

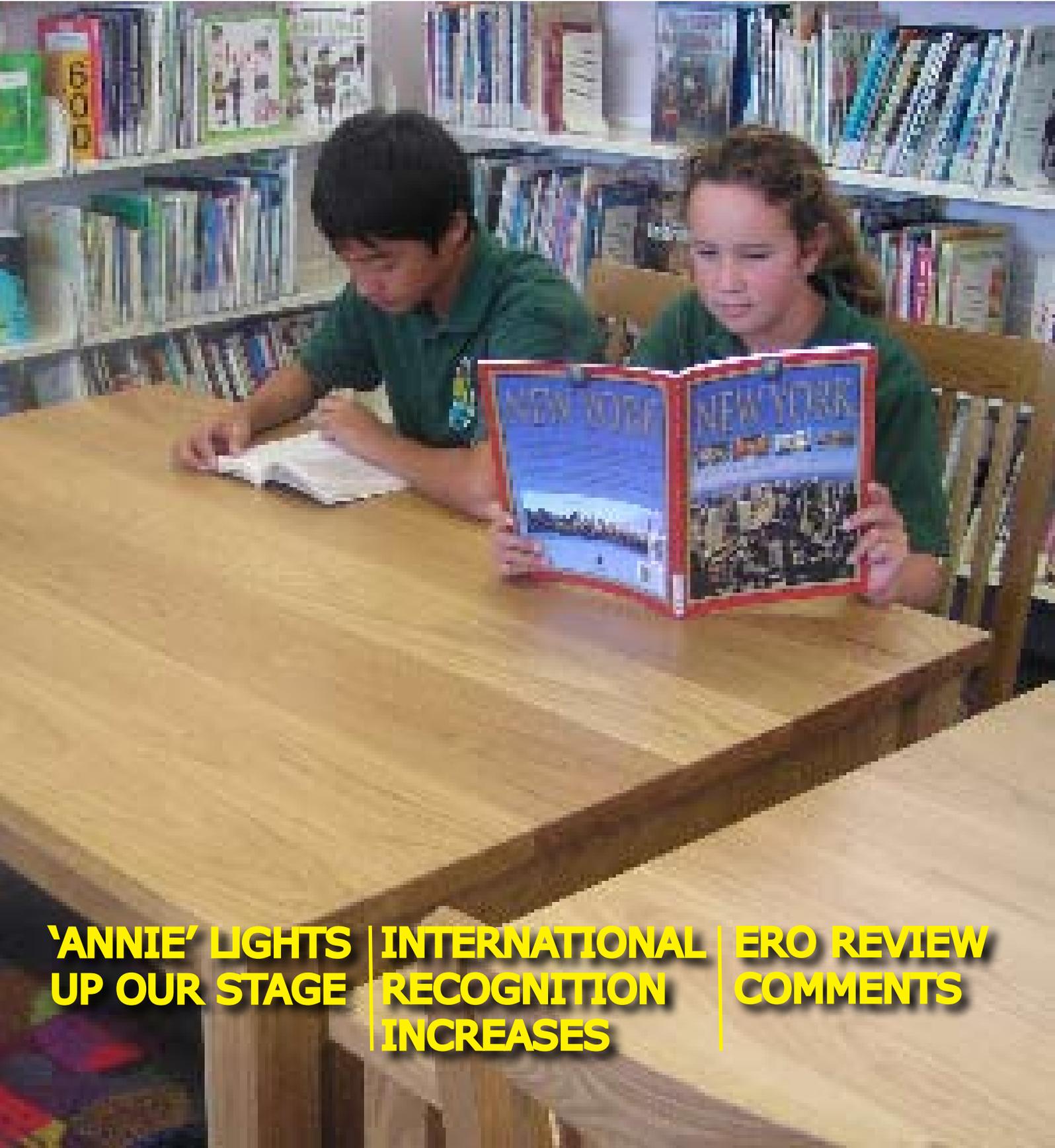


Birkdale Intermediate School

Newsletter of the Board of Trustees

Summer 2008

BULLETIN



**'ANNIE' LIGHTS
UP OUR STAGE**

**INTERNATIONAL
RECOGNITION
INCREASES**

**ERO REVIEW
COMMENTS**

Education Review Office Comments

“ Teachers work actively to implement the agreed school vision and practices. They are reflective and respond well to professional development and direction. Teachers are focussed on the ongoing improvement of student engagement with learning.”

“Professional leadership from the senior management team has resulted in a significant transformation in the quality of teaching and learning since the 2003 ERO report. The principal is a strategic thinker who utilises the individual strengths of teachers well and creates an environment where professional growth is valued. One deputy principal is responsible for curriculum development and professional mentoring of all teachers. This role has had a positive impact on promoting good teacher performance.”

“Classrooms reflect high levels of student engagement and interest in learning. Students are able to make personal associations with Quest contexts and report this as a positive impact on their attitude to learning. Wall displays reflect student learning and thinking. PBL is well documented in examples of student work.”

New School Trophy

A new trophy is being awarded at our school's awards assembly at the end of each year. The trophy is a pounamu (greenstone) hei tiki (neck tiki). Awarded for excellent leadership of Kapa Haka, it is a taunga (treasure) of our school. The hei tiki was carved by a nationally renowned carver Mr Charlie



Wilson of Te Arawa. Charlie is an artist who produces fine, traditional Maori body adornment and weaponry. He uses New Zealand pounamu and whale bone to produce art forms such as hei tiki, kapeu, patu, wahaika and kotiate. Based in Te Puke, his work can be found in quality

“Children’s writing has a high profile in the school. High quality, published children’s writing, both handwritten and computer generated, is displayed with pride and is a feature of all classroom environments. The writing demonstrates the use of both surface and deep features, and an awareness of audience. Children have frequent and regular opportunities to write for a variety of purposes.”

The Titanic

Our library has a new display cabinet that houses many interesting displays throughout the year. One recent display was around the R.M.S. Titanic. Dr Robert Ballard, the man who found the Titanic wreck, was kind enough to donate a signed photo of himself on board a research vessel from the Woodshole Oceanographic Institution. Along with the photo we had a 1:325 scale model of the ship and a piece of coal brought up from the boiler room on the wreck. Other items included a porcelain doll made by a world renowned New Zealand doll maker Jan McLean of ‘The Unsinkable Molly Brown,’ a famous Titanic survivor. These displays are intended to create wonderment in our students and provide a tangible link to the real world of their studies.



‘The Unsinkable Molly Brown’

American Oak Furniture Crafted for Our Library

New library furniture crafted by Woodcellar Ltd, a furniture maker in Browns Bay, has been installed in our library. Made from solid American Oak a hardwood from sustainably managed forests in the United States. It is heavy, hard, very strong and impervious to liquids. Our timber comes from the Appalachian region of the USA. It will be an asset to our library for many years to come. We see the library as the ‘jewel in the crown.’ An important centre for learning. We are working to make it an interesting place for our students to come as part of their studies and to develop a love of reading.

retail outlets such as the Auckland War Memorial Museum and Te Papa.



International Recognition for Our Programmes



13th International Conference on Thinking, Norrkoping, Sweden

Our Principal, Mr Coote and one of our Deputy Principals, Mr Neubert were asked to speak at the 13th International Conference on Thinking in Sweden. Held in the City of Norrkoping, 100km south of Stockholm, the conference was attended by 1,200 people from all over the world. They spoke about our problem-based learning approach where our students are challenged to solve 'real world' problems. They also talked about the way we are directly teaching our students ways to improve their critical thinking. Research that showed our students success with improving their critical thinking skills was a feature of their presentation. This follows on

from Mr Coote's previous presentation at the National Education Computing Conference in New Orleans attended by 12,000 educators where he received an International award which 'Recognizes creative teachers for their pioneering use of telecommunication networks to provide innovative learning opportunities for school-age students.'



World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, 17th Biennial World Conference University of Warwick, England

Mrs Needham who leads our Gifted and Talented programmes and Miss Moller who is the other half of the GATE Team also featured on the International scene. They presented our students' work at the World Council for Gifted and Talented's Conference in Warwick, England. The presentation was well received.



International Reading Association Annual Convention, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Mr Neubert and Miss Moller have been asked to work with Reed Publishing in the development and trialing of new teaching and learning resources for a series of novels. The novels will be part of an exciting 'Critical Literacy' series to be released in New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the USA. Some of their work will be taken to this year's International Reading Association Annual Convention in Toronto, Canada. Miss Moller's work with problem-based learning is also featured in a new book published in the United States titled "Thinking-Based Learning: Activating Students' Potential" by Robert J. Swartz, Arthur L. Costa, Barry K. Beyer, Rebecca Regan, and Bena Kallick - Foreword by David Perkins.

New Pergola for Our Playground

During a holiday break the North Shore City Church worked to improve the seating area under the two large trees out from the staffroom. They removed the old paving and, following the landscape plan drawn up by a leading landscape architect Jan Woodhouse, they put in place new paths, garden areas,

seating and a pergola. The estimated cost of the improvements is around \$50,000. The Church gained sponsorship for this project from a variety of North Shore firms and their congregation has provided the labour at no cost to the school. The seating and pergola are proving very popular with our students with large groups using it at lunchtime. Also it has been used by classes as a comfortable shady place to sit and work and by Rimu House as a meeting place during the election of their House Captains.



'Annie' Lights Up Our Stage

This year's production had its beginnings on Broadway and in the classic film musical, this heart-warming rags-to-riches story of Annie's adventure - from a New York orphanage to the luxurious home of Oliver Warbucks - is a story that has been enjoyed by audiences of all ages. Our cast is to be congratulated on the wonderful performance, one of the high points in our 42 years of productions.



Top Science Results

Assessment data from our Quest 'Survivor Rocky Shore' shows that 90% of our Year 7 students and 87% of our Year 8 students were at or above expectations for this age level. This is well above the goal which was set at 80%. During this Quest our students investigated and described special features of common animals which help them stay alive and survive into the next generation. It is very pleasing to report the large percentage of students who now have such a good understanding of this science topic. If you would like to know more about our Quests check out the problem-based learning button on our website at www.bis.school.nz



Professional Development DVD

To assist new teachers and students to our school to understand our problem-based learning programme we have filmed our teachers and students in action. A professional film crew spent two days in our classrooms filming each stage of our Quest, 'Lest We Forget.' This is a social science study based around ANZAC Day. It asks our students to answer the question, 'What should we remember about war?' The DVD produced is available to other schools who are interested in our approach. So far teachers from 52 schools from around New Zealand are using our problem-based learning Quests.