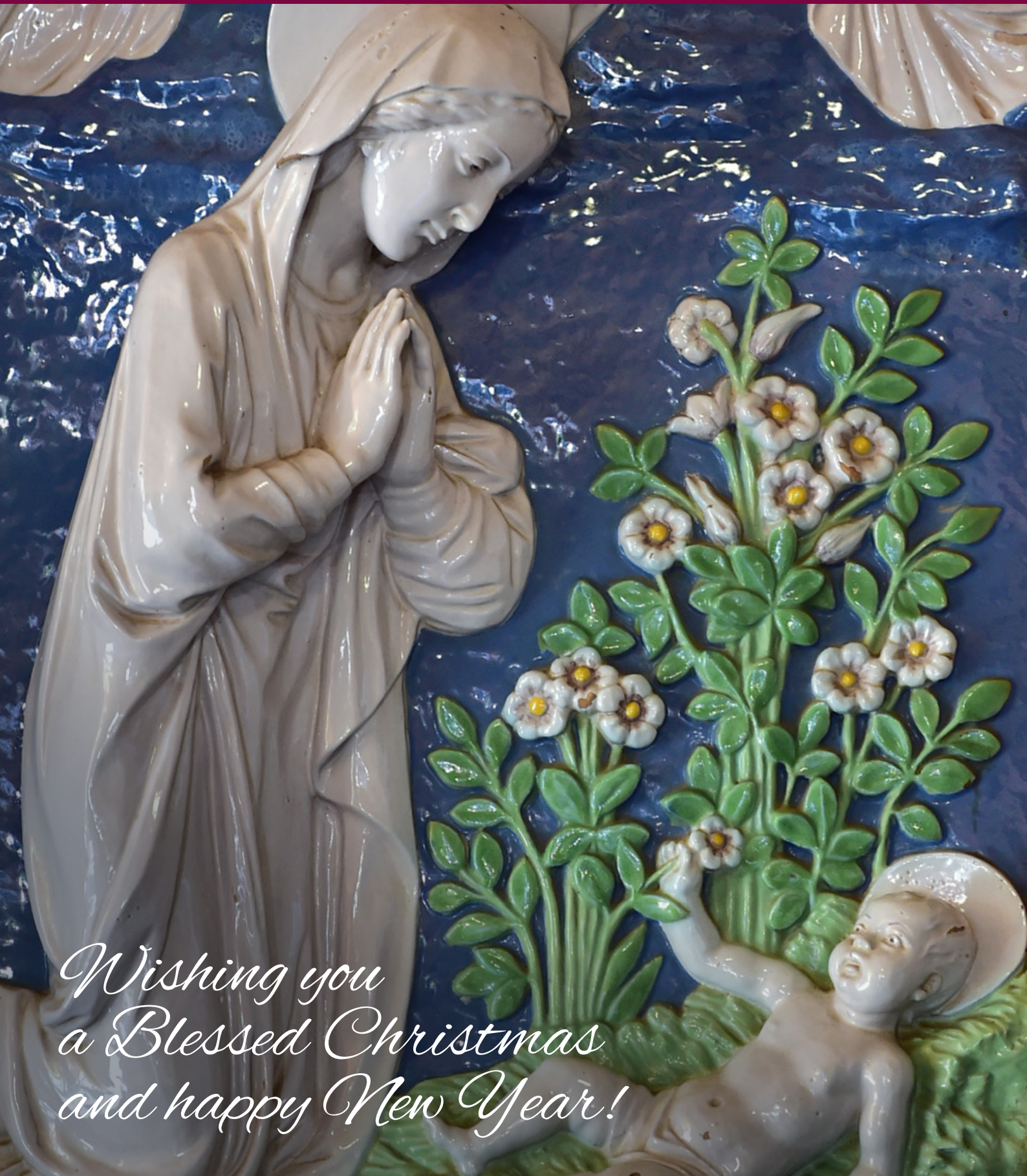




OLD JOHANNIAN ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



*Wishing you
a Blessed Christmas
and happy New Year!*

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Old Johannians

As St John's College marks its 125th milestone, the Old Johannian Association (OJA) emerges as a crucial force in preserving the institution's legacy and sustainability. The OJA, integral to the broader St John's community, understands the necessity of a robust Old Johannian (OJ) network in upholding the values and ethos beyond the school walls.

Believing that a world-class school demands a world-class network of OJs, the OJA aims to serve as the nexus connecting all Old Johannians with the St John's community. In pursuit of this objective, strategic initiatives are underway to enhance the engagement within the Old Johannian network. The OJA endeavors to draw Old Johannians closer to St John's, ensuring they experience the enduring value of being part of this esteemed association.

Functioning as a facilitator, the OJA focuses on strategic imperatives, particularly the maintenance of an up-to-date and comprehensive database of Old Johannians. In collaboration with The Advancement Office, strides have been taken to create a repository of information that improves the OJA's service to Old Johannians and keeps them abreast of the school's progress.

The power of connection is celebrated in this edition of the OJA Newsletter, spotlighting recent in-person events such as the Johannesburg and Cape Town cocktail evenings and the Garden Route Luncheon. These gatherings not only facilitated connections among Old Johannians but also strengthened their ties to St John's, especially in light of its 125th birthday celebration.

To enhance this network further, Old Johannians are encouraged to share their updated details with OJA Organizer Zelda Siphenuka (info@oja.co.za). The OJA extends invitations for continued engagement through various channels, including events organized throughout the year, The Johannian Club, and virtual connections via social media platforms.

Graham Kerr-Phillips
Chairman



Please **follow us** on our social media platforms for more content related to the vibrant and enduring community of Old Johannians. Your participation is key to the continued success and unity of the Old Johannian network.



www.linkedin.com



www.facebook.com

Contact: Zelda Siphenuka | info@oja.co.za | 011 645 3178

2024 CALENDAR

January	February	March	April
Community Mass	St John's College Basketball Tournament		St John's College Rugby Festival
May	June	July	August
		OJA Dinner Gaudy Day	
September	October	November	December
Morrisen Abel Golf Day			End of Year Community Mass



EVENTS AND VISITS

The Johannesburg Cocktail Evening

In a celebration of 125 years of St John's College, we welcomed back Old Johannians at the Johannesburg Cocktail Evening on 25 October 2023. The event, held at The Johannian Club, was a testament to the enduring spirit of our Old Johannians.

The cocktail evening served as a living archive of the school's history, with OJs exchanging anecdotes that spanned decades as we saw familiar faces and welcomed new ones. Old Johannians who had not crossed paths in years found themselves immersed in conversations that reminded them of their school days. The diverse backgrounds and accomplishments of Old Johannians showcased the profound impact St John's College has had on shaping individuals who have gone on to make a difference in various fields.

Thank you to all who attended, making it a night to remember.



EVENTS AND VISITS

Cape Town - 125th Birthday Celebration

In Cape Town on the 2nd of November, Old Johannians gathered to celebrate the 125th birthday of their beloved St John's College. The iconic venue, Peddlars on the Bend, provided the perfect backdrop for this momentous occasion, echoing with laughter, joy, and shared memories.

The formalities kicked off with a warm welcome by the school's Executive Headmaster, Mr Stuart West. He shared heartfelt reflections on the school's rich history, its commitment to excellence, and plans for the future. This was followed by a brief overview of the ***Beyond 125 Campaign*** by the Head of Advancement, Ms Shelley Roberts, and a screening of the [Beyond 125 Campaign video](#) which showcases the magnificent St John's College and outlines the priority projects of the campaign. The Chairman of the Old Johannian Association, Mr Graham Kerr-Phillips, closed things off with an update on the activities of the Old Johannian Association, with particular emphasis on the OJA's drive to grow mentorship networks for Johannians around the globe. He called on all Old Johannians to stay in touch and asked them to please volunteer their time to pass on their valuable experience and expertise to new generations of Johannians.

The celebration was not only a trip down memory lane but also a chance to forge new connections. Old Johannians, spanning various graduating classes, exchanged stories, catching up on the paths their lives had taken since they last walked the hallowed halls of St John's. The bond of the Johannian spirit proved unbroken, as friendships were rekindled and new ones forged amidst the shared pride of being part of this special community.

The 125th-anniversary celebration at Peddlars on the Bend was more than an event; it was a testament to the enduring legacy of St John's College and the timeless bonds that connect Old Johannians across generations. Here's to another 125 years of excellence, camaraderie, and the Johannian spirit!

For more photos from the event please follow this link:
[Cape Town 2023](#)



EVENTS AND VISITS

Garden Route - 125th Birthday and Boar's Head Luncheon

Plettenberg Bay, November 3, 2023

The Burnt Orange Restaurant was once again the location of camaraderie and celebration as Old Johannians and esteemed guests gathered for the traditional "Boar's Head Luncheon" in Keurbooms, a particularly special occasion in 2023 as it celebrated the 125th Birthday of St John's College.

The afternoon began with the Executive Headmaster, Mr Stuart West, reflecting on the foundations that had been laid over the 125 years of St John's College and the ambitious plans for the future, emphasizing the school's commitment to innovation, education, and character development.

Ms Shelley Roberts, the Head of Advancement, followed with a brief overview of the ***Beyond 125 Campaign*** and a screening of the [Beyond 125 Campaign video](#) which outlines the ambitious plans for the future which form the key projects of the campaign, a testament to the enduring spirit of progress and a commitment to shaping the future of education.

Mr Graham Kerr-Phillips, the Chairman of the Old Johannian Association, took the stage next. He spoke of the extensive worldwide network of Old Johannians and, in particular, the invaluable mentorship program. He emphasised how the exchange of wisdom and experiences between generations forms a vital part of the Johannian spirit, strengthening the bonds that transcended time and distance.

One of the moving moments of the afternoon came when Christo Beetge (Clayton 1980) delivered a beautiful toast and prayer. His words, laden with nostalgia and gratitude, echoed through the gathering, binding hearts and minds in a shared moment of reflection and appreciation.

The highlight of the day was undoubtedly the entrance of the "Boar's Head". Old Johannians in aprons and chef's hats, while singing the Boar's Head Carol, carried in a symbolic "boar's head" (lovingly crafted from sacking cloth) on a tray, a cherished tradition that added a touch of whimsy and connection to the event. The boar's head was presented to Mr West, symbolising the passing of tradition and the continuance of the Johannian legacy.

Amidst the laughter, joy, and shared memories, a sumptuous lunch was enjoyed by all, fostering an atmosphere of fellowship that truly embodied the Johannian spirit. Special thanks were extended to Ed Cutten (Thomson 1966) and the dedicated Old Johannians and their families who orchestrated the event with meticulous care. The luncheon was not just a gathering; it was a celebration of the past, a commitment to the future, and a testament to the enduring bonds of the St John's College community.

For more photos of the event, please follow this link:
[Boar's Head Luncheon 2023](#)



EVENTS AND VISITS

Light on the Night

The St John's College community, family, and friends gathered on Burger Field with picnic baskets, blankets and deck chairs for a splendid evening of light and sound as we celebrated 125 years of St John's at Light on the Night.

More than 250 musicians from Pre-Prep, Prep, and College took to the stage at Light on the Night for a memorable performance as they entertained thousands of spectators and basked in the applause of the appreciative audience.

The lineup featured an array of musical talents, including the entire Pre-Prep Grade 2 class, College and Prep marimbas, Prep wind band, senior and junior strings, rock band, College wind band, SKA band, senior strings and quartet, symphony orchestra, and Big Band, all contributing to an exhilarating two-hour musical marathon.

This was followed by a whimsical fusion of light and sound projected onto our northern facade by artist Marcus Neustetter in collaboration with OMAi and their revolutionary light drawing Tagtool supported by the Embassy of Austria, and the College's visual art and drama students and musicians. "It was an immersive creative experience," said Estelle Potgieter, Head of Visual Art. "The students involved truly excelled in their roles, embracing the opportunity to learn new digital techniques for creating great art. It was a collaboration of the arts unlike any other, where musicians and visual artists came together to push the boundaries of creativity."

The Pre-Prep, Prep, and College joined in singing a special 125 song composed by Old Johannian Greg Nottingham (Fleming 2006) as part of the mesmerising light show.

Artist Marcus Neustetter noted that the performers took on their roles with dedication and passion, both in the creative studio session and on the massive stage. "The musicians displayed remarkable improvisational skills, performing with Micca like professionals. Simultaneously, the visual artists seamlessly blended their drawings of the school, their lives, and their interpretations using the Tagtool software, creating a captivating collage of wonder."

The evening ended with the music of Mango Groove, joined on stage by the College symphony orchestra and under the baton of Dr Ben Oosthuizen, Director of Music, for four exceptional performances together. "It was inspiring to collaborate with such internationally renowned musicians and share the spotlight with them," said Dr Oosthuizen.

It was a delight to have our greater community come together in our shared love for St John's as we celebrate 125 years of this fine institution.

Pictures: Steve Lawrence, Matt Jacobson (UV Hodgson) and Tom Dewar (UIV Hodgson).



REUNIONS

Class of '63 60th Reunion

Ant Gear (Thomson 1963)

A handful of members of the class of '63 started the three day 60th anniversary reunion on Thursday, 28th September 2023 with an inspirational and eye-opening visit to Masibambane College in Orange Farm, an informal community 50km south of Jo'burg. In 2022 the class raised R250 000 to support those completing their matric that year. In the evening more classmates joined to enjoy cocktails at Alto234 on the 54th floor of Leonardo in Sandton with spectacular views of the northern suburbs at sunset. On Friday morning three of us played a lovely round of golf at the Parkview Golf Club where others joined us for a very sociable lunch hosted in absentia by Colin Robinson (Nash) who had just left to enjoy the Wildebeest migration in Tanzania. On Friday evening Alan and Berna Foden (Thomson) held a well-attended, very convivial braai full of reminiscences and anecdotes.

The Old Johannian Club, which had been Alastair MacDuff's (Alston) family home in our prep school days, was at the centre of our celebrations, starting with morning tea on Saturday when Graham Kerr-Phillips, OJA Chairman, and Shelley Roberts of the Advancement Office welcomed us back to the school. We broke up into three groups for tours of the College, each led by a senior boy. So much the same, but so much changed, not least of which was the boarding accommodation. At 1.00PM the School Chaplain, Fr Jeremy Jacobs led our poignant memorial service for the 28 of our colleagues who are no longer with us. A boarders' lunch on the stage in Darragh Hall followed, another change for the better. Some of the class enjoyed the start of the music festival on Burger Field in the late afternoon.

Just over 40 gathered on Saturday evening for our reunion dinner at The Johannian Club, starting with predinner pizzas from the Club's impressive pizza oven. A Zoom link enabled classmates from around the world to get a flavour of our celebrations. A special presentation of the 2023 Golden Eagle award to Gus Mills (Alston) with his acceptance remarks was one of the highlights of the evening. Our main course was a very tasty buffet carvery of beef and chicken. We had two outstanding speeches. Mike Matthews (Thomson), speaking on behalf of the dayboys, gave a heartfelt talk including a

tribute to our dedicated teachers and what the school has meant to him. Cedric Puckrin (Hill), in his rich barrister's voice, took us through some good and bad cultural aspects of SJ life including reference to one of our chaplains, notorious for his liberal use of the cane, ".....nevertheless he was a devout man, a man of the bible, although I thought he tended more toward Leviticus than Matthew, Mark, Luke or John." Tiramisu completed our meal, reinforcing the wisdom of holding it at the Club.

Stan Trollip (Thomson) put together a wonderful brochure of updated biographies, photos and class anecdotes. Alan Foden (Thomson) and Berna for Alto234 and the braai, Colin Robinson for golf, lunch and other support, and John Wilder (Hill), for his foresight and wisdom all warrant special mention. Kate Lowings in the Advancement Office, with support from Zelda Siphenuka, did all the heavy lifting in making the reunion the success it was. A very big thank you to all.



REUNIONS

Class of 2013 10th Reunion

Gianluca Agostinetti (Head of School 2013)

The 21st of October saw members of the Class of 2013 reunite after 10 years. A fine spring day allowed for a memorable outdoor gathering on the lawns of The Johannian Club. The afternoon began with greetings, laughter, storytelling, photographs and the handing out of memorabilia kindly supplied by the Old Johannian Association. Prior to a delicious braai lunch, Gianluca Agostinetti (Head of School) delivered a captivating speech, before handing the mic to Guy Campbell (Nash 2023), Jocular Thursday leader, who had the class in stitches of laughter. Before the afternoon came to a close, the group toured the school and reminisced about times past, whilst singing and enjoying each other's company. A wonderful event for a fantastic group of old students.



WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE OUR OJs?

New York Job Shadowing

Nathan Tswatswa (LV Hill)

During my August Holiday in America, I was fortunate enough to shadow behind Old Johannians Greg Matthews (Thomson 1994) at KPMG New York and James Linnet (Runge 1984) at Citi Bank New York. I am delighted to say that during this trip, I learned more than just accounting and financial relations.

On my first day in New York, Greg took me to his office, where I was granted the opportunity to see what his day-to-day life was like, interact with his co-workers, and receive meaningful information as to their specific job requirements and needs. Greg helped me further my understanding of what it means to be a financial risk manager, which I am forever grateful for. Greg was also an amazing host, and I cherished the conversations I had with him and his family during my stay there. Greg told me of his time at St John's and how the school's values played a vital role in how he lives today. He shared many stories with me about his time at St John's, and although there was an age difference between us, we both shared a common love for this amazing school.

On my second day in New York, I was taken to Citi Bank to meet with James and grow my understanding of the finance field. James planned a day packed with meetings led by his

colleagues. Each of them gave me a detailed breakdown and analysis of what their job was at Citi Bank and how theirs was different from the others. Although all this information was overwhelming and seemed to go over my head, I was amazed by the talent and skillset of his colleagues. This experience was enlightening and left me motivated to pursue a career in finance.

From the views, city culture, and the difference in climate, the thing that amazed me the most was the love I shared with both Greg Matthews and James Linnet towards St John's. This experience has made me appreciate how fortunate I am to go to this astounding school. I believe there are very few places that grant their students the opportunity to meet with alumni from other parts of the world.

I am immensely grateful for being granted the opportunity to represent St John's while learning about my future career choices. This experience has made me realise the significance of the school alumni network, and I one day wish to grant another young Johannian the opportunity to come work under me and hopefully give them an experience as enlightening as mine. I would like to thank Greg and James for allowing me to come into their spaces and learn more about what they do. I would also like to thank Mr West for allowing me to be a representative of my fellow peers during this experience.



WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE OUR OJs?

UAE couple drives for nine months to Arctic Circle, reaches 18 countries in camper van

John Willson (Sixth Form 1996)

Driving a trusty camper van, a couple in Abu Dhabi has hit the roads from the UAE all the way to the Arctic Circle over the course of nine months. During this time, South African Hanneke Willson and her Irish-South African husband John Willson have covered 18 countries across the Middle East and Europe covering more than 33,000km in the van they lovingly named Jannah.

"Having lived in Abu Dhabi for more than 24 years, we have missed seeing four seasons of the year," said Hanneke,

speaking to Khaleej Times from Norway, where the couple is now. "During this trip, we got to experience all the seasons and we have been able to see a lot of agriculture. However, what we love the most is our ability to go anywhere we want and at any time we want, while having our house with us at all times."

During their time on the road, the Willsons' calendar was packed: They attended their daughter's wedding in Fiji; stopped at picturesque locations; celebrated holidays with family members; visited friends they made in Abu Dhabi; and explored local cuisines.

[Read more...](#)



Luc Albinski (Clarke 1987)

We are delighted to announce that the first of forty schools we plan to rollout in Poland under the "Maple Bear" brand was launched on 3 September in Katowice this year. The opening ceremony was attended by representatives from This Day Foundation that are sponsoring the school rollout, the deputy mayor of the city of Katowice as well as thirty excited parents and children. Unfortunately my "partner in crime" Melvyn Lubega missed the opening but we are hopeful that he will make the opening of Maple Bear Wroclaw and Maple Bear Krakow in September 2024.

[Read more...](#)

IN MEMORIAM

All OJs who have passed

OLD JOHANNIAN

Peter Cousin de Kock (Thomson 1966)
Peter "Slug" Thurlow (Alston 1966)
John Anthony Blyth (Hill 1958)
Peter Harris (Thomson 1956)
Paul Williams (UIV Nash 1988)
Kip Summer (Taught at St John's College)
Chris Couchman (Nash 1967)

DECEASED

May 2023
2023
8 August 2023
6 October 2023
February 2023
27 October 2023
October 2023

THE SCHOOL PRAYER

Lord God our Father, who art
Light and Life and Love, look down
in love upon our College of Saint John:
make it to be a home of religious discipline,
sound learning and goodwill,
which may send forth many
rightly trained in body, mind and character
to serve Thee well in Church and State:
supply our wants,
and give us increase as shall seem Thee good,
and let Thine angels drive away all evil from us;
through Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.



SCHOOL NEWS

Nine Lessons & Carols

St John's College celebrated the Nine Lessons and Carols at the Cathedral Church of St Mary the Virgin in Johannesburg on Sunday, 12 November, the birthplace of St John's College. It was a magnificent performance by our Prep and College musicians under the baton of Dr Oosthuizen and Mr Sidumo Nyamezele.

This was Dr Ben Oosthuizen's final school performance as he retires from his role as Director of Music after 37 years of dedication to St John's College, where he received a standing ovation from all in the cathedral.



School Prefects

It was a proud morning on Thursday, 5 October 2023 in the Memorial Chapel as the new school leadership of St John's pledged to loyally serve the College with dignity and modesty. In his address to the newly inducted School Prefects, Mr Stuart West, Executive Headmaster, told them that their selection is not just a recognition of their abilities but also a call to a greater responsibility to guide their peers and uphold the values of St John's.

"You are now recognised and accepted as School Prefects before the members of this School and in the sight of God, to whose grace and faithfulness we commend you as you seek to fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to you this day," he said.

Ross Rovelli (Head of School), Keamogetswe Motlhamme (Second Prefect), Thomas Kruger (Head of Nash), Jethro Mazhande (Head of Hill), Zain Newman (Head of Clayton), Jacob Smith (Head of Thomson), Zac Erasmus (Head of Alston), Liam Jung (Head of Clarke), Hlobi Mthembu (Head of Hodgson), Greg Pryce (Head of Fleming), Matthew Venter-Clelland (Custos), Nathan Tswatswa (Student Affairs) and Gregory Bradley (Head of Runge).



SCHOOL NEWS

2023 Upper V Speech Day

Students, staff and Upper V parents gathered in Pelicon Quad to the enchanting sounds of the College Symphony Orchestra for Upper V Speech Day, always a highlight on the College calendar.

Guests were warmly welcomed by Mr Peter Wright, Senior Deputy, including the Guest of Honour, Dr Ben Oosthuizen, Director of Music, and Mr Paul Edey, former Headmaster, who received these young men into Remove in 1919. The event was formally opened with a prayer by The Revd Dr Jeremy Jacobs.

Mr Stuart West, Executive Headmaster, delivered a wonderful account of the achievements of St John's College in its 125th year, followed by Mr Thulani Khanyile (Nash 1989), Chairman of Council, who shared his insights with the young men of the College.

Matthew Manghami (UV Hill) and Thandolwethu Kambule (UV Hill) presented a moving excerpt from Julius Caesar as their last-ever school performance.

Just as Taeg Mosehla, Head of School, was about to address the gathering, the heavens opened, prompting a hasty relocation to the Memorial Chapel, where he delivered his address to his peers.

Dr Ben Oosthuizen, who retires after 38 years of esteemed service to music at St John's College at the end of this year, assisted Dr Colleen Henning, Deputy Head: Academics, by conferring the awards in recognition of the achievements of our young men over their College careers.

[Read more...](#)



School leadership 2024



Class of 2023



Thulani Khanyile (Nash 1989), Chair of Council



Matthew Manghami (UV Hill) and Thandolwethu Kambule (UV Hill)



Class of 2023

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR DETAILS

We want to ensure that we have your up-to-date details. If you have not yet completed the form, please do so, and encourage as many other Old Johannians you know to do so too — <https://sjc.co.za/oja>

We really appreciate your assistance and we hope that together we can update our data and improve our communications with you.

Should you wish to chat further, please do not hesitate to email Zelda Siphenuka at info@oja.co.za.

SOCIAL MEDIA

By following our pages, you'll be kept up to date with exciting news, upcoming events and inspiring stories. Spread the word among your fellow Old Johannians and let's strengthen the Old Johannian Network on social media.



www.linkedin.com



www.facebook.com

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Contact: Zelda Siphenuka  info@oja.co.za  011 645 3178

