



Newsletter Number 1 December 2008

What is Q Network?

Welcome to the first Q Network newsletter! This newsletter is very exciting as it represents an important milestone in the development of the Q Network.

Kew High School initiated the revival of an organisation to promote and engage with parents and carers, and in 2007 the Parents and Friends Association was set up. We changed our name to Q Network in 2008 in order to highlight the inclusive nature of this body which is made up of, and works for, parents, carers, students and teachers.

The Network has evolved, and continues to change, as we have engaged with more parents, learnt from one another, sharing our individual skills and trying different approaches. The role of the Q Network, at this stage, is to:

- Facilitate parental involvement in the school;
- Assist students, teachers and staff;
- Organise social events;
- Promote the school in the community;
- Contribute to school policy development through School Council; and
- Discuss issues raised by the parents and to link these with appropriate personnel for action.

2008 has seen the consolidation of Q Network. We have continued to grow, welcoming many new parents and other carers.

This year has seen the development of a strong partnership within the school, including the SRC. Highlights have been:

- The development of our new name and logo;
- Operating the canteen at the School Production;
- Supporting the school in a range of ways - catering for the Year 7 & 8 Art Show, administration support for the office staff, collecting the all important signatures for the building co-operative;
- Working with the SRC with activities such as term barbeques;
- Assisting with sports days, e.g., preparing and handing out fruit to students; and
- The highly successful Kew Trivia Challenge.

We are particularly appreciative of the support of Clare Entwisle, the Principal, and Natalie Kotaidis, teacher, Community Liaison Officer and Admissions Officer, who have led the effort to stimulate parental involvement in the school.

We welcome participation in the Network by all parents and carers. Q Network is here to support and engage parents, staff and students.

Look out for ongoing information in the school newsletter, *On Q*, available on line on Thursdays – www.kew.vic.edu.au

We look forward to continuing to grow in 2009.

Nola Tudball, Chairperson

The importance of the parent-high school connection

Why is it important, or advantageous, for parents to feel connected to their child's high school?

This question has been widely discussed in academic studies and newspaper reports. Results have found that when parents have some feeling of connection with their child's school, they help to foster a sense of belonging to that school community in their children as well as themselves.

That our children go to Kew High School makes developing links with this school easy because the impetus for rebuilding and strengthening an organisation of parents and carers, has come from the school itself. Staff at Kew High have led the effort to stimulate parental involvement. Their belief is that students benefit when parents feel connected with their children's school.

From the very first day our children take public transport or walk to school alone, we observe them becoming increasingly independent and able to get on with school and life's demands, seemingly with little or not much help from us. Now, as high school students, they master their timetables and relationships with a myriad of new students, teachers and subjects, and they do it all marvellously on their own. Whilst, events may not always go smoothly, there is a school full of teachers, coordinators and other professionals who care and who do try to help them sort things out. So, if our High School Students are grown up and getting on with what they have to do themselves, why would we, as parents, want to assert ourselves into their world of new-found independence? The answer to this will be different for all of us.

For people who really cannot find any extra time or energy in their already busy lives, becoming active in their child's high school may just not yet be possible.

However, many others, may find themselves thinking, *Maybe I can still help out at the High School, get to know other parents, share their experiences, concerns and impressions, but...* What comes after that 'but'?.... I don't want to look like I can't let go of my child. ... I am exhausted after all the effort I put into activities at primary school. ... My child would be furious if they were to see me at school.....I don't want the teachers to think that I am a pushy or interfering parent.

I am sure that these are but a few of many more concerns inhibiting some parents from becoming involved in their child's high school experience. But as parents or carers of students at Kew High, we are inevitably members of the school community.

There are many ways in which you can become a more active member of the Kew High community – joining School Council, becoming involved with the Chaplaincy Committee or volunteering to help in the Second Hand Book and Uniform Shop, which funds the Chaplaincy program, are other areas in which parents are currently active.

Being involved in Q Network provides opportunities to link with parents in a variety of ways. This does not mean having to attend committee meetings, although anyone who is interested would be very welcome. You can be involved in organising social events, or simply attend school and Q Network events – get to know other parents and begin to feel a part of the school community. To become part of Q Network, we simply need your email address, to keep you informed of our activities.

Our young people grow up so quickly and we are lucky to be at a school that encourages us to be a part of their high school experience in whatever way that suits each of us individually. Let's make the most of it!

Teresa Castelvetero
Parent & Q Network rep. on School Council

Our Special Events for 2008



The 2008 Kew High School Trivia Challenge

Brightly coloured balloons, smartly decorated tables and a balmy night greeted the 150 plus Kew High School teachers, parents, friends and relatives who attended the Trivia Challenge on the 25th of October. The air in the room was full of laughter and happy chatting as people enjoyed themselves. Once the quiz master began asking his questions, however, voices changed to a whisper as the people on each table jealously guarded their answers. In between the rounds of questions, each table had the opportunity to score more points by performing a party piece. Tables lucky enough to have children on them excelled at this, although the appearance – seemingly from nowhere – of juggling balls and cards suggested that we had some quiz-hardened adults in the room!



We took the opportunity to launch the new Q Network logo, generously designed by Donna Farquhar and Marcus Lee, who are parents at the school, on the night. The logo, which appears at the top of this newsletter, shows a line of dots evocative of links in a chain; links in the whole school community. When the Q Network – that is, parents, carers, SRC and teachers – helps out at or runs school events the banner will stand as a reminder of the proud sense of community that we all feel at Kew High School.

The number of people attending on the night is one measure of its success, but even more heartening has been the feedback from people who enjoyed the night. Organising any successful event requires planning and tireless attention to detail. Well done everyone who helped to organise the Trivia Challenge. A special thank you to Di Tupper and Clare Kinden for the superb way in which they decorated the room!

A special thank you, also, to the many local businesses that supported the night by generously donating prizes. We have included a list of these businesses in this newsletter and we would urge members of our school community to make a point of supporting these businesses in return. As parents, educators or citizens, our actions and words stand as models for behaviour, and 'reciprocity is a vital part of community relations and of healthy human relations' seems a good message to send.



Working together with the SRC

An important part of our development this year has been creating links with the Student Representative Council (SRC). A parent attends SRC meetings and has worked with Faye Harding, Student Wellbeing Coordinator, to support the SRC in their activities.

This has meant that many parents have become experts in cooking sausages at the regular end-of-term BBQs! With over 400 sausages cooked at each event, some parents reckon they've seen enough to last a lifetime, but still come back for the next one at the end of the following term! Special thanks to Suzanne Napolitano for her work in developing this important link between parents and students. We look forward to working with the new student leadership team in 2009.

Administrative Support

Helping out in the office seems to be a task that belongs in primary school. Well, that is until we discovered that spending one or two hours every term was a great way to meet other parents and to begin to feel a part of the Kew High community. Parent help with mail outs has freed up time for the office staff to do other work. We're hoping to continue this support in 2009. So, if you can help, look out for the notice in the newsletters or give us your email address so that we can let you know directly.

Catering –Production Canteen, Art Show

The thought of catering for school events was a little daunting for us to begin with. But, in true community style, we discovered that many parents have lots of skills and contacts in this area. As a result, the canteen at the school production and the Year 7 & 8 Art Show event were very successful. Thanks to all involved and particularly to Annette Maher for coordinating the production event.



A Special “thankyou” to our sponsors

Many local businesses have supported Kew High School though donating goods for events. Also, many parents have donated their time, energy, skills and business resources to ensure that our activities have been successful. Please support these local businesses – they support our school.

Piazza 735 Restaurant, 735 Heidelberg Road Alphington	Bakers Delight, rear 129 High St Kew
Athletes Foot, 109 Upper Heidelberg Rd Ivanhoe	Café Italia, 56 -66 University St Carlton
Aldo Raymond, 141 High St Kew	Coles, 1 Doncaster Rd Balwyn North
Allans Music, 56 Cotham Rd Kew	Nutricare, 156 High St Kew
ama angelina's mane attraction, 196 High St Kew	De Melis International Hairdressing, 115 High St Kew
Andrew's Bookshop, 183 Upper Heidelberg Rd Ivanhoe	Onyx, 173 High St Kew
Fig Fine Foods, 100 Nicholson St Abbotsford	Pages Bookshop, 167 High St Kew
FoodWorks, 220 Lower Heidelberg Rd East Ivanhoe	Photo Q, 143-145 High St Kew
Fred Young of Kew, 204 High St Kew	Safeway, 7 Walpole St Kew
French Corner, Rear 141 High St Kew	Sierra Gallery, 133 High St Kew
Kew Recreation Centre, 383 High St Kew	So Swish, Lower Heidelberg Rd East Ivanhoe
La Maison Interiors, 198 High St Kew	Sophisticakes, 269 Lower Heidelberg Rd East Ivanhoe
la scentia, 202 High St Kew	Toscano's of Kew, 217 High St Kew
Leo's Fine Food & Wine, 26 Princess St Kew	Tuscan Tan of Kew, shop 3/12 Walpole St Kew
Mint on Burke Café, 1144 Burke Rd Balwyn North	vita bella café, 236 Lower Heidelberg Rd Ivanhoe East
Dawson Electrical Warehouse Retravisio, 239 - 247 High St Kew	