

# NEWSLETTER

## RUDOLF STEINER TRUST

### OTAGO

TERM2 #22

27 JULY 2009

471-2163

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www.dunedin.steiner.school.nz

UPCOMING EVENTS		MEETINGS	
Thurs 13 <sup>th</sup> August	Day Camp: Naseby	Wed 5 <sup>th</sup> August	KMC
Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Last day of term 3	Thurs 3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Board of Trustees

*"Example is the school of mankind and it will learn at no other."*

*Edmund Burke*

## FROM THE OFFICE

### From the Board of Trustees

It's wonderful that we now have wood stoves in both of the yurts to keep the children warm and cosy but the teachers now have to spend quite a bit of time managing the fires as well as keeping the yurts clean during the week. If parents could help with the sweeping of the yurts it would really help our hardworking teachers. We are thinking of starting up a 'yurt sweeping roster' for the 2 yurts. They need to be swept twice a week either before or after school. (They are cleaned more thoroughly by Monica every second weekend). If one family in Class 1/2 and one family in Class 3 could do the sweeping one week per term (on 2 days of that week) it would free up time for the teachers to be doing what they are skilled at! **Please give me your feedback on this issue.** If parents are in agreement we will create a roster next week.

Linda for BOT

### Parent Reps

We need to re-establish the system of parent reps for each class so that we have smoother liaison between teachers and class parents especially when organising outings and camps. If you are currently your class parent rep and are happy to continue to do so, please let the class teacher know. If your class does not have a rep and you would be happy to take on this role, please also let your class teacher know! Thank you.

### Organic Foods Hamper Raffle

Thanks very much to those who have already donated an item for the organic goods raffle. Great to get this off to an early start. The box is in the office for each family to place at least one item of non-perishable organic product. I'm still keen to hear of any ideas for accessing a large basket/hamper to put it all in. Please contact Tracy 478 0411.

## PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

### Naseby Day Camp

A reminder that the trip to the ice rink in Naseby is next Thursday, 13 August. There are only 2 places remaining on the bus. We will be leaving by 8 am from the Maia bus stop at the bottom of Jessie Street, returning by 4.30. Please make sure we have a phone contact for you during this trip. If you have not yet returned your child's permission slip, please do so as soon as possible.

### High School Vision Group

Just a reminder that our meeting is scheduled for Monday the 10th August 5:30-7:00pm. We are meeting to discuss the long-term vision of creating a Steiner high school, and to identify preliminary steps to allow that vision to be realised.

## KINDERGARTEN NEWS

It was helpful to the kindergarten/nursery staff to have Marjorie Theyer here visiting last week and it was lovely to see such a good turn out to her information evening for the parents on Wednesday.

Request from the Rata Room: Could you please return your child's journey book to the Rata Room if you have not already done so. Thanks – Lea-Ann, Dianne and Liqin

It seems with cooler weather children are quite hungry. Please ensure there is sufficient food in their lunchboxes - especially for those staying for afternoon tea.

On Saturday, at the Early Childhood Education Research Hui, Whaea Dianne and I enjoyed learning about the Forest Kindergartens in Germany and Denmark. In so many ways their practices are so like those here. I also attended a presentation on early childhood education in China where the practice of pushing children to achieve, starting at an early age, showed a deeply contrasting philosophy. Our children here in the Steiner kindergartens are very fortunate to not have their childhood taken away from them too early. It is indeed important to protect this philosophy.

If anyone hears of someone willing to donate a dishwasher, it would help be most gratefully received!

Wishing you all a good week -  
Rennie

### **Flax bushes to be removed**

Work has commenced. We need to dig out the clumps of flax in the Kindergarten playground behind the swings in preparation for a bamboo house to be planted. A few people so far have indicated they can help with the digging. More help is needed so please pick up a spade and join in the digging when you have a moment of time. Please see Ulf, Alice or Pamala. Many thanks.

## CRAFT GROUP

We are making classic Steiner felt fairies next week, for a seasonal table or as a child's playmate. Come and learn how to do needle felting. If you have your own felting needle please bring it. If you don't, craft group has some.

After that project, we will make Origami mobile with various geometrical shapes, all made from simple paper parts.

Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> August	9am to 1 pm Ravensbourne Hall	<b>Needle Felt Fairies</b> with Liqin. Please bring felting needle (also available at office).
Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> August	9am to 1 pm Ravensbourne Hall	<b>Origami Mobile</b> with Motoko. Just bring yourself.

### **Dollmaking Circle**

Join us to make Steiner dolls on Saturday August 29th from 10:30-1 at Leigh's place. All are welcome to come along and either work on your own doll with your own materials, help finish playgroup dolls for the new playgroup room, or work on dolls for the fair and office display with craft group materials. Any questions to Cecil 472-8683.

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

### **Developmental stages and Awakening Consciousness**

Walking, Speaking and Thinking

The fact that the first three years of a child's life are the most fundamental and important for the whole of the lifespan is now generally accepted as self-evident. The question of what to do with this knowledge; asking what it is that will serve the child best throughout the rest of its life, then remains. Theories, programmes and approaches abound, but are of little use if not based on true observation of

what naturally unfolds through these first three years; given the child is provided the right environment for growth.

What is observed over these first three years then, is a 'growing down' – a subtle but observable process of incarnation shown through the development of the three capacities of walking, speaking and thinking. The acquisition of each of these is the task for these three years respectively.

### ***Walking***

The first year after birth is a period of mastering the physical body and, as mentioned above, is a downward process: at birth the head is very large in proportion to the body and limbs and there is no conscious control of the limbs in any way. During the first few months the child gradually learns of the existence of their limbs, hands and feet through touch and sight, whilst slowly becoming more aware of their surroundings; recognising spaces and people. Given opportunity to feel their own weight in an unobstructed way, the baby is able to develop the necessary strength in neck, torso and limbs to enable progression through the stages of lifting and holding the head, rolling over, sitting upright, crawling, and the eventual standing in the upright position. This is usually accomplished by the end of the first year; but the range in which this will happen can span as wide as four months either side of this mark.

Regardless of the actual time spent progressing through these stages it is coupled with a slow wakening to its environment and, at around 8 months, an unconscious willing on the part of the child to imitate those around him/her. It is this desire to be like those he/she sees that drives the child into the upright position and sees them taking those first tentative steps. The way in which the child approaches the challenges, the successes and the failures, can tell much about the future character traits and temperament of the child. We are encouraged to allow the child to progress at their own pace and simply observe.

The achievement of this uprightness is the first significant milestone in the life of the young child, marking as it does the freeing of the arms and hands, which as Steiner points out, "affords the possibility for the soul to find equilibrium", a truly human trait.

### ***Speaking***

The freeing of the limbs and the finding of balance that comes from learning to walk means that two aspects of development essential to speech-acquisition are brought into play: the rhythm element present in the legs; and the gestural and 'thematic' nature inherent in the hands.

Of course, during the entire previous year from birth to twelve months the child has been hearing, listening and attuning to the patterns and pure sounds, rhythm and inflection of adult speech, but with the advent of uprightness begins a process of understanding the speech around them, of comprehension.

This attenuation and comprehension is deepened through the provision and modelling of healthy speech; speaking directly to children about the real tasks they are involved in; or in the simple but nurturing rhythms of nursery and nonsense rhymes, which all providing the all-important living and repetitive qualities of speech that lay the permanent pathways in the growing brain.

From comprehension come the attempts by the child to imitate the speech of adults. Again, this is bound implicitly with walking, as Steiner makes clear through examples.

When a child walks sturdily and steadily, it has the bodily foundation for a healthy syllable-division. This means that in learning to walk the child learns to form its sentences. If it walks unsteadily we shall find that it does not follow a proper division of sentences; it drowns its thoughts in a sea of words. If a child does not learn to use its hands and arms harmoniously, its speech will disintegrate. Its voice becomes somewhat harsh. If we cannot get it to feel in its fingers, it will with difficulty develop a true sense for the modulations of speech.

Vocabulary, both the spoken and the purely understood, develops rapidly in a child immersed in a healthy spoken environment, but is largely directed by the innate desire to imitate (which remains the strongest force driving the child's activity until the age of seven) and from pure feeling most speech before the age of three is of the type, interjection. However, from this repetition and imitation of the

speech heard - and from their attempts at self-expression through the word, the pathways toward thinking are laid: the task of the third year.

### **Thinking**

Of course children before the age of three are /thinking/, but such early thinking is driven by the willing and feeling. However, at the age of three, once the capacity of speech has been laid down there comes the ability to reflect. The child is able to make particular use of the placement of the self in relation to past, present and future as has been learned through the grammatical conventions of everyday speech.

The placement of objects (adjective/noun) in space (verb/adverb/ tense) logically builds pictures, specially if the daily speaking and conversing between adults and child has been contextually-based, relevant and rhythmical. The child builds a body of experience to remember, speak about and draw on for future decision and action. The attributes of relevance, richness and rhythm help to build the memory and picture-forming capacity that is thinking; it is this ability to form mental pictures that helps the child to begin to perceive themselves as a separate entity: an 'I' to themselves.

Lee

## *Community Notices*

*Community notices in our newsletter will 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)*

### **White ice skate shoes for sale \$10**

Brand Graf Davos, Switzerland

Size EU32/UK12/21cm

Made in Czech Republic

Thick padded ankle area, good used condition. Asia has just grown out of these shoes. If you are interested please contact Junko ph. 4712304.

### **Organic Co-op Order**

The co-op order with Chantel and Terrace Farms (for freshly ground biodynamic flour) will be placed next Monday the 10th August. Please email orders to [tracy@sculpture.co.nz](mailto:tracy@sculpture.co.nz) before then. Still time to get a catalogue and order form. Just email Tracy at the above address. Thanks.

### **Wanted – Single Woollen mattress**

Please phone David or Dianne on 4731271.