

AFS North Shore Newsletter

April, 2010

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TAKAPUNA
NORTH SHORE 0740



**Intercultural
Programmes**
New Zealand
Ngā Herenga Tātai o AFS

"From Wellsford to the Bridge"
<http://www.afsns.org.nz>

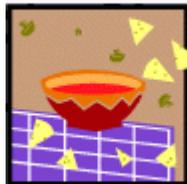
NEXT MEETING

Sunday 18 April, **7:00pm**

Sunnynook Community Centre,
CNR SUNNYNOOK RD & SYCAMORE DR, SUNNYNOOK

INTERNATIONAL FOOD NIGHT

Tempt our taste buds with treats from your country! Join with your compatriots and prepare a national dish that you can bring to the meeting for everyone to try.



Take the opportunity to set up a table and show us all about your country – make a display with pictures, maps, your flag, anything you have that is special to your part of the world.



If you are the only student from your country, you can take up the challenge and prepare a dish and display yourself, or you can join up with students from nearby countries.



We all look forward to tasting your delicious treats!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is that time again, we need to find families for the July 2010 students.

AFS NZ last year cut the incoming student numbers by 50% due to the struggles we were facing in trying to find kiwi host families. **Unfortunately** we **also** have not had many Kiwis apply to be selected as part of our programme this year

So as always I now ask you all to help in placing the July students. Yes I hear you say, not my problem. Well I hope that AFS is a big "family" and that we all pull together when times are hard. I remember clearly when my own daughter was distraught with the thought of being delayed on her journey of a life time.

Yes the bathroom may need remodeling but will they really care.

No we don't have a spare room, they would happily share a room.

Yes times are hard tell your grandmother and they will say During the depression.... That was hard.

It will cost us and prevent us saving for the trip to Fiji mid winter have a kiwi holiday instead.

I am saving to buy a how much stuff is enough stuff.

I would need to keep the house clean and tidy all the time Well you would for the first two weeks, then reality would come back.

I would need to cook nice meals all the time Well you would for the first two weeks, then reality would come back.

Yes some students are rat bags but most are lovely and keen to make a mark in NZ.

I would love to go to "*France*"next year for a holiday and I could have a cheap place to stay.

Too old too host, never, they will make friends and entertain themselves, but they will still need your support and help.

Our student are not fee payers, they do not expect hotel service, but want to be part of a kiwi family and share the tasks.

AFS North Shore will pay any student, school or university, \$200 if they can secure a host family. So get marketing with all the people you know and earn some holiday cash.

Get a deal going with another family to host for 3 or 6 months each.

Get in early and define your student requirements ... "*Spanish and into art*", or "*German and plays rugby*", or "*Swedish and is a musician*".

Do not procrastinate,**DO IT NOW** **DO IT NOW** **DO IT NOW**.

Contact just to talk about options **NOW**:

hosting@afsns.org.nz

Phone Su on 09 426 5030

Phone Heather on 09 426 8128

Text Winston on 027 222 3296, or president@afsns.org.nz

If you will not host then PLEASE contact your friends and tell them instead. This is **OUR** mission.

Hi all - we currently need to find a new home for just one student:



Laila Egah Hersted, 17, from Norway.

She currently attends Takapuna Grammar and ideally we would like to keep her there.

Her current host family were always only going to be a welcoming family for two months and this expires at the end of April.

They describe her as “happy, great fun, very easy to have in the house, helpful, interested in NZ life, loves kids, just easy!” Her English is excellent. Laila was one of the students who arrived a month late owing to the fact that she didn’t have a host family and we would love to find her a new one to avoid any further disappointments.

If you can help with a home for Laila, please contact her support person, Rachel Upton, on 410-3207 or Su Vincent on 09-426-5030.

Thanks, Su

HOSTING

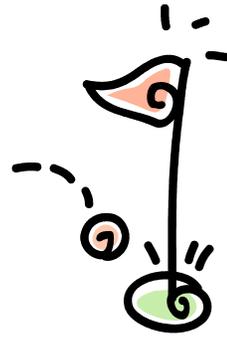
We are now looking for host families for our next group of students due in July. These students are all here for 12 months and can be viewed on the AFS NZ website www.afs.org.nz Hosting is a wonderfully enriching experience for the whole family. We also have booklets containing small profiles of each student if you are interested in seeing one.

AFS North Shore has to find homes for **5 students only** (plus our five IP students as well) so we need your help please. If you have a spare bed, we’d love to hear from you. Help us to become the first chapter to find homes for all our allocated students which will enable them all to arrive in our beautiful country on time!

Please contact Heather or Su if you can help. hosting@afsns.org.nz
Su: 0942 65030 or 021 251 4302
Heather: 0942 68128 or 021 426 890

CALENDAR DATES		WHAT'S ON
Apr 2 – 16	School holidays	
Apr 18	AFS meeting	Apr 25 AFS fun golf tournament (details below)
Apr 25	Anzac Day	July 4 American Independence Day (see below)
May 16	AFS meeting	

GOLF INVITATION



All hosted, selected and returnee students **and their parents** are invited to a fun golf tournament.

Date: Sunday 25th April (or Sunday 2nd May if wet)

Time: 12:00pm

Venue: 76 Dairy Stream Rd, Dairy Flat (off Postman Rd), Su and Rock Vincent's house

BYO: Meat for BBQ, drinks, golf clubs if you have any, and togs

Wear: Golf attire (the funnier the better) or casual wear

Parking: In the bottom paddock. Drive down the drive.

RSVP: By Sunday 18th April please to Su Vincent 0942 65030 or 021 251 4302 or

mark.vincent@xtra.co.nz

Petanque and swimming available (if not too cold!!)

Don't worry if you've never played golf. We don't play either and this is just a fun event, a cross between mini-golf and a very rough 9 hole golf course. Tennis balls will be used rather than golf balls.

Please text if weather looks dubious.

4 July 2010

What: North Shore Military Tattoo / American Independence Day Celebrations

Where: North Shore Events Centre

When: Sunday 4 July, 1.00 - 3.30pm.

All Welcome. Further details in the next newsletter.

HOSTED STUDENTS' NEWS

Hi guys,

It looks like it is my turn to write an article for our Newsletter. What I am going to write about just happened recently. It will be a report of the most amazing 10 days of my life. Well now you could ask, 'how can you say it was the best time you ever had?' I think if you come off a boat after 10 days with totally random people and you are in a massive down and you feel sick, then you can say that you miss the people you met and the time you had heaps.

It was the morning of the 22nd of March. My dad dropped me off at Princess Wharf. And there it was, the Spirit of New Zealand. A 50 meter long training sailing ship, and on it were totally random people I had never met before. Well that wasn't really something new for me. The last eight months I met new people in new environments regularly, without having any bigger problems. That in mind I made my way on the boat with good confidence.

The first thing I thought after getting on the boat and meeting all the people was that we will have an awesome time together and will become friends. And I would not be wrong.

The first days were basically for getting to know the ship and all its safety features and procedures. We were all sleeping in pretty small kind of hang mats. They did not look like they would be, but they were really comfy. And I would miss them after the trip. All our days were beginning at 6:30a.m. with the start of the generator. We had to get up reasonably quickly, running around the deck until everybody was on deck to do our warm up. After that everybody had to jump in the water. It was actually pretty warm. And in the end we all wanted to stay in longer than we were allowed to. The swim replaced our daily shower. We were allowed to have a few seconds shower of fresh water to get rid of the salt. After that breakfast, of course! At about 8 o'clock we had colors. In colors we rang the bell, hoisted the flag, read out the weather and made our plan for the day. Everybody can tell that a clean ship is a happy ship. Because of that we cleaned the whole ship every day. Scrubbing the deck; cleaning wheelhouse, cabins and galley; and some others were preparing the veggies. But most of the day we spent sailing. Hauling and striking sails, learning about navigation and how to handle the sails in different maneuvers. In the evenings we always had activities just like the spirit Olympics or a Burma track. And at about 10p.m. lights off. Everybody was really tired and exhausted by that time and happy to go to bed. But even at night somebody has to look after the ship. So there was a night watch. Always two people for 105 minutes and then the next two would take over. It actually was quite fun and Lauren our Cook always put out some baking for the night watches. She was an amazing cook. The food was really, really good every day, every single dish. And everybody went for seconds or thirds.

The 40 Trainees got divided into 4 groups of each 10 people, 5 girls and 5 boys. You did basically everything with your watch. Working at your sailing station, cleaning and competing against the other watches in the fun activities. The watches rotate around the ship every day. There were four stations: Foredeck, Mid Ships, Main Sail and Missen/Specials. The Specials were responsible for cleaning the dishes, After Cabin and Galley. Also serving and preparing everything, but not cooking.

On the third day we crossed over to Great Barrier Island and because it was really rough sea and the boat was all over the place, two thirds of the Trainees were seasick. Luckily I was not one of them. So I could enjoy my macaroni cheese. On Great Barrier Island we did a Tramp and a Beach-clean. The views and the nature were fascinating. One of the highlights was the BBQ at the beach of Smokehouse Bay. Another one was climbing the mast to the very top and using the yard-swing jumping into the water. On the way back to Auckland we anchored at Kawau Island for two nights. The last full day was Trainee Day. This means that the Trainees got to sail the ship on their own. For that we elected a crew out of the Trainees. Captain, First and Second Mate, 2 Navigators, 2 Gingerbeers (Engineers) and 2 Cooks. I got First Mate. My job was to ensure everybody a safe swim in the morning, means getting people to put the ladders and nets up and place staff on each side of the ship looking that everybody is safe. Next I had to do Colors, tell everybody what we were aiming to do on the day. While sailing I had to look whether the sails are in the right positions, giving advice on how to make things easier and giving a hand or organizing help where ever it was needed. We did that good a job, that we did not have to hand the ship over to the crew

at the stage we were supposed to, we got to sail it longer. And with the end of that day which was the absolutely highlight for everybody, we had our last night on the boat. The next morning we just went back into Princess Wharf and had to go off the ship. It was really sad and hard to say goodbye to everybody after amazing 10 days full of fun.

But if you think that all that was the reason for the best time in my life than you are totally wrong. The past 1000 words were just a short description of what we did. But the part which made these 10 days amazing 10 days is not visible. It is an experience just really hard to describe. When we came on the ship nobody knew anybody. And just after two days, working and living together on the boat, those random people became really, really good friends. Another two days later they weren't just good friends, they were close friends and everybody cared about the other as well as everybody helped each other out. It was impressive to see how we could push each other to limits we never thought we could ever reach. You could see some of the Trainees' self confidence growing so much. There was the one who were really shy and almost tried not to be there. And in the end she tried to be involved in everything and was unhappy if there was nothing to do where she could help. At the end of our Trip it was a family. We were one family. We grew together build up this huge trust and the friendship in everybody. To be part of that is something really special. It is something you cannot describe, it is something you have to experience yourself.

And so I recommend for everybody: Apply for the Spirit of New Zealand and try to get into it. It may be a bit expensive but you will never be able to buy the experience you will get out of it. This trip is much more worth than the money you pay for it.

From Moritz Pött (Poett) Germany

A Trainee comment: 'THE MOST AMAZING, UNREAL, BENEFICIAL EXPERIENCE OF MY LIFE.'

If you are interested in participating in the Spirit of New Zealand ask your school or visit this Webpage: <http://www.spiritofadventure.org.nz/index.html>

Gateway camp 19 – 21 March



AFS North Shore Group photo – the whole team.



AFS North Shore new students at camp

MAIL IN-BOX

Ray Hu (France) 20 March 2010

Bonjour,

It's hard to believe that it has already been 6 months since I arrived in France. How time flies! So much has happened since the last time I wrote. Life has settled into a steady rhythm and I find that I have truly become a member of my French family. At schools as well I feel like that I belong and that I am one of them. My French has well improved as well. Now I have no problems communicating with people and even with other exchange students we often find it easier to speak in French!

Just before the Christmas holidays, school was very laid back. We had next to no classes during the two last weeks as either teachers were on strike (which happens a lot in France) and the students also formed a "blocus" (blockade). ie when we all stand in front of the school and block the entrance so that people, teachers and students alike cannot get in (not as if anyone did want to). Some teachers even helped our cause and lock the gates! The blockade was in opposition of an educational reform for the coming years. It had nothing to do with me as I will not be here, but like most others, I participated for the fun and to skip a few days of school. Our blockade was quite tame compared to that of other schools where they burnt rubbish bins and overturned cars! There was also a demonstration at Lille against the reform. There were about 3000 students who took to the streets and my host brother, Ugo, and I tagged along as well. We chanted and shouted as we made our way through Lille. The police was present in riot gear to keep us in order, although nothing happened except for a few crackers that went off. People stopped to watch our procession and the media was all over the place filming and taking photos. It was a memorable experience, like nothing I have felt before. That night on the evening news, there was a story on the demonstration and I had my three seconds of fame where Ugo and I walked right past the camera! The next day at school everyone was telling us about how they saw us on TV! It was so cool. I felt like a celebrity! Unfortunately my host parents and teachers did not see it the same way... Our parents gave us a good telling off and our form teacher gave us two hours of detention and a pile of punishment work, but it was definitely worth it!

Finally it was the holidays. Everyday I went out with my friends and at home we prepared for Christmas. The night of Christmas Eve, family members from all over France came to celebrate it at our house. There were about 30 people in total. I chatted a little with everyone and they were all very kind. Seeing that it was Christmas, us kids were allowed a glass of champagne. We ate some finger food and talked. At 9pm we sat down to eat. The food was delicious, despite having to wait an hour between the entrees and another hour for the main course (which was duck) which made it nearly midnight when we finished. I am proud to say that I helped with the preparations. We took advantage of the time between the meals to open our presents. In all, I received a t-shirt, a box of chocolates, some underwear, and my best present of the night: 50 euros from my host grandparents. It really made me feel like part of the family. The adults then went to eat some cheese and drink some wine while us kids went to watch some TV. At around 3am we ate dessert, the guests then left and we went off to bed. It had been an awesome evening, and in my bed I wondered what my family were doing in NZ, which made me a little sad... (just a little). The next morning, Christmas day, despite our late night the night before, we woke early in the morning to see that 'Santa' had passed by during the night. My little brother gave me a sausage made from horse meat (I adore horse sausages), my parents gave me some perfume, a scarf and some socks, and my uncle, aunty and their 2 daughters who were staying with us gave me a wallet. After opening the presents we all crept back to bed and spent the day recovering from the previous night.

We were supposed to spend the time between Christmas and New Years at our house in the countryside. My host brothers and I were especially unhappy to hear this, as it is probably the most boring place on Earth and at this time of the year it must be about -15°C over there. However we were obliged to go. Our parents woke us up at 6am to leave. I took my plain, old clothes as we were going to the countryside, and I did not even bother to comb my hair. As I was throwing things into my travel bag, my host mum came and told my to pack my 'city gear' as well. I did not see her reason in asking, but at that hour in the morning I did not have the energy to question her intentions. We loaded the car, got in and I dozed off to sleep. A while later, Ugo woke me shouting that we were going to London. He had to repeat himself a few times before it sunk in. I can just imagine the face that I must have made, the look of surprise and the stupid grin. I must admit my host parents really had fooled us! While waiting for the ferry at Calais, the first thing Ugo and I did was change into our city strides and do up our hair!

The boat took about 2 hours to reach England. We got off at Dover and proceeded to our lodgings, remembering to drive on the left side of the road. With some difficulty we found our house. We had rented the attic room of a house with three beds side by side, a kitchen and a bathroom. Altogether it was about the same size as my bedroom in France. The owner came to meet us and my English finally came into service. During our next three days we did a fast tour of London, just walking and seeing as much as possible such as Buckingham Palace, Big Ben and the major tourist sites. London is a beautiful city and we had a very enjoyable (and tiring) time there, despite the rainy and cold weather, and my little brother who always moaned. The return trip seemed really long and we were all very worn out. We arrived home just as it struck midnight and we passed into 2010.

With the holidays over it was back to school for us and the sports started again after the Christmas break. It was good to be doing the sports again. Soccer is enjoyable as usual, except now my team trains with another team and the coach is completely mad, shouting his head off all the time. Judo is going well, and I even won a bronze medal at a competition. I also started swimming with Ugo. At first I could hardly swim 3 lengths, but now we swim about 2km each lesson. It is also very enjoyable just socializing with the others before and after the sports. One thing that is annoying me is the snow. At first I loved it as I had never seen any before, but now it is just plain cumbersome. It causes these great big stains on my jeans and shoes and the buses often stop operating because of the snow. Good thing that the weather is starting to improve. We are seeing more of the sun and it does not go much more below 0. I have also been to my first party in France, and since then I have been to 2 others. They were great fun, but it is a shame that I'm only 15 and my host parents restricts my activities... But on the bright side at least I am going some and I am finally developing a good social life here!

The school term ended quickly and once again we are on holidays! It was quite a big moment to pass the 6 month mark. I am still here for only another 4 months, another 17 weeks. It is kind of scary to think that soon I will be leaving, but before that, I will make the most of the time that rests. The one year that at first I thought would never end has so far passed extremely rapidly...

A la prochaine, Ray

Beatrice Taylor (Netherlands) March 2010

I have finally arrived in the flat land of windmills, cheese, tulips, clogs and free minded people - the Dutch.

I arrived in February 2010 in the minus degrees which was a beautiful sight from the air. In my first few days I learnt to ice skate on a real frozen lake in my tiny villiage of 'T Veld. Coming from the biggest city in New Zealand to my tiny village I do find it difficult to keep myself occupied other than smelling the cowshit and watching the grass grow. Trying to grasp the language is definitely an obstacle but I know that this experience will be full of them. They wouldn't be called obstacles if there wasnt a way over them or around them. Every night I must sit with my host dad and read children's books and practise writing, and in a couple of months my host family will only speak Dutch and will translate ONLY when needed.

Another obstacle - I must hurdle my lazy butt over a bike and cycle 40 minutes to school every day - rain snow or shine! At home I jumped in my car and the weather didn't matter! But, if the Dutch can do it why can't a kiwi! Plus it is a good way to keep that exchange weight off! (AFS - Another Fat Student!)

I do have many things to look forward to in the near and I think that is the key to surviving this experience. Keep yourself busy at all times, fill your calendar with as much as possible to keep your mind and body busy. My family and I have a trip to Barcelona in May and 3 weeks in Tuscany in August. AFS have meetings in Belgium, Berlin and on the tiny Dutch island of Texel in the north. Along with all of this there are many Dutch festivals such as Paasvee next Wednesday (I think its celebrating spring and animals) but is a day off school to drink and be merry! Then there are the many beautiful Dutch cities to visit, and family to find that don't even know I exist. My grandfather was Dutch and came to New Zealand when he was 17 and I have come to Holland when I am 17.

To all of you about to take a huge step in to the big wide world with AFS, I wish you all the luck! As hard and as scary as it is, you must stay strong, take it day by day and you will learn and grow. I have been here 6 weeks and am already figuring out who I really am. I am not going to tell you it is a breeze because it it may be the hardest thing you will ever do - it sure is for me. It is a sea of emotions you must deal with. One day I am feeling as happy as the people in the coffee shops and the next day I am feeling as grey and as bleak as the Dutch winter weather. But I must hold on and stay strong (hou je taai)

My best advice to you is to think of this experience as riding a wave - when that wave crashes on you, fight for the surface then swim back out there, and most of all try and enjoy the ride and find the positive in every negative, because this is your year that will play a major role in who you become.

Beatrice

Sylvia North (Denmark) 5 April 2010

G'dag, g'dag, fra Danmark. Hej, jeg hedder Sylvia og jeg har noget at sige. (...and there's bound to be something grammatically wrong about that sentence written in Danish - the most difficult language in the world to learn.)

I arrived in Denmark with 4 other New Zealand companions on the 1st of August 2009 after more than 24 hours worth of flying half way across the planet. I think it could have@ almost the same for everyone at that point; of course you're terrified, excited, ready to take on whatever, but at the same time trying to strip away any expectations that you could have subconsciously built for yourself. Then for any New Zealander coming to Europe after a ridiculously long flight, you're also looking for a glass of fresh water and a hot shower... but then if you're going to Scandinavian Europe then you'll also feel a little bit unsure about that

hot shower after you see the lovely communal ones waiting for you at arrival camp.

That's about that. Cultural differences. Denmark: The musli (which generally is just dry oats) goes on top of the yogurt, and the jam goes on top of the cheese for breakfast. I've been here for 8 months; I know those things now.

I know when and where my bus goes to drive me home back out to the country,
I know the short cuts,

I know every second hand clothes store in town,

I know that you can't expect to pay much less than 30kroner for a cheese burger,

I know that crossing at a pedestrian crossing when the little man glows red is virtually an unforgivable sin,

I know the importance of bread and butter,

I know Germany is less than a 2 hour drive south and it fails to impress me any longer that we can drive down there after school to 'stock up',

I know it's important to have a key to your bike,

I know that to be served at the post office or bank you need to take a que number and watch for your number to show up on the screen above the respectable counter, I also know that while waiting for your turn you need to stay at least 3 steps behind the 'discretion line' drawn into the floor,

I know that mayonaise may never be put with salami when making traditional open faced sandwiches.

I know that if one wants to get anything done on Saturday then it means between the hours of 10 and 2pm,

And I know that the Danish word "hyggeligt" or to 'hygge', an atmosphere created by lighting candles or just being with friends, has something to do with the meaning of life.

I went through so many peptalks and preparations in the leading up to and during this year that I really didn't expect much surprise in how it all, generally, would be. A whole lot of ups and downs and amazing things inbetween forcing you to learn and appreciate, maybe. I also didn't expect twenty five centimetres of cold wet snow, again, at my door step on a March morning. In trying to avoid every possible cliché, I got to a point where I just saw the cold, sad, dark, slow winter as what it was; an unchangable weather pattern and just waiting for the sun to come back again. This was the point where I finally realised where AFS had taken me. With my own two legs I had stumbled round trying to catch bearings with nothing familiar in sight. It's far too easy to get your foot stuck in a rabbit hole, but a surprisingly difficult thing to learn that you actually need losen that foot in order to keep moving. It's at that point when you really can see the beauty and excitement in things and can remember what you're actually doing on the other side of the world for an entire year.

It's funny how now I've finally established the full gravity of creating a little life on the other side of the world, that in a comparatively short time I'll be on my way back to where I came from. I'm finding that part a little uncomprehendable. So now...? I'm doing all I can do; breathing it all in, taking pictures, loving it and laughing it to exhaustion. I'll see ya' 'round.

Sylvia.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING HOSTED STUDENTS:

Maibrit from Denmark on 8 April
Christian from Peru on 28 April



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<p>MERCHANDISE – SAMPLES OF ITEMS AVAILABLE</p>	<p>TO ORDER: contact AFS National Office at http://www.afs.org.nz/nzl_en/view/3789 or check what's available locally at the next Chapter meeting.</p>	
		
Hoodie (Black) (Back Design 'www.afs.org.nz')		\$69.00
T-Shirt (Men's) (Black)		\$25.00
T-Shirt (Tight, Black) (Women's)		\$25.00
Backpack		\$30.00
AFS Pen (writes in blue)		\$8.00