

4<sup>th</sup> December 2009



**CRANLEIGH**  
EX CULTU ROBUR

**NORTH HOUSE  
END OF TERM LETTER  
MICHAELMAS TERM 2009**

Dear Parent(s),

The new year in North started with a fresh look with our twenty two new fourth formers, four new lower sixth boys, a new Day Warden and two new Tutors. James Witcombe, who was married to the lovely Jo in the summer holidays, replaced Peter Kemp as Day Warden. Mike Worsley joined as a Fourth Form Tutor and David Ardley as a Lower Fifth Tutor. The student leadership within the house saw Zeno Agnew-Davies as Captain and Callum Ewing as the Vice Captain.

As the term progressed changes were afoot. One of our Matrons, Liz Paterson, decided to leave and take up the challenges of working with disadvantaged adolescents. Liz was with us for just over three years and in that time has developed a strong bond and relationship with all the boys. There is no doubt she was passionate about the development and growth of your sons. I want to take this opportunity to thank her for all that she has done in assisting me running the house. Mrs Sandi McConnell-Wood is her replacement and she will start at the beginning of the Lent Term. Sandi is very experienced having previously been Matron in East House for five years.

The first major house event was the House Performance. The fourth form dance under the direction of Sam Roberts, Charlie Rooke, Georgie Haynes and Georgie Syms rehearsed extremely hard and put on an excellent performance. They were awarded second place, which I thought was a most fitting reward for their efforts. The part song under the leadership of JJ Bee, Hilary Cronin and Tory Sawyer performed a stirring rendition of "Angels", with our singing Upper Fifth guru, Tom Hollister singing the lead solo. We were placed second in the song and second overall. I must be honest in saying that this was a totally fair reflection of all the performances on the night.

The major school play was "Dr Faustus". JJ Bee was the lead actor and his performance was powerful and evocative. I still don't know how he learnt so many lines and stayed so calm. Sam Durant and Nick Roberts also had major parts; both very different characters but each performed so well.

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This year's Remembrance Day Service was once again moving; I think it is so important that something so special is made of this day. The respect the students display shows that it does mean something to them. Henry Harrod played "The Last Post" absolutely perfectly; that is not my opinion but that of his music teacher!

In the Junior Public Speaking competition our team of Rory Weyman, Will Stocks and Luke Boyd performed magnificently. Rory was the only fourth from speaker, all the others were lower fifth students, and he acquitted himself very well. Will Stocks was awarded the best vote of thanks. Overall we were placed second. In the senior competition our team of Nick (I love an audience) Roberts, Tom (Try and stop me talking) Grafton and Harry (I am quite cute) Dear spoke on the emotional topic of Auschwitz. Tom had only just recently visited the site of the mass killings. The quality of all speakers was incredibly high and we were awarded first place.

In the minor sports house competition; fives, squash, b/ball, water polo, many boys contributed but unfortunately we didn't make the final of any of these. In the house rugby matches the results were as follows: Lites A – first; Lites B – second; Heavies A – fourth; Heavies B – second; Seniors A – second and Seniors B – second. You can see from these results the strength of rugby right throughout the house. I was so impressed with the support shown by those not playing and the absolute commitment in the matches.

The House Music Evening is a night in which boys of all standards have the opportunity to play in front of 350 people in Speech Hall. All aspects of the evening were organised by Upper Sixth students, Tom Grafton and JJ Bee. I was absolutely thrilled with the end result. Starting with the Fourth Form dance, a huge range of performances were played in front of a most appreciative audience. It culminated in the "Special Guests" singing and dancing (well sort of!) a Jersey Boys song. I speak on behalf of those Tutors involved, in saying we had a ball up on stage! The Upper Sixth then finished the night with an unbelievably humorous but very well choreographed dance of three songs featuring the faces of Messers Hardy, Jackson and Witcombe. A perfect way to finish a high quality and enjoyable evening!

Earlier this term I accepted a position at Trinity College in Adelaide, starting in January 2009. As a result of this Ed Burnett will be the new Housemaster, with Rod Jackson being the non-resident Deputy and James Witcombe still being the Day Warden but living attached to North. I am sure this team will continue to make North House the best here at Cranleigh.

We are returning for Speech Day and the Leavers' Service, but solely as parents, to be with our oldest son Michael who will have completed Upper Sixth. It will be great to catch up with as many of you as possible.

The experience my family has had over the last nine years has been unforgettable; we have travelled to places we never thought we would visit, experienced a unique life style living on the school grounds and most importantly we have made life-long friends.

Cranleigh School and North House have been a huge part of our lives and I want to thank you most sincerely to those of you who contributed to our leaving presents and the cheque that were presented to us after the House Evening. It was a very special night that Linda and I will never forget. One of the first things I will buy is a bbq; the one here has served me well but it was in no state to be shipped back to Australia!

If any of you do decide to travel to Australia, please include Adelaide on your itinerary. We would love to show you some true Aussie hospitality.

Wishing you a relaxing and peaceful Christmas.

Regards

John and Linda

I apologise for the absence of photos in this letter. They are all on Linda's computer and that is currently packed in a shipping box!