February, 2012

Welcome back to all existing parents and guardians of students.  A special welcome to all parents and guardians of year 7 students and students new to the school.  This newsletter is produced mid-term and end of term for each term of the year.  A copy is placed on our school website (see above) along with our Annual School Report (and much more information).

Student numbers are down in every year, less than predicted.  At the time of writing this report it is likely that we will have to lose a member of staff and accordingly a new timetable will be produced.  A change of this nature will have an effect on every part of the school and accordingly there will be changes to your child’s teacher, room or timing of a lesson.  I hope to have these changes finalised well before the end of this term.

I would like to introduce our new members of staff to the community.  They are Ms Huang and Mr Swindle in science, Mr Tanner in history and Ms Morris to the HIU.  Ms Thompson will be taking all of Ms Gile’s (nee Jones) from term I onwards.  We say farewell to Ms Robinson of the HIU who is retiring.  We will continue to see her in a reduced capacity however so our contact will not be totally lost.

Students have commenced the year well as a whole.  There is a disturbing immaturity amongst some of the year 7 boys and this has led to early suspensions and pre-suspension for older students who involve themselves in silliness.  Fighting will never be tolerated and will be dealt with swiftly and to the fullest extent of my powers.  Encourage, as we do, to have your child let a teacher know of any problems and not to seek justice in their immature hands.  Often the innocent and ignorant are dragged into these situations and end up getting hurt.  Lastly, remember fighting back is still fighting.  On a positive note our suspension figures are well down on past years.

Our year 8, 9 and 10 have been participating in a mental health resilience and information program each Tuesday morning of this term.  The program is run by Mrs Willmott and delivered by their morning teachers.  Please ask the students their opinion of the session.  Perhaps you may even get more than the common teenage grunt or “I don’t know” as a parent I often experience.  If you have any comments about the program please let me or Mrs Willmott know.  We will be returning to our normal Tuesday morning sessions on PBIS (Positive Behaviour in Schools) in term II.

Sadly there is a significant group of year 11/12 girls (mainly) who try to smoke on school grounds.  They continue to take too much of our teacher time as we watch their poor attempts at being discrete.  These students have been warned and will be suspended and not allowed to return unless I am convinced that their will be no further incidents.  If you feel your child may have an addiction please consult your local doctor for advice.

Thankyou to all parents who have taken advantage of our uniform shop.  New stock has arrived and is available for you to purchase.  I am pleased with the quality of the stock and the availability.  If you have any concerns, again please let me know.  Just a reminder that our community uniform policy does not allow for coloured garments to be worn under the uniform if it can be seen.  This includes coloured long sleeve tee
shirts that protrude along arms and in the midrift when shirts are too small. Tights are never allowed unless it is for some type of performing arts attire worn only during that time.

Finally all parents and students have been told many times that canvass shoes are not uniform. Students will find themselves removed from all practical activities due to OH&S regulations that teachers must enforce. Remember, black shoes with “full” leather uppers. We are currently looking into supplying a school shoe from our uniform shop to avoid students convincing parents that incorrect shoes are acceptable. This however will not be available this year.

Year 9 computer roll out will occur on Tuesday, 27 March 2012. Letters with more detailed information will be sent home shortly.

This newsletter features a calendar of events at the rear. Please consult it for information about school events such as the up and coming carnivals. Lastly, if you have a problem with a teacher please speak to them first and their head teacher second. If you have problems of a wider nature please contact your year adviser and if urgent, the Deputy Principal of that year. If you have not had a response by the third day ring and speak to either Deputy or myself.

Please inform the school of any change of contact details. We are introducing SMS absence notification early this year so that you are informed as to any attendance issues ASAP. Have a great year and remember Robert Townson High School is as much your school as your children’s.

_Warren Parkes_  
_Principal_

Contacts

**Deputy Principals**

9824-7777

Mrs Kim Chapman  
Years 8, 10 and 12

Mr Robert Morrow  
Years 7, 9 and 11

**Year Advisers**

Year 7  
Mrs Stamoudis

Year 8  
Mr Corolla

Year 9  
Mr Essex

Year 10  
Mrs Child

Year 11  
Mr Heap and Ms Waden

Year 12  
Mrs Hogan and Mrs Otieno
News from Mr R. Morrow DP

Welcome back to school. I hope all students, parents and community members had an enjoyable break. At the start of the school year we set expectations on our students which enable them to achieve to our school goals of SAFE, RESPECTFUL and a LEARNER.

Please ensure correct uniform is worn. The uniform shop is available on Tuesdays from 10 am for purchase of all aspects of uniform. Student must note that correct safe shoes must be worn in practical classes. If shoes are deemed unsatisfactory, students will be excluded from class for OH&S standards.

**Year 7:** Students seem to have adjusted to following timetables effectively but I have some concerns with playground behaviour. The school must act to ensure the safety of all students and unsafe behaviour cannot be tolerated.

**Year 9:** Elective choices have been made and any changes will be severely restricted as vacancies are very limited.

A significant number of year 11 students have not completed **ALL MY OWN WORK**, which must be completed and shown to Mr. Morrow. HSC entry cannot be registered until each student completes these 5 units from the Board of Studies website – [http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/)

Mr Morrow has an information sheet for students to help them gain this credential.

I am looking forward to a great year.

*Mr Morrow DP*

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**VISUAL ARTS HSC RESULTS**

Congratulations to the Year 12 Visual Arts class of 2011 who achieved excellent results in the HSC. Samantha Vongmany achieved a Band 6. 38% of students achieved Band 5, which was equal to the state result. Well done Rachael Abrahams, Ruby Bisson, Laura Cataldi, Katie-Anne Clarke, Natalie Hunt and Peter Renn. Another 38% of students achieved Band 4 and no student achieved less than Band 3. Six students demonstrated growth well above the state. For 75% of students, their visual arts mark was their highest subject mark in the Higher School Certificate. Overall, Visual Arts results were the best in the school, meeting the state trend.

Well done Visual Arts class of 2011! We are very proud of you! We wish you all the very best in your chosen endeavours for 2012.

*Mrs D. James*

*Head Teacher Creative & Performing Arts*
Year 11 PHOTOGRAPHY MASTERCLASS

Last year the Creative and Performing Arts faculty began its Masterclass series of workshops. This is a new initiative drawing on the expertise of former RTHS students studying in the creative field at a tertiary level or working professionally in the industry. At the end of last year, Kyra Skidmore (a 2010 RTHS graduate) ran a full day workshop for the year 11 photography students. Students learnt how to set up studio lighting, use a digital SLR camera, and edit their photographs on Adobe Photoshop. Maintaining connections with former students has been a vital way to keep both the art staff and our students abreast of current practices in the art industry, particularly in terms of technological advances.

Mrs D. James
Head Teacher Creative & Performing Arts
THE SUMMER ART SCHOLERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Holly Craig (Year 12)

Myself and the 15 other scholars were able to experience several workshops, mentoring, discussions and tours during our week in Canberra. We were given tours of the National Art Collection with the curators of the individual galleries and experienced behind the scenes tours to see the inner workings of the gallery involving tours into various departments including registration, conservation, service and exhibition design. We were given the opportunity to view famous artworks that the public do not see on display in the gallery and gained access to many areas that are off-limits to the public. We had the opportunity to be given a curatorial tour of the Renaissance exhibition and see a private movie screening in the NGA Theatre. Myself and the fifteen other scholars were interviewed and photographed and appeared in several news reports and on ABC News after our Media Call which was an interesting experience for us all. I also had the opportunity to meet the Director of the gallery, Ron Radford, and attend a function with the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard.

The Scholarship allowed me to participate in workshops both inside and out of the gallery. We were given drawing lessons with professional artists inside the NGA. I had the chance to work collaboratively with the 15 other art scholars in several workshops which was great experience. This included several art workshops in the NGA as well as an art workshop at Mount Stromlo that went late into the night. At the Australian National University School of Art we did life drawing with one of the University’s drawing teachers and also a workshop in the photography department with photograms where a professional photographer, Mark Kimber, gave us expert tuition.

On our final day we had an exhibition of our work set up in the NGA and had a presentation and our celebrations. I met so many amazing people including the scholarship organisers, the sponsors of the scholarship, NGA staff, talented artists and teachers and the 15 other summer scholars who were all extremely talented, amazing people. The National Summer Art Scholarship was one of the best experiences I have ever had and I am so thankful to all of the people that organise and sponsor the National Summer Art Scholarship for providing me with such a great experience.
Holly Craig (Year 12) participating in the Summer Art Scholarship at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra in January this year.

**PD/H/PE Announcement**

Our school is lucky enough to have certain members within the PDHPE faculty that specialise in an area of expertise in certain sports. As such, within the Physical Activity and Sports Studies course offered as an elective in Year 9 and 10, we can offer football (soccer), rugby league and a general PASS courses.

Despite choosing rugby, soccer or general PASS in years 9 and 10 there is only one PASS course. Each teacher delivers the course in different ways focusing on a particular area of skill. Should that teacher leave RTHS or become unavailable for an extended length of time we may be able to deliver the specialised course. This means that the course would now become PASS general.

*Mr N. Kelava*
*Acting PDHPE Head Teacher*
Arts scholars get behind the scenes at the NGA

Holly Craig (Year 12) was selected to attend the Summer Art Scholarship at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra over the January school holidays. Below is an excerpt from a news article by arts editor Helen Musa from City News in Canberra on January 19, 2012.

In this, its 15th year, the scholarship attracted more than 400 applications from remote, regional and metropolitan Australia. The lucky 16 students arrived in Canberra on Saturday, January 14 and are staying at the Brassey Hotel.

Supported by the National Australia Bank, it takes advantage this year of the NGA's summer exhibition “Renaissance: 15th and 16th century paintings from the Accademia Carrara, Bergamo”.

Peter Naumann, Head of Learning and Access at the gallery, said many of the students from previous programs over the last 15 years had gone on to excel in diverse areas of the visual arts.

In the intensive summer course, scholars are broken up into smaller groups for discussions. According to Krabman, this allowed the gallery to introduce them to the behind the scenes aspects of art as well as the presentation, hanging and changes afforded by new technologies.

In Krabman's view, by the end of the week they will “really have moved somewhere”. She said the program offered professional and personal opportunities as well as a look into the field of the arts.

Although she agreed with the students that it was an exhausting week, with round-the-clock experiences each, Krabman thought they were up to it, having all been through a gruelling application process which involved responding in writing to wear a work from the NGA collection, meaning that “they tend to be quite motivated”.

SICK BAY

If your child is unwell and needs to go to sick bay, please ensure they follow the correct procedures, which are:

- Tell their classroom teacher who will issue them with a note to come to the office.
- The office ladies will admit them to sick bay recording the details on computer.
- A parent/caregiver will then be contacted to collect the child.

An increasing number of students are calling or texting their parents directly to come and pick them up. When parents arrive to collect them from the office, they are not in sick bay.

Please remind your children of the correct procedures so you won’t be kept waiting.

Thank you.
**Born to Run** by Cathy Freeman

*A book review by Luke Martino (Year 7)*

*Born to Run* is an autobiography written by Cathy Freeman. Cathy was a poor aboriginal child who loved to run with a dream to win a gold medal at the Olympic Games.

Cathy Freeman is very close to her family who have old-fashioned family values. Even though they are poor, they gave her support through her running career. Experiencing family tragedies, she gained the motivation to fulfil her dream. She attended many schools as her family moved around. No matter where she was, she always loved her running. 

Cathy Freeman is a likeable narrator who makes the book fun and interesting. The events are in chronological order, making it kid-friendly and easy to read.

The way Cathy Freeman describes the villages at the Commonwealth and Olympic Games is like you were there, experiencing the atmosphere.

Cathy Freeman breaks down negative aboriginal stereotyping by her success encouraging other aboriginal people to be proud of who they are and their culture.

Many different age groups could be inspired to achieve their dream by reading this book. It is a suitable book to read for readers over the age of ten.

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**Discovery Day**

On Wednesday the 8th of February, about half of the year 12 students attended Discovery Day at Wollongong University. The aim of the day was to introduce students to what a day in the life of a university student is like.

We travelled to the campus via bus, and throughout the day attended differing subject sessions of our choice to experience what the classes are like, hear from key speakers at the university, learn about the scholarships offered and get a feel for the kinds of things we need to be aiming to achieve between now and University application time. All up, we attended four sessions, and had lunch at the campus in between with some lively musical entertainment during lunch to attract our attention.

The day itself was valuable for everyone, as it gave us a sneak peek at what opportunities are offered once we graduate. We got to experience a variety of courses to help us decide on what kind of path we want to take towards our future careers, and got to meet university students as well as year twelve students from all around the state. Though the weather was rather miserable, the campus was open and inviting, and the comfortable atmosphere made the day really enjoyable. I really liked the day as I got to attend courses that I am interested in and it made me realise that life after high school may not be as daunting as I first thought.

Angela Johnston

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As in previous years the Senior Leadership team have donated their time to Volunteer for the Lifeline Gift Wrapping Appeal. This event was held at Campbelltown Mall during the lead up to Christmas. The leadership team took shifts wrapping gifts for donations along with other community volunteers, helping to raise over $30 000.

Jordan Fowell

Year 12
ICAS ENGLISH, SPELLING AND WRITING COMPETITIONS.

Each year a growing number of Robert Townson students participate in the UNSW International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) competitions. They provide students with excellent practice and feedback relevant to NAPLAN tests and general literacy. This year, we again offer students from Year 7 to Year 12 the opportunity to participate in the competitions. Please fill in the slip below if you wish to enrol your child/children for 2012 English, Spelling or Writing ICAS Competitions. The English ICAS co-ordinator is Elizabeth Giles if you have any questions.

ENGLISH COMPETITION  (Strongly recommended for all students)
Sitting Date:  Tuesday, 31 July, 2012
Cost:  $7.70 (including GST)
Payment Due:  27 April, 2012

SPELLING COMPETITION  (Year 7 only)
Sitting Date:  Tuesday, 19 June, 2012
Cost:  $11.00
Payment Due:  27 April, 2012

WRITING COMPETITION  (Recommended for all students with an interest in writing).
Sitting Date:  Monday, 18 June 2012
Cost:  $16.50
Payment Due:  27 April, 2012

ICAS PERMISSION SLIP
I wish for my child ____________________________ of Roll Call group ________ to participate in the ICAS tests ticked below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Competition</td>
<td>$7.70 (Years 7-12)</td>
<td>044-153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling Competition</td>
<td>$11.00 (Year 7 only)</td>
<td>044-163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Competition</td>
<td>$16.50 (Years 7-12)</td>
<td>044-154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I enclose ____________________ as payment  Parent care giver signature: _______________________________
PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

The school public Speaking Competition begins on **Monday, March 12 – Week 8.**

Topics:

**Year 7**
1. If I could change the world...
2. It’s better to be one of the crowd
3. What is school for?
4. What’s really important?
5. Humanity’s greatest moment

**Year 8**
1. Anything is possible
2. Where are we going?
3. Overcoming obstacles
4. We should forget the past
5. Who am I?

**Year 9**
1. Advertising and us
2. The future
3. The media has too much power
4. Modern technology is destroying/enhancing human relationships
5. Sport is no longer fun

**Year 10**
1. Conformity is poison
2. Fashion is tyrannical
3. Beauty is better than brains
4. Computers are a curse
5. It’s tougher for boys/girls

Year 11 Standard and Advanced speak on their core topic Journeys, English Studies on the Future.

Year 12 Standard and Advanced speak on their core topic Belonging and English Studies on We Are Australian

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DATES TO REMEMBER

**Sport**
- 7 & 8 March: Zone swimming
- 12 March: Regional swimming
- 30 March: Athletics carnival
- 1, 2 & 3 April: State swimming carnival

**PARKING REGULATIONS**

*Council Rangers regularly patrol school parking. Please ensure you follow signs to avoid fines.*

**SCHOOL PHOTOS**

Friday 23 March
Catch up day – Monday 25
FROM THE WELFARE/SUPPORT DESKS

Ensure the school office has all up to date **medical and contact details** for your child/ward.

*The vaccination schedule for Year 7...*

8th March 2012  Hepatitis B (Boys & Girls) & Human Papillomavirus (Girls only)

10th May 2012  HPV (Girls only) & dTpa boostrix - diphtheria, tetanus & whooping cough (Boys & Girls)

14th June 2012  Varicella – chicken pox (Boys & Girls)

11th October 2012  Hep B (Boys & Girls) & HPV (Girls only)

*Vaccination schedule for Year 10...*

14th June 2012  dTpa boostrix

*Place all dates on the calendar as in order for the vaccine to be effective your child must have all doses.*

Last year 200 of our Year 7-10 students participated in the **National Survey of Young Australians** with heartening results that our children value family relationships most importantly (similarly to the findings in NSW). Secondly our students, as well as young people in NSW, value friendships other than family. And thirdly, again mirroring NSW results, young people value school or study satisfaction. Interestingly the issues most of concern to our students mirrored NSW results too...young people are concerned mostly with school or study problems, then coping with stress and thirdly, body image. Females were more concerned than males about body image, but males were more concerned about drugs and family conflict.

As parents of adolescents we need to bear in mind these results and ensure we have open communication with our young people about a range of issues.

The full analysis and report is available on Mission Australia’s website at www.MAYouthSurvey.com.au

Our school has been chosen to participate in the y-worri project which involves Year 10 students completing the e-couch modules online. This program is a youth friendly research based project to assist young people in dealing with anxiety. 10PD2 and 10PD4 are participating in this project during Terms 1 and 2.

There are helpful **fact sheets for parents on line** which cover:

- “Why you should never tell your teen you are busy.”
- “How to stop your teen from using excuses.”
- “How to help your teen overcome the fear of failure.”
- “Teach your teen the difference between friends and followers.”
- “How to get your teen to work hard.”

These fact sheets are available at www.oxygenfactory.com.au

Till next time,

*Mrs Sally Willmott*

*Head Teacher Welfare*
NEWS FROM HSIE TERM 1 2012

There have been a number of really exciting excursions conducted by HSIE since the last time the faculty got the opportunity to write in the newsletter. Nearly 100 Year 7 geography and history students went on an excursion to Katoomba’s Blue Mountains in Term 3, 2011. They learnt about traditional Aboriginal bush tucker and survival skills from local indigenous tour rangers. Students also walked through a rainforest before enjoying a scenic railway ride. This excursion will be offered again to our Year 7 students in 2012.

In term 4, 2011 Year 8 students for the first time went to the Minamurra Rainforest. Once here they enjoyed bush walking through the natural rainforest learning about how the natural ecosystem works. The best part about the trip was viewing the magnificent Upper Falls.

Year 9 students also enjoyed for the first time an exciting excursion to the Wombeyan Caves. Here they were able to investigate a truly unique environment filled with spectacular views. Both these excursions will run again in Term 4, 2012.

Isabou Podina

“My time on our excursion was thrilling and fun, we had the best time taking photos and trying to make things out of the caves faces and rock. The scariest part was when we had to go down the steep staircases which ended up being the best parts. I loved the idea of the stories and education behind how they found the caves and the people who went to explore the caves before they put the ladders in and walk ways”.
Our faculty was also congratulated by local veterans associations for sending representatives to memorial services in recognition of the men and women who have served our country. The Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia has awarded the school a Certificate of Appreciation for its support in sending a staff member (Mr Ross) and student representatives to the special memorial service held at Mawson Park in Campbelltown on the 18th August (Term 3). The School Captains and Vice Captains also represented our school along with Mr Olm at the memorial service for Ingleburn RSL on Remembrance Day (11.11.2011).

The faculty is offering several excursion opportunities for students this term. The National Geographic Channel Competition will be running again. The cost is $3 to enter. Student should have already taken information home regarding this competition. Every student who participates receives a certificate for their CV regardless of the result. Year 7 Geography classes will be involved in completing a fieldwork trip to the local Burrendah Lake Reserve this term. Legal Studies students will be attending Campbelltown Local Court and Macarthur Community Legal Centre on the 27th February.

As for the rest of the year the faculty is excited to offer the following opportunities to students. Year 8 History students will be able to participate in Medieval Day. We are also hopeful of organising an Indigenous Australian experience for History students. This will provide students with a unique opportunity of talking to some local Indigenous Australian identities about their life and experiences growing up. A Mysteries and Disasters excursion for Year 9 and 10 elective History classes will be conducted later this year. All year 7 Geography and History students will have the opportunity to participate in an excursion to Katoomba in Term 3, 2012. In term 3 Society and Culture students will be visiting Cabramatta to do some research. In term 4 Society and Culture students will have another excursion to the NSW State Library and Chinatown.

There have been some changes to the HSIE staff in 2012. We would like to welcome three new members of staff. Ms Sneddon will be replacing Mr O’Farrell for the year in History. Mr Tanner is also a new teacher to the History staff. In Geography Ms Thompson will be replacing Mr Field. We look forward to in HSIE this year.

We look forward to a great year with our students. Please contact any of the teachers in HSIE if you have concerns about your child’s progress. We are more than happy to help in any way we can.

Mr Kapitanow - HT HSIE