

PENROSE HIGH SCHOOL ONE TREE HILL COLLEGE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

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Student Spotlight

Congratulations to former student Lara Thompson (2021-2025) who gained 2 scholarships in Chemistry and Statistics as part of her NZQA Qualifications. Lara was named Dux at last year's Prizegiving.

Congratulations also to Charles Jiang (Calculus as a Y10 student) and Current Head Girl Esther Hutchinson (English).



Our School, Our Community Welcome to our first Alumni Newsletter

UPCOMING EVENTS

* Quiz Night Fundraiser Date to be confirmed

Get your old classmates together, for an evening of fun, laughter and support the Europe Trip! More details to come

* 1st XV Rugby Pre-Season March 9th 2026

Come along to our first pre-season game and support our 1st XV. Kick off is 4.30pm at One Tree Hill College grounds

Following the tremendous success of our 70th School Reunion, we are delighted to welcome you to this first edition of our Alumni Newsletter. The reunion was a powerful reminder of the lasting connections formed within our school community and the shared stories that continue to bind generations together. It was truly inspiring to reconnect, reflect on cherished memories, and celebrate how far our alumni have come since their school days.

In this newsletter, we are proud to showcase the journeys and achievements of our past students. From professional milestones to community contributions, these stories highlight the diverse paths our alumni have taken and the impact they continue to make in the world. By sharing these experiences, we hope to strengthen our alumni network and inspire meaningful connections across year levels and generations.

Looking ahead, we will also shine a light on upcoming school events and celebrations, along with the outstanding achievements of our current students. Their academic, cultural, sporting, and leadership successes reflect the enduring values of our school and the bright future ahead. Thank you for remaining part of our school story — we look forward to keeping you connected, informed, and inspired. We need your stories so please contact alumni@onetreehillcollege.school.nz

Past Student Feature

Donald Riezebos (PHS 1968–1972) receives Public Service Medal



PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER BRIAN ROCHE &
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS PRINCIPAL
ADVISOR DONALD RIEZEBOS

Once a year the Public Service Awards are held to recognise individual public servants who demonstrate an outstanding commitment to New Zealand and New Zealanders.

This year Donald Riezebos, Principal Advisor at the Department of Internal Affairs, was invited to receive a Public Service Medal. The medal recognises his impressive 47 years of stewardship in the local government sector.

When asked about his response to the news, Donald said he was stunned "It really came out of the blue! After I got over that reaction, I felt proud, but also quite humbled because I know there are lots of public servants who do really amazing work." Of course, Donald has done a lot of amazing work himself over his career:

Donald played a key role in negotiations between the Crown and the Tuwharetoa Māori Trust Board to reach an agreement on the ownership of the Lake Taupō lakebed. This meant finding a solution that honoured the lake's status as a taonga of Tuwharetoa while facilitating usage of the lake. Negotiations ended with an outcome with everyone agreed on, Donald adds: "It was both fascinating and rewarding work".

Donald was also heavily involved in the establishment of the Auckland Council in 2010. He led a team tasked with establishing the ward and local board arrangements for Auckland. This saw him consulting with local councils and iwi groups. "It was interesting to meet with communities and learn more about how they're structured" he comments. With a region as big as Auckland, setting the boundary arrangements is crucial so that the local board can properly support their communities. Most importantly, it means that the people who live there have a voice – something that matters to Donald, who says, "I'm personally committed to a healthy local government sector".

These projects offer a peek into why Donald was nominated for the Public Service Medal.



Construction begins on new classroom block

With our growing roll at OTHC, we are fortunate to have a new block of six classrooms currently being built at the front of the Kōwahi Quad area. Construction is expected to continue for most of this year, with the aim of having the classrooms ready for use at the beginning of Term 4.



Get Involved!

Interested in donating some time to **REP**? Our Rotary Enrichment Programme has become widely known across Auckland and we are always on the look out for new tutors. If this is something you would be interested in, please contact **Brian Langdon** at blangdon@onetreehillcollege.school.nz

2027 Europe Trip

Current Students jetting off

The Travel Club off to Australia.

1967 PENROSE HIGH SCHOOL TRAVEL CLUB -
TRAVELING TO AUSTRALIA

April 2027 - One Tree Hill College is going to follow in the footsteps of those that have gone before us - we have a trip to Europe planned! Taking in the sights of London, Paris, Ypres, Sorrento, Venice, Florence, and Rome. This trip encompasses subjects such as History, Geography, Design, Art History, Sociology, Philosophy, Art Painting, Tourism, Mathematics, Science, Drama, Music and Food and Hospitality.

Students will be treated to 19 days of tours, cooking classes, riverboat rides, as well as Art Galleries, battlegrounds where NZ soldiers fought and the history that surrounds them, road trips with incredible scenery, and the joy of sharing all this with classmates (and a few teachers!)

Students have started fundraising for this trip already and if there are any former students who might like to sponsor our travel uniforms (and have your company logo all over Europe), back packs or just donate to the wider education of these amazing students, then please get in touch with Jenny Scott at OTHC: (jscott@onetreehillcollege.school.nz)

The last time the this school took a trip away was in 2015 when we took a group of students to the Amazon in South America. EOTC is alive and well at OTHC, but we have built on the legacy left behind by former students!



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**New Staff To OTHC**

This year we welcomed a large number of new staff to our growing school - including four former students. Sapphire Weatherley (2014-2018) and Cherie Woods (1986-1990) have both returned as Teacher Aides, alongside teachers Jessie Stenberg - PE & Health (2005-2009) and Charla Fernando - Science (2016-2020)

They join Shanna Rope (2005-2009), Loma Weatherly (2019-2023), and Christine McKnight (1986-1990) on staff.

Once a PHS/OTHC student - always a PHS/OTHC Alumni!!

Get Involved!

- Are you interested in working with young people?
- Do you have a job/careers where you could have a student shadow you to get a feel for it?
- Do you have any time to mentor our current students?
- Do you own a business that would like to sponsor one of our top sports team and show off your company to Auckland and New Zealand?

Then contact the school!! 09 5795049

Email our Careers Advisor Natasha:
njeffrey@onetreehillcollege.school.nz

We would love you to stay connected with the current generation of learners.

2027 Europe Trip

The New \$1 House (2.0 Version)



THE TRADES ACADEMY HAS PURCHASED THEIR NEW \$1 HOUSE WHICH HAS ARRIVED ON SITE

2024 marked the first house we purchased for \$1 through Kainga Ora. Students in the Year 13 Trades Academy had the privilege of working on this house where they completely renovated the 1970's house in the span of nine months and 17 days.

This was a great opportunity for the students who worked on the project as they picked up the different skills working with, and learning from, the various plumbers, carpenters, roofers, plasterers and electrician's involved in the work. This has certainly helped them think about futures in the trades industry.

OTHC was one of the first schools in New Zealand to give students the opportunity to renovate a house. Mrs McKeon was the driving force behind this project and says that it was a pleasure and a privilege being able to work on this house and is grateful to the Board of Trustees for giving the academy the support needed to complete it.

The house went to auction in 2025 and profits made have gone into the next house that arrived last week.

We will keep you updated with progress and advertise Open Homes when it ready.



Fundraiser for Trades



The Trades Academy are fundraising to offset the costs of materials and are offering these "Gorilla Bags" to Alumni, Staff and the wider community.

These bags are suitable for everything! household appliances, junk and waste, construction waste, tiles, garden waste and demolition waste.

Cost is \$210/bag and this includes it being picked up from your indicated place.



FILL IT. Your Gorilla Bag™ is delivered flat-packed, so it's easy to store and ready when you want. Unlike a skip, there is no time limit or hire period.



BOOK IT. When you're ready for us to take your Gorilla Bag™ away, simply book your collection here or call our friendly team during working hours on 0800 GORILLA (4674552).



WE COLLECT. Depending on your location, your bag collection is usually within seven days, thanks to our brilliant crew of Gorilla Bag drivers.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED -
PLEASE CONTACT THE FRONT
OFFICE - 09 5795049