



# Timaru Boys' High School

## Thomas House News

### CALENDAR

30 July Parent Mid Winter Christmas Dinner

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### From the Director of Boarding

Welcome to our Thomas House Newsletter.

We hope to deliver our newsletter each term, keeping you informed and updated with all that's happening around our Hostel.

We are proud of the history, traditions and contributions by staff and parents, past and present, that has culminated in the Thomas House environment of today. We are constantly looking at ways to improve the Hostel in order to enrich the lives of those residing here.

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### Staff Profile: Director of Boarding

Mr Richard Fogarty

Richard began his teaching career in 2004 as a workshop teacher after previously working as a registered builder in the family construction company. Having taught at Palmerston North Boys' High school for several years as well as schools in Australia and England, he finally saw the light and moved with his family to beautiful Timaru in early 2020. He is passionate about the role that hostels play in boys' education and the opportunities that it affords young men. With hostel leadership roles at Palmerston North, College House and Australia, All Souls St Gabriel's, he is well accustomed to the day-to-day operation of school hostels.

Richard believes hostels build friendships for life while offering students a genuine and supportive "second home". When speaking with former hostel students, parents, and old boys he is always amazed at how strong the generational

Thomas House bond is. He is proud to be a part of a hostel that still serves its rural community while maintaining the traditions and expectations of modern boarding.

Strong character education sits at the heart of Richard's educational philosophy. In a modern environment it is vital we provide a well-rounded, holistic boarding experience that equips our boarders for life outside of Thomas House.

Richard lives on site and is supported by his wife Julie who is a registered Art teacher, and two young children who can often be seen running around the hostel.

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## Staff Profile: Residential Manager

Mrs Linda Merrilees

Linda is a Registered Nurse with an extensive and broad range of nursing experience gained over a 40 year career, which includes working in Intensive Care Units, the Royal Air Force, Thames Valley Police and in the Middle East. Originally from Scotland, Linda spent most of her early years in Australia and England. Following a few years in Abu Dhabi where she worked in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, before returning to Oxford in the UK, settling down and having 3 children, whilst a senior nurse in a Neurological Intensive Care Unit.

Linda came to New Zealand in 2005, settling in Timaru. She became a Public Health Nurse in the Mackenzie and Timaru areas, working with complex and high needs children, youth and families, and contributing to the delivery of the health curriculum in 13 schools within her portfolio. TBHS was one

of the schools in which she worked for over 12 years, which allowed her to become familiar with the staff and the TBHS environment. Linda has experience as a Practice Nurse, and currently works some weekends at the Timaru After Hours Medical Service, as well as being a COVID vaccinator for the local DHB,

Linda's role is to enhance and monitor the care, safety, welfare and wellbeing of each of the boarders. She does this by overseeing their physical, mental, spiritual and emotional needs, and has a comprehensive and holistic approach to achieving this. Linda welcomes any contact from parents / caregivers, regarding concerns they may have about their son.

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## Staff Profile: Catering Manager

Mr Justin Holman

Whilst responsible for the daily management of the kitchen, Justin also operates the Timaru Boys' High School Canteen. In the Thomas House kitchen, he oversees the production and delivery of lunch orders for several local primary schools, catering for a variety of businesses and school sports groups.

Hailing from the North Island, Justin was educated at Tauranga Boys' College. He enjoys mountain biking, crafting sourdough, and hunting (makes no claims of any prowess here).

Before Justin turned his hand to managing the Thomas House Kitchen, he worked in a wide range of catering establishments from London's West End to Wellington's café culture. Completing his trade apprenticeship in the Royal New Zealand Defence Force as a chef, Justin served six years

in the Regular Force Army before turning to Wellington's vibrant restaurant scene in the late 90s at the then Duxton Hotel. Using this as a stepping-stone, he then moved overseas to work in a variety of Gastro pubs and restaurants in the UK. After six years overseas, he returned to NZ as the Executive Chef for the Copthorne Hotel, Solway Park where he helped redevelop the restaurant and conferencing facility, working with local producers.

In addition to catering, he has also worked as a Catering Instructor in the Department of Corrections and spent time driving trucks for a propagating company in Christchurch.

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## Head Boarder Profile: Robbie Adams

Robbie, his three older siblings and family are whakapapa from Ngai Tahu, currently sharemilking at Waitohi.

His parents, Andrea and Kent, were both raised in Fairlie.

Robbie attended Fairlie, Waituna Creek and St Andrew's Primary Schools before becoming a day boy at TBHS in 2017. When his parents went on holiday whilst he was in Year 11, he stayed at Thomas House and never left !

Robbie states that life as a Thomas House Boarder is like having 137 brothers, and he really enjoys the strong social aspect of being in the hostel.

A previous rower for TBHS and player of social hockey, Robbie spent a good amount of time with his dad who was a rugby coach, so he was always involved in helping. This is his

second year as a 1st XV player for TBHS.

As well as coaching and playing Rugby, Robbie is keen to become more involved in Community Maori projects, and recently took part in a Maori Secondary Schools' Rugby Camp. He would like to look further at the opportunities that Ngai Tahu may offer in regards to role modelling and mentorship programmes.

Robbie plans to study Farm or Environmental Management at Lincoln next year, and is keen to travel to Italy and Greece, as he is a keen history buff, focusing on ancient Greeks and Romans.

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## Deputy Head Boarder: Angus Munro

Angus hails from Burkes Pass, considered to be the small town that is the gateway to the Mackenzie area, where the family farm sheep and beef.

Angus attended Fairlie Primary School in Years 1-6 before boarding at Waihi Preparatory School for Years 7 and 8. He arrived as a Year 9 Boarder to Thomas House and TBHS in 2017.

Angus has thoroughly enjoyed his time at Thomas House, and states the thing he enjoys most about boarding life is "it's the people". He refers to all the boarders and staff (past and present) and especially his Year 13 group whom he describes as, "*a very active group*". Angus resides with three other Year 13 boys in one of the Thomas House Flats, where they soon learn not to set the fire alarms off when cooking up bacon or a fry up!

A keen rugby player, playing prop, saw Angus being awarded a Rugby scholarship to Judd School in Tonbridge, Kent, England, which he fondly remembers. The school is a voluntary aided Grammar school which is highly academic and has over 1000 students, most of whom go on to University. Angus recalls memories of visiting London and Paris, and seeing how the 'other half' lived.

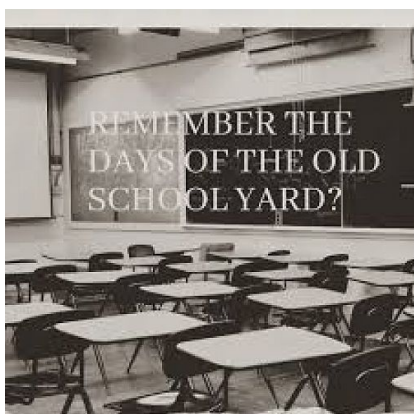
Although currently unable to play rugby due to an injury, Angus remains actively involved in coaching Hockey teams, and still fits in lots of gym work.

In the future, Angus is keen to travel to Canada and Australia and aspires to be a shepherd, before being back on the family farm and working with his dad.



Both Robbie and Angus have strong connections to Mackenzie Rugby, with fathers and grandfathers being Life members of Mackenzie Rugby Club, through their commitment and strong contributions to the club.

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## Thomas House Reunions and Lettings

During the holiday periods throughout the school year, Thomas House lets out our accommodation and campus facilities.

This allows us to use the profits to improve the Hostel environment for the benefit of our boarders. Recently we have hosted Hockey Teams and Rugby groups, with favourable feedback on our provision.

If you would like to organise a reunion of Old Hostel Boarders, we would be delighted to host you in our facilities,

or cater for a function where you can reminisce and get reacquainted with old friends. Contact [thomashouse@timaruboysschool.nz](mailto:thomashouse@timaruboysschool.nz) or telephone Director of Boarding, Richard Fogarty, 020 4176 1940

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## Thomas House Acknowledgement Wall

Earlier this year when cleaning the hostel grounds, we stumbled across many named pavers that were donated to the hostel by generous Old Boys and their families.

The pavers were previously laid at the entrance to the dining room but were lifted and replaced with concrete some time ago.

As part of the outdoor dining/basketball area we have incorporated the pavers into a **THOMAS HOUSE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WALL**. Of the 48 named pavers, 15 are being recut due to irreparable damage. We are hopeful of having these pavers back in the coming weeks.

The pavers provide current and former boarders an opportunity to share in the rich history of Thomas House.

While working on the project I was moved by the messages, family bonds, and references etched into the pavers that are now a visible legacy to Thomas House. While working on the project I was moved by the messages, family bonds, and references etched into the pavers that are now a visible legacy to Thomas House.

Once all the existing pavers have been set into the wall, we will look to offer Thomas House Old Boys the opportunity to add their own paver to the wall.

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## Peter Lewis Wing

In March 2019, the official opening was held to unveil the newest accommodation block within the Thomas House site.

The project cost around \$1.8 million and was funded through word of mouth and the generous contribution of donors. The accommodation wing was named after a prominent Old Boy, Peter Lewis, who was a philanthropist and major contributor to the project.

Lewis Wing is a 600m brick building, housing eighteen double bedrooms, two bathrooms, eight showers, sick bay, large common area with kitchenette, and Housemaster's accommodation. Currently housing Year 12 and Year 13 students, the accommodation is generous in size and

comfort, with the boys very much enjoying their warm and inviting living environment, which helps to foster a certain level of independence, whilst also under the supervision of House staff.

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## Blast from the Past

Excerpt from the Timaru Boys' High School Monthly Bulletin: December 1925

Altogether 131 Boarders have been in residence. The new cubicles were ready at the beginning of the year, and this has allowed another 45 boys to sleep in the 'open air'.

The health of the boys has been excellent; fortunately there have been no epidemics during term time, and, as usual, very few boys have 'reported sick' from other causes.

Only the boys themselves and their parents can realise the care and devotion of the Matrons, Miss Scott and Miss Hendry, in the cause of the boys' welfare.

During the year a new block of buildings of the 'open air' type, which has been proved by the preparatory school for the past ten years to be so wonderfully effective, was erected. The fortunate classes which reside there have felt the contrast of the full severity of winter weather and the sultriness of the nor'wester, and the unanimous opinion of masters and boys is that the 'open airs' are the best rooms in the school.

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## 1966 Old Boys' Visit - Thomas House

A number of 1966 Old Boys visited Thomas House as part of their Timaru Boys' High School Reunion on Monday 14 June.

The day was set to coincide with the St Andrew's College exchange. It was great to see so many Old Boys back at the hostel, be it somewhat different from what they remember. The group spent some time visiting the modern hostel facilities and recollecting the differences compared to those of the "open airs"

It was incredibly humbling to see the passion that these men had, and continue to have, for Thomas House.

We would encourage any hostel Old Boys who want to have a look around the hostel to get in touch.

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## Mid Winter Parents' Dinner

To be held Friday 30 July. Reminder to RSVP by 16 July

5:30 – 6:30 drinks, followed by dinner  
Canapes, buffet main course and dessert  
\$30 per person, Drinks provided

**Please RSVP by 16th July**  
**To: Linda Merrilees**

Phone / txt - 021 027 93050

email: [Merrileesli@timaruboysschool.nz](mailto:Merrileesli@timaruboysschool.nz)

Invoices will be sent out

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## **PDF Version - Thomas House Newsletter (T2)**

The pdf version of the Thomas House Term 2 Newsletter is available here.

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