



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

NEWSLETTER

MICHAELMAS TERM

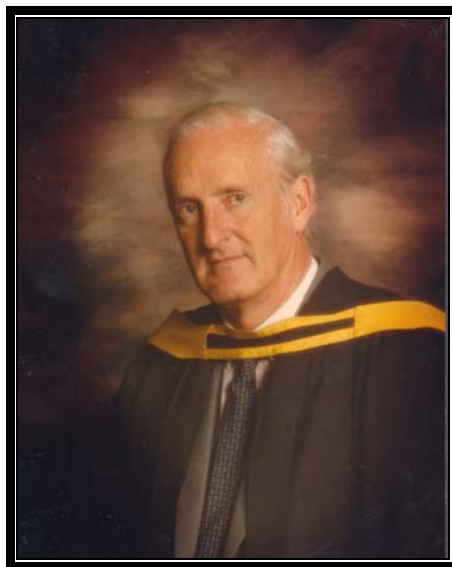
No 6/2006

Dear Parents

Walter Macfarlane died unexpectedly, aged 74, on the 15th of November. The St John's community shares with his wife, Kim, and their family, a great sense of sadness and loss. Walter so encapsulated in his life the words of the school prayer: "to be well trained in body, mind and character to serve Thee well in Church and State". At the funeral service, tribute was paid to Walter as a great educationalist, father, husband, mentor and friend. The hundreds of people who attended, celebrated Walter's life of service, with the tributes indicating that Walter touched many lives in profound ways.

We all recall Walter's kindness, generosity and love. I am sure that he would have enjoyed the wonderful congregational singing and the inspirational choir of St John's boys, and the Old Boys Choir, of which he had been a member.

We pray for Kim and the family that God's love will surround them and strengthen them during this difficult time. At a simple quiet ceremony on Monday 27 November, Walter's ashes were placed in the Garden of Remembrance next to the Crypt Chapel. You are welcome to visit and read the plaque commemorating Walter among many others who have served St John's College.



Tribute to Walter Macfarlane

Walter was born in Johannesburg in 1932 and was educated at Parkview Primary, St John's Preparatory School and St John's College where he was a school prefect, head of Alston House and member of the 1st rugby team for three years. He continued his studies at the University of the Witwatersrand majoring in English and History, and Lincoln College, Oxford, where he obtained his professional qualifications.

He taught at St Peter's Preparatory School, the Dragon School, Oxford and St John's Preparatory School. He was headmaster of St Stithians Preparatory School from 1966 to 1983, Headmaster of St John's College from 1983 to 1994 and Headmaster of Woodmead Preparatory School from 1997 to 1998.

Walter and Kim were married in the St John's Memorial Chapel in 1961 and were blessed with five children - Jenny, Peter, Cath, Allie and Rob. They have twelve grandchildren.

Walter was Chairman of Preparatory Schools of the Conference of Heads of Independent Schools from 1980 to 1982 and Chairman of the whole conference from 1990 to 1992. He was the Chairman of the Central Region of the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa, ISASA representative on the Gauteng Education and Training Council and at various times served on the boards of seven different Independent schools. He was Chairman at different times of the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' conference, he initiated the school's Outreach programme for two primary schools in Alexandra and played an important role in the formation of the Independent Examinations Board.

Walter was awarded an American Field Service Educator Scholarship in 1968 and was granted British Council Visitorships in 1972 and 1978. In 1994 he was awarded the Gold Medal of the College of Education for his services to education and the Bishop's Medal for service to Church schools.

Walter was the author of St Stithians College's 50th anniversary history, "To Serve the Future Hour", the history of Pridwin Preparatory School, "The Happiest Days" and St John's Preparatory history "Greater Than We Know".

Walter was a much-loved "people person" who had an extraordinary memory and love for pupils who passed through his hands. He always supported boys who were experiencing difficulties, guiding and encouraging them to reach their full potential. He had a wonderful rapport with parents and encouraged their full participation in the life of the school.

Walter was appointed to establish St Stithians Preparatory School at the age of 33, the youngest age of any Headmaster at the time. Under his leadership, St Stithians Preparatory School became a leading Prep school which flourished in all sectors including academic, cultural, music and sport.

Walter enjoyed the theatre and encouraged major productions of Gilbert & Sullivan and other musicals at both St Stithians and St John's. He initiated the Primary and Senior Private Schools' Choir Festival and the St Stithians Singers, both of which continue to be very active to this day. He was an active Old Johannian Choir member and was the prime instigator in the building of the Noel Iverson Music School at St John's as well as the installation of the magnificent organ housed in the St John's Chapel.

One of Walter's earliest actions as Headmaster of St John's College was to introduce the Valedictory service for Matrics and VIth Formers. Within his first year, he encouraged the admission of pupils of all races throughout the school. In his time, the academic side of St John's was further extended with the inclusion of Art, Computer Studies, Music and Zulu as Matriculation subjects. He encouraged participation in Computer, Maths, English and Science Olympiads and Young Historian competitions. He fostered the creative talents of pupils through art exhibitions, inter-house plays, music concerts and inter-school music festivals. The wide variety of sports had a special place in Walter's interests and he followed pupils' achievements at all levels.

Walter was a committee member of the successful Centenary Venture commissioned by the Council of St John's to raise funds for the building of the Deane Yates Science Centre, the Fred England Media & Technology Centre and an endowment fund to provide for Outreach, Scholarship and Bursaries.

The text of the Bishop's award for meritorious service in Church schools for 38 years, presented to Walter by Rt Rev Duncan Buchanan in 1994 embodies all that Walter stood for:

"A scholar at St John's, a graduate from Wits, a deeply committed member of the Church, a schoolmaster all his life, he has served the teaching profession with distinction as Headmaster of St Stithians Prep and then as Headmaster of St John's College. He has been active in the Independent Schools' Council and on the Headmasters' Conference as well as on the Archbishop's Task Force of Education.

A man of integrity and humility, he has given himself unstintingly for the good of others and has had profound effect on many who have passed through his hands. He has served God with compassion and love”.

In July this year St John’s College honoured Walter on Gaudy Day with a Gold Eagle Award for outstanding service to education. This was a fitting tribute to an Old Johannian who was “well trained in body, mind and character” who had gone out to “serve Thee well in Church and State”.

His delightful stories, his infectious sense of humour and zest for life, combined with his warm, affirming nature will be missed by all who knew him.

Walter will be remembered with deep affection. We thank God for the life of Walter Macfarlane.



Staff Farewell

On Tuesday 28 November we said farewell to a number of staff who have served St John’s well over the past years.

Mr Mike Stalley
Mrs Gillian Leggat
Mr Greg Hingle
Ms Karien Van Schoor
Mrs Alison Scarr
Mr Paul Van Zyl
Mrs Ray Myhill

Mike Stalley retires after a long teaching career. He served as Deputy Head of St Stithians College, Headmaster of Saheti and served St John’s for eleven years. Mr Stalley is a master teacher who has had a significant influence on the lives of many young people. As Director of Drama, Mr Stalley has produced many plays, each challenging and thought provoking, but also providing a platform for young talent to perform at their best. It is his skill to draw out of his actors and actresses the maturity to take on adult roles and to perform them with insight and depth. We wish him all the best in his retirement.

Mrs Gillian Leggat leaves us to join St Andrew’s, Senderwood, where she will teach English and Geography. Her significant contribution to the reading programme in the English Department will have introduced many boys to the delights of reading. She will also be valued for her introduction to the cultural programme of “Authors Hour”. Here Mrs Leggat introduced many St John’s boys to well known South African authors whom she invited to talk to the boys about their work.

Mr Greg Hingle leaves us to take up the role of Head of Department at St Alban’s College, Pretoria. Over the years he has made a wonderful contribution as a Science Teacher, Hockey Coach, Housemaster, and as the man who organised the timetable. His role as Master-in-Charge of the Bridge Club has also seen boys develop their skills. Our loss will be St Alban’s gain, but we look forward to meeting often during our clashes with St Alban’s.

Ms Karien Van Schoor leaves us to start her own franchise business. Ms Van Schoor has been Science Teacher, Housemistress in charge of Runge boys and girls, Matric dance organiser, and in charge of swimming. We thank her for her varied and significant contribution. Ms Van Schoor will continue in a part-time capacity teaching 6th Form Science.

Mrs Alison Scarr taught both English and French, and was also a Matric Dance Organiser. Mrs Scarr leaves us to join an NGO dealing with issues around gender equality and gender violence. Her insightful and often witty comments at staff meetings will be missed, as will her love and care for the boys.

Mr Paul Van Zyl will be becoming an IT consultant in the field of education. We wish him all the best and thank him for his contribution to St John’s.



New staff have been appointed for next year and I will introduce them to the school in the new year. They are Mr Peter Henning (Director of IT), Mr Paul Emant (English), Mr Hansel Stevenson (English), Mr Franklin Human (Science), Mrs Cathy Plint (part-time Science) and Ms Sonica Van Zyl (French).

Mrs Erika Lion-Cachet has been appointed to a new post as Director of the Foundation and will be helping to raise funds for St John's through the Foundation. Her Afrikaans post will be filled from the second term by Mrs Irene Basson who is teaching at St Andrew's School for Girls.

Carol Service

At our third visit to the Cathedral of St Mary's, St John's joyously sang the traditional carols and listened to the lessons read at our annual Carol Service. It was a wonderful occasion when the Cathedral was filled and our voices rang out in praise and worship celebrating the birth of Jesus. The choir was magnificent. I take this opportunity to wish you a wonderful holiday and God's blessing this Christmas time. May you travel safely and may the bonds of love in your family be strengthened.

Roger Cameron
Headmaster

Quality Assurance

Over the past three years and continuing into the future, St John's College has embarked on an Independent Schools Quality Assurance process and each year we have examined aspects of our institution and the quality of teaching and learning. The process has consisted of an internal evaluation team mentored by a qualified mentor who has experience in education. We have been privileged to have Mr John Gardener, previously Headmaster of Bishop's and Kingswood College acting as mentor. The process consists of questionnaires to parents, pupils and staff, followed up by focus groups and interviews which examine particular issues raised in the questionnaires. The mentor's task is to ensure that the process is rigorous, and to ensure the accuracy of the written report. I highlight here two quotes from the report which contextualise the recommendations, which by their nature focus on the areas needing improvement:

The evaluation revealed that the overwhelming majority of staff, parents, and pupils are positively engaged with and passionate about St John's. There is evidence of common purpose, and general satisfaction within the school community.

The second quote comes from the mentor's report:

I have valued greatly my association with a great school, and wish St John's well with great confidence in its preparedness to go into the future with both wisdom and an adventurous spirit, preserving deep values and exploring new expressions of them, and serving its own community by looking both within it and beyond it to others.

The three areas evaluated are Teaching and Learning, Sport, Discipline and Behaviour.

The recommendations of the evaluators are printed below, as well as the conclusion and the mentor's report. For detailed copies of the 20 page document, please contact Mrs Michelle Rufener who will print the document for you. The school Executive led by the Headmaster, the Heads of Department and the Housemasters have examined the report and will implement improvements where necessary and possible. The document will be tabled at the Council Executive and with the College Council.

Internal Evaluation Report on Teaching and Learning

Recommendations:

1. Staff with control difficulties must establish firm boundaries and may benefit from observing other staff. Heads of Department are to offer assistance where required.
2. Heads of Department need to encourage staff to develop experiential lessons and move away from more traditional chalk and talk.
3. To overcome inconsistencies in giving of homework, staff are to be encouraged to be more rigorous with their planning.



4. Training in meeting the needs of a variety of learners is required ie catering for mixed ability needs.
5. Heads of Department are to be encouraged to organise classroom observations within their departments.
6. An aggressive strategy be devised to separate perception from reality, address the reality of the claims and correct incorrect perceptions about mathematics teaching.
7. A full review of the policy of setting be undertaken.
8. Exam timetable criticism be noted and considered.

Internal Evaluation Report on Sport and Related Issues

Recommendations:

1. More emphasis should be placed on Soccer and the season extended.
2. The Director of Sport should consult Masters-in-Charge to ensure that quality coaching is in place for all teams.
3. A review should be made of the purposes and practice of compulsory attendance for spectators at sporting and cultural events.
4. The Director of Sport, together with the Sports Council, fully investigate levels of achievement in terms of College sports, and set expectations accordingly.
5. The Director of Sport set up a central call facility to communicate changes/cancellations of fixtures.

Internal Evaluation on Discipline and Related Issues

Recommendations

1. Clear lines of responsibility and accountability be established.
2. An ongoing programme of value re-enforcement, with the emphasis on values and self-discipline be established.
3. The leadership programme be thoroughly evaluated and amended in such a way as to empower leaders and clarify the expectations of them. Administration issues around portfolios and community service must be revised so that no question can be raised about the accuracy/appropriateness of appointments. A clear 'whole school' communication process be undertaken to properly explain the programme. The timing of training and appointment of leaders should be re-planned to enable fuller and longer use of leaders' final year at school.
4. A clear, unambiguous set of expectations in terms of behaviour, manners, and appearance be set amongst staff and boys, and rigorously enforced.

Conclusion

The evaluation process was well received by all constituencies within the school who expressed a genuine interest in the process and a willingness to learn from the findings that emerge from it.

The evaluation revealed that the overwhelming majority of staff, parents, and pupils are positively engaged with and passionate about St John's. There is evidence of common purpose, and general satisfaction within the school community.

The recommendations contained herein represent a crystallisation of issues that emerged

throughout the process. These recommendations have been tested by the rigours of the process and are evidentially based. As such they should be considered to be a collection of constructive recommendations born of consultation and discussion amongst a full cross-section of the College, designed to improve a school that is already functioning well.

It is the view of the evaluation team and our external mentor that the process was sufficiently rigorous to paint an accurate picture of the issues that are currently pertinent to St John's.

St John's College

Mentor's Report on Internal Evaluation – September 2006

This is the third time I have had the pleasure and privilege of acting as mentor at St John's College. It is likely, alas, also to be the last – for two reasons: I am about to move from residence in Johannesburg, and it is the policy of the Independent Quality Assurance Agency (IQAA) that no one mentor should do too many evaluations at any one school. The role of mentor requires a certain detachment from each school visited, and each school needs the stimulus of varied approaches and insights from outside.

It is not difficult to feel very soon the hospitality and human warmth at St John's, as well as the professionalism of the staff and the way things are done. St John's was one of the original seven schools that were evaluated in the pilot scheme run by IQAA in 2004, and the contribution of St John's to the thinking and development of the IQAA process has been considerable.

The enthusiastic embracing of the process and its adoption into the annual routine of the school for three years is eloquent testament to the leadership of the Headmaster, Roger Cameron, the evaluation team leader, Alan Thompson, and the members of the evaluation teams in the three evaluations.

The process

This year, as before, certain sections of the College's activities as detailed in the internal team's report, were chosen for investigation. This is a method that leads to thoroughness, but it is to be recommended only if evaluations are undertaken as regularly and frequently as St John's have chosen to do, and if, as they have been, teaching and learning are central to each evaluation.

The responses to the questionnaires and the focus group discussions were notable for their vigour and frankness. There was an impression that people were prepared to take more trouble to express their views than in previous years. Not that there were inhibitions before, but it seemed that the open acceptance in the past evaluations of a range of suggestions and the preparedness of the team to make strong recommendations have opened the doors of consultation wider.

To an outsider it has been impressive that when recommendations from previous evaluations have been recorded as not having been fully or successfully carried out the team has said bluntly that the school should try again harder or differently.

This is part of the reason why it is possible to say again that the evaluation has been carried out with vigour and rigour, and that it has been fairly and comprehensively done and reported on. As mentor I was able to observe a number of classroom lessons and to sit in on several focus groups as well as share the findings of the team. I gained a great deal of insight into the background and tone of what I was observing through conversations, somewhat more formal interviews with some St John's people and viewing activities beyond the classroom as well.

I endorse what the internal evaluation team have said in their report and support the recommendations they have made.

Thanks

I have valued greatly my association with a great school, and wish St John's well with great confidence in its preparedness to go into the future with both wisdom and an adventurous spirit, preserving deep values and exploring new expressions of them, and serving its own community by looking both within it and beyond it to others.

John Gardener

13 November 2006





Congratulations to Toni Williams on her appointment as Chairman of the Independent Schools Marketing Association ISMA, Gauteng branch, from January 2007. She will be ably assisted by Vice-Chairman, Anne Wright (St Andrew's).



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
Johannesburg, South Africa
Education with integrity

President:	Aleksander Stojakovic (Hodgson)
Deputy President:	Sibusiso Matsini (Hodgson)
Chief Financial Officer:	Mpho Mutloane (Nash)
Public Relations Officer:	Jonathan Singh (Clayton) Dmitri Ratnayake (Hodgson)
Executive Secretary:	Keabetswe Mokitle (Nash)

MUSIC



Conductor of World Youth Choir

Sidumo Nyamezele, music teacher, has been appointed to conduct the World Youth Choir summer session in South Africa next year. This project is endorsed by Jeunesses Musicales South Africa and will be the first full session on the African continent. Sidumo will be focusing on South African choral music, with a substantial part of ethnic music.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Siyabulela Xuza acquitted himself very well in the annual ABSA /Rotary Club of Sandton Speaking Competition in October. He won a place in the final from 80 participants. His speech entitled "*With Liberty comes responsibility – that's why men fear it*" was beautifully delivered. He won a weekend trip to the Drakensberg to attend a course entitled "Breakthrough to Excellence" organized by the Pacific Institute. Well done, Siya.



OVERSEAS ART TOUR – 2007

We will be going to Spain, France, Italy and London over two and a half weeks in the 2007 April holidays. Mrs Culwick will be accompanied by Mr Hingle, and a few other IEB schools will be joining us to make up a richly educational, exciting, fun-filled tour. Please send enquiries and deposits of R2500 to Mrs Culwick 011 646 3089 (h) / 011 645 3011 (w) / 072 599 6606 (c) / culwick@stjohns.wits.ac.za



SPORTS NEWS



Golf

Captain 2007 – Nicholas Ryan

Karate



Congratulations to **Austen Parfitt** on winning Gold for Kumite and Silver for Kata in the KWF Karate Nomichi Championships held at JCE on 4 November.



STUDY SKILLS COURSE

Well-known educationist Myrna Silberman will be running a study skills course, at the school, in the first term. The course will run for 4 weeks, every Monday afternoon. This course specialises in teaching students how to simplify schoolwork and how to answer exam questions. The course includes:

- how to summarise information
- memory techniques
- time management
- exam technique

The classes will be kept small in order to give each student the individual attention they require, and allow them to apply the skills to their schoolwork. The cost of the course is R670. For more information call Myrna (011) 887-9233 or 082 357-4920.

PARISH OF HOUGHTON, ST JOHN'S



We warmly invite you to join us on Sunday mornings for a church service at 09h00 in the Crypt Chapel, the Crypt is below the larger Memorial Chapel). Although we are the Parish of Houghton, St John's, the College Chaplains are not involved in leading services. We are extremely blessed to have Bishop Duncan Buchanan as our Minister, and he is more than ably assisted by Rev Jeremy Jacobs. As a team, their spiritual leadership would be hard to surpass.

At present we have approximately 50+ regular communicants. In addition, a Sunday School and Youth Group caters for children between 3 and 18. These groups run during the sermon in the Community Room adjacent to the Crypt Chapel.

What characterises us as a Parish is the sense of closeness, which originates from our connections to St John's (although a fair number of parishioners have no connection whatsoever), our focus on the family, our commitment to St Christopher's Home, Mother Teresa's and Princess Alice and our warmth and commitment to each other.

If you are looking for a spiritual home for you or your family, this might just be the answer. Please give us a try!



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE/ROEDEAN TOASTMASTERS' CLUB



Mr Mike Stalley will be running another Toastmasters' Club course commencing in January 2007.

The purpose of the Club will be:

- To improve its members' abilities to communicate effectively.
- To provide tools and opportunities to develop skills and encourage experience in the preparation and delivery of effective speeches.
- To encourage its members to read and listen analytically.
- To offer some basic leadership training.
- To assist its members in overcoming stage-fright and appear before audiences expressing thoughts and ideas with credibility and confidence.
- To plan and organize public functions.
- To assist its members to think on their feet and deliver effective impromptu speeches.
- To make its members aware of body language and how to read it.
- To prepare for the all-important oral component of the matric and other examinations.
- To develop individual self-confidence.
- To indulge in some situation role play.
- And much more.

It is hoped that the successful and popular mix of the girls of Roedeane with the St John's boys in the 2004/5 course will be repeated. The course will consist of 12 two-hour sessions on alternate Tuesday evenings from 19h00 to 21h00, and will be spread over two terms, thus finishing in June 2007.

For the Club to operate effectively, membership will comprise either a minimum of 16 or maximum of 24 boys and girls. You are encouraged to enroll for the course and preference will be given to boys and girls from Upper IV (Grade 10) and Lower V (Grade 11) 2007.

The year's course will conclude with a formal dinner, hosted by Club members, to which parents will be invited. Guests will be entertained by speeches of differing natures, delivered by some of the young Toastmasters. Various prizes will be awarded.

A minimal fee of R500.00 will be charged for the entire course and will include light refreshments each evening and various stationery requirements. Past Toastmasters have spoken of the enormous benefit and enjoyment to be found in the course, which also includes a bit of hard team work (which can also be fun!). It is neither a daunting task nor in any way threatening to complete the course! We move at a relaxed pace suited to its members. Once an application has been accepted, total commitment will be expected from each member.

Would-be Toastmasters are asked to contact Mr Stalley at St John's before the end of term, or on (011) 783-1692 (H) for further information. Enrolment forms should be completed as soon as possible as enrolment will be more or less on a first-come-first-served basis. Roedeane girls should liaise with their Deputy Head, Ms C Harrison.

