahanga Restoration Trust and others who share our common interests.

We aim to be a vibrant and energetic organisation that Old Boys are proud to belong to. I hope this summer you will have the time, and take the opportunity, to make a connection to an Old Boy that you might not otherwise have done. Whether they are in your line of work, someone you bump into out at the beach or someone you vaguely remember from school, you have a key bit of your history in common and can be proud of that connection.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year, and I look forward to seeing you at a ROBA event in 2024.

Edward Cox
President
Rathkeale Old Boys' Association

ROBA 4WD Tour Information:
<https://www.rathkealeoldboys.org.nz/4wd/>

Rathkeale Board of Trustees

Report from BOT Chair - Matt Boggs

In writing this report I was guided to look at past Rock Runner reports to gain an idea of what has come before. In 2022, George Murdoch, our previous chair, talked about the place our school occupies in the landscape of the Wairarapa and how special Rathkeale is as a community and school. I would like to echo and continue those sentiments in 2023. The last year has seen major projects completed, a large number of students continue to enrol and our students and staff are achieving fantastic results through their endeavours and effort.

Over the last year the school auditorium project was completed. This project brought the auditorium up to and exceeding code, and while slightly frustrating that such a new facility required this improvement, it was nevertheless great to see the final results. The facility is now able to be utilised fully, and more and more events are using this great venue. We even saw Hadlow use the facility as part of their end of year celebrations in December 2022.

It was good to see future students of Rathkeale and St Matthews use the facility and I think that this is a sign of the future. A future where we treat our Trinity facilities as a collective asset, and not just as individual school assets. I was

reminded that all our facilities on the Rathkeale site are now at, or exceeding code. This is a massive achievement and so very important to ensure that our staff and students are safe and that our investments are future proofed for whatever may come.

The Repton House upgrade was another major achievement and example of the investment the Trinity system is making to ensure we are well positioned for the future. The facility has been fully upgraded and looks amazing. This major investment by Rathkeale and the Trinty Schools Trust Board is a cornerstone offering of our school – providing high quality boarding facilities for our students, now and into the future. If you get a chance, please do come and visit to check out the amazing work done to finish this project on time.

School achievements continue with both our students and staff alike excelling on the national stage. I strongly encourage you to visit our Facebook page which, almost daily, posts what is happening at our school and across the community. I am heartened that we are celebrating all aspects of Rathkeale – including sport, culture, music, academic achievement, staff achievement and our community. This balance is vital from the Board of Trustees perspective and something the

Board will continue to focus on into the future.

After a number of years absence, due in the main to the impact of Covid, our fantastically successful Rathkeale College Fete has returned with huge success thanks to the amazing efforts of the Friends of Rathkeale College, without which this would not have occurred.

As I conclude and reflect on the year gone by, I can truly tell you that the school is a great space. The school is exceptionally well led by our Principal, Martin O’Grady, and his leadership team. Our staff remain engaged and continue to deliver first class education to our students. Our students are achieving and our community remains connected – thank you.

Hopefully I will see you around the traps as the year unfolds and thank you for your continued energy and wisdom.

Matt Boggs
Chair of the Rathkeale College Board of Trustees



Principal’s Report

Report from the Principal of Rathkeale College - Martin O'Grady



Kia ora koutou,

It is with great pleasure that I present my sixth Rock Runner report as Principal of Rathkeale College.

The past year has been a mix of challenges, exciting developments, and successes, and I am thrilled to share our journey with the Old Boy community.

At the beginning of the year, I embarked on a Ministry of Education funded sabbatical, which allowed me to explore various aspects of education in New Zealand. During this time, I had the privilege of visiting several schools and engaging in extensive research regarding student wellbeing. Little did I know that my sabbatical would also entail managing the aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle in Hawke’s Bay. I suspect a significant number of ROBA members will have been impacted the cyclone as well and our thoughts go out to you.

As we opened our doors to welcome new students and their whānau at the start of the academic year, there was a sense of anticipation and excitement. Notably, this year marked a significant milestone in our college's history as we welcomed the school’s first third generation pupils. To build on this special moment, we established the inaugural Grandparents/Special Person Day. The overwhelming response from our community and the positive feedback from attendees warmed our hearts. We eagerly anticipate the growth of this tradition in the years to come.

During the year, we had the privilege of helping ROBA host the Decades Reunion function. It is always heartwarming to witness Old Boys returning to their alma mater, rekindling connections, and reminiscing about their school days. These reunions remind us of the enduring bonds forged at Rathkeale College.

One of the most exciting initiatives of the year was the planning of the four-wheel drive event scheduled for 2024. The college is enthusiastic about supporting ROBA in this thrilling endeavour and we look forward to witnessing the event's success.

ROBA's support at our annual Founders Day assembly was truly appreciated. During this event we also had the honour of acknowledging the extensive contributions of Cliff Bouton, a recently retired staff member. Additionally, we celebrated the completion of the Repton House upgrade with a brief ceremony, which was made even more special by the presence of previous staff and Old Boys. These moments reaffirm the enduring spirit of Rathkeale College.

In Term One, Rathkeale College proudly supported ROBA in hosting another Honours Tie Assembly to celebrate the achievements of Sir Maarten Weavers. This initiative continues to gain momentum and status within our college community, reinforcing the strong connection between current students and our esteemed alumni.

We had to sadly farewell two long serving staff members at the end of Term Two. Jenny McGovern had held the position of Principal’s Secretary for 27 years and had worked with four principals over that time. I can personally testify to her knowledge, expertise, and dedication to Rathkeale College over this time. We also farewelled Maureen Vaughan who retired as Cranleigh House day matron after 33 years of service to the boarding community. Over 500 boys and well over 1000 parents and caregivers have been through Cranleigh during this time who have all benefitted from Maureen’s dedicated approach to caring for the boys in the boarding houses.

Towards the end of the year another highlight was the Leaver's Dinner, organised and hosted by the dedicated ROBA committee. This event, held at the beginning of Term Four, was a significant moment for our Year 13 students, who were mere weeks away from joining the

Ryan Tonkin

Ryan Tonkin (2009-13) attributes his appreciation for education, sport, and the outdoors to his formative years at Rathkeale College

ranks of Old Boys. The guest speaker, Vicky Robinson, delivered an inspiring and motivating speech to our leavers, leaving a lasting impression on all in attendance.

As we move forward, I eagerly anticipate attending more ROBA regional events. These gatherings provide an excellent opportunity to connect with our Old Boys and share in your successes and experiences.

A huge thanks goes out to Edward Cox for his outstanding leadership of ROBA, supported by the tireless efforts of the ROBA committee. Your dedication and commitment ensure that the various facets of the ROBA organization continue to thrive and achieve their goals.

As we approach the end of another year it is pleasing to note the continued interest in the College by the Wairarapa community and beyond. The diverse areas of New Zealand and the world that our students draw from bring a unique spirit to Rathkeale. We look forward to harnessing this spirit in 2024 and beyond.

Ma te atua e manaaki - May God bless you all.

Martin O'Grady
Principal



Ryan Tonkin was a student at Rathkeale College from 2009 to 2013. During his five years at Rathkeale he enjoyed immersing himself in all aspects of school life. He was a keen sportsman who enjoyed his time playing 1st XI hockey and cricket. He also looks back fondly on his days in the classroom and is grateful for the time and effort put in by his teachers. By far, his proudest achievement was the opportunity to lead the school as Deputy Head Boy.

After Rathkeale, Ryan left Masterton for the bright lights of Auckland with dreams of becoming an engineer. Ryan started his undergraduate degree in the summer of 2014 studying Engineering Science at The University of Auckland. Ryan enjoyed the challenge of balancing a busy workload (due to his participation in a program which saw students finish four-year engineering degrees in the space of three years) with social activities such as club hockey and trying desperately to find a girlfriend. Following undergrad, Ryan spent time living in a van while travelling the South Island. After getting his fill of the Southern Alps, he decided to return to university to pursue a PhD. A recipient of the Auckland University Doctoral Scholarship, Ryan spent four years researching geothermal energy. Specifically, he studied how water, steam and CO2 flow within geothermal wells and developed a computer program that models these processes. A highlight of this period was the three months Ryan spent on exchange in the United States of America. He was lucky enough to spend two months studying at Stanford University in California followed by a month of

tramping through the Sierra Nevada Range.

Ryan was awarded his doctorate mid-2022 and, by this point, was thoroughly sick of research and life as a student. After some time away from university, which he spent tramping and climbing in the South Island (interspersed by brief stints labouring on building sites in Auckland), Ryan returned to The University of Auckland as a Research Fellow in the Faculty of Engineering.

Ryan's current work involves applying his research to commercial projects for geothermal fields in places such as Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the USA and East Africa. Ryan gains satisfaction in the role he plays helping provide renewable, low carbon energy to developing countries. Though his role at the University, Ryan has the pleasure of teaching engineering design to the next generation of engineers. He is currently lecturing wind turbine design. In this paper, students design, build and test their own small scale wind turbine. "One of the most enjoyable parts of the



Ryan on the Talbot-McPherson traverse, Fiordland, New Zealand

teaching," explains Ryan, "is to see young engineers learning from the design process. Watching them work out what works and what doesn't and then iterating on their design. It's a skill that can be applied to all aspects of life - not just engineering design."

Outside of his work at the University, Ryan still has a passion for the outdoors and tries to spend as much time as possible running, climbing, paddling, and tramping. A member of the Auckland University Rock and Alpine Club for most of his time as a student at the University, Ryan now gives back to the club by helping instruct their beginners and advanced alpine skills courses taught on Ruapehu.

This year, Ryan attended his Rathkeale Decade Reunion where he greatly enjoyed catching up with his school mates and touring the beautiful grounds. As an Old Boy, he hopes that many future generations are able to enjoy the same wide-open spaces that he valued so much during his time at Rathkeale.

Brian Blackie

New staff member Brian Blackie reflects on his journey to Rathkeale College

Brian Blackie is a new staff member at Rathkeale College this year. Brian teaches Digital Technology – a lifelong passion of his. Born and raised in Taupo, New Zealand, Brian has lived in both Australia and the United Kingdom.

A Bachelor of Science majoring in Computer Science from Auckland University and a Bachelor of Management Studies from Waikato University have seen him in a variety of roles around the world. He started off in the finance industry, working for Deutsche Bank and Credit Suisse in London, where he realised the importance of Information Technology (IT) in the modern business world. This led him to pivot and begin work in the IT industry, where he held roles as a Software Engineer at both Datacom and Powerco. Most recently, Brian started thinking about the importance of IT in education – and how important it is for students to have a firm grasp of how they can utilise technology in today's world. This led him to complete a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning at Canterbury University and begin his career in teaching.

Brian is a firm believer in the fact that a good education system leads to a thriving society and maintains that technology has a key part to play in this. He was first attracted to teaching with the idea that technology could help students access education in ways they may have been unable to before and that a good understanding of technology would help prepare students for the modern world. He is excited to explore the opportunities for change that technology can create in education – and be a

part of it himself. In his Digital Technology classes, Brian enjoys opening students' eyes to website design, online start-ups, electronics and robotics, UI design, UX design, artificial intelligence (AI) and social media.

After living in big cities all over the world, Brian was keen to find a teaching position in a small town, and this is what drew him to Rathkeale College. In the Wairarapa he feels lucky to be a part of a tight-knit community and more connected to his small town New Zealand roots. He was immediately impressed by the school's campus and, as he lives on site, feels lucky to have the best of New Zealand nature right on his doorstep – particularly the mountains and rivers. Brian also assists at the Repton Boarding House where he enjoys getting to know the boarders and the strong feeling of community there. He loves sharing his knowledge with the kids, and

learning from them too. Brian is also passionate about sports and runs the school's in-house football league where he enjoys being able to connect with the boys in a more relaxed out-of-class setting.

Brian is conscious of the ever-changing technological world we live in and hopes to prepare his students as best as he can for this. With the dynamic environments and implications of AI and social media and more of our lives being lived online every day Brian believes that it is more important than ever for students to have the knowledge they need to understand and navigate the technology they are presented with.

With one year down, Brian is looking forward to what the future at Rathkeale College will look like, and how he can continue shaping the Digital Technologies program to be as worthwhile and engaging for students as possible.



The Nicol Family

Tom Nicol follows in the footsteps of his father and grandfather to become a third generation Rathkeale College student



In 2023, we were lucky enough to have a third generation student begin their college education at Rathkeale. Tom Nicol, son of Stu Nicol and grandson of Peter Nicol, became one of the first third generation students to attend Rathkeale College when he started in Year 9 this year.

The Nicol family are proud Wairarapa farmers. They have been farming sheep and beef on Drumcairn Farm, east of Martinborough, since Peter's uncle, Thomas Ian Nicol, balloted the property as a WWII return serviceman in the 1950s. Stu currently runs the property which he took over from his father in 2016. Today, the property runs 9,000-10,000 stock units and has grown over time from the original 280ha to the present 1200ha.

After attending Hadlow Preparatory School, Peter attended Rathkeale College from 1968-1971. He came from a farming family having grown up on Glenburn Station where his father Noel was the manager. He boarded at Rathkeale and played rugby. In particular, he enjoyed the outdoor activities the school had to offer such as tramping and sports. Peter remembers the headmaster of the time, John Norman, as being an incredible man. A returned serviceman who was a natural leader of boys, Peter has fond memories of working with Mr. Norman and other boys after school and on the weekends – building footpaths and the Greek Theatre, driving the school tractor, mowing fields, and keeping the school and grounds in tip top shape. Peter also remembers Mrs. Norman, who knew every boy by their first name.

Since leaving school, Peter shepherded at Glenburn Station for his father and Mangaheia Station inland from Tolaga Bay before finally settling at Drumcairn in 1976, where he has focused much of his time growing and developing the business. Although he has now handed

the day-to-day over to his son, Stu, Peter still enjoys helping out on the farm and is always there for advice. One day, it may become the responsibility of Stu's sons Tom and Oscar to take the reins if they are interested.

Based on his good experiences at Rathkeale, Peter and wife Barbara decided to send Stu there in 1996. Stu attended Rathkeale College from 1996-1999 and, like his father, was also a boarder. Stu played hockey and particularly enjoyed woodwork classes with Mr. Berry. Stu was also interested in agriculture but decided not to take the class at school, as he could learn this at home on the farm, and instead focused on other subjects. Upon finishing school Stu completed a Diploma of Agriculture at Massey University in 2002 and then followed in his father's footsteps, shepherding in various locations before eventually moving home to the family farm.

Stu's son Tom started Rathkeale this year in Year 9. Tom, who is also boarding, is enjoying school life. He is a keen rugby player, doing particularly well academically, and like his father, his favourite class is Hard Materials. He is proud to be following in the footsteps of both his father and grandfather.

Earlier in the year, Rathkeale held its first official Grandparent's Day, for which students were invited to bring their grandparents along to school for the day. As part of this day, two third generation families were honoured in a special assembly, including the Nicols. Both Peter and Tom have special memories of this day.

We are thrilled to have such a strong connection with the Nicol family, and thank them for their contribution to the school. We can only hope that we might see a fourth generation Nicol at Rathkeale College one day soon.



Cliff Bouton - Retirement

Staff member Cliff Bouton leaves Rathkeale College after 35 years of service



Cliff Bouton retired from Rathkeale College at the end of 2022 after 35 years of service to the school. He began teaching at Rathkeale in 1987 after he and his family emigrated from South Africa. Since then, he has served Rathkeale College as a teacher, sports coach, Housemaster and Dean.

He was the master in charge of swimming for 34 years, managed the First XI football team for 16 years and at other times has coached basketball, rugby, squash, hockey, and cricket. His guiding philosophy has been that teams are stronger when individual talents are harnessed. On a personal level his favourite sports have been basketball and golf.

From 1992 to 1998 he was the Housemaster of Repton House. He, along with the matrons Liz Eaton and Anita Gough, formed a great team. The three of them knew the boarders well and created a homely environment. Their passion for the House rubbed off on the students. The House went from strength to strength. The Repton House jersey, a colours system and a

Repton badge were introduced. House jobs on a Sunday included building and maintenance.

The portfolio he enjoyed most was the 19 years that he was Year 13 Dean. He loved the pastoral aspect and preparing senior students who were about to venture into the world beyond the school gates for the challenges that lay ahead.

Cliff is a self-starter who bristles with initiative. In 1996 the weather was similar to what we have been experiencing recently. Rain records were broken. Climate change was rearing its head. On one occasion the Ruamāhanga River overshot its banks and went back to its natural course over the golf course and towards School House. This was one day in the July school holidays at about 4:00pm. That night the whole school was flooded. By 11:30am the next morning, however, Cliff had recruited a squad of volunteers, lifted all the sodden carpets (only the Library and Room 1 were carpeted in those days) and put them over benches in the gymnasium to dry. He then went on to make a list

of everything that had been damaged by the flood. Nobody had asked him to do this. The insurance company was amazed at the efficiency and the school was paid out in no time.

Initially, Cliff taught Accounting. Shortly after he joined the school we were short of a Geography teacher and had an excess of Accounting teachers. I had read his curriculum vitae and knew that he was qualified to teach Geography. I remember asking him to teach Geography and being told that Accounting was the nicest subject in the world to teach and that he was not changing to teach Geography. The next morning, he came into my office and said: "I'll teach Geography." The rest is history. At that pivotal point the career of one of the most successful teachers to teach at Rathkeale College began. How can this assertion be verified? His achievements as a Geography teacher are legendary. Nearly every year at least one of his students has gained a scholarship. In 2007, every single one of his Geography students who sat the scholarship examination achieved the standard, with one at the outstanding level. She is now a Doctor of Geochemistry and a research fellow at Victoria University doing work focussed on Antarctica and climate change. Another student was, until recently, a Doctor of Geophysics, also at Victoria University.



An integral aspect of his senior Geography courses has always been the field trips. The first Geotour was in 1998. A group of 56 students 'safaried' from Darwin, through Kakadu to Alice Springs, Uluru and Coober Pedy, finishing in Melbourne. The geography and wilderness of the Australian outback had great appeal. Aboriginal reserves were visited. Similar tours, following different routes, took place every two years until 2008.

From 2011 to 2017, again every two years, Geotours visited South Africa. Incorporated into each tour was a visit to the Missionvale Care Centre. It is situated in an area near Port Elizabeth where 70% of the 200,000 inhabitants have AIDS and 75% are unemployed with no welfare state to care for them. The care centre was started under a tree by Sister Ethel, a Catholic nun. At its peak it was an institution that offered food, education and medical and dental care to the people who lived there. Rathkeale and St Matthew's students would fundraise before leaving New Zealand and for every visit raised R100,000 (about \$10,000 NZD) for Missionvale. All money donated was designated for education and food parcels. For the visits, a day of activities for the children during their school holidays was arranged. It was also the group's aim to feed everyone a lunch rich in protein. In addition, they helped plant a new crop in the garden, played games with the children, visited the sick in their homes and packed food parcels. The students would all leave a great deal richer for the experience and the joy they shared.

Cliff Bouton, for me, is like a book. Not a shallow paperback, but a hardcover book. On this hard exterior is a photograph of Cliff. His eyes are piercing. They see right into you to your very core. Behind those eyes there is a brain. His face is serious. His hands are big and rough, they have planted olive trees, lifted fence posts, built houses. And with a nickname like his, he is wearing boots. But if you take time to open the book, the pages are as flexible as any. The eyes also twinkle. There is fun to be enjoyed. He also has a sense of humour and smiles. His brain is always in top gear. He and his bridge partner have on many occasions won the championship at the local bridge club. Any teacher who can consistently equip his or her students to gain scholarships must be at least scholarship material themselves. Those rough hands are often used to gently lift up people who have fallen on hard times. He volunteers at a refuge in Masterton. His boots have taken him all over the world – bringing him real life experience for his lessons.

It is time to write the next chapter in the Book Bouton. For many years Cliff has counselled students on how to prepare for the next chapter in their lives. Now he can write his own.

Thank you, Cliff, for breathing life into Rathkeale College for three and a half decades, in all the ways mentioned by Mother Teresa.

Bruce Levick



Sir Maarten Wevers

Sir Maarten Wevers (1965-69) has spent his life serving his country

Sir Maarten Wevers was a student at Rathkeale College from 1965-1969. In Term One of this year, Sir Maarten was presented with an Old Boys' Honours Tie. Maarten was one of Rathkeale's earliest students and therefore you are amongst our longest serving Old Boys. The Honours Tie is an award for Old Boys who have made outstanding achievements in their lives after Rathkeale. The purpose is twofold; to congratulate Sir Maarten, but more importantly to be an inspiration to current and future students that they might achieve as he has from the very same physical starting point – Rathkeale College. This award is consistent with the school value that students 'stand on the shoulders of those that have gone before'.

The first clue that Sir Maarten has achieved at the very highest level is the fact that he has been knighted. He wasn't born with that title; it is a Queen's Birthday honour that was bestowed on him. In 1999 Sir Maarten was made a companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit and in 2012 he was made a Knight companion of that same order for his services to the State. In effect, it recognises he has served his country at the highest levels of government and diplomacy.

Some of Sir Maarten's career highlights include that he was New Zealand's Ambassador to Papua New Guinea and to Japan, that he was responsible for New Zealand's hosting of the 1999 APEC summit and was the chief executive of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet from 2004 to 2012. Maarten has worked almost his entire life in the public service for the good of New Zealand. The first half of his career was as a diplomat representing New Zealand's interests to other countries, both in trade with the

European Union and in our relations with key Pacific nations.

As an ambassador he was the official representative of the New Zealand government in overseas capitals. First in Port Moresby and then in Tokyo, the latter especially being one of our most important diplomatic posts. It is a testament to Maarten's intellect that he learnt Japanese specifically so that he could take up one of his first diplomatic postings some years before he returned to Tokyo to become our ambassador. Maarten has been made a member of the Order of the Rising Sun by the Japanese government for his contribution to strengthening relations between Japan and New Zealand.

In 1999 New Zealand hosted the APEC summit and Sir Maarten was the lead official for that summit. He was called the APEC Sherpa and given the responsibility of bringing all of those governments to agreement about supporting economic growth through strong and open markets.

Probably the highlight of Maarten's career was being head of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. This is about as close to the centre of power in New Zealand as you can get. On a daily basis, Sir Maarten worked with the Prime Ministers of the day and led their department to deliver the outcomes the government was trying to achieve. The skills required to lead such a key government agency include intelligence, the ability to grasp what has Prime Minister is trying to achieve and convert it to action, the ability to be able to work across a wide range of other government department leaders and to be calm through the likely daily crisis.

It is notable that Sir Maarten led the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet first under Prime Minister Helen Clark and then under John Key. They are two of New Zealand's arguably most successful Prime Ministers in the last 20 years and yet from opposite sides of the political divide. It is a mark of respect for Sir Maarten that he was knighted under the National Government when the first half of his tenure was spent serving the previous Labour government. When he was knighted in 2012, Sir Maarten joined a very small group of highly esteemed public servants who have received that honour and recognition of their service to the machinery of government and their skill in doing so. He was the first ever chief executive of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to be knighted.

Sir Maarten's achievements in leadership roles throughout his career in the public service have required a critical set of personal skills. He is said to appear relaxed even when under great pressure. He created an environment where others could bring out their best and reportedly had an attitude that the glass was always half full, rather than half empty.

Sir Maarten took his learning from Rathkeale College in its earliest days to university and turned it into a career that allowed him to perform at his absolute best. Along the way he changed disciplines from mathematics to economics to languages, allowing him to become a leading diplomat and trade negotiator for New Zealand. We hope that his example will serve as an inspiration to current Rathkeale students and those that will follow them.

Ed Cox



Quinn & Ethan Childs

Quinn and Ethan Childs (2014-18) find themselves back at Rathkeale once again

Ethan and Quinn Childs are a set of twins who were students at Rathkeale College together from 2014-2018. Born and raised in the Wairarapa, there was only one high school the Childs brothers wanted to attend. With the support of their parents, Rathkeale was the best fit for their ambitions. As diminutive youngsters, the twins were mad about all things sport, and with their cousin, Liam Burling, making great strides in his sport at Rathkeale, he was a key figure in persuading both of them. The cricket-crazy cousins would often switch from their usual backyard cricket sessions and utilise the school’s High Performance Centre for cricket training from as early as the age of 10. Using these great facilities at a young age and seeing the beautiful campus regularly, Ethan and Quinn were convinced that Rathkeale was the school for them.

Entering Year 9 almost a decade ago seems like just yesterday for the twins. There were never any nerves, only sheer excitement for what was predictably going to be a great 5 years to come. Highlights from the boys' schooling career seemed to happen almost every day,

with hardly any complaints about school life. Some notable memories include singing in the choir for three years, House Music events, the Year 11 P.E. trip to Rotorua for mountain biking, the Year 13 Geography trip to Tongariro National Park, coming 9th in the country at the National 1st XI Football Tournament in 2017, and the genuine camaraderie they found between the boys and their schoolmates and teachers.

Both Ethan and Quinn were exceptional cricket players, and it did not take long for the Childs brothers to make their mark on junior cricket and the First XI. In fact, it only took Quinn a month of junior cricket to be called up for the First XI in a traditional game against St. Peter's Cambridge, where he took 5 wickets in the second innings on debut in Year 9, a memory he will never forget. Not long after, at the start of Year 10, Ethan made his debut, and the twins never looked back. Together they played at least 80 games for First XI, with their greatest memories being Ethan's 125 runs in an innings versus Lindisfarne in 2018 and going unbeaten in the fixtures in 2018.

Five years of memories flew by for the twins and for the first time in their lives, Ethan and Quinn were separated in their first year out of college. Ethan chose to pursue a passion for business in Dunedin, studying a Bachelor of Commerce at the University of Otago. With four of his best mates also studying in the deep south, it was a great opportunity for Ethan to gain a wealth of knowledge in the business sector and create new connections along with a strong core of Rathkeale Old Boys. Quinn chose to pursue cricket over in the scorching Northern Territory, spending 6 months in Darwin, Australia. Playing for PINT Cricket Club, Quinn juggled his time between playing against international cricketers and a part-time labouring job, which was certainly challenging in the sweltering hot conditions.

After a testing year apart, the twins reconciled over the 2019-2020 summer, having great success for the Wairarapa cricket team and both being selected for the Central Districts A Side. In 2020, Quinn exchanged his singlet and jandals for a puffer vest and scarf as he joined his brother in Dunedin to study a Bachelor of Applied

Science. The twins both graduated in 2023, with Ethan earning a Bachelor of Commerce majoring in Marketing and Management, and Quinn graduating with a Bachelor of Applied Science majoring in Physical Activity and Health, with a minor in Sports Development and Management.

After completing their degrees, the summer of 2022-2023 saw the brothers return to their hometown, looking for inspiration on what to achieve in the future. After working different summer jobs and thinking about their next steps, the young men have, funnily enough, found themselves back at the school they love – Rathkeale College. Quinn has taken on a role as a tutor for the last half of the 2023 school year, and Ethan is working diligently in the property team under the watchful eye of a great family friend, Brian James. The brothers feel it is a great honour to be back at Rathkeale, with Ethan saving up some money before planning on moving to England for a few years, and Quinn gaining valuable experience in the classroom as he aspires to study teaching next year in the hopes of becoming a PE teacher.



Fergus Jack-Hinton

Fergus Jack-Hinton's (1999-2003) career in the film industry is only just beginning



Fergus Jack-Hinton was a student at Rathkeale College from 1999 to 2003. When Fergus was growing up the two careers that most interested him were either mad scientist or magician. He loved building things, reading about how things worked, and solving puzzles.

After moving to New Zealand from Australia he attended Hadlow Preparatory School, and then started at Rathkeale in 1999. Fergus had a passion for films and filmmaking. He had always loved films from a young age. Filmmaking wasn't widely taught yet though, and this was just before digital cameras were easily accessible and the rise of YouTube. During lunch times and after school, Fergus and his friends would go to the Rathkeale computer labs and

create animations using Microsoft Paint and Slideshow. They would draw pictures, then copy and paste them to another page so they could make crude animation slideshows. They'd make car chases or gun fights – it was great fun. Inspired by films such as *The Matrix*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *Titanic* they dreamt about a future in the film industry. The early 2000s was a great time for filmmaking, and New Zealand filmmaking in particular. When Peter Jackson made *The Lord of the Rings* movies here in New Zealand for the first time it felt like movies were a thing people did, not just a thing you went and watched.

After finishing at Rathkeale in 2003, Fergus moved down to Wellington to attend Victoria University. During his first year, he discovered the

one course where you got to watch movies instead of read books – Film 101. Films always captivated his young mind, and realising that he could make a career in this field, suddenly he saw his path. However, while there was plenty to learn academically about film studies, university courses that dealt with the practicality of filmmaking were few. Fergus was interested in how to use a camera, how to edit, how to colour grade, how to produce a film. So, during his last year at Victoria, while completing his Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Film Studies, Theatre Studies, and Art History, Fergus also began a one-year Video Post-Production Diploma at Natcoll. It was here that he found himself in his element – all practice and no theory. By the end of the course, Fergus felt he had learned more practical

skills in that one-year course than he had in the entirety of his university education. He had also now found the career he intended to pursue in the film industry – Visual Effects (VFX).

VFX is a process during the post-production phase of filmmaking where visual elements are manipulated or added to shots in order to create new images. This could include, for example, adding new backgrounds, adding special effects like explosions, changing the appearance of actors, adding or removing things to or from the set, or even adding computer generated characters. When you watch *The Matrix* and you see Neo dodging bullets, leaping across buildings, doing acrobatics without the aid of wires – that's visual effects. It's the

magic trick in filmmaking that makes the impossible possible.

After finishing his studies, Fergus spent two years working in education as a video post-production tutor before finally landing a job at Park Road Post Production as a compositor. Fergus felt incredibly luckily to have landed his dream job. In his first year working professionally in film VFX he removed safety wires from actors for a *Cirque du Soleil* film, created a sci-fi HUD display for a crashing spacecraft for an amazing short film called *Misdrop*, added bullet holes, muzzle flashes, and blood for a local Kiwi action film, and did cosmetic fix-ups for *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*. What is cosmetic fix-up? That's fixing bad wigs, rough looking make-up, bad

lighting, and wardrobe malfunctions. Not all VFX is noticeable – about half of all the work Fergus has done in his 10 year VFX career is actually invisible; fixing or removing things from the final film instead of adding to it.

Since then, Fergus has worked on such films and TV shows as: *Planet of the Apes*, *The Hunger Games*, *Star Wars*, Marvel films and TV shows, and most recently *The Last of Us*.

"It's been a fun 10 year career," says Fergus, "I'm glad I got to live the two dream jobs my child-self always dreamed of, being a mad scientist and a magician, by being a VFX compositor. My education led me on this strange journey, and this strange career, into making movie magic. It's a pretty fun, exciting, and silly job. I highly recommend it."



Tim King

The Reluctant Mayor (1983-87)

Mayor, Farmer, Company Director, Trustee, Rugby Coach, Administrator, Husband and Father, Tim King and his wife Gail live on their sheep and beef farm in Eves Valley, near Brightwater in the Tasman District.

Tim attended Rathkeale College from 1983-1987. After leaving school, Tim travelled to Europe via America and Canada enjoying the typical Kiwi overseas experience. He worked in a range of jobs in the UK including farming, building and butchering, spending any downtime he had exploring Europe.

On his return to New Zealand, Tim worked in the forestry industry for a number of years, while at the same time working on the family farm. Eventually, the farm became his full-time role.

Tim and Gail have three sons who are all farming in different parts of New Zealand. He was closely involved in his boys' sports as they grew up, coaching both rugby and cricket, and continues to participate in his local sports club in both coaching and administration roles.

In 1998 several local issues drew Tim's attention to local politics. At that time there was much consternation in Tasman's rural communities as to what the Council of the time was proposing. Tim wanted the opportunity to speak to a couple of burning issues. However, to do so, he needed to put his hand up as a candidate. Thus began his foray into local politics.

Despite a minimalist campaign Tim was ultimately elected to Tasman District Council. After 18 years as the Deputy Mayor, he is currently serving a second term as the Mayor juggling his farming commitments

while leading one of New Zealand's largest unitary authorities.

Tim has seen a huge change in local government over the past 25 years. He enjoys the challenges and the opportunity to work with people and communities to reach constructive and positive outcomes and to find pragmatic solutions to complex problems.

In February 2019 a large wildfire in Pigeon Valley resulted in a state of emergency in the Tasman District. Tim and his family were personally affected by the fire being forced to evacuate their home at short notice with the fire quite literally at their back door.

Dealing with the challenges of the immediate event and being evacuated, Tim didn't hesitate to take an active part in the civil defence response ensuring the right messages were being distributed to those in need in the initial period and that the required services were being directed to the right place.

The Council's decision-making is very much focused on delivering the 'right' solution for its community. An example of this is the now near-completion of the Waimea Community Dam, New Zealand's largest dam build in over 25 years. While unpopular due to the cost and aspiration of the project, its long-term benefits to one of the fastest growing residential areas and a significant location in the supply of national horticulture cannot be challenged in this rapidly changing climate. Tim has been involved in planning for the dam for 20 years. While at some personal cost, he has shown leadership for the ongoing build in an uncertain environment; testament to his fortitude to lead a team to

look at long term outcomes for the community.

Tim was recently awarded the Leadership Award at the LGNZ 2023 conference – an award that celebrates an exceptional elected member who leads by example and inspires others to action.

Despite the challenges that being the Mayor brings, there is also a raft of upsides. For Tim, one of the bonuses is his regular interaction with the children of Tasman District. His visits to the local Waimea Kindergarten have earned him a new title as the 'King of Richmond'. Here's what the children had to say after they helped him plant a tree to commemorate the King's coronation:

"I loved digging with the Mayor. He helped us put the dirt around the roots of the tree." – Ivy

"He was fun, and it was cool planting the tree with the Mayor." – Brea

"Today we got to see the King of Richmond. He was kind and good at planting the tree with us. The tree was well-supported." – Caleb

Tim was one of only two pupils in his year from the South Island who attended Rathkeale. He really enjoyed his time at Rathkeale especially the outdoor location, the Ruamāhanga River nearby, and the many extra-curricular activities that the school offered.

Being a long way from home at a relatively young age was challenging for Tim and he didn't always handle it well but in the long run he learned a lot of life lessons from his time at Rathkeale College and realised that sometimes some of the best learnings come from challenging circumstances.



From clockwise: Tim and Gail King at his swearing in; Tim visiting Waimea Kindergarten; Tim and his loyal farm dog Bra; Tim hosting a citizenship ceremony.

Jenny McGovern - Retirement

Staff member Jenny McGovern leaves Rathkeale College after 27 years of service

Jenny McGovern finished her time as the Principal's Assistant at Rathkeale College this year. Jenny's contribution to Rathkeale is almost immeasurable – and she will be sorely missed. Whilst for nearly 27 years she has been at the beck and call of successive Principals, she has also had a life of her own, some of which may surprise. Youthful years were spent in Taranaki, in Pātea and Kaponga in the shade of Mount Taranaki, before moving up the ladder to Eketāhuna where her father was the mayor no less.

Jenny's college days were spent at Tararua College and later she ran the Eketāhuna telephone exchange and can probably remember most of the numbers to this day. She and her husband Ian farmed in Ihuraua and she did a wide range of jobs following the closure of the Masterton Post Office. She worked in real estate and banking and even as a reliever at Opaki School for a couple of weeks. She and Ian then went on to establish and run the very successful Loop Line Winery before building and moving into their new home in The Barracks two years ago.

Jenny first started as the Principal's Assistant at Rathkeale College in 1997 and the rest is history. Our principal's assistants are a rare breed and not just because there have only been three of them: Shirley Smith for 17 years, Alison Baillie for 16 years and Jenny for nearly 27 years. To be a Principal's Assistant requires an arsenal of special qualities and talents. Ordinary secretarial skills alone do not adequately serve the position and good assistants are quite literally worth their weight in gold. Rathkeale has been lucky enough to be blessed thrice. Jenny has been at the College during some of its most challenging times and has, as the saying goes, coped with the good, the bad and the ugly.

Over the years she has welcomed Kris Brewin, Neville Duckmanton, Willy Kersten and Martin O'Grady to the Principal's office. Her role has also seen her closely aligned with Board Chairs, whilst the Role of Board Secretary has added a significant dimension to the job and some long late nights.

It was during my two periods as Acting Principal that I became hugely indebted to Jenny and grateful for her kindness, helpfulness and generosity of spirit. Beyond that it was she who helped to move me, kicking and squawking, from a heavy reliance on the secretaries for typing to a seat in front of my own computer. It is still she, who to this day, is my number one go to for every

conceivable problem I may have on the technological front and beyond. Not once has she ever climbed under her desk to get away from me or sighed the sigh of the exasperated when really, she had every right to do so on numerous occasions. I have been very lucky to have you Jenny, but I know I am not alone.

Willy Kersten, Martin's predecessor, remarked, "Looking back Jenny, one can wonder how you have remained sane. Each Principal with his own personality, idiosyncrasies and methodologies has meant you have had to adjust your ways to different expectations in terms of the ways they wanted, or perhaps needed, to have things done." But sane she has remained; changes were embraced, and idiosyncrasies always tolerated with good grace. Jenny was often the gatekeeper to the Principal's office. She was quietly protective of the door beside hers and no matter the situation, she remained calmly loyal and discreet.

Jenny is proof of the Celtic saying that 'an old broom knows the dirty corners best'. So many of us have relied on you, Jenny, and have been supported by you through our years together. Your sunny disposition, sense of fun and embrace of all that professionalism entails meant that we were all very lucky and grateful to have had you in our workplace and our lives. We wish you and Ian all the very best for the next phase of your lives together.

In the meantime, remembering the Irish ancestry of the McGoverns, may the road always rise to meet you.

Grant Harper



Maureen Vaughan - Retirement

Staff member Maureen Vaughan leaves Rathkeale College after 34 years of service



This year Maureen Vaughn retired from her position as Cranleigh House matron after 34 years of service to the school. To work for 34 years in the same job is an example of outstanding dedication. Maureen's job has changed with regards to hours and titles but essentially it has remained the same.

Maureen arrived at Rathkeale in 1989 and Principals have had nothing but praise for Maureen and her work in Cranleigh House since. Cranleigh has always been beautifully presented and the house to get the most visits from prospective parents over the last dozen years since its renovation.

During Covid times it was Cranleigh that had the only sick bay with an ensuite, so Maureen became extra busy with the stream of ill boys that passed through and sterilising the sick bay again after every one of them.

Maureen has been far more than a keeper of the house. What has made her truly invaluable is the relationships that she has built with parents, staff and most importantly the boys. People trust Maureen. They know that she is

discreet, they know that she has empathy and knowledge but most of all it is her warmth and care that draws people to her.

There is nothing scary about Maureen in her stature or demeanour, yet she has the respect of so many. It is probably worth dwelling on why this is: a little humour, a lot of care and bucket loads of kindness and empathy will get you all the respect you could ever want. If ever I have come across a mess in the house and asked the boys around it if they are seriously going to leave that for Maureen to see the response has always been the same – no way, we'll sort it out.

Maureen is an encyclopaedia of knowledge when it comes to boarding. She started her job in a time where boys would leave the house to entertain themselves. Where there was no internet and no network for mobile phones and only one landline upstairs for 70 boys to share. Downstairs showers were in the laundry area and everyone shared them. There was no gas so when the water cylinders were empty there was only cold water.

Cranleigh House went through many changes during her tenure changing from a fully vertical house to Junior House for all Year 9 and 10 boys and then reverting back to its original name and status as a vertical house. A dozen years ago the house was upgraded which involved a shift to Rugby House for 12 months and looking after all of the Cranleigh boys plus the Year 9 cohort with a roll that went well into the 80s.

The role of the matron has also changed over the years and Maureen has been a flag bearer of change. She has the patience of a saint, empathy without limit, she has the ability to make people feel welcome and valued. She kept these traits whilst keeping a 65 bed boys boarding house immaculately presented every day of the year, tending the sick and injured, darning and mending, folding and washing. Trips to town with the sick and needy or getting supplies are all part of the day for Maureen. What time she has left is used by taking and making calls from parents and reassuring them that their sons are well. Over the years, Maureen must have cared for over 500 boys.

For a boarding community to truly work well there must be trust between the Principal and the Housemasters, and the Housemasters must be able to share and work together but equally important are the matron's team which must be a unit that supports each other. Gone are the days of individual houses working as silos and competition between staff. Rather there is an understanding that when we work together, we are stronger. No one has done more than Maureen to create this positive harmony and unity. The matrons will know, as I have learned, it is Maureen's move to silence that best represents her conviction. She has ideas and opinions and a wealth of knowledge but will never raise her voice, talk over anyone, or bang on a table.

Thank you to John for allowing us to keep Maureen on our staff for so long. We wish her all the best with her life after Rathkeale – and thank her for everything she has given us.

Glenn McIntosh

Decade Reunions
Together again at Rathkeale in 2023

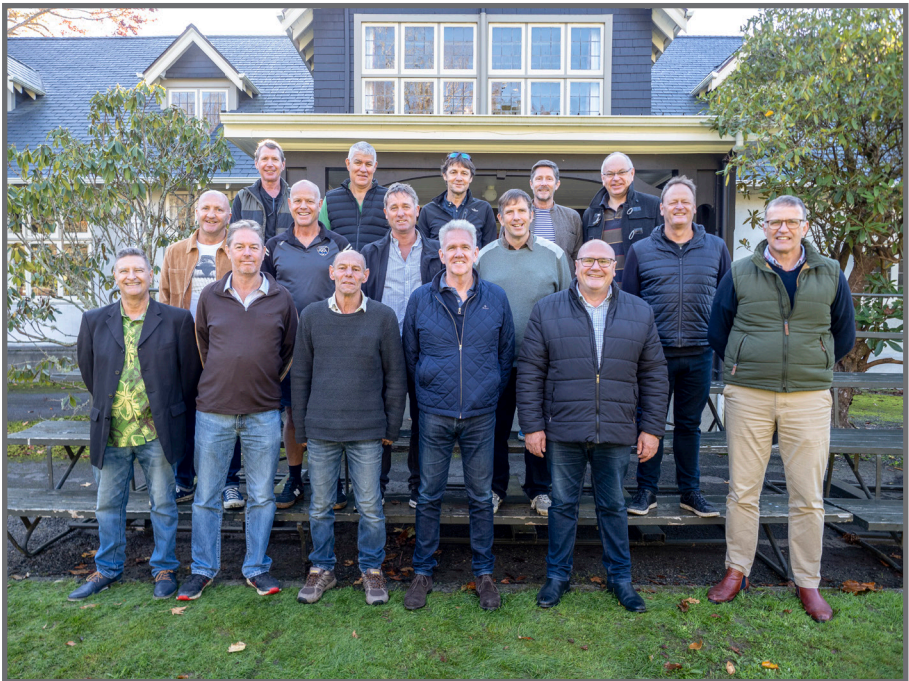


John Peel
Representing the Class of 1973

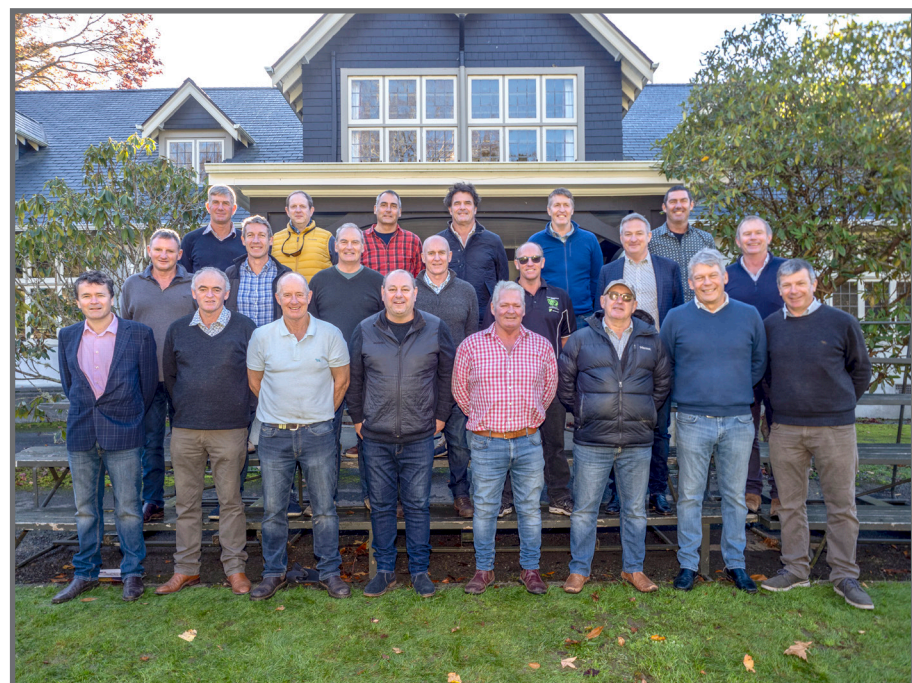
Rathkeale College
Decade Reunions - Class of 1981



Rathkeale College
Decade Reunions - Class of 1982



Rathkeale College
Decade Reunions - Class of 1983



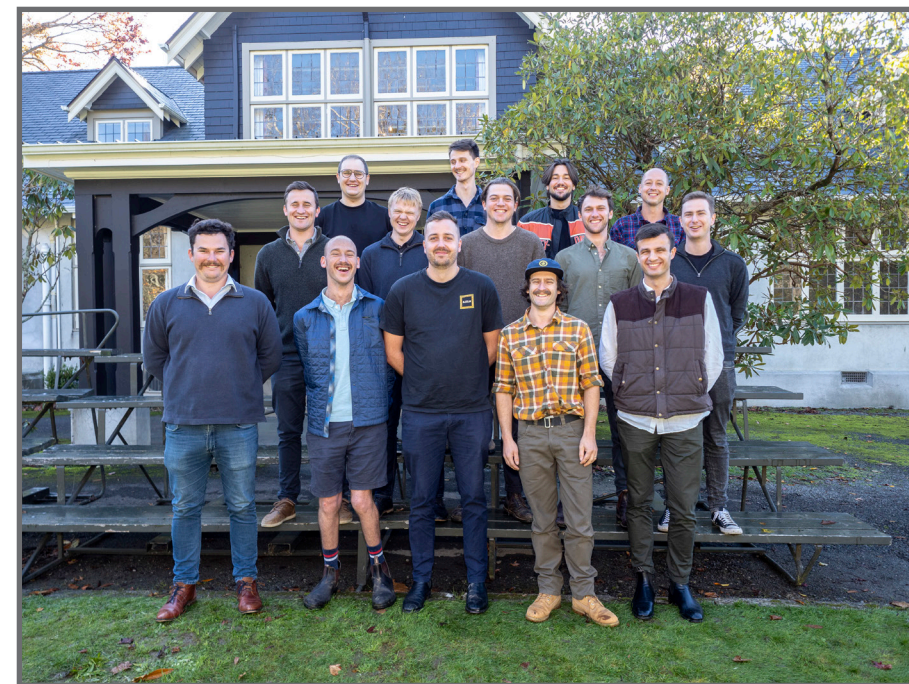
Rathkeale College
Decade Reunions - Class of 2003



Rathkeale College
Decade Reunions - Class of 1993



Rathkeale College
Decade Reunions - Class of 2013



Simon Taylor - in Memoriam

Simon Taylor attended Rathkeale College from 1986 to 1988

Simon Taylor was born in June 1972 at St Georges Hospital in Christchurch. Simon initially lived in School House at Christ's College. His primary schooling commenced at Elmwood School then he moved to Hadlow Preparatory School in Masterton in 1979 when his father became Principal of Rathkeale College.

Simon excelled on the rugby field, hoping one day to emulate his All Black grandfather. He made the Wairarapa Primary School Reps at half back, playing a leading role in Hadlow's legendary victory over Huntley in 1985 – as well as being a key player in the First XI Cricket team.

Simon went on to Rathkeale as a boarder in Repton House where he made some lifelong friendships. Again, he excelled at rugby, making the First XV in Year 11. Though it was thought it was better for him to stay at Rathkeale for the duration of his schooling rather than join his family at King's College, he suffered from anxiety and went to King's for Years 12 and 13.

During those two years, he again excelled at rugby and cricket, making the 1st XV and the 1st XI. He was selected for the prestigious Northern Region Reps and Auckland Secondary Schools versus Wales in 1990.

After gaining Bursary, Simon went to Otago University, but having made the prestigious Otago University U19 Blues side, he suffered a depressed sternum when the whole Lincoln College scrum piled upon him in a pre-season tourney in Christchurch. This led to a further bout of anxiety, which brought him home from Otago and was the beginning of a life of incredible bravery against the odds.

When he came back to Auckland, he studied a Diploma of Recreation and Sport at Manukau Polytech, including scuba diving, and was a much appreciated tutor at King's Prep. He then spent some time farming in North Canterbury before he returned to Auckland to spend 3 years on an alternative health farm at Shelly Beach where he experienced highs and lows, but managed to play rugby for Helensville and joined the local volunteer fire brigade, an association which he was to resurrect very fondly several years later. Simon continued to collect a range of qualifications, including First Aid and Shearing certificates. He was always a man of many idiosyncratic parts.

Simon then went to test his mettle in Wellington for a year, doing a building course in Lower Hutt, and becoming a



carpenter building ready-made houses. Despite his Lower Hutt family heritage, and playing for the great Petone club, he found carpentry rather unfulfilling, and moved to Timaru to do a journalism course at Aoraki Polytech.

As part of the course, he wrote some superbly insightful sports reports, but disliked the T-Line shorthand he had to master to qualify. He played for the Celtic Club, in places like Temuka and Geraldine, and enjoyed lots of Irish after-match humour. Simon then bravely returned to academia at Auckland University Teachers' College and worked incredibly hard to gain 310 of 360 credits needed for a Bachelor of Education.

Unfortunately, he found it difficult to master the final 50 mathematics credits, which even his lecturers could not understand, let alone teach. He earned huge positive feedback from all the students he taught on section, and also demonstrated what a fine teacher he could have been by also doing voluntary work at Mt Richmond Special School and coaching an Ōtāhuhu Rugby Club Junior Team very successfully.

When Simon became understandably very frustrated by not completing his Bachelor of Education, a good friend suggested dairying might suit him. So, add two years of 4am mustering of cows on dark slippery slopes with a large unwieldy Suzuki motorbike at Matamata and Piarere to his list of work experiences.

By that time, with his younger sister Sophie living in London, Simon decided to do his OE. Looking

back, his travelling solo through Italy, Morocco, Spain, Switzerland and France, then the UK was another major feat. When he came home in 2005 he worked for Silver Fern Landscaping, which he enjoyed. But it was then that a specialist noticed he was dragging his left leg and that led to the discovery of the meningioma which has held him back all his life.

This led to the first of a number of challenging major operations in 2005, sadly to be repeated in 2015. From that time on, Simon was no stranger to hospitals and rehabilitation centres, specialists, nurses and carers – all of whom have been absolutely superb, seeing something special in Simon which made them more determined to help him get well.

After recovering from the first major operation, Simon went to Western Australia in 2007 hoping to get a high paying, short term job in a Pilbara mine. Finding it difficult to break into the industry, however, he drove a truck delivering hard board to building sites but found that very soul-destroying and lonely work so returned home to New Zealand.

His life was enriched again when he was able to move back to North Canterbury with the great support of the Zino family. After that, continuing his peripatetic journey of provincial New Zealand, he worked in Medbury on a dairy farm, and then at the huge Patoa Pig farm, while living in Hawarden village. There he greatly enjoyed playing cricket for the Scargill team, once taking a catch on the boundary which knocked him out. He was very proud of his gold and green baggie, probably his favourite of a wide variety of cloth caps. It was there that he also revived his great interest in volunteer firefighting and he greatly enjoyed his time with the Hawarden Rural Fire Brigade. He received much praise for cradling a seriously injured motorcyclist near Flaxmere one evening, and was very proud of his honorary life membership when he had to leave for Auckland once his meningioma reactivated in 2015.

Simon had his second major operation in 2015 and then spent some months at Rehab Plus in Carrington – literally learning to walk again.

Following his recovery from this, he unfortunately had a further serious medical event in Taupō en route to the Lions Test in Wellington in May of 2017. He was saved by a superb intensive care team at Waikato Hospital, and when he eventually came round, he made another of his famously wry observations on life – “The nurses here are so pretty, I don't know if I want to get better.”

During his ongoing recovery, he worked as a volunteer at the Mercy Hospice Shop in Ellerslie, often returning home with the odd eccentric purchase. From that time on, Simon lived largely at home, where his delightfully idiosyncratic modus operandi came to the fore. Through it all Simon's Christian faith remained very strong, even when many felt

he had huge cause to doubt it. Somewhere in his daily Word for the Day emails, he read “The Lord loves a cheerful giver.” That eventually explained why all the lemons on his parent's prolific tree kept disappearing as he gave them to all and sundry – not to mention the frequent gaps in their bookshelf which he took it upon himself to donate to various op shops.

He became heavily involved in St Paul's in the Park parish activities with the wonderful encouragement of Reverend Warner Wilder. However, even the ever-tolerant Warner was occasionally taken aback by some of Simon's initiatives, including planting potatoes in numerous tyre stacks on the church boundary. What really took the cake, however, was Simon's announcement in the end of the service Parish notices that: “The Crusaders had thrashed the Blues the previous evening.”

The occupation at which Simon became very proficient at was his career as a very popular Z service station concierge in Ellerslie, and then eventually at the Remuera station, which brought him into regular contact with a lot of old mates.

Sadly, despite surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy to keep the meningioma under control, Simon's health deteriorated in September of 2022, and eventually he was moved into the hospital wing of the Edmund Hillary Retirement Village. There, he became a firm favourite among nurses and carers, even if his winning the weekly bingo and quiz sessions on a regular basis annoyed some of the more competitive residents.

Simon's life story confirms that bravery under fire can occur in many different and often unsung and unnoticed contexts. He had, in reality, come through with flying colours – typified by his Hawarden Fire Brigade photo.

As Simon reflected on his life, he said his happiest times were at Rathkeale, where he and his friends loved wandering around the extensive grounds cradled by the Ruamāhanga River and guarded by the mighty Rangitūmau.

Simon passed away on the 24th of July 2023 and was farewelled at a packed Saint Mary's-in-Holy Trinity in Parnell, Auckland on Thursday the 29th of July 2023, with a good number of Rathkeale Old Boys in attendance, including Guy Uttley and Tim Jack among the pall bearers.

Obituary by Simon's father - John Taylor

Obituaries

It is with sadness that we acknowledge the passing of a number of Old Boys and former members of staff. Regrettably we sometimes know little about their lives beyond the College gates and are always grateful when families inform the Association or provide the Rock Runner with information which can be shared with readers.

Billy Bargh (2017-20)

Billy Bargh attended Rathkeale College from 2017 to 2020. Billy was an effervescent and likeable young man who seemed to always be at the heart of playful and fun interactions. From his first days in Year 9, whether in the class or on the Rugby field, he impressed all with a warm and charming smile. Billy may not have been the biggest bloke to roll onto the Rugby field. But still, his accurate lineout throwing and open ball play showed strokes of genius – enjoying two Junior Wairarapa Championship finals wins as the perfect reward for hard work and good sportsmanship. Repton House was where he probably spent most of his time. Here, Billy grew a strong bond with his peers and boarding house staff. He enjoyed his time with his brotherhood, exploring the campus surroundings and all the adventures a good Rathkeale man gets to embrace. Billy sadly passed away on the 24th of January 2023. Our heartfelt condolences are with family members and close friends. He will truly be missed.



Paul Duncan (1973-77)

Paul attended Rathkeale from 1973 to 1977. He was a full-time boarder and recently donated generously to the School House Bush fundraising campaign. Paul was born in Hammersmith, London, United Kingdom on September 8, 1959 to Graeme and Raema Duncan. Paul passed away in Portland, Oregon on Saturday, September 23, 2023, aged 64.



Paul Greenwood (Staff)

Paul Greenwood was the Director of Information Technology at Rathkeale College for 15 years. During his time at Rathkeale Paul made an invaluable contribution, not just in the area of computing, but also in sport, debating and theatre. He also represented staff on the Board of Trustees, and was renowned for his bow ties and sense of humour. He and his wife moved to Whanganui to enjoy their retirement in 2014. Paul passed away on the 30th of March 2023, aged 76 years – a very loved husband of Lynn and a loved father, brother, uncle, and friend to many.



Murray Kendrick (1969-73)

Murray Kendrick attended Rathkeale between 1969 and 1973. During that time he was a member of Repton House, a School Prefect and the recipient of Academic colours. After College Murray attended Massey University in Palmerston North where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in History. A career in Primary Education followed and Murray worked in a number of schools in the central North Island that culminated with Principalship of Strathmore School in the Waikato. He was married to Fiona and together they completed an extensive campervan trip of the South Island. In his record of the trip Murray observed that retirement was great. Murray passed away on the 7th of July 2023 and is survived by his wife, two children and four grandchildren.

Murad Salayev (2022-23)

Murad attended Rathkeale for two years from 2022 to 2023. On the 13th of October 2023, on his journey home to Wellington after sitting an exam, he was tragically killed in a car accident. Murad's friends, fellow boarders and staff were deeply affected by this loss.

Murad's passing hit the school hard. In just two years at Rathkeale College, he made his mark and took great pride in his achievements. You could see how much he loved his family – it was written all over his face whenever you questioned him about family. He's left a gap that can never be filled, but we'll always remember his spirit, his ability to give new things a go and the motivation he took from achieving.

Murad's funeral was held at Old St Paul's in Wellington on the 28th of October 2023. Students and staff from Rathkeale College were in attendance to celebrate his life and comfort his family, and each other. We pray for his family, and we hope they can find comfort in how loved he was by so many here, and by how deeply his passing has moved our community.



Carl Wilmshurst (2004-08)

Carl Wilmshurst attended Rathkeale from 2004 to 2008. Carl was from Hokitika a boarder in Junior House and then Senior House. He was a keen sportsman and Vice-Captain of the 2nd XV Rugby team. He also played badminton. Carl would spend exeat weekends at his Grandmother's farm in Carterton. After finishing at Rathkeale, Carl went on to run his parent's dairy farm back home in Hokitika.

Carl passed away on the 22nd August 2023 aged 32 years. Dearly loved fiancé of Anna Boulton. Adored Dad of Eva and Mason. Loved son of Brigitte and Bryan. Loved brother and brother-in-law of Angela and Julius Cousins, and uncle of Petra.

Loved grandson of Lila and the late Ron Wilmshurst, and Ash and Janet Lawson; nephew of Lynda and Brian McCartney, Jan and Kevin Davenport; Yvette Gillanders and Rawiri Lawson. Loved and respected by Anna's family: Fred and Pam Boulton, Penny and Kurt, Kirsty and Mitch.



Robert Liverton (1965-68)

Robert attended Rathkeale during the College's earliest years from 1965-1968 and boarded in both Cranleigh and Repton Houses where he was a popular and gregarious student.

After College Robert studied agriculture at Massey University before returning to Pakowhai, the long-held family farm in Tiraumea, north Wairarapa. Here Robert earned a reputation as a well-respected hill country farmer and the producer of high-quality stock. During his tenure the farm taken up by his forebears, some of the earliest settlers in the district, was doubled in size. He had strong feelings about the rapid advance of pine trees in the region and their impact on farming and rural communities.

Robert and his wife were passionate travelers and travelled widely. This occasionally included Rob's passion for scuba diving; a sport he instructed in. Rob and Pat have two sons, Jason and Sam, who both attended Rathkeale. Robert passed away on the 17th of August 2023. He is remembered as a loyal and proud Rathkeale Old Boy.

Philip Keddell (1967-68)

Philip (never Phil) Keddell joined the Rathkeale community in February 1967 and was in the same dormitory as me, Cranleigh C Dorm. Many will remember Philip as a small, red-headed boy who suddenly put on a growth spurt to emerge as a lanky individual with an ambling gait. Although he left after 3 years, at the end of his School Certificate year, he will be remembered by many for the fact that he developed Type One Diabetes early in his school days, meaning he was rewarded with a special diet and extra care from the Cranleigh Matron, Mrs. Phyllis Sadlier. As his parents lived in Christchurch, Philip would often spend exeat weekends with me in Wellington, as a return journey to Canterbury, in a 36 hour period, was simply not feasible. Partly due to medical problems he did not remember his time at Rathkeale particularly fondly, apart from, his widow tells me, the swimming. He remembers this as being very enjoyable, back in the days when a compulsory naked swim was de rigeur upon rising on summer mornings.

After school we didn’t keep in touch but we both ended up living in the United Kingdom from the 1980s. In England he had a varied career from plumber to politician to journalist. He was a member of Lincolnshire County Council representing the Stamford North electoral division for Labour from May 1993 until he stepped down in May 2001. He was also a member of South Kesteven District Council and Stamford Town Council, before moving to Norfolk with his artist wife, Lis, where he acquired and built up the local free newspaper in Cromer – The Crab Line. Philip sold the paper in 2012 but then began a new journalistic venture with Crab Tales, a remarkable achievement for someone who was severely dyslexic. The inevitable draw, back into politics, meant that he became

a Parish Councillor in his home town of Mundesley and stood, unsuccessfully, as an Independent candidate for Norfolk County Council in 2013.

Sadly, despite attempts otherwise, I never managed to catch up in person with Philip in the UK but in September 2023 I did visit Philip’s widow, Lis, at her home in Mundesley, Norfolk. I was accompanied by my wife Clare as well as Robyn Prior, widow of former Rathkeale school doctor, Simon. Sadly, Philip had passed away from a heart attack in October 2022, possibly resulting from Covid.

Philip Arthur Keddell - Born August 24, 1952. Died October 20, 2022, at Mundesley, Norfolk, UK.

*Obituary by Philip Harcourt
(attended Rathkeale 1967-1971)*



Matthew Bolton (1988-1991)

Matthew Bolton, known as Matt, passed away on April 18th, 2023, at the age of 47. He leaves behind a legacy of laughter, generosity, and boundless energy that touched the lives of all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Matt attended Rathkeale College from 1988 until 1991 but it quickly became clear that his true calling in life was not found within the pages of textbooks, but rather in the art of making people laugh. Even the teachers couldn't help but crack a smile at his antics.

Matt enjoyed the many pursuits that Rathkeale offered as a border and made many close friends. He enjoyed playing rugby and made the 2nd XV for a few years.

An adventurer and a tinkerer, Matt embarked on numerous projects, from crafting garden furniture, building go-karts and converting a car into a makeshift convertible with an angle grinder. His spirit of determination and creativity shone through in everything he did and he always had a project on the go.

After completing his studies, Matt ventured to the Smedley Training Farm, where he ran his own horse and dog and played rugby for Hawkes Bay Under 19s. His journey continued at Lincoln University, where he discovered a newfound focus on academics but maintained his spirited approach to life, often hosting raucous parties with friends and farm animals in tow.

Following his academic pursuits, Matt embarked on a successful career as a door-to-door vacuum cleaner salesperson, quickly rising to the top of the sales leaderboard. He tackled that challenge head-on and managed to pay off his student loan within six months.

In 1997, Matt met the love of his life, Sarah Main, and they began a life together on the farm at Pahiatua. They married in 2000 and welcomed their children, Emma, Charlotte, and Sam, over the years. Matt's high-energy spirit was undoubtedly passed on to his children, who brought immense joy to his life.

Matt's farming journey took a significant turn when he transitioned from sheep and beef to dairy farming, facing doubters head-on and achieving remarkable success. He expanded his farming ventures, including a goat farm with 5000 milking goats, and gained recognition for its achievements in sustainability and animal welfare. Matt's dedication earned the farm numerous awards and recognition, showcasing his commitment to excellence.

In addition to his farming endeavours, Matt also started a charity food bank during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing much-needed assistance to those in need in his community.

In 2021, Matt found happiness and companionship with Nikita Vincent, planning an exciting future together before his untimely passing.

Matt was known for his generosity, unwavering integrity, and his profound love for his children and the businesses he had built. Beneath his stoic exterior, he possessed a sensitive soul and a heart that would readily extend a helping hand to a friend in need.

*Obituary by Nick Bolton
(attended Rathkeale 1986-1990)*

Sons of Old Boys

2023



BACK ROW: Louie Martin (Year 9, Tim Martin 1978 – 1982), William Orsborn (Year 10, Sam Orsborn 1989 – 1993), James Ellingham (Year 10, Craig Ellingham 1980 – 1983), Hunter Farman (Year 10, Guy Farman 1986 – 1990), Charles Edge (Year 10, Hamish Edge 1987 – 1991), John Martin (Year 10, Tim Martin 1978 – 1982), Charlie Cameron (Year 11, Roddy Cameron 1985 – 1988), Jack McGruddy (Year 9, Will McGruddy 1998 – 2001, Bill McGruddy 1974 – 1975), Zane Hogg (Year 9, Alan Hogg 1999 – 2003).

MIDDLE ROW: Guy Jaspers (Year 11, Malcolm Jaspers 1983 – 1986), Matthew Plimmer (Year 9, Alistair Plimmer 1978 – 1982), George Farman (Year 10, Guy Farman 1986 – 1990), Tysen Southey (Year 10, Dion Southey 1980 – 1982), Harry Brader (Year 9, Garrod Brader 1993 – 1997), Luca O’Gorman (Year 11, Shay O’Gorman 1988 – 1992), Tom Nicol (Year 9, Stu Nicol 1996 – 1999, Peter Nicol 1968 – 1971), Thomas Hepburn (Year 10, Willie Hepburn 1995 – 1996), William Plimmer (Year 11, Alistair Plimmer 1978 – 1982), Edward Martin (Year 9, Andrew Martin 1987 – 1991).

FRONT ROW: Harry Kynoch (Year 11, Marcus Kynoch 1985 – 1989), Max Andrew (Year 11, Scott Andrew 1989 – 1993), Hamish McLaren (Year 13, Blair McLaren 1983 – 1987), Angus Jaspers (Year 13, Malcolm Jaspers 1983 – 1986), William Blundell (Year 13, David Blundell 1983 – 1987), Benjamin Cameron (Year 13, Roddy Cameron 1985 – 1988), Matthew Cox (Year 13, Ed Cox 1983 – 1987), William Booth (Year 13, Andrew Booth 1987 – 1991), Thomas Farman (Year 13, Guy Farman 1986 – 1990), Jono Didsbury (Year 12, Guy Didsbury 1985 – 1989), Campbell Bassett (Year 10, Rob Bassett 1987 – 1991).

ATTENTION ALL OLD BOYS

who were part of the cohorts who left school in
1974, 1984, 1994, 2004 and 2014.

2024 is your year to attend the
King's Birthday Weekend Decade Reunions,
Friday 31st May - Saturday 1st June.

Contact your Year Group facilitators or
the Old Boys' Association for more details:
oldboys@rathkealeoldboys.org.nz



Do you have a story for the next issue of
the *Rock Runner*? We'd love to hear from you.
Please get in touch.

