

Rock Runner

The magazine of the Rathkeale Old Boys' Association • Volume 16 • September 2011



EDITORIAL



The expression 'pillar of society' is found in Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) and is also the title of a Henrik Ibsen play (1877). Idiomdictionary.com defines 'pillar of society' as a person who supports society just as a pillar supports a building. Early generations of Rathkeale students will recall assisting with the construction of the Greek Theatre, the 'Bomb Shelter', and numerous paths and roads. During my time at school providing the means for building a foundation for the future was indeed still literal in the carrying of rocks for various projects. Our hard graft is still evident today and will be for many years to come.

Rathkeale College has in recent years placed much focus on defining and promoting 'The Rathkeale Man' within the school community as a means of encouraging a good foundation for the future amongst our young men. The Rathkeale Man is symbolised by four pillars.

- Being prepared to step forward.
- Having an awareness of those around him.
- Knowing that he stands on the shoulders of those before him.
- Having an inner strength, a strong moral compass.

In current school life Rathkeale students experience these pillars in many ways from being asked to step forward and volunteer to learning about the history of our school.

In many ways the Rock Runner acknowledges pillar 3 (knows he stands on the shoulders of those before him) which is still of significance to us as the Old Boys community. In this edition we remember those from our community who have passed away and acknowledge those who have spread far and wide since leaving Rathkeale. Our old school continues to be a vibrant place for young men to live and learn, and the stories of our Old Boys both locally and internationally continue to be equally as impressive.

I trust you enjoy reading about those who have gone before and I hope this edition will motivate some of you to volunteer your story for publication next year. Thanks to those who have taken the time to contribute this year. Please start sending your articles NOW for the 2012 Rock Runner to bje@rathkeale.school.nz

Blair Ewington

Editor

TRINITY JUBILEE

ST MATTHEW'S COLLEGIATE CENTENNIAL
HADLOW SCHOOL 85TH JUBILEE
RATHKEALE COLLEGE 50TH JUBILEE

A full weekend of celebrations is scheduled for 21-23 March 2014

Contact your old friends and classmates now and plan for a great reunion.

Cover: Next year's Old Boys lead a group of students on the Tongariro Crossing. L to R: David Pereira (Chapel Prefect), Harvey Mason (Sports Prefect), Hamish Hirshberg (author of article, partly obscured), Jock Cameron (Deputy Head of Cranleigh).

Planning for the Future

ROBA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Our last AGM which was held in Greytown was a good evening and reasonably well attended. It was a good opportunity to meet and greet and share some food, wine and reflections as well as look at future directions.

Matters addressed were the establishment of a ROBA website and the Charitable Trust. Paul Hocking has been working on the website planning and things are looking good. It will be an essential part of keeping in contact with Old Boys but ultimately it will rely on you to keep your contact details up to date.

In terms of the Charitable Trust discussion has been held over the course of the year with Bruce Wagg and things are well in place for this to proceed. The Trust will be a major platform for ROBA to expand upon.

Regional meetings were another topic of discussion and it was hoped over the course of the year that we could have held one in Auckland or Christchurch. Sadly this did not eventuate due primarily to the constraints on members of the committee and tying matters in with their own business activities.

So this year in part has been one of consolidation as much as anything and concentration on having the Rock Runner published. Blair Ewington has done a great job in pulling this together and we are very grateful for his effort. The Rock Runner has evolved into an excellent annual publication reflecting current happenings as well as touching on memories from the past.

This is your magazine and we really need your input and support for it to continue. Our Old Boys community



Fergus Rutherford (student from 1985 – 1989) returned to Rathkeale with his family last year for the baptism of his son Jock Guy Rutherford in the school chapel St. Martins on the Close. The Rutherford family from left to right are: Hugo, Fergus, Philly, Gussie and Jock.

is rich with humorous stories of achievement so please remember to forward information through so it can be listed for inclusion.

Grant Harper who has been the long time editor of the Rock Runner stood down last year to take a first hand involvement in the Jubilee planning. Our thanks go to Grant for his efforts over many years.

Remember for the continued success of the Old Boys Association we need your contributions and help. Our upcoming AGM is a good opportunity to come together and a notice will be coming out for this shortly.

Our thanks go to Willy Kersten, Principal and Andy Pottinger, Chairman of the Board of Trustees for their continuing support. Last, but not least my thanks to the committee who have doggedly continued their support over many years.

Brent Thompson

President



From the Principal's Desk



As we reflect on the past year we bear in mind those less fortunate than ourselves. Tragedies have impacted on us all in some way and the grief and loss that some families and friends have endured is acknowledged by the College. In Term 1 we accommodated six Christ's College students for varying lengths of time and raised funds that we know will be put to good use in their school. Ironically, the restored baptismal font made possible by funds contributed by Rathkeale College after the September quake was not damaged in February. We raised funds that will be put to further good use by Christ's College and made a contribution to the Christchurch Earthquake appeal.

Recently, we were saddened by the death of Tom Morrison (2005-2006), but thankful that Kris Nielsen (2006-2010 and Head Boy) will make a full recovery after surgery to repair a brain aneurysm. Our thoughts and best wishes go out to these and other families as they deal with the impact of such unforeseen events. We are also mindful of the death of Francis Skiddy Marden (1983-1987) and more recently, Mr Ross Sutherland, a former groundsman.

New people and various initiatives have seen changes at the college this year. Although still teaching part-time, Arlene du Cann has retired from her position as Assistant Principal. Peter Haworth has taken up the role of Deputy Principal and James Clark has come from Sherborne School in England to be our new Chaplain. We are delighted to have both men with us and we look forward to their leadership in curriculum and assessment areas and in the spiritual and pastoral life of the school.

Rathkeale College is in good heart and while we might be pleased, we must never be satisfied. Some Old Boys may lament about the way things have changed and that it is not possible to do things as they once could. Others may think that change creates opportunities. I would like to think that some of the current initiatives are good examples of Rathkeale moving forward.

The 2010 NCEA results saw Rathkeale College well placed among the decile 9 schools. The improvement in Merit and Excellence grades has been marked and we will retain our focus in these areas. The Senior College gained 17 of the 18 NZQA Scholarships awarded to students in Wairarapa schools with six of these gained by Year 13 boys. The results in Visual Arts Painting, suggest it would be reasonable to claim that the Senior College Art Department is one of, if not the best, in the country.

In sport, we continue to punch above our weight and perform well against our traditional rivals. The results of the annual fixture against Christ's College were particularly pleasing as they were against Wanganui Collegiate. In "local" competitions our first teams are faring well against their Wellington, Manawatu,

Wanganui and Wairarapa counterparts and we remain indebted to the skill and knowledge of our coaches.

The cultural life of the school continues to flourish. The 2011 season of *Chicago* and the performances of *Viva Camerata* have once again seen a combination of talent and skill brought together through the dedication and commitment of our performing arts directors. As with sport, so much occurs at junior level to provide the basis for boys to go on and be confident about their abilities in their senior years.

We are very excited about the level of interest shown in the school and the enrolment numbers for next year are nearing a maximum. The work of Steve Foster (student from 1975-1979) over a period of four months has allowed us to focus on our marketing, undertake the visiting of schools and arrange community meetings in a manner that would not have otherwise been possible. We are indebted to him for this empathy for the school and for his energy and passion.

The work of the Old Boys continues to be an important dimension of our wider community support. Their effort in bringing the Old Boys together is vitally important and much appreciated. This was particularly evident at the recent function we co-hosted after the Wanganui Collegiate exchange.

William Kersten

Principal



The Chairman's View

RATHKEALE BOT REPORT

The Rathkeale Board of Trustees has had a very busy and productive twelve months since I reported in last year's magazine.

Our focus has been on growing the roll at Rathkeale College as well as all the other areas which we are required to have an involvement in our role as Governors of the college.

With the very successful refurbishment of Cranleigh boarding house being completed for the start of the 2011 year, we are in an ideal position to market boarding as an affordable option when encouraging parents to choose Rathkeale College as their school of choice to educate their son(s). This boarding facility is something that the school can be very proud of. I encourage any of you who have not had the opportunity to have a look to do so and you'll see for yourself what has been achieved. It was pleasing to see a number of past Heads of House at the official opening and also great that Max Mabin was able to be present.

The Board has moved forward as part of the marketing of Rathkeale College by investing resources in setting up what we hope will be the start of a Development Office(r) for Rathkeale. What has been put in place can now be replicated each year prior to open days and other promotional events. The new prospectus and video gives parents a very clear picture of what Rathkeale has to offer, not only in the academic area, but also in all the other parts of life at Rathkeale College which we believe are our points of difference.

If the interest at the Open Day and subsequent inquiries are an indication for next years' intake, it appears that it



Max Mabin, Bruce Hamilton and Jim Whitfield at Cranleigh House opening, January 30th 2011.

has been money well spent, as we are substantially ahead with numbers of prospective enrolments compared to a similar time last year.

The 50th Jubilee looms not far away in 2014, and I encourage all Old Boys to start looking ahead and becoming involved in this important milestone in the history of Rathkeale College.

We are fortunate that our Deputy Headmaster, Grant Harper, who is an Old Boy from the very early days, is spearheading Rathkeale's celebration planning and I am sure he would welcome support from any of you who can give a hand with planning and Ideas.

I hope this finds you all fit and well and can assure you the Board of Trustees is passionate about the future success of Rathkeale. We feel very fortunate to have a Headmaster of Willy's calibre driving the school forward.

Kind wishes for the balance of 2011 and I look forward to catching up with a number of you in your future contact with your old school.

Andy Pottinger

Chairman

Rathkeale College Board of Trustees



Rathkeale's Gain, Wai Coll's Loss

A NEW DEPUTY PRINCIPAL



Peter Haworth, new Deputy Principal at Trinity Staff Service

Peter Haworth was appointed to the newly created position of Deputy Principal in late 2010, to start at the beginning of the 2011 academic year. He comes to Rathkeale with 28 years of teaching experience, having commenced his career in 1983 at Southland Boy's High School in Invercargill.

Peter is a product of the Canterbury education system having attended Riccarton High School, Canterbury University (where he gained a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics) and Christchurch Teacher's College.

His first teaching position was at Southland Boy's High School where he taught economics and accounting, and coached rugby and cricket. This was a one year long term relieving job and at the end of that year he was appointed to teach the same subjects at Motueka High School in the Nelson area. He continued to coach rugby at Motueka

(with limited success) but was more likely to be seen (and heard!) with wife Sue most weekends on the sidelines of the Nelson national league soccer games and the Nelson Giants basketball games.

In 1986 Peter became the first teacher to move from Invercargill to the Nelson region and back again when he took up a position back at Southland Boy's High School. He taught economics and accounting and was coach of junior football teams and player/coach of the 2nd XI cricket team. (As an aside, one of these cricket teams contained Nick Broughton – who went on to play rugby for Scotland, Rob Nicol – currently the professional rugby players' association representative, and Simon Forrest – who later played rugby for Canterbury and league for the Rabbitoh's. It would appear that no great cricketers were in teams coached by Peter!)

Invercargill was the birthplace of Peter and Sue's daughter, Nicole, in 1987. Two years later he was on the move again, this time to Christchurch and a job at Hornby High School teaching economics, accounting and mathematics. He turned his hand to badminton and softball "coaching" at Hornby. During the five years he taught in Christchurch, Peter became a marker of school certificate economics and in 1993 he was assistant chief marker of that subject.

Promotion was the reason for his shift to the Wairarapa in 1994. He convinced his wife that a five year stint in the North Island would be good for his career and family, and after checking out on a map where Masterton actually was, took the position of head of commerce at Wairarapa College. Seventeen years later he and Sue are still here! (Nicole now lives in sunny Nelson having got married late last year). He has been involved in coaching

football and cricket but more recently has been a keen spectator at school sports events (and at a small but increasing number of cultural activities!)

In 2005 Peter was awarded a prestigious Woolf Fisher Fellowship in commerce and spent three weeks in Australia looking at the programmes run by schools in three states. Earlier this year he took up a TeachNZ Study Award sabbatical to further his knowledge of the changes to the economics curriculum.

Having spent ten years in senior management at Wairarapa College, Peter decided he needed new challenges and jumped at the opportunity to take up the new role at Rathkeale when offered the job, which also involves teaching social sciences and commerce. There are many similarities to his previous job but also many new tasks and systems which he hopes will provide the challenges he needs. He is looking forward to working in a smaller school with a dedicated management team and staff. Already he has been impressed by the way in which the students support each other and willingly participate in the many activities that the school provides them and also the exciting new initiatives that the school is introducing in the mentoring and personal development areas.

Peter and Sue will often be seen (but no longer be heard as much as they would have been a few years ago!) most Saturdays on the sidelines at sports events involving Rathkeale teams, particularly the football teams and the teams involving the boys Peter teaches.



On a Mission at Rathkeale

A NEW SCHOOL CHAPLAIN



James Clark, the new Chaplain with Bishop Tom Brown.

James Clark took up his position as Chaplain of Rathkeale College in January 2011, after two years as Assistant Chaplain of Sherborne School, a large Independent Boys' boarding school in Dorset. He is a layman but he is being prepared for ordination by the Wellington Diocese.

He arrived in New Zealand with his Daughter, Sophie (aged 8) on the 18th January, in good time to settle into a Wairarapa summer and get his bearings before the start of term.

James has been teaching since 1999, where he began his career in a London inner city state school as a teacher of Theology, Philosophy and Religious Studies. He spent nearly ten happy years at the Cardinal Vaughan School, where he was also Dean of Year 11 and, latterly, Dean of Year 12.

He lost his wife, Edwina, to Cystic Fibrosis in February 2006 and this led to a re-evaluation of his career path. He secured a position at Sherborne

as Assistant Chaplain in 2008 and the experience confirmed his desire to move into school chaplaincy.

A visit to New Zealand for Christmas 2009 got him thinking about a move to these shores and when the Rathkeale position came up he flew out for an interview.

He comes to us with a wealth of life experience, a strong teaching record and significant pastoral skills, many of which were developed in a boarding context. He also coaches hockey.

He is thriving in the New Zealand context, where he is introducing the boys to the joys of the Philosophy and Psychology of religion; starting up Rathkeale's Kickboxing Club (he hopes that Judo will follow as soon as he has figured out a way to raise the money for mats); spending an evening a week in the boarding houses; and more significantly (for him!) launching the Rathkeale Sumo Wrestling Championship to raise money for charity.

His first impressions of Rathkeale?

Well what's not to like? I know so many people in England who would pay a fortune to have their boys schooled in an environment like this. I can't ever remember seeing an English Schoolboy with the freedom to roam grounds like these or spend summers swimming in a river like the one that runs through the grounds.

The boys here are great company: they are likeable and humorous and very friendly and there are some great teachers doing their thing in the various classrooms around the place.

I haven't missed England at all since arriving. I think most of us who come here from the UK do so in search of a better quality of life and the Wairarapa and Rathkeale delivers that in spades. I look forward to the next few years immensely.



Stepping Up Communications

ROBA'S NEW WEBSITE

The Old Boy's Association is in the process of developing a website to better create a positive and meaningful link between the Association and the Old Boys community and between old boys themselves.

The website development is being funded by a generous \$4,000 donation from an old boy who wishes to remain anonymous.

The main theme of the website is the history of the Association and the headmasters/principals who influenced our lives so much. We have been lucky to have had a good (and sometimes great) group of Headmasters and we are pleased to be able to feature them on the website. All the historic photos have come from the school archives which are in the process of being cataloged and filed appropriately. It is an amazing collection of photos of a still quite amazing school.

The website is intended to be fully functional rather than just be a gateway. In addition to having useful information for members of the association and PDFs of past Rock Runner magazines the website will support an email system to enable more effective and easy to operate mass mail outs. Further, it will support the development of a more regular e-zine which will carry more timely information than the annual Rock Runner supports.

The functionality will extend to an event management tool allowing for registrations and online payments as well as issuing invoices for payments. The Event Management tool will most probably be available for others to use for school and Old Boy related events such as year group gatherings.

It is also hoped that we will have a fully operable "Old Boy find Old

Boy" function in a secure area of the website to enable classmates and team members to find each other.

It will be apparent to readers that an important part of the website will be the availability to us of up to date contact information so that event notices, newsletters and association news can be sent to association members. It will be incumbent upon old boys to keep their details up to date which each old boy will be able to do via the secure member's area. This database will ideally contain email, phone number and mail address. However, behind this will sit the extensive old boy database that has been most recently developed by Chris Gane and which contains more detail than most of us may wish to remember.

A key feature of the website will be a gallery of photos of school activities, old boy's gatherings and photos of old boys in more recent times.

Another important feature of the website will be a profile and details of the Rathkeale Old Boys Association Charitable Trust which is featured in more detail elsewhere in this issue. The Trust will be an important part of our ongoing service to the schools as well as a focus of Association activities.

We would very much appreciate you sending us your contact details. If you have received this Rock Runner you will be on our mailing list. However, if you have not been receiving emails from us then we obviously don't have that in our records. Send it to roba@rathkeale.school.nz

The website will carry details of the Association Committee so please feel free to contact us.

Paul Hocking
Secretary / Treasurer



Left to right: Roger Thorne (student from 1968-1971), Tawhi Lackner (current student) and Bill O'Leary (NZ Deerstalkers Association National Hunts Coordinator). Roger returned to Rathkeale last year as an instructor for the Hunts course offered to a group of Rathkeale students.



Here They Come!

THE NEXT CONTINGENT OF OLD BOYS

On the 20th March, a busload of aspiring year 13 (7th form) Senior College geographers travelled up to Tongariro. First stop on the way was Tangiwai, the site of New Zealand's worst rail disaster in 1953. At Whakapapa Village, we had our first site of field work where the students looked at one of two alpine plants, *Celmisia spectabilis* or *Dracophyllum recurvum*, for an internally assessed part of the geography course. Some also spent time searching for a phone that was dropped, only for the owner to find it herself just as we were leaving. We stayed at Puketoi and Rotorua ski lodges, in Iwikau Village (Whakapapa skifield).

Day two consisted of an early start for a trip along the Tongariro Crossing as far as Red Crater in gradually worsening weather. We began in the Mangatepopo Valley, looking at the environment from a geographic perspective. The original plan was to allow a smaller group to ascend to the top of Mt Tongariro from Red Crater and then return to the car park via another ridge but this had to be abandoned due to bad weather. Consequently, everyone continued down the usual track back to the bus and was very glad to be able to get into the bus and warm up again. It was therefore of little surprise that there were few takers for a trip up Pukeonake.

Back at the ski lodges, the students participated in a Tongariro-themed quiz, climaxing with the final question – what is the combined age of all of the staff members on the trip?

After the pack-up on the final day, the students took their final measurements at a further three field sites down Bruce Road. With all the required work completed in good time, we had a look around the interesting Whakapapa Visitor Centre. We then proceeded to visit various parts of the Tongariro Power Scheme, which uses water from many of the major rivers in the Tongariro-Ruapehu area for hydroelectric power generation. Also achieved here was a significant reduction in the amount of leftover cakes. This concluded our trip and left only the long bus ride back to Masterton, a good chance to catch up on some sleep.

Hamish Hirschberg
(2011 Year 13 student)



David Pereira et al approaching South Crater.



Left to right: Vaughan Nelson, Ollie Donald and George Falloon crossing South Crater.



What on Earth is the Iditarod?

RATHKEALE'S ARCTIC ADVENTURER



Indian River.



Locals' hut.

I had tried hard to convince myself for three months that taking on the 1000 mile Iditarod Trail Invitational (ITI) foot race in Alaska was enough for one year, but the thought of being the first to do both the 430 mile Yukon Arctic Ultra (YAU) in Northern Canada and the Iditarod in the same year was just too much. I gave in and just accepted the fact that I wouldn't be happy unless I attempted both races back to back.

The YAU 430 kicked off in the town of Whitehorse in the Canadian Yukon Territory. The weather was perfect and I managed to cover the first 100 miles in about thirty-six hours before taking a sleep at what was check point 3. After eating as much food as possible for breakfast I hit the trail again. By about the 200 mile mark the weather had turned and it was now snowing heavily, slowing progress considerably. This section of the course crossed great frozen lakes, now covered in several metres of snow. This was incredibly difficult as I often sunk waist deep into the fresh snow. There were snow machines out on the course to help break the trail and check on competitors, but with hundreds of miles of trail I often only saw them every few days.

Pelly Farm was the next major check point, officially the Northern most

farm in the world. The last 165 miles from here get really tough and the organisers require you to take an avalanche shovel and other additional gear due to the extreme conditions from this point on. I had been held at Pelly Farm by the organisers for about 24 hours as the trail was currently impassable due to heavy snow fall. Finally we heard the snow machines had broken through from the north and we were allowed to continue. The weather didn't disappoint and by about 350 miles I knew the temperature must have been around -50°C . I travelled through the night towards the last check point, it was one of the coldest nights I've ever experienced. As much as I wanted to stop and rest I knew, even in my -40°C sleeping bag it would probably be too cold to sleep. While you're moving you keep generating heat and I decided that this was the best plan. I kept pushing on and finally arrived at the finish line in the old gold rush town Dawson City at about 5am to a lone welcome by the Race Director who greeted me with a cold beer!

Three days later, and a bus trip (that was an adventure in itself) across the Canadian / US border and I was in Anchorage, Alaska for race two. I had been walking as much as possible

since arriving in Anchorage; to the supermarket, outdoor stores and generally just around the city to try and stop my legs from going into recovery mode and seizing up before I started the second race, the Iditarod Trail Invitational (ITI). Only eight people had previously finished the 1000 mile course on foot in the last ten years and they all had fresh legs.

This race has two distance options, either 350 miles or 1000 miles. To attempt the 1000 mile race you must have completed the 350 mile version, basically proving to the organisers you have the ability to handle the extreme cold and conditions. The ITI 1000 miler was a very different ball game, as once you passed the 350 mile check point where most other racers finished you were on your own. You called in to notify the organisers by phone (if you could find one) from the villages as you passed through them.

Again the race started in beautiful weather, and progressed well until just out of Rohn, check point 5. At about 8am, I decided to stop and get some food from my sled for breakfast. The sun had come up about an hour before. I took my outer mittens off, and for whatever reason this time had to take my inner gloves off also to get to my food. I could usually judge





Near Mt McKinley.



The finish.

how long I was able to have these off (about 15-20 seconds before you start losing sensation in your fingertips, so you have to work fast). But this time after probably about five seconds I realised I had already lost feeling in my fingertips. For this to happen I knew the temperature must be well below -40°C . I had misjudged this badly so I quickly put my gloves and mitts back on and swung my arms in big circles for a few minutes to force the blood back into my frozen fingers. It is a pain that is hard to describe when your fingertips start to come back to life! For my troubles I had black spots on the end of three fingers where some minor frostbite had taken hold. It was a harsh reminder of how careful you have to be, but luckily it was not enough to put me out of the race.

As I headed towards check point 7 at the 330 mile mark I realised I was at the point where I had encountered a moose the previous year and became very cautious. Moose actually kill more people in Alaska than any other animal. They're particularly grumpy creatures and have a habit of charging and stomping people when they feel threatened. I'd been told if I encountered a moose on the trail to back up and stay your distance until you were sure it had moved on.

In 2010 the trail was too narrow for me to turn my sled around so when I encountered the moose I unclipped the sled and moved back down the trail. The moose proceeded up to my sled, smelt it, stomped it several times and then continued to eat the vegetation on the side of the trail. I had to wait about half an hour before it decided to move on. However, this year I passed the area with out incident.

After twenty-five days on the trail I arrived at the last check point, White Mountain. The locals in all the villages I had passed through had been fantastic and their hospitality amazing. I was invited to stay with some locals who cooked a brilliant moose stew for dinner. I got talking to one of the native Alaskan Indians and he asked me what type of gun I had carried over the last 925 miles. I told him I didn't have one and he said "What, are you crazy?!" Apparently there had been a pack of about fifteen wolves roaming the foothills I had passed through a day or two earlier. Even though wolf attacks on humans are rare I was glad I had been told after the fact. In 2010 I had been tracked by a wolf for several miles. I wasn't aware of it until I reached the next check point and some racers that came in shortly

after me said they had seen fresh tracks following in the flattened snow of my sled. After this I always made sure I buried or sealed away any food I cooked. The locals told me if you ever feel like someone is watching you out there it's probably a wolf just off the trail. You try not to think about these things out there but they're always in the back of your mind.

Finally twenty-seven days and 1000 miles later I reached the finish line in Nome, Alaska. It had been two months since I had first arrived in Whitehorse, Canada. It had been an amazing journey but I now couldn't wait to get back to civilisation and see my wife and four-month-old daughter. However, shortly after returning to London I met up with a friend from the Arctic Ultra and he was already asking if I was keen to have a go at breaking the record to the North Pole on foot with him.

Jerym Brunton

Student from 1986-1990



Good, Keen Rathkeale Men

NEW ZEALAND BACK COUNTRY: A SCHOOL TRADITION



"I thought it was always raining on the coast?" Hunter cheekily said to a West Coast local at a set of road works that had held us up for twenty minutes. Luckily the West Coast hadn't lived up to its reputation of terrible weather so far, but little did we know he would be eating those very words in a few days!

We arrived at the helicopter base around midday, packed the chopper and we were off. After a year of lectures and being stuck in the library studying for exams for the past few months, both Hunter and I were glad to be out of the city and back into the wilderness. Rifle in hand and no exams looming over our heads, we headed into the mountains.

The flight took three minutes and was amazing as it would have taken a full day to tramp to the tops. Our home for the week was to be a four-person tent in the mountains south of Mount Adams near Whataroa. We arrived and unpacked our tent and we were off for a crack at some chamois. For those of you that don't know what chamois are they are a small, elegant animal that are almost a cross between a mountain goat and an antelope. They were released in the Southern Alps as a gift from the Austrian Emperor in 1907.

On the first hunt we realised how variable the weather is on the tops and within ten minutes a thick set of cloud had set in so it was back off to the campsite for lunch followed by a scoping of the area to search for suitable places for chamois to be hanging about. Unfortunately the cloud never cleared so it was off to bed for the night as we were up the next day at 4:30am. As they say "the early bird catches the worm," or in our case "bags a chammy".

We were up at the crack of dawn; munched some porridge and we were off south to where we thought some chamois would be grazing. The day was amazing. The view down the valley from which we had come was covered completely in fog and it was an awe inspiring sight with the Alps in the background.

After a quick hike we saw a lone chamois doe acting as a sentinel for the rest of the mob grazing below her. We made a plan to sneak to the next ridge where we would close the distance to just over 300m. Upon climbing up the next ridge we poked our heads over the top and she was gone! So we held up hoping she was hiding behind another ridge. A few minutes later

three does appeared with the stropy head doe chasing the two younger ones from her perch, asserting her authority. After a few photos we both lined up our shots. Hunter pulled out his new rangefinder which told us the shot was 306m. I took the chamois on the left and Hunter took the one on the right. BANG, my Remington 7mm-08 fired and I watched as the chamois crumpled. BANG, Hunter's suppressed Tikka 7mm-08 rang out and I watched as Hunter's chamois that had received a well placed shot, leapt off the bluff and fell several metres into the dense scrub. Ecstatic, we jumped up and Hunter congratulated me on my first chamois.

The hike up the bluff where the chamois were was extremely tough and it stands as a testament to the hardy nature of these beautiful animals living in such a testing environment. But eventually we made it to the top of the bluff as the famous West Coast weather set in. After a few minutes of searching in the rain I stumbled upon my chamois which was a nice looking 8½ inch chamois doe (not the 10 inch trophy buck I was after but nonetheless, I was stoked!). Hunter's chamois proved to be elusive as the bluff was far too steep and there was



too much vegetation around to find it. We predicted that it was probably a doe of a similar size.

Wet through from the storm that came in, we trudged down into a gully to have some lunch then it was back to the camp to get off the wet gear, have a feed and jump into the sleeping bag.

The next few days would prove to be uneventful because of the weather. However, the nights were very turbulent with a few storms blowing in and several nights were spent holding the tent up in the wind and rain. We did get some kea fly in to check what the fuss was all about. I got some cool photos of them and luckily they didn't pick apart our tent!

Whenever the weather cleared we scrambled to get out of the tent for a hunt. After seeing a few mobs of chamois that we were unable to stalk due to the cloud setting in, it was time to be flown out, but the chopper never came! The weather was too horrible to safely pick us up so after much deliberation over the prospect of walking out we decided to brave another sleepless night hoping the tent didn't blow down.

Luckily we woke to a pearler of a day and about 7:30am we heard the welcome hum of a chopper flying up the valley.

Overall it was an amazing experience, we are extremely lucky to have such beautiful scenery on our doorstep and I recommend it to anyone who is keen, to get out and check out the Alps. However you must have respect for the mountains as the weather is so variable. We now know that it isn't always raining on the West Coast, just the majority of a time!

Heath Cowan

Student from 2003-2007



From the Foundations Upwards

CRANLEIGH RENOVATIONS



After being closed in 2010 for extensive renovations and refurbishment Cranleigh Boarding House was reopened at the start of term one, 2011. Cranleigh's second house master, Max Mabin was on hand to inspect the new facilities and declare the building to be once again open to Rathkeale students.

Not only was it felt that the Houses at Rathkeale College were in need of a general tidy up but we also had to take into consideration that any work would also meet the new earthquake standards.

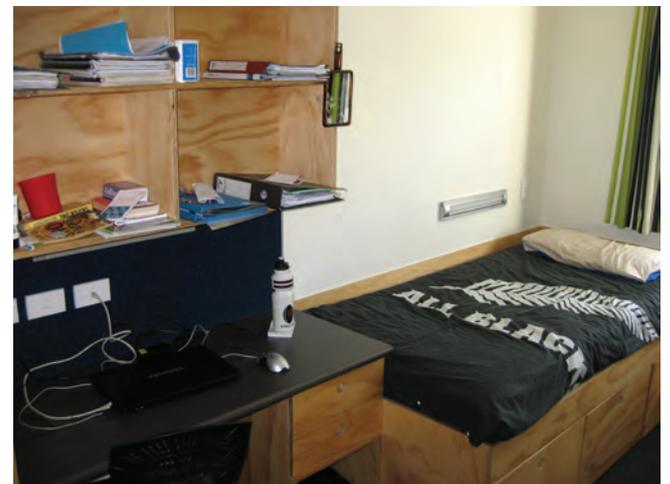
Boys and boarding have changed over the years and Rathkeale has to be mindful that we are offering facilities that are comparable and hopefully better than at other schools. We wanted to create an environment where boys would choose to spend less time in the cubes or rooms and rather take advantage of the common areas. Over the past five years Rathkeale has returned to its traditional boarding format offering vertical boarding in Repton and Cranleigh House. In keeping with this areas have been created not for year groups but rather to cater for interests so that boys can mingle in a more family orientated manner.

Not all of the changes are visible as in conjunction with the more cosmetic improvements, the house's wiring and plumbing was also upgraded. Work continues around the surrounds and there is a focus on making the most of outside areas creating usable space and flow from the house.

Presently we are working on updating the prefect shields and finding space to hang the photos so that Cranleigh's history will once again be a big part of its future.

Glenn McIntosh

Director of Boarding



“This isn’t a school, it’s a parrrk!”

EDITOR’S IMAGES OF WINTER

When studying Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management at Lincoln University in the early 1990s I returned home for my usual holiday trip into the Tararuas with a good mate and Gore High School Old Boy. His southern praise for Rathkeale is captured in the title above.

Monday 15 August was a Teacher-only day granted by the Government to allow for planning for the implementation of NCEA Level 2 in 2012. Thankfully the largest snowfall on record provided some excitement for the day. School continued as usual on the Tuesday with around half the students being stranded at home.

Accompanying images of winter remind us how stunning our school grounds are. The transformation from snow back to usable sports fields is a massive tribute to our dedicated grounds team Colin O’Connell, John Hurley, Brian (Bj) James and Jamie Clinton-Baker.

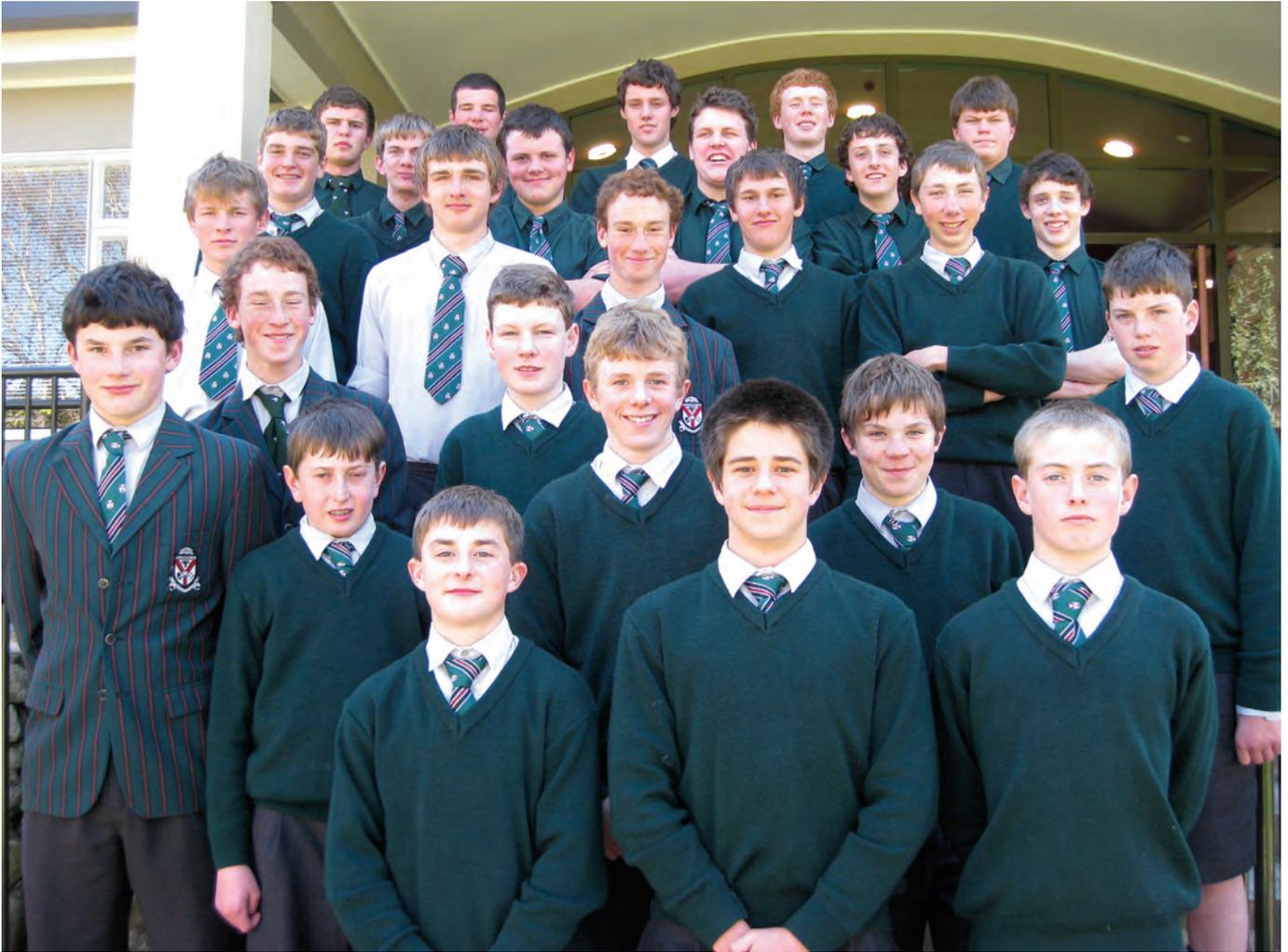


For more great images of Rathkeale see: imagesofrathkealecollege.shutterfly.com or www.rathkeale.school.nz



Milestones

SONS OF OLD BOYS AND SENIOR COLLEGE OLD GIRLS



Back left to front right: Harvey Mason, Harry Clinton-Baker, Ben Foster, Matthew Sims, Timothy Gordon, Rupert Elworthy, Jamie Stuart, Timothy Blackett, Matthew Hocking, Oliver Stewart, Christopher Wagg, Joshua McKay, Matthew Perry, Edward Hewitt, Daniel Warren, Henry Parkinson, George Hewitt, Mac Nelson, Guy Warren, Jim Aitken, William Warren, George Sims, Henry Wilson, Benjamin Whitehead, Dougal Ross, Luke McKay.

FONDLY REMEMBERED

Francis Marden

The Pike River Coal Mine tragedy was one that touched many NZ families and on this occasion sadly one of our Old Boys was one of those killed.

Francis attended Rathkeale between 1983 and 1987 and from there travelled between NZ and the USA for almost a decade working construction jobs to finance his travels. He came home in 2001 and married his wife Lauryn.

The impact of his death devastated his family and our heartfelt best wishes go out to them all.





Divers Supplies 2002

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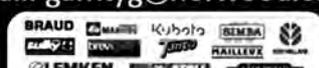
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The 2011 Rathkeale Old Boys' Association Committee

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John Booth	Vice President	mellowrise@xtra.co.nz	
Paul Hocking	Secretary/Treasurer	siam@xtra.co.nz	06 306 8849 / 021 362 545
Blair Ewington	Committee	bje@rathkeale.school.nz	
Jonathan Hooker	Committee	synergyconsultants@xtra.co.nz	

The Old Boys' Association has an email address for general correspondence ROBA@rathkeale.school.net

We Need to Contact You

You have received this copy of the Rock Runner because you are a Rathkeale Old Boy, a parent of an Old Boy or you are a member of the school community. We need your help! We have very few email addresses for Old Boys and Email is the most effective means we have to keep in touch with Old Boys; to tell them about Old Boys' events, to invite them to reunions, to keep them up to date with school activities and to let their old school friends contact them.

Please, if you are an Old Boy, email us at roba@rathkeale.school.nz with your email address, your brothers address, your son's email address, the email address of any of your old school mates. Spread the word that we need to contact the Old Boys. Send us every email address you have for Old Boys - we'll sort out the double ups!

Thank you.

Half a Century Not Out!

We are planning an art exhibition to celebrate 50 years of artistic endeavour by Rathkealites. This exhibition will be held at Aratoi during the jubilee celebrations in April 2014.

This will be an open exhibition to showcase any form of visual art produced by people with a connection to the College.

To receive a registration form please email your contact details and connection to Rathkeale College to Evan Jones, MFA (dist), current HOD Art.

emj@rathkeale.school.nz





Nil mortalibus arduum est

“nothing is impossible for mortal man.”

