



National Council of Home Educators New Zealand

NCHENZ Quarterly Newsletter

July 2018

Dear NCHENZ Member,

Welcome to our quarterly update.

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Help!

South Islanders: We DESPERATELY need a volunteer NOW who can fill the important role of Meetings Secretary for NCHENZ. This is an enjoyable, easy, low-hours position which involves managing our monthly meetings (finding a date, collating the agenda and reports, and taking minutes). Commitment is about 3 hours per month. You must live in the South Island, have a good internet connection, and fit well with the current team (ie. have a great sense of humour). Email info@nchenz.org.nz to help your committee, please!

From The Coordinator

by Debbie Thomas

Thank you to our members that attended our AGM last month and welcome to Callie Reweti as Member Services Administrator. Nadia Sole is staying on the Committee as a general member for another year and we thank her for her continued support and experience. We have various articles this quarter which will interest everybody and welcome articles from members that are encouraging and of interest to all. Email us at info@nchenz.org.nz if you would like to send in an article for consideration.

Homeschooler heads to Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Keiran Lewellen has been accepted to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and will be attending in August!

Keiran has been homeschooled from the beginning and applied using a homeschool application which allowed him to report self-study as well as external courses. MIT is one of the top universities in the world and accepts only one or two children from NZ each year. He is very excited, and plans to major in Maths and Physics with a focus in quantum computing or quantum materials.

Being able to apply as a homeschooler let Keiran shine in a way that was solely his own. His application focused on his unique blend of mathematics, music, and leadership, and it was homeschooling that allowed him to follow his dreams and stand out in a crowd of over 20,000 applications for 1,300 spots. By not being in school, Keiran could tailor his academic subjects to his personal interests and work at his own pace, finishing courses quickly.

This allowed him time to delve into non-academic interests like chamber music, martial arts, badminton, and olympiad mathematics.

Keiran honed his leadership skills through being first violin of a small string orchestra, volunteering his time to tutor maths online, and running a year-long olympiad maths class at Wellington College. Going beyond simple academics and following passions is what top universities in America look for in their applicants, and homeschooling gave Keiran the time and confidence to develop these interests.

Non-traditional students are considered valuable members of American university communities because they bring unique perspectives and maturity to campus. Keiran will be representing New Zealand in the International Mathematical Olympiad in Romania in July - the first homeschooler to do so. He leaves for his four-year adventure at MIT in August.

We wish him all the best for his future.



Member Offers for Term 3

Callie Reweti answered the Member Services call, and I'd like to welcome to her the NCHENZ Committee and to the Member Services team! Over the next several months there will be a handover of *some* programs. The website will always be up-to-date so you know whether you're emailing me or Callie.

Thanks,
Nadia

From Callie:

Member Services continues to offer a variety of programs at great prices for our homeschooling families. Here are a few offers for term three:

Reading Eggs: A popular literacy programme which many home educators use, for ages 3-13yrs; \$16.00/child, [enrol here](#).

Mathseeds: Maths and problem-solving skills for ages 3-9yrs; \$21.60/student, [enrol here](#).

Mathletics: Follows the NZ curriculum, for ages 5-18yrs; \$22.00 per child, [enrol here](#).

Spellodrome: A popular program for improving spelling skills for ages 5-18yrs; \$13.65/student, [enrol here](#).

Education Perfect: Maths, English and science (all aligned to the NZ curriculum) as well as an extensive list of languages; \$55.00/student for all or \$12.50 just for languages, [details here](#).

Maths-Whizz will be starting again in September, please keep an eye on Facebook or the NCHENZ website for enrolment details.

[Click here for a complete listing of our offers and discounts](#) including Studyladder, LEARNZ Virtual Field Trips, Wai Ako, Phonics Hero, ESA Publications discount, gratitude journals discount, etc.

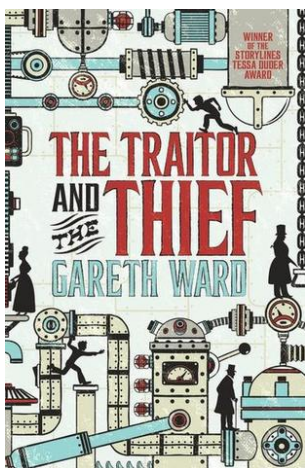
In the near future, Member Services will look into phasing out some of the offers not being utilised by our members so that we can explore new options. We are not quite ready for new programs yet but will ask for contributions when we have the person-power to take on more.

Book Review: The Traitor and the Thief

by Denika Mead

“It appeared no one in this new world he inhabited was quite who they seemed.”

This is a quote from the steampunk adventure novel, *The Traitor and the Thief* by Gareth Ward. I was inspired to read this book after meeting the author Gareth Ward (The Great Wardini) at Booktown in Featherston and being his assistant while he performed magic tricks. *The Traitor and the Thief* is a great book with complex characters, exciting twists and many themes.



When 14-year-old orphan Sin is abducted off the streets, he finds a new life in COG (Covert Operations Group), a group of teens training to stop a war. Sin befriends the unique Zonda. While trying not to break the school's unflinching rules, they work to unmask a traitor, causing chaos at COG's headquarters. With twists and turns Sin starts to suspect that someone close to him is the traitor.

The Traitor and the Thief is Gareth Ward's first published book. It was the winner of the Storylines Tessa Duder award and was also listed in the New Zealand Listener Top 50 books for 2017. Gareth Ward is a magician, bookseller and writer. He has also had many other interesting jobs including being a police officer and a zombie. He is a

New Zealand author living in Hawkes Bay. Gareth Ward was a Sir Julius Vogel Award winner 2018 for Best Youth Novel and Best New Talent.

The Traitor and the Thief has lots of themes including coming of age, good vs evil and persevering against the odds. The book has complex characters and their agendas are not always clear. As Tobias Beckett said in the movie *Solo, A Star Wars Story*,

“Assume everyone will betray you and you will never be disappointed.”

That reflects what Sin and the reader’s train of thought becomes as the story progresses.

Throughout the book you suspect many people of being the traitor. There is a character who is a magician called Noir. Noir is part of the COG committee who runs COG along with the inventive Nimrod, the demanding Lilith, and clever Eldritch. Noir was one of my favorite characters second only to Sin. Noir appears sinister and is very creepy. There is strong character development throughout the book. At the start, Sin only watched out for himself, but by the end he has formed close friendships and loyalties.

There are many moments in *The Traitor and the Thief* where tension runs high, pushing the characters to their limits. *The Traitor and the Thief* has a nice blend of reality and fictional settings. The River Thames appears in the book but so does the fictional Lenheim Palace. I can’t wait for the second book to come out so I can learn more about these amazing characters and share their journeys. I would recommend this book to anyone who likes a bit of magic and mystery.

Members

by Tanya Vivier

Wanting to know your membership number, update your contact details or cancel your membership, click [here](#) to find out how.

Homeschooling Survey

Be on the lookout, our next Homeschooling Survey will be out soon in your email boxes. Previous surveys can be found [here](#).

About NCHENZ

Set up in 1998 for the purpose of [advancing the cause of home education](#) in NZ at a national level, NCHENZ is the only national homeschooling body in New Zealand. NCHENZ is a neutral organisation with no affiliation to any political or religious groups. NCHENZ is run by an elected [Executive Committee](#) who volunteer their time for the benefit of NZ home educators. If you are not yet a member of NCHENZ please join, it’s free - [just go to our website](#).