

## **The newbie on the block**

**Tuesday, 9th March, 2021 By Erika and Izzy**

Mr Randell, the new Waihi College recruit in the music department, shares an insight into his ongoing life story, his previous lifestyle, how he is adapting to his new life and a new school, his current projects and future plans for Waihi college.

Born and raised in South Africa Mr Randell met his Kiwi wife and moved to New Zealand. The Randell family is very musical, with his father playing in a band, his grandmother a concert pianist and his mother and brothers also playing music, Mr Randell has music 'in his blood'. Mr Randell trained in classical music, his inspiration coming from many places from Elton John and Bruno Mars to famous pianists, Maurizio Pollini and Vladimir Ashkenazy to name just a few. He played in Johannesburg professionally for a while, teaching music and working nights, before meeting his wife and moving to New Zealand.

Mr Randell's New Zealand life started in Auckland where he taught music at Sacred Heart College. He is now adapting to a rural lifestyle, something very new to him, coming from a big city. A factor in him and his wife's move being the close access to the Coromandel and beaches, something they could experience while getting out of the city. Each day Mr Randell continues to learn as he is faced with rural lifestyle issues, such as fencing, water pumps and thistle spraying. Mr Randell is having to rapidly adapt to many changes being now at a small school, with the students here being 'very different' from his past school. He is enjoying the new school environment here at Waihi College and loving his new lifestyle.

Mr Randell is coordinating many new things around the school, one being the school's new production of Sweeney Todd. As it is a massive production, he mentions he'll try and simplify it to make it easier for the cast. The school band is also something he wants to improve as "bands are really important to showcase the school" and "most students here are beginners" so for a while he will just be starting on the basics. He hopes the band will grow as they continue. He also suggested possibly adding a choir to the school. Overall Mr Randell just wants to improve the music classes, for students to "respect the instruments" and to strengthen the music department again.

So far, Mr Randell has enjoyed teaching music at Waihi College and is enjoying making new teacher-student relationships and encouraging new students in music to express a passion they can share.



