MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The College has begun the year in good heart with strong NCEA results for 2013 and an improved McEvedy Shield performance (see below). Kevin Carter and his team continue to invest tremendous energy, time and enthusiasm in giving effect to the school’s strategic objective: ‘Rongotai College is committed to the pursuit of excellence, encouraging young men to be the best they can be in all areas of their lives’.

Old Boys continue to contribute to the College through their generous donations. They are put to good use. Apart from the Association’s recent donation of a defibrillator and an annual contribution of $1000 to Prizegiving, consideration is being given to contributing to costs of outfitting the kitchen in the new gym.

Your committee has continued -- as foreshadowed in my message in the December 2013 Chariot -- to rethink the Association’s role and operational practices. In short, the task is to bring together the heritage of the Association and its members of earlier generations together with the interests and practices of more recent leavers -- those of the digital and social media generation. Among the issues being thought through are (1) various levels of ‘membership’ providing for those who were prepared to pay a sub or give a donation, and those who might participate in other ways; (2) arrangements for payment online; and (3) facilitating of business networks.

It is expected that proposals for the future of the Association will be presented to the AGM -- scheduled to be held in conjunction with the Assembly Lunch on Friday 29 August 2014.

Those of you who attended last year’s AGM/Luncheon/Assembly, will recall my comments regarding the precarious future of the Old Boys Association, unless younger ex-pupils come forward as members. I am aware too that several members of this year’s committee are most unlikely to continue beyond the present term.
At the end of the year Prize Giving Ceremony close to a hundred Old Boy badges and a letter urging the leavers to join our association are presented. This has had little, if any, effect on our membership numbers.

We are fortunate that Matt Eagle and Ben Irving have the digital/social media/network and many other skills at their fingertips. These two Old Boys are working towards the future proposals. In the meantime, use is being made of the various Facebook pages to disseminate information about Old Boys activities.

In addressing this message to members of the Association, I know I am ‘preaching to the converted’. But you may be able to introduce family members, friends or colleagues who are also Old Boys to the contribution to be made and the fellowship to be enjoyed from becoming members of the Association.

The College has been reminded of the interest shown at the last AGM by Old Boys willing to share their experience or expertise with current students.

Arrangements are in hand (thanks to Bill Cathie (1963-67) and Charles Blades (1950-56) for a Golf Tournament at Miramar from 2.45 PM on Friday 11 April followed by nibbles in the Club rooms at 5PM -- partners very welcome. (See below).

Peter Marshall (1950-56)
President

**GOLF TOURNAMENT**

A nine-hole golf tournament has been arranged for Old Boys and partners:

*Friday 11 April (week before Easter), 2.45 PM start, Miramar Golf Club followed by informal gathering from 5PM onwards in Upstairs Lounge – partners and non-players very welcome.*

Those who will be attending are asked to ring Bill Cathie, 387 7492 (evenings only) or Charles Blades, 380 9667.

**THE AGM/ASSEMBLY LUNCH**

Please enter in your diaries: Friday 29 August 2014
OBITUARIES

Sadly we record the deaths of the following Old Boys to whose families we send our sympathy:

Alexander, James Frederick (1946-51)
Bryant, Owen T Chadwick (1936-1941)
Field, Harley Percival (1936-38)
Maplesden, Peter Wilson MBE 1933-39 See tributes.
Pearson, Ian Carroll (Zac) (1957-58)
Robertson, Richard James (1943-45)
Wells, Ian Douglas OBE (1950-54) See tributes.
Wilkinson, Norman Barry (1936-38)

TRIBUTES

Peter Maplesden (died 10 January 2014, aged 91) was a highly respected member of the New Zealand Forest Service and spent 22 years (1960-82) as Conservator of Forests, Nelson. During World War II he served in the Royal NZ Navy. In 1983 Peter Maplesden was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire for his services to forestry (Waikato Times 13 January 2014).

Ian Wells (died Wellington 6 January, aged 76), a prefect in 1954, was a long-time patron of the Old Boys’ Association. Ian’s support and availability to enable the Association to take advantage of his extraordinary range of sporting and business associates were much valued by successive committees of the Association.

Ian made an unparalleled contribution to sports administration in Wellington and New Zealand. At various times he was chairman of New Zealand Tennis (for 20 years from the seventies) and a life member; from 2004 he was chairman of Cricket Wellington for several years; and he was a former chairman and life member of Miramar Rangers Football Club. Ian was a leading figure in the move to establish the Phoenix to take over the failed Auckland Knights’ Premier League license in 2007.

Ian was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for services to tennis in the Queen’s Birthday list of 1988.

Ian had a notable career in publishing. Beginning as a sports reporter with the Dominion in 1965 he later spent 17 years as general manager of Wellington Newspapers, publishers of the Dominion and the Evening Post. During this time the company developed the ‘Absolutely Positively Wellington’ slogan and gifted it to the City.

Ian is survived by his second wife, Joan, son Jason (Old Boy 1983-87), and three grandchildren. A number of Old Boys were at his well-attended funeral at Old St Pauls. (Dominion Post 6 January 2014)
NEW YEARS HONOURS

We extend our warm congratulations to Judge B.S (Barrie) Travis (1955-61) who was made a Companion of the Queen’s Service Order (QSO) in the New Year’s Honours for services to the judiciary. Judge Travis graduated LL.B. from Victoria University and was admitted to the bar in 1966. After some years in practice Barrie Travis was appointed a judge of the Labour Court from 1989 and the Employment Court from 1991. A Valedictory Sitting of the Employment Court was held in Auckland on 3 May 2013 to mark his retirement after 24 years on the bench. (www.justice.govt.nz/courts/employmentpapers/judicial-papers-and-speeches)

CENTURY ACHIEVED

The Association’s congratulations have been sent to two notable members of the Rongotai community who have recently celebrated 100 years. Ernie Sellens (1928-30, Foundation Scholar) reached the wonderful age of 100 on 19 January (see interview with Ernie in the Chariot, August 2012; Wellingtonian 23 January 2014).

On 23 September 2013 Mrs Doreen Fraser, widow of the late R.H. (Bob) Fraser, master at Rongotai (1935-68) (most of that time as head of the Art Department) and mother of the late Dave Fraser (Rongotai 1953-58) also turned 100. Dave was an eminent professional musician, especially in jazz, but sadly died in 2002. The Robert Fraser Art Scholarship and the Dave Fraser Music Scholarship (both Recognising Talent and Creative Ability) are awarded annually (Noel Harris 1951-55; College Prizegiving).

COLLEGE NEWS

The 2013 Prizegiving was held on 12 December. Apart from the principal, speakers were chairperson of the Board of Trustees, Brett Lineham, Head Prefect, Oliver Fredrickson, and, unscheduled, All Black Ma’a Nonu. Ma’a spoke of his time at Rongotai and paid a special tribute to retiring Sports Director, Ross Findlay. The Dux for 2013 and recipient of the Arthur Jamieson Prize was Roshan Patel. Proxime accessit was Daniel Little. Peter Marshall and John Martin represented Old Boys and presented Association pins to school leavers.
School officers for 2014 are

Head Prefect (Pictured): Conor Flynn
Deputy Head Prefect: Luka Hogervorst;
Arts Captain: Amosa Lene;
Sports Captain: Matthew Brett;
Cultural Captain: Edwin Salanoa.

Academic results for 2013 continued to show significant improvement with Rongotai students consistently performing well above or at the school’s benchmarks. 87% achieved NCEA Level 1 and 82.3% Level 2. A large group of boys achieved Merit and Excellence endorsements: 47% at Level 1 (cf. 37% in 2012); 41% at Level 2; 36% at Level 3. (cf. 30% in 2012). New Zealand Scholarships were awarded to Kadin Hapuku (English), Ronan Kelly (English), Daniel Little (Statistics & Modelling) and Roshan Patel (Economics). (Principal’s Newsletter, Week 2, Term 1).

Athletics: Following the Athletics Participation Day on 12 February (Lock House were the overall champions) and team selection for the McEvedy Shield, a competition with Hutt International Boys School (HIBS) was inaugurated. Rongotai were the winners: 250.5, HIBS 240.5. Outstanding achievements were registered by Denny To’o who broke the College U16 shot put record with a throw of 15.67 metres (the record had been held since 1980 by Colin Creed with a throw of 15.19m), and year 9 Siatua Anesi who dominated the U14 sprints and unofficially broke the 100m record. However, this needed to be electronically timed to stand.

Although fourth at the McEvedy Shield on 4 March (won by St Pats Town for the third successive time), Rongotai’s performance improved. Notable and promising was the very high proportion of points gained by younger members of the Rongotai team (full results are available at http://www.collegesport.org.nz/upload/usermedia/files/35901/mcevedy.pdf). Denny To’o and Siatua Anesi were again the outstanding performers. Denny won the U16 shot put and came second in the discus.
The high calibre of the McEvedy competition is demonstrated by Siatua’s performance. He came second in the U14 100m, and second in the 200 and 400m. He set two college records and was close to a third: in the 100m his time of 11.99s beat T.C. Campbell’s 2011 record of 12.14 seconds; in the 200m he set another college record of 24.5 beating K. Zondag’s 24.80s from 2005; and in the 400m, Siatua was just milliseconds off Bakhard Mohamed’s college record of 2010. Yet despite these wonderful performances he was unable to take a first place.

Rugby: Former All Black and Old Boy, Ofisa (‘Junior’) Tonu’u (1983-85) held a Coaching Clinic open to all prospective rugby players at the school on 22 February.

Collaboration with the NZSO: The NZSO recently hosted a Chicago-based firm of percussion tuners to tune mallet instruments – marimbas, xylophones, glockenspiels, tubular bells, vibraphones. The tuners use a metal grinder and belt sander to alter the shape and length of each instrument part, making many tiny adjustments until they are in perfect tune. In the past broken or problematic instrument parts were sent to Chicago. But on this occasion the wood and metal workshops at the College were used over the vacation. The Orchestra has registered ‘a special thanks to Mark Greig and the Rongotai College team who were extremely helpful, allowing us to use their wood and metal workshops during the school holidays’ (NZSO Notes 7 March 2014)

OLD BOYS’ NEWS

Richard Bruce (1992-2000, Tamatoa Special Needs Unit) having been a Special Olympics swimmer for over 20 years, was again selected to represent NZ at the Asia Pacific Games in Newcastle, Australia, held 1 to 7 December, 2013. Ian Bruce (1954-57) travelled down from Hawkes Bay especially to welcome home his champion nephew. Richard brought home gold for the 50m freestyle and silver for the relay. He also finished fourth in the 100m freestyle. The late Ken Simpson (staff 1964-2003) was a great encourager of Richard at Freyberg Pool where Ken swam and Richard works. (Cook Strait News 16 December 2013, Liz Bruce).
Peter Coates (1950-54 and member RCOBA committee) is holding a Retrospective Exhibition in Paint and Film from 10 to 23 March at the All Saints Church and hall in Moxham Avenue, Hataitai. Peter, who is a former director and producer for NZBC and TVNZ, from 1969 through to the 1990s -- over 390 television productions and documentaries -- has a very full list of credits including work on the stage, as a performer, singer, designer and writer. Peter’s paintings have been regularly exhibited, have won national awards and are in private collections around the world. He was awarded the Broadcasting Award by the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council in 1974 (http://www.filmarchive.org.nz/blog/staff-talk-about-collection-items/peter-coates/).

Norm Thompson (1961-65) retired as deputy chief executive of Air New Zealand on New Year’s Eve. Norm had worked for 46 years for Air New Zealand, moving from the finance department into sales in the northern region in the early seventies. In the 1980s he had charge of regional sales for New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. In 1992 Norm was appointed to Los Angeles where he spent five years charged with expanding the airline’s North American operations. In his long career Norm has been closely involved in such events as Erebus, the merger with Ansett, and the crash of an Air New Zealand plane on a test flight in France in 2008, as well as the continuing reforms that have taken Air New Zealand to its present prominent position among world airlines. He has also held important appointments in the tourism industry. Norm is on the board of Tourism New Zealand, is deputy chair of Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development and was previously chair of the Tourism Industry Association for ten years. (Weekend Herald 21 December 2013).

As one stop on a tour of New Zealand, ‘New Zealand’s most entertaining classical organist’, Chris Hainsworth (1959-63) with Beziers Conservatory colleague Andrei Freidine (clarinet) gave a performance at St Peters, Willis Street on 9 March. The ‘Entertainment’ began with the Aperitif (Weber), proceeded through the courses (Mozart, Bechet, Paganini ...), and ended with Coffee and Vodka (Benny Goodman)! Chris has been in France for 30 years but frequently returns to New Zealand. Apart from his duties as Organist at Beziers Cathedral, Chris conducts tailor-made tours for small groups around France and adjacent countries (hainsworth@free.fr).

Since 2007, when appointed head of the Inspectorate’s Operations and Planning Branch, Julian Tangaere (1978-82) has been with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which in 2013 won the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize. He is at present deputy head of the Organisation’s mission to Syria. The OPCW is charged by the UN Security Council with removing all of Syria’s chemical weapons by 30 June 2014. Julian was interviewed by Kathryn Ryan on the Nine to Noon National Programme on 24 February http://www.radionz.co.nz//national/programmes/ninetoonoon/20140224
Principal Youth Court Judge, Andrew Becroft (1971-75) is a frequent and respected commentator on youth behavior. In a recent article in the New Zealand Education Gazette (27 January 2014) Andrew made a number of important observations. Among them, ‘It is fair to say that the popular misunderstanding is that youth crime is on the rise, and in the view of some is out of control. Actually, we are at historic all-time lows, in terms of overall apprehension of young people by the police ... Schools are working really hard to keep kids at school.’

A visit to a physiotherapist focused attention on Brian Mulligan (1943-49) who has made a major contribution to the discipline in New Zealand and overseas. Brian qualified in 1954 and two years later commenced in private practice in Wellington where he remained until 2000. His special interest is manual therapy. He was one of a small group who formed the NZ Manipulative Therapists Association in 1988. The Mulligan Concept Teachers Association was founded in 1996. Brian’s textbook on his techniques was first published in 1989 and has gone through multiple editions in multiple languages. He has received many awards including Honorary Fellowship and Life Membership of the NZ Society of Physiotherapists, and an Award of Excellence at the World Confederation of Physical Therapists. He is an Honorary Teaching Fellow at the University of Otago (http://www.bmulligan.com/about-us/founders-profile-history/).

Those who have walked through the Wellington Hospital corridor parallel with Riddiford Street will have seen the timeline on the wall featuring 36 metres of text and images, depicting how health services have changed over the past 165 years. This display is based on the work of Dr Ron Easthope MB ChB, FRACP (1948-54), a cardiologist in Wellington for over 40 years, who as a hobby has collated the history of the Hospital. Ron, Dux and prefect in 1954, graduated in 1960 and served as a registrar at Wellington Hospital until 1965 when he moved to London and then Canada specialising in cardiology. Ron took up a position as full-time cardiologist in Wellington in 1969, remaining there until 2000 with visiting roles at Wairau and Hutt Hospitals. He has been the Honorary Archivist at Wellington hospital since 2006.

AN INTERVIEW WITH P.J. ( PEN) MOORE (1932-37)

Few people have contributed more to Rongotai College than P.J. (Pen) Moore, as student, as Old Boy and as a governor. Living in Rongotai and having completed Standard 4 at Miramar South Primary School (merged with Strathmore Community School in 2013 to form Kahurangi School) Pen entered Rongotai College in Form 1 in 1932. (Pen still keeps in touch with Ross Familton (1932-37))
who came with him from Miramar South to Rongotai; and who, after a
teaching career and now living in Auckland, has recently written *My Life and
Family*).

Rongotai was still a ‘new’ school when Pen arrived in Form 1 with Jimmy
Grono (who introduced art appreciation to the college) as form master. The
unwelcoming sandhills that had awaited the foundation students in 1928,
largely through the work of boys and parents, had been transformed into
playing fields. But grounds to the south of the school were riddled with
stones -- detention involved picking up of these stones (a punishment
resumed when the speedway stadium fields were acquired in the fifties).

Pen was one of 13 students who skipped Form 2 and entered Shell 3 in his
second year. Among the masters who played a large part in Pen’s Rongotai
life from then on was A.S. (‘Farq’ later ‘Quack’) Farquhar -- ‘a real
gentleman’ -- who apart from teaching English and Latin inspired in Pen a
lifelong interest in drama. With Ralph Hogg and later Doug Edwards the
school from the outset mounted fine plays. A highlight of the year was the
tour north -- Martinborough, Eketahuna, Waipukarau -- a programme for the
Waipukarau District High School in September 1936 reproduced in
*Rongotai Sound of the Sea* (p. 186) features Pen as the lead as Mr Perkins in
‘The Grand Cham’s Diamond’). Mr Farquhar introduced Pen into Repertory
productions (as a stable boy) and also fostered children’s drama through the
Children’s Theatre Company.

J. Todd (‘Pop’) McCaw was one of the foundation staff. Pen was not taught by
him and when confronted by ‘Pop’ with a tuning fork was one of the few
boys declared to be unsuitable for the school choir, which attained a high
reputation in these years. ‘Pop’ also led expeditions to the Akatarawas --
the Karapoti camp -- for a week in January. Recent Old Boys were recruited,
in Pen’s words, ‘to lick us into shape’ ‘H.T.M. (Dad’) Fathers was a much-
respected master who taught Pen for 6th Form maths. A.J.G (‘Joe’ or ‘Fish’) Heron was another master who made a strong contribution to Rongotai
(joining the staff in 1929 and still on the staff when he died unexpectedly in
1944). For some years he commanded the cadets. Pen because he lived east
of the college was posted to the artillery unit that conducted live shoots on 6
inch guns at Fort Dorset. Pen recalls that cadet training was a positive factor
in men being commissioned in World War II.

Pen participated in rugby, cricket and tennis but confesses to finding
reasons why he was unavailable in the summer when there were
opportunities to take to the water sailing a ‘Takapuna’, first at Port
Nicholson and then at Worser Bay. As president of the Worser Bay Boating
Club Pen, to this day, retains his interest in yachting. There were some
outstanding athletes during Pen’s time at Rongotai. One was Colin Robinson
who in 1933 won the 100, 200 and 440 yards titles at the secondary school
sports.
A feature of the school in the thirties (and later) was the wealth of opportunities for after-school participation. Apart from the Dramatic Society, boys could take part in the Dialectic Society (Farquhar), philately (Fathers), camera, radio ...

The headmaster, F.M. (‘Fritz’) Renner OBE (1928-1945), was a commanding figure at the school. He was a disciplinarian but Pen remembers him as an ‘eminently fair’ man. His extraordinary interest in every boy at the school was exemplified by his action in writing to every Old Boy serving overseas in World War II.

In Pens’s last year at Rongotai, 1937 -- he was a prefect and proxime accessit -- Mr Renner arranged interviews for school leavers. The impact of the Depression was still being felt and jobs were very hard to find. Pen was offered a job in an accounting firm in Nelson but declined as he wished to go to Victoria University. He briefly returned to school in 1938 but, following in the footsteps of another Rongotai boy, Pen was offered a position with accounting partnership, Clarke, Menzies, Griffin and Co. He had completed the first two units of a B.Comm degree -- accounting and French -- while at college and now began the life of a part-time student ‘up the hill’ before and after work. Pen completed his B Comm degree in 1941 just before leaving for England with the Royal Navy.

By May 1941, aged 20, Pen was available for overseas service. Joining the RNZN he then embarked on the path of being commissioned in the Navy, through selection boards, 3-6 months at sea, and then to a naval college in the United Kingdom (a former Rongotai Old Boy, Ted (later Admiral) Thorne – see Chariot December 2013 – was at the same time also involved in the selection process).

Pen’s early service on loan to the Royal Navy was on a destroyer, the Malcolm, involved from June to November 1942 in the hazardous mission of escorting convoys of merchant ships delivering essential supplies to the Arctic ports of the Soviet Union – Archangel and Murmansk. He was awarded the Arctic Star and several Russian awards.

Later the Malcolm was sent to Gibraltar and then in November 1942 was assigned the task of capturing the port of Algiers held by the Vichy French under Admiral Darlan. Breaking the harbour boom proved more difficult than expected and the destroyer suffered 12 direct hits, lost 13 crew and three out of her four boilers were put out of action.

The ship returned to the United Kingdom for repairs and Pen was sent to HMS King Alfred base at Hove and commissioned as a sub-lieutenant after a selection board at Portsmouth. While on leave from King Alfred Pen visited a cousin at Salcombe, Devon near the Kingsbridge estuary in south-west England, when a squadron of German fighter-bombers came in under the radar -- a’ Baedeker raid’ -- and a direct hit was received by his cousin’s house. Sadly his cousin was killed and Pen was buried under 14/15 feet of
masonry for seven hours. Pen was unconscious from the Friday to Tuesday and threatened with the loss of a leg but after four months in hospital and convalescing he was able to return to light duty at King Alfred.

After commissioning as a sub-lieutenant Pen undertook a navigation course in compass adjusting and degaussing (decreasing or eliminating the magnetic field in ships to counter magnetic mines) and then in the run-up to D Day (6 June 1944) took responsibility for the compasses in all landing craft based in Chichester harbour. His next posting, after a course in advanced compass adjusting, was to have been to Cochin on the south-west coast of India but after 4 ½ years service he was due for home leave. As Pen prepared to return to New Zealand the war in Europe came to an end. While on leave he was assigned to the British Pacific Fleet based in Darwin; but again peace altered these plans. On 6 December 1945 he was ‘demobbed’ at Shelly Bay, Miramar.

Pen rejoined Clarke Menzies on his return to civilian life. He was soon encouraged to apply for one of two overseas scholarships offered by the New Zealand Society of Accountants. He was successful and returned to London for 2 1/2 years experience in the City. Back in Wellington he rejoined Clarke Menzies and then in 1952 he joined the accounting firm, J.L. Arcus and Co -- he had met W.J. (Bill) Arcus in Scarborough, England while on his scholarship -- where he remained as a partner until 1981. He then went into sole practice, spending 50% of his time as Financial Director of Semco NZ Ltd. He was later joined in practice by his daughter, Jenny, and remained active in practice until a couple of years ago.

Pen became actively involved in the Old Boys Association from 1949 when ‘tapped on the shoulder’ by Ray Sanderson (1935-40) president for the ‘Coming of Age’ 21st anniversary commemoration in 1949. He remained as honorary secretary for many years (1949-57) and later served as president]. He recalls with particular pleasure the Association’s success in obtaining two places on the new separate board of governors in 1957. Pen was appointed to the board and remained for 17 years. Guy Smith (1932-37) was initially the other Old Boys representative later succeeded by Richard Heron (1948-54). (Sadly both Guy and Dick were taken from us too early.) Pen believes that the presence of two Old Boys representatives ensured stability in the board’s decision-making.

Pen Moore has had a career of outstanding achievement, in wartime, in the accounting profession, and in service to the community especially Rongotai College. He remains a warm supporter of the school and has been a regular attender at Old Boys assembly/lunches in recent years. He and his wife, Esme (who sadly died four years ago), and their three children lived for some 40 years in Ferry Street, Seatoun but moved to Evans Bay in 1990. Pen’s son, Penwill, also attended Rongotai (1974-77) during Mr Mackay’s term as headmaster.
CONTRIBUTIONS

The editor, John Martin, will be pleased to receive any news of Old Boys or other items for publication. John’s phone number is (04) 3858 213 and his email <john.r.martin@icloud.com>. Contributions may be posted to the Chariot Editor, RCOBA, PO Box 14-063, Wellington, 6241. The editor thanks Bruce Cockburn and Andrew Collins for their much-appreciated contribution to the production of the Chariot.