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From the Acting Headmaster

Why we should encourage realistic optimism



Tena koutou ki te whanau o Mount Albert Grammar School.

Winston Churchill once said, "A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

Google research tells us that, on average, human beings are hardwired to be more optimistic than not. And, evidently, 'have healthier outlooks; tend to live longer than their more pessimistic counterparts; and are less susceptible to the negative effects of illness, fatigue, and depression'.

However, being optimistic does not mean just blindly hoping for the best or naively only expecting the positive. Nor can being optimistic guarantee success or prevent disappointment or failure.

So where lies the balance?

Too often we wish others luck before an exam – yet we know that exam success is in reality dependent on commitment to preparation. Teaching our young people the concept of realistic optimism and the correlation between luck and effort is essential.

Across this week we have vicariously enjoyed and celebrated the successes of our 1st XV Rugby Girls, Year 12 Science Bowl, Junior Debaters, 1st XI Hockey Girls and Premier Basketball Boys but we have also shared in disappointments. We have enjoyed opportunity and faced difficulty.

Key Dates

Click [here](#) for the Calendar

Monday, August 28

Winter Tournament Week begins



Monday, September 4

Senior Exams begin

Thursday, September 21

Last day of classes for Term 3

Friday, September 22

Staff Only Day
End of Term 3

Sport

Photo Essay

Tonight, our Centennial Choir will be shoulders-back and heads-up at The Big Sing, each understanding that their harmony comes not as a result of luck but of hard work and commitment to hours of practice, and fine-tuning. Realistically, they also know they will be in the company of, and competing with, others who have done the same.

Next week, many of our students head off to Winter Tournament Week vying for the opportunity for further success. Our athletes will not be relying on luck but should be realistically optimistic, and confident, that their preparation and commitment will put them in good stead to be competitive. But, they too must be wary and respectful of equally prepared and committed opponents.

Competition, by definition, means likely disappointment. We know there can be only the few who win, but as Churchill counselled 'an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty' and so it remains up to us as to how we choose to handle and grow from any such 'opportunity'.

We need our young people to be realistically optimistic and to be able to understand that they must work to create their own luck for success, but also to accept, face, and to learn from the 'opportunity in every difficulty'.

Warmest regards,

Jo Williams
Headmaster – Acting



Blues Region Final: Rugby
Girls 1st XV v Bay of Islands
College
Click [here](#)

Trials and Registrations
Click [here](#)

Fixtures and Results
Click [here](#)

Our Lion Fund programme aims to provide financial support to allow every MAGS student to access the breadth of opportunities we offer at our school.

Donate to the Lion Fund now



Quiz Night boosts Village Trust



Photos / Sylvie Morrison

Quiz Night 2023 last Friday was energetic and spirited as 340 staff and students gathered – not only for friendly competition but also to raise money for charity.

The 42 tables raised around \$3000 to support Pasifika and Auckland youth and families through the Village Trust.

Everyone enjoyed seeing tables dressed up and decorated, with lots of laughs at a variety of unique themes. Best dressed

individual was won by Snow White, while the best dressed table was won by Scooby Gang with honourable mentions to Senior Leadership Team and the Fifa Women's Football table. The coveted first place was snagged by the English department's 'Deserters', followed by the teachers' team and the 'Giblets' from 12GIB.

Thank you to the student-led Academic Council, Quizmaster Mr Barrett and Miss Hobbs for organising and running the event.

You can see more photos from Quiz Night [here](#)





Health Expo improves well-being



Year 12 Health Science students have been hard at work this week as they proudly hosted the MAGS Health Expo.

This event was an opportunity for them to make a real impact on the well-being of our school community.

As part of their Achievement Standard, these students were tasked with taking action to enhance an aspect of people's well-being within our school community.

Their journey began with thorough research and comprehensive surveys to identify the

pressing issues affecting our student body.



For weeks, they worked on creating engaging expo stalls, and their efforts culminated in a two-day expo during Tuesday and Wednesday lunchtimes this week.

The turnout was incredible with over 400 students visiting the expo on Tuesday alone.

Each stall was thoughtfully designed to address key well-being concerns, covering a wide range of topics. Students had the chance to explore stalls dedicated to promoting mental well-being, offering valuable stress management techniques for the upcoming senior exams, raising awareness about bullying, fostering body positivity, sharing fitness insights, and even experimenting with a unique smoothie-making bike (pictured left). Acting HOD Health Ms Goff said, "The commitment and creativity demonstrated by our Year 12 Health

Science students was truly inspiring. Their dedication to improving the well-being of our school community has left a lasting impact, and we commend them for their outstanding effort.

"Thank you to all the students who participated and everyone who supported this initiative. It is through such collective action that we continue to make our school community a healthier and happier place for all."



Centennial Choir at The Big Sing



All the best to our Centennial Choir, who start a weekend of performances at 8pm tonight at the prestigious The Big Sing competition at the Auckland Town Hall. They will also be singing tomorrow night and in the Gala Concert on Sunday night. You can see the schedule for the event [here](#) and watch the livestream of the choirs performing [here](#)

Juniors talk their way into final

On Monday night, at St Cuthbert's College, our MAGS Junior Open 2 Debating team defeated St Cuthbert's in the semi-final and are now in the grand final at Diocesan School for Girls on September 4.

The team of Stephanie Zhang, Eliza Rodger, Isabella Caie, Sona McCormack, and Lachlan Paul, ably coached by Ms Laxon (all pictured right), are in the top two of 106 teams across Auckland. Last week, our Senior Open 5 team of Nishka Arora, Ryan Antia and Arshiya Arora made it into the Quarter Final at Carmel College but were edged out by Massey 1.



Ryan Antia said, "Over the course of the year, the debating team's skillfull speeches and effective use of logic led them to achieve numerous victories, along with receiving multiple 'Best Speaker' Awards. "Among a staggering field of 600 participating schools, the team managed to secure a coveted spot in the Top Five Teams for the Senior Open grade in Auckland after the break was announced. "The team acknowledges the support and guidance that they received from the school and especially from Mr Ploeg."

Year 12s win Science Bowl



On Monday night, MAGS sent two Junior and two Senior teams to the annual Science Bowl held at Auckland Grammar, competing against the best science students across a select number of schools in Auckland.

Our Senior 1 team made up of Year 12 students Jacob Miller, Samuel Reeves, Eric Hu and Jonathon Yu (pictured above) competed well in the round robin and qualified for the semi-finals against a strong Year 13 Macleans College team. They decisively won that semi-final and progressed to the final against another Year 13 team from Kristen School.

TIC Mr Huang said, "The MAGS boys showed composure and held their nerve to take out their competition with a fantastic win, with 170 points for MAGS over 100 points for Kristen."

One of our Junior teams also made it to the semi-final rounds. The Junior 1 team of Parth Setiya, Isabella Caie and Campbell Buchanan were the only Junior team with just three members, putting them at a disadvantage.

Despite this, the team managed to get to the semi-final rounds only to be knocked out by a very strong Year 11 Auckland Grammar team. Special mention to Isabella Caie for being the only Year 10 in the team and showing outstanding knowledge and contribution to their success.

Senior 2: Suvaji Kolugala, Lauren Xu, Ruby Dewerse, Joseph Gracie

Junior 2: Fearghal Reid, Ansel Weatherall, Ben Whaley, Mo Qi Li

Taste of market forces



Yesterday and today at lunchtime, our year 10 Finance and Enterprise students treated the school to a range of savoury and sweet products. There were over 19 groups that sold home-made products including burgers, nachos, cake pops, macaroons and cupcakes, with all groups selling out. HOF Commerce Mr Gilbert said, "The entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well at MAGS, and all students appreciated the opportunity to test classwork theory in a competitive selling environment."

Blood Donor Day saves lives

Last Friday, the annual Blood Donor Day saw NZ Blood Service collect 63 units of blood from students and staff in the F.W. Gamble Hall.

School Nurse Claire Brown said, "It was great to have the NZ Blood Service at MAGS

allowing our students to be a part of the incredible work that they do."

She said that one unit of blood can save up to three lives, meaning the donations from MAGS students and staff will save up to 189 lives.

"The NZ Blood Service have again commended our students and staff on their generosity in donating and the impeccable behaviour observed on the day. They passed on that that our students are always a pleasure to work with and helped to make the day run smoothly.

"The tireless work of members from the Health Committee with spreading the word and recruitment of donors prior to the day, as well as their help on the day itself, contributed immensely to the success of the day – thank you for all your continued hard work."

Guardians of the Treeway



This year, for the second year running, our Environmental Group have coordinated with their counterparts at Marist College to clean up the Roy Clements Treeway.

The walkway and associated waterway have long been associated with our school as former teacher Roy Clements initiated an effort to plant this area with native plants around 30 years ago.

Environmental Group member Lize Deng organised a team of 35 MAGS students to assist with the clean-up this week, with a number of Marist students joining them.

They collected a trailer load of rubbish, including everything from plastic pipes and baby wipes to fittings from a kitchen sink.

Fifty years ago – the school in 1973



In 1973 the school roll was just 1173. Many students left at the end of their third year or even before and consequently there were only 72 students in Form 7 (Year 13). The Headmaster, Maurice Hall, had been appointed in 1970 and the school was administered by the Auckland Grammar School Board of Governors, which oversaw the running of four grammar schools – Auckland, Auckland Girls’, Epsom Girls’ and Mount Albert.

Physically, the school was much smaller as well. There was a small swimming pool, pictured below, where the E-block now stands, and where the pool and parking area now are, there were six all-weather tennis courts. The library block had not been built and in that space was a “shelter shed” dating from the 1920s – this building housed the tuck shop, where boys are pictured sprinting towards below right, and the prefects’ room, and there was also room for a number of boys to shelter in wet weather.

Students starting in Form 3 were streamed into two language, one language, general or technical forms. The names 3A, 4A etc were slowly being phased out. Boys in Form 7 were allowed to wear non-uniform clothing and the rest of the school had a summer and a winter uniform. The school year consisted of three terms and class photos were taken in the second term, hence the students are wearing black (winter) shirts. Regulations about hair length were slowly being relaxed.

Two staff members from 1973 are still on the staff today – Brian Murphy, now the school archivist, and Warwick Gibbs, shown in his class photo, pictured above. In 1973 he introduced German as an option in the two language classes and German has thrived as a subject in the school ever since.



1973 was marked by the first Festival of the Arts for some time. Over two nights a number of students performed musical items, poetry and drama. There were two items of note – *Tribute to Samoa*, songs and dances performed by Samoan pupils, and the play *Black Comedy*, performed by senior students but directed by Laurie Belsham who also played a role. Laurie was an old boy of the school and taught at Mount Albert from 1957 to 1978. Laurie will be remembered fondly by many students from that era.

In sport, the highlight of the year was undoubtedly the 1st XV, which won the Auckland competition, winning all its matches and finishing eight points ahead of the second-placed team – at this time a win was worth only two points. Three other rugby teams either won their competitions or were runners-up, the 2nd XI cricket team won its competition as did two football teams.

Several of the 1973 students deserve mention. Murray Olsen was Dux in 1973 and became Professor of Physics at the University of Queensland. Mike Taggart was Professor of Law at Auckland University until his death in 2009. He was inducted into the Hall of Distinction in 2008. Dale Griffiths has served the school in many capacities in the last 25 years, most recently as a member of the Board of Trustees and a chairman of the committee which organised the centennial celebrations last year.



Out-of-zone enrolments for 2024

The Mount Albert Grammar School Board of Trustees may approve a limited number of out-of-zone enrolments for 2024.

Applications for out-of-zone enrolments for 2024 must be received by **4.00pm, Wednesday, 30 August, 2023**. Should a ballot be required for out-of-zone enrolments, this will occur on Wednesday, 6 September, 2023.

Out-of-zone applications use the same online application procedure as in-zone students. However, out-of-zone applications do not require the completion of the in-zone Statutory

Declaration Form or provision of proof of residence.
More information about enrolment [here](#)

Central Interceptor Open Day

22 August 2023

CENTRAL
INTERCEPTOR **MT ALBERT**

Behind the Big Blue Gate Open Day

We would like to personally invite you to come behind our big blue gate and see what we have been up to. As our closest neighbour, we would love for you to come along and see all the work and equipment close up.

When:
**Saturday –
9 September 2023**

Time:
**10:00am
to 12noon**

Where:
**7 Wairere Ave,
Mount Albert**



Our team has completed the 38-metre-deep shaft, and launched our micro Tunnel Boring Machine (mTBM) Domenica on her tunnelling journey to our Norgrove Avenue site.

This is your opportunity to come behind the blue gates, look down the shaft to see the tunnelling operations, and chat with our team about the project.

We welcome you, your family, and friends to come along. Light refreshments and snacks will be provided. Please wear closed-in footwear

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Watercare 

Sports Update

Rugby Girls into national finals



Our Rugby Girls 1st XV, recently crowned Auckland Champions, dispatched Bay of Islands College 82-7 on Monday in the Blues Region Final to make the National Top Four Finals next week.

They will play Hamilton Girls High School in Palmerston North next Friday to see who goes through to the final and can compete for the title of national champions.

Teams on form ahead of Tournament Week



As well as the Rugby Girls, there are several other MAGS teams in good form going into Winter Tournament Week.

The Basketball Boys Premiers, pictured above, were crowned Auckland champions last night – for the first time since 2001 – following a one-point, 79-78, win over Rosmini, while the Girls Premiers, who played earlier, finished second after a loss to Westlake Girls.

The Boys Premiers took an early lead against Rosmini but, in a see-sawing last quarter, found themselves behind with a minute on the clock. Some big plays, including a steal in the last 13 seconds, helped them to take the win.

Our Hockey Girls 1st XI, pictured below, won their Greater Auckland A1 grade last night, with a 1-0 win over St Mary's.

Coach Mr Guy reports, "It was a tense encounter with Nina Chalmers scoring with just under three minutes to play. MAGS were the dominant team throughout and created numerous chances through a cohesive press and strong play but could not get the go-ahead goal they deserved until late. Special mention must go to Sophie Rednall, who needed five stitches the day before and played a full game at centre back.

"The team went through this competition undefeated and richly deserved their gold medal. The team is well led by co-captains Rosa Fox and Lizzy Robins. Attention is now turning to national tournament in Napier where the team will be hoping to add another gold medal to their collection."

The Hockey Boys finished third for the season after a win on penalties against Pukekohe High last night (1-1 after fulltime).

The Football Girls 1st XI recently won the APC Cup and finished fourth in their league, while the Football Boys 1st XI finished second in their league.

Our Girls Lacrosse Premiers finished second in the Auckland competition, losing their final to arch-rivals Epsom Girls Grammar.

During Tournament Week, there are 17 teams and one individual representing MAGS in 14 different sports – competing for regional or national titles – across the country.

You can see all the teams' fixtures and regularly updated results for Winter Tournament Week [here](#)



Orienteers run hot at World Games



A group of six MAGS Orienteering students selected for the ISF U15 World School Games in Rio de Janeiro headed off last week.

Victor Coen, Year 11, William Wood, Caleb Green, Jack Trowsdale, Year 10s, and Charlie Milne and Tahī Harris, Year 9s, have enjoyed a few days acclimatising to the heat in Brazil, and completing training runs, swims and activities at the Games Village.

Their first event was the Middle Forest event, on Tuesday, where William gained an impressive second place and Victor a third. Other top results came from Tahī, 4th, Caleb, 7th, and Charlie, 10th.

Next up, they have the Sprint event and they will finish the competition with an International Relay, with teams made up of different nationalities.



Archers' indoor success



Last weekend, eight MAGS students competed – in their new strips – in the Archery NZ National Indoor Championships in Palmerston North.

Five MAGS archers won medals at the two-day tournament, continuing the strong performance of the MAGS Archery team

In the Men's Under 21 Division, Nick Lees won silver in the target champs and gold in matchplay, Samuel Holmes won Bronze in both the target champs and in matchplay, and

Orion Elward won silver in matchplay.

In the Men's Under 18 Division, Cormac Fell took Bronze in the target champs.

In the Girls Under 16 Division, Phoebe Newcombe claimed silver in the target champs and bronze in matchplay.



Siblings bring home Waka Ama medals



Marnie and Marlin Toloa claimed gold and silver medals respectively representing Aotearoa New Zealand in Waka Ama at the IVF World Long Distance Championships in Samoa.

They both competed in the U16s V6 ocean race, which was 16km.

Teams came from far and wide, including the Pacific Islands, Australia, Chile, Brazil, USA, Hawaii, Germany, Great Britain, Canada, Singapore and Hong Kong to compete on Apia Harbour.

The U16 Girls endured the worst start possible after getting caught in a crosswind and being tangled in the start buoy. By the time they cleared the buoy, the rest of the field had a

150m headstart. The girls kept their composure and went on to execute their race plan and started overtaking teams. They came home several minutes ahead of second-placed Samoa to take the gold medal and world championship title.

The U16 Boys also raced the same day and were in a very fast field. The boys worked hard off the start line and were just in front of Tahiti heading out of the harbour. The boys also executed their race strategy well with downwind surfing but were passed by a very slick Tahitian team. They fought hard to stay with the Tahitians and see off any challenges from other teams. They claimed the silver medal behind Tahiti, with Samoa coming third.



A Tradition of Excellence

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**EXCELLENCE
CONNECTION
& GROWTH**

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