

# NEWSLETTER

## RUDOLF STEINER TRUST

### OTAGO

TERM2 #20

28 JUNE 2010

471-2163

office@dunedin.steiner.school.nz

www.dunedin.steiner.school.nz

UPCOMING EVENTS		MEETINGS	
<b>Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 5pm</b>	<b>Lantern Festival Ravensbourne Hall</b>	<b>Tuesday 3rd August, 1pm ( previously the</b>	<b>Kindergarten Trust Management committee)</b>
<b>Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July</b>	<b>Vision Hearing Team</b>	<b>Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July, 7pm Rata room</b>	<b>Class 2/3 parents meeting with David Jordan</b>
<b>Saturday 31 July 10- 4pm</b>	<b>Working Bee – school &amp; Kowhai room</b>		

## FROM THE OFFICE

### The Midwinter Festival

Within our community we may look both to St John's Tide and also Matariki as we pass through the longest night and the midwinter solstice.

It is at this time of year that Matariki, the Maori New Year is celebrated. Matariki is the Maori name for a group of seven stars known as the Pleiades star cluster. Some people think of Matariki as a mother star with six daughters, and it is often referred to as the Seven Sisters. Matariki appears in the eastern sky sometime around the shortest day of the year, and is thought to determine how successful the harvest crop will be in the coming season. The brighter the stars, the more productive the crop will be. Nowadays, Matariki is seen as an important time to celebrate the earth, and show respect for the land on which we live.

Matariki has two meanings, both of which refer to the cluster of stars. Mata Riki means Tiny Eyes, and Mata Ariki means Eyes of God. Matariki begins to rise in the last few days of May, and this symbolises the coming of the Maori New Year. Some iwi (tribes) start celebrations when Matariki is first seen, however it is the first new moon after Matariki that officially signals the Maori New Year. Traditionally Matariki was celebrated by gathering with whanau (family) and reflecting on the past. The festival's connection to the stars provided an opportunity for families to remember their whakapapa (genealogy) and those ancestors who had passed away to the heavens. Offerings were made to Atua (gods) related to the whenua (land) who would help provide good crops, and new trees were planted to signal new beginnings.

On June 24, St John's Day is celebrated, the birthday of John the Baptist. This day begins St John's Tide, which is celebrated for the four following Sundays. His summons was to turn inward, to search within toward a confrontation with oneself. St. John's Day is a fitting time to re-assess and re-balance ourselves in this spirit. Traditionally, a fire was lit at sunset on the eve of St. John's Tide Day. The firewood was collected for days beforehand, and prayers and blessings were spoken as the fire was lit. There are also other traditions associated with the fire, including walking around the fire three times and throwing a pebble into the center of the fire with a special prayer, and also jumping over the embers of the fire as it died to get new endeavors off to a good start or to rid themselves of their own weaknesses and inadequacies.

The essential and constant theme from St John is summed up in the words, "Change your thinking!" The way in which the inner soul of man is to be prepared is indicated by Luke's invocation of the prophet Isaiah: "valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth.: (Luke 3:4f).

Mountains and valleys are not only external objects of nature, they are also images of conditions within the soul. We experience them in the life of feelings, as we swing between the heights of jubilant ecstasy to the depths of depression and despair. The task of John is to hold the balance between these two extremes. Furthermore, the "crooked" ways of thinking are to be led into clarity and the hindrances which again and again paralyse the will are to be gradually eliminated through disciplined spiritual work. For adults, St John's Tide is a time of inner struggle, of striving for virtue. In raising

children we are also concerned with developing certain virtues. Among these are wonder, reverence and gratitude. St John is associated with the light, and as we pass from the longest night of the year (reflecting the time of inner struggle) to the lengthening light in our days we can see this association reflected in the natural world.

With the Lantern Festivals bringing light to the darkness, and the midwinter camps with star gazing and nights together for the school children the community is able to connect to these festivals and their significances.

### **Lantern Festival**

The Lantern Festival for the School and Kindergarten is this Friday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July at Ravensbourne hall. Please bring food for a shared meal from 5pm during which the children will provide some music. Following the meal we will take our lanterns to sing and proceed around the playing field opposite the hall. Thanks to Ulf Uchida and Matt Preece for volunteering to patrol the road crossing. The children have learnt a range of songs for the night, one of which is:

*I go with my bright little lantern, my lantern is going with me  
In heaven the stars are shining, on earth shines my lantern for me  
The light grows dim as we go in, la bim-a- la-bam-ba-la-bim  
(ask your child for the tune)*

### **Vision Hearing Team**

The Public Health South vision hearing team will be visiting the school during the first week of next term on Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July. They will be mainly checking the 4 year olds and the children in Class 6. If your child is not in those groups but you have concerns and you would like them to be screened, please talk to Clare.

### **Rata Room Working Bee**

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Rata room working bee. It was great to have so many eager hands on deck. Many people put in lots of time but we would particularly like to thank Merrall for getting/supplying the equipment and materials as well as putting in a long day, Kelvin for his electrical skills in changing the lights and Miriam for purchasing and sewing a huge portion of the calico in advance. It was the whole team that made it all happen though – well done everyone!

God gave the day, God gave the strength.  
And the day and the strength were consecrated in labour,  
And that labour was its own reward.  
(Leo Tolstoy, from *Anna Karenina*)

## PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

### **Class One and Two Sleepover**

What a wonderful time we had at the schoolyard camp! We chopped vegetables for soup and baked cheese scones, played in the dark and decorated sticks to carry our lanterns. We sang and washed dishes and brushed teeth and bedded down around the fire for a story and lullabies by candlelight and then the candle went out and the rustle of sleeping bags faded to a hush and all were asleep by 8.00! **Thank you to Katje, Joe and Merrall for all your help.** Porridge, stewed fruit and hot cocoa warmed the children in the morning after packing away our beds and then a play and a picture rounded out the stay. We had 3 minor moments of homesickness and a few lost items that have since surfaced so we can declare the 2010 camp a rousing success! Thank you all, -Alex.

Note – next time we shall aim to give parents a month's notice of this type of event.

### **School Camp**

The Naseby camp was a wonderful time for all. Thanks to all the helpers who gave of their time and energy. Thanks to Mark from Taste Nature for again supporting our school with a generous discount on our camp food. The children are busily writing accounts of their camp which we look forward to sharing next term.

### **News from Class Six**

Congratulations to Alex McMillan who has been selected for the Southern Knights – the

Otago/Southland Under 13 Ice Hockey team. Alex will play in the New Zealand Ice Hockey Nationals in Gore on the 6/7/8 of August.

### Yurt Cleaning Roster

The **Nicholson and Walrond** families are on yurt duty this week.

Cls	W1 -19/4	26/4	3/5	10/5	17/5	24/5	31/5	7/6	14/6	21/6	28/6
1	MacDon	Botica	Dunroy	Xu	Barto	Tamang	Funnell	Holmes	Bendall	Henderson	Nichols
2/3	Walrond	Cain	Schweik	Stevenson	Cunningha	Oswald	Hollowa	Whitehe	Alger	Carter	Walrond
4	Stichnot	Miles	Noyes	Cohen	Degas	Tapealava	Barriga	Dwyer	McMillan	Robson	

Yurt Cleaning Duty consists of sweeping the yurt twice during the week (preferably on Tuesday and Thursday) either before or after school. Each yurt has its own broom, dustpan and brush. The duty family also needs to bring a bag of kindling for fire starting during the week. For Class 1 duty – could one of the sweeps please be Fri afternoon or Monday morning so the week starts with a clean Yurt.

## KINDERGARTEN NEWS

We will celebrate the lantern festival with the school (as detailed in Office news). Please take your child's lantern home with them at the end of the week and bring it to the festival. We look forward to seeing you there.

As it is the last week of term, please remember to take away all of your child's belongings including spare clothing bags, extra shoes, hats etc. We would also love a volunteer or two to take home the children's small sheets from nap time in the Kowhai room to be washed over the holidays please. Also is anyone able to take the hens or check on them during the holidays? Please let Whaea Violet know if you are able to help with these jobs thanks.

### Kowhai Room

Thank you for the families of our tamariki o Kowhai for the kind and generous hospitality shown during our home visits this term and for coming to the parent interviews. Could all of the journal books be returned this week preferably or if you need them during the holidays please return them in the first week next term.

A reminder that Whaea Sandra is away this week, and Julie and Junko will be assisting in the Kowhai Room.

Thank you all for your support this term. Be safe during the holidays.

- Whaea Violet, Whaea Sandra, Junko and Julie.

### Rata room

We are delighted to welcome back Liqin who is with us again from today. We also welcome Fergus, Connor and Caelie's little brother, who had his first visit with us last week.

On recent advice from Marjorie Theyer we will be introducing "little fruit", an earlier mini morning tea during which we will use the children's fruit from their lunchboxes.

Thanks so much to everyone who helped with the working bee. It was a fantastic turnout and our new ceiling and playground shed are great. Thanks to the Kowhai room who made their space available during the working bee.

Make sure you have the lantern festival in your diary – this Friday 5pm at the Ravensbourne hall. See the office news for details.

- Matua Nick and Whaea Ros,

## PLAYGROUP NEWS

Thanks to all who came along to make our lantern festival such a wonderful event! Despite strong wind many of our little lanterns stayed alight for the whole way, and it was amazing to see the Rata room literally *filled* with beautiful little children! We are also grateful to all those playgroup parents who stayed to help pack away in preparation for the work bee.

Our playgroups are now finished for the winter holiday and will resume the first week of term 3 which starts on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July. Our playgroup facilitators meeting is on Friday July 9<sup>th</sup> at 10 in the Rata room. Anyone who is considering becoming a facilitator one day, or simply wishes to become more involved, is welcome to attend (children welcome). -Cecil

## CRAFTGROUP NEWS

Thank you all for coming forward to make toys during holidays. Izumi will be in touch during the week, and pass you materials etc.. Have a great break everyone, and see you next term!

### **New product at the craft shop**

Starry window decoration for your windows! Our "Do It Yourself – Transparent Stars Kit" includes 100 sheets of special Kite Papers and instructions to make many different stars. German-made Kite Papers are very special --- crisp, easy to fold, transparent, great colors and yet strong. It is also suitable for cut out art. For star-making, age 8+ is recommended. \$10.00

Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> July, 9.30-12.30	Miriam's house; 307 Ravensbourne Rd	Doll Making
---	--	-------------

## COMMUNITY NOTICES

*Community notices in our newsletter will normally appear for one week only and may be edited to accommodate space. If you wish to place a notice please email your notice to [office@dunedin.steiner.school.nz](mailto:office@dunedin.steiner.school.nz).*

### **TE AROHA INDEPENDENT HOME-BASED STEINER CHILDCARE**

Miriam Preece is now providing independent home-based Steiner childcare under the Te Aroha network. Miriam is the mother of Amelie (Rata room) and Lucia (Waitati playgroup) and is married to Matt. She was a Paediatric Occupational Therapist prior to having children and is pleased to be able to provide home-based care with the Steiner philosophy as her base.

Care is:

- \* completely flexible
- \* in a TV free home
- \* following the rhythms and values that are provided through Steiner education.
- \* conveniently located close to Dunedin Rudolf Steiner School and on the main road into town.

Rates:

0-5 hours \$12 per hour  
6-15 hours \$10 per hour  
16+ hours \$8 per hour

Discounted rates for more than one child from the same family.

For more information, please contact Miriam on: 471 2376 or 021 260 0656