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# VITA

*Prep Building*

+

Why Our Names Matter

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Waiting for the Shot



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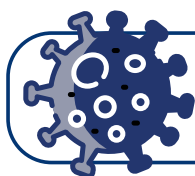
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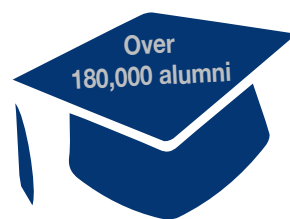
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The aloes at St John's College in magnificent winter bloom below Long Walk.





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Cover and additional photography courtesy of Susie Kirk



Ed's Welcome

Welcome to VITA, featuring the best of St John's - old and new.

Former Head of School Melvyn Lubega deciphers the world of cryptocurrency while Allan Magubane, College Deputy Head, talks about building a community that chooses love and justice. Meet Adv Graham Kerr-Phillips, the newly appointed Chairman of the Old Johannian Association and enjoy the wonderful letters shared by you, our community.

We have lived with COVID-19 for nearly 450 days and our San Sister, Nomathemba Mabaso, reminds us that while COVID waves are inevitable, our actions determine their severity. Dudu Mashele, Prep Deputy Head, explains why our names matter.

The doors to the striking new Prep building opened at the start of the year. We are proud to share pictures and take you on a short video tour of this world-class new structure.

Prof Martin Veller, former Dean of Wits Health Sciences, speaks about the roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine and Prep Second Mistress Margot Long reflects on the metamorphosis in teaching and learning over the past year.

Dr Daniel Pretorius, Heritage Committee Chair, decodes the language of St John's College and introduces the first in a series of College characters from the past.

We highlight OJs in the news and introduce you to the Advancement Office, the team dedicated to ensuring St John's long-term sustainability. They are also the point of contact for any OJ wishing to contact the OJA or School.

We've included QR codes across this edition - scan them with your phone, or click on the link if you're reading the digital edition to access rich, interactive content, from videos to easy opportunities to update your contact details as an OJ or donate to the Foundation.

VITA is for you. Share your stories, letters, opinion pieces and achievements with us. We value hearing from you.

- Jacqui Deeks



# Crypto(geo)graphy

Deciphering the landscape of investing in digital assets backed by the blockchain

By *Melvyn Lubega*

On the eve of penning this article, auction house Christie's sold its first-ever digital-only artwork. It sold for a record US\$69 million. It was a digital mosaic - "Everydays - The First 5000 Days" - created by artist Mike Winkelmann, who is also known as Beeple. For a moment, I flashed back to making subject choices in Lower 4 and wondered what would have transpired if I had pursued that "uncovered potential" my art teacher Mrs Culwick said I had.

Why would someone pay that amount of money for a digital artwork? After all, any of us could go online and search for the image and save it. Herein lies the significance of this sale. This digital artwork was sold using a non-fungible token (NFT), which is based on the same technology as cryptocurrencies. We have all heard of Bitcoin, among other cryptocurrencies, but NFTs are the new-er kid on the block(chain).

The purpose of this article is not to be a primer to the digital assets backed by blockchain technology, nor do those mentioned here present an exhaustive list. The intention is to lay the foundation for conversation and share some initial thoughts on the proliferation of new blockchain-based technologies such as NFTs compared to Bitcoin.

To understand NFTs and other cryptocurrencies, we need to start with recapping what the blockchain is. The blockchain is a digital ledger of transactions (or blocks) that is distributed and duplicated across a network of computers which is not controlled by a single authority. It is public and transparent. With this system of recording information, it is difficult or impossible to alter or "hack" the history of transactions. This security of its ledger gives blockchain and, as a result NFTs, its utility to verify the identity and ownership of digital assets. NFTs can be used for anything digital including videos, drawings, music or a purchase in an online game, but digital artworks are increasingly popular.



Non-fungible tokens cannot be directly exchanged for one another, which is different to other cryptocurrencies. A fungible asset has units that can be readily interchanged – like money. With money, you can exchange two R50 notes for one R100 note. Similarly, you can trade one Bitcoin for another and have the same thing. However, no two NFTs are identical and therefore are non-fungible. You can think of this in the context of airline tickets:

you cannot trade two airline tickets as each ticket has its own unique set of information like its flight number, seat number, passenger name. Each NFT is distinct and can be traced back to its original issuer. This property, together with the fact that they are easily verifiable, is one of the main benefits to collectors and investors who seek to own digital collectibles via NFTs versus physical collectibles such as artworks or rare minted coins – it becomes pointless to create or distribute fakes.

So, it is at this point where it is only right to come clean: when one buys say a digital artwork authenticated by an NFT, you are not buying the digital asset per se. What is actually being bought is a digitally authenticated note of ownership, such that the NFT holder is the official owner of the digital asset.

To return to the original question: why would someone pay for an NFT, especially when the digital asset that has been tokenized can be downloaded or saved by anybody? Ultimately, it is because ownership matters – whether this is driven by social status reasons, the hope of financial return, or something else. The same way someone can take a photo of the Mona Lisa and make a poster and put it up in the house, it is very different from owning and having the original painting.

## “Each NFT is distinct and can be traced back to its original issuer.”

The verdict is still out on whether NFTs will become an established investment option. Like all assets, the price of NFTs is determined by supply and demand. Given the recent attention given to NFTs, one can expect there will be significant growth in the number of NFTs in the coming years, particularly those positioned as investment opportunities. There will likely be an oversupply. While the verdict is still out on their use as an investment it does not mean one cannot buy and collect them simply because one enjoys doing so.

Bitcoin on the other hand has experienced a near ten-fold rise in its value over the past 12 months, and at the time of writing its price was around \$37,000 per Bitcoin. This was driven, in part, by increased investment in Bitcoin by the car manufacturer Tesla as well as other institutional investors. At a characteristic level, Bitcoin is better positioned to be considered an investable asset as it is highly liquid, with many people buying and selling it through a myriad of platforms globally. However, this is tempered by the considerable volatility in the Bitcoin price. Everything considered, its recent meteoric rise had fuelled the narrative in favour of Bitcoin becoming a mainstream asset and alternative investment option. What one can expect to see in the near future is large banks, both locally and abroad, contributing to this by offering brokerage and custodial services for cryptocurrencies.

If one chooses to include Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies and blockchain-backed tokens in an investment portfolio, it would be best considered as a part of your high-risk, high-reward allocation within a well-diversified portfolio. Eleven years young, these are still

relatively new technologies and even the experts aren't sure of how their use will evolve, but the past 12 months have boded well for their continued existence and relevance.

I will leave you with this food for thought: 22 May 2010 was the first recorded Bitcoin transaction, in which US-based Laszlo Hanyecz paid 10 000 Bitcoins to have two pizzas delivered to his house in Florida. Today, those 10 000 Bitcoins are worth over US\$550 million. As always, seek professional advice when making financial decisions – and see you around the block(chain). ●

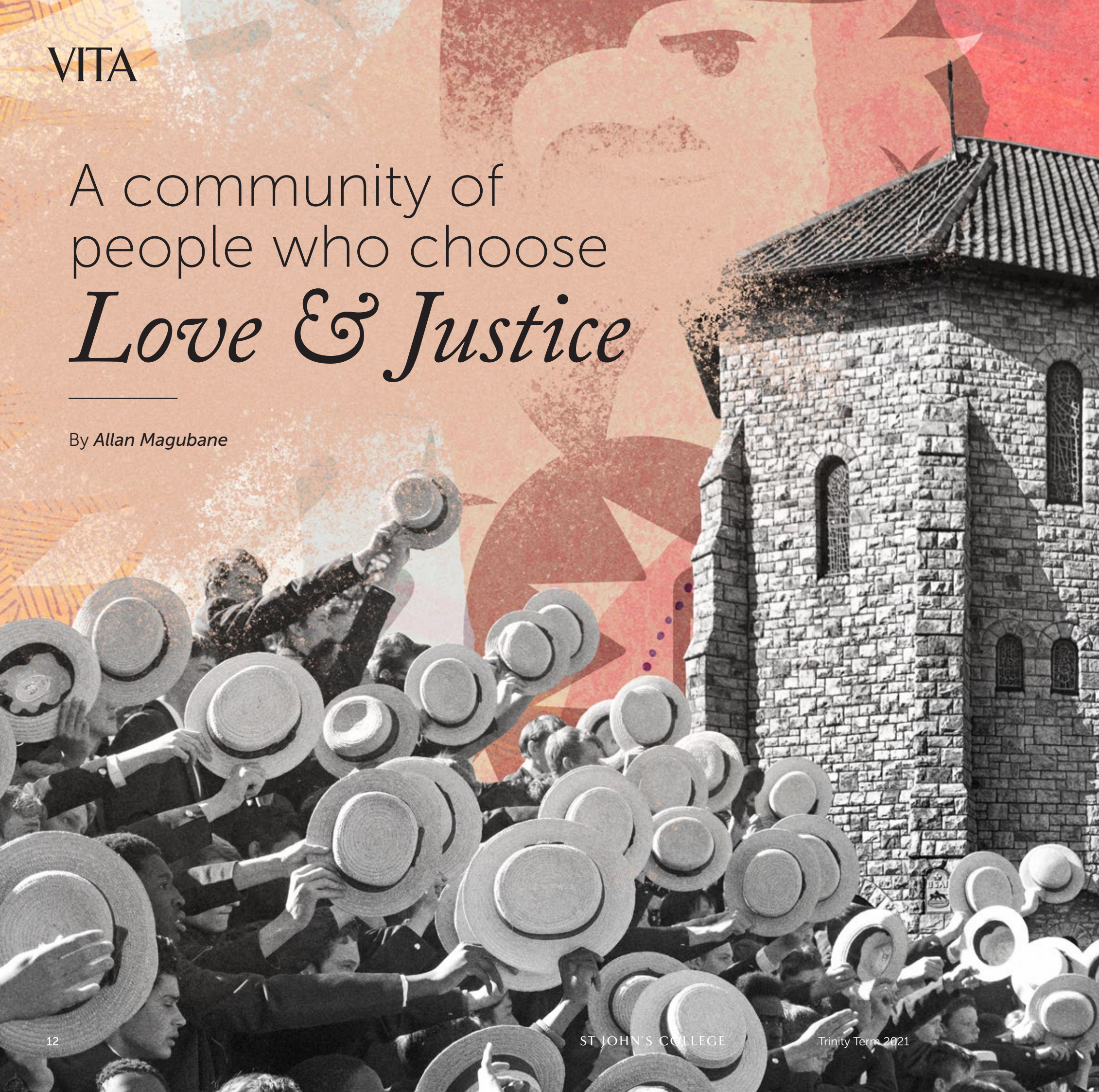


*Melvyn Lubega is a member of the St John's College Council and an Old Johannian, Head of School in 2007. Melvyn is an experienced investor and technology entrepreneur who has successfully built and exited businesses that serve customers around the world. The views expressed here do not constitute financial advice.*



# A community of people who choose *Love & Justice*

By Allan Magubane



I teach about love and justice. Justice is love in public. But, sometimes, I end up crisis managing. That crisis management comes from when we adults, living in this country, have learned particular behaviours and translate them to our children. In some ways we are unable to unlearn the ways in which we are unkind to one another: to draw lines, to build walls that separate us from each other.

And so, the great work of transformation and community engagement at St John's College returns us to the three words under the school badge of the St John's blazer: Lux, Vita, Caritas.

Lux: light. That we are the light of the world. That we must now share and think through the ways in which the world, completely surrounded by various forms of darkness, must come to an understanding and build a future – a just future – that we so desperately need.

Vita: life. In the past year we have seen and been in conversation with life. We've been in conversation with mortality. And for many years before that we have been in conversation, and continue to be in conversation, with how fleeting life can be. For the various forms of violence that we see in the world, whether it is through crime or gender-based violence; whether it is through poverty and the suffering of the people around us.

Caritas: love. A love that we believe God calls us to live and to be. A love that we know God IS.



“When students ask what I do, I tell them I teach about love and justice, but managing crises inevitably comes with the territory.”

How do these translate into a life at St John's College?

From a structural point of view, we have our Anti-Discrimination Policy and our Human Dignity and Anti-Discrimination Policy. These living policies guide our behaviours and seek to undo the ways in which we have been socialised. In our country and the world over, we are socialised to racially prejudice one another - sexism, racism and classism are systems, not events. It is important therefore that there are systemic interventions to help shift and change behaviours. Transformation in our school is now also guided by our Leap of Faith document, the strategic plan for transformation at St John's College.

It is also important that parents reflect on the messages they send to their boys. Of all the different deputies on our team who work so hard at shaping, growing and raising and loving the young men at St John's, I, through my work, am probably one who spends most of the time listening to what the boys hear at home.

I ask that parents reflect on the conversations they have with their young men about this country, about poverty, about some of God's people who stand at the corners of our streets. What is the language we use? How are we framing those narratives?

My job, my role, is to serve. It is to grow exposure, build understanding about the complexities and intersections of race and of gender; to help young men understand what their bodies do, what their minds can contribute to a world filled with gender-based violence. Young men being loved, free to love themselves and show love to the world around them, should be a core endeavour of monastic education in the 21st century.

Transformation and social justice is not about black people. It's not about women. It's not about any marginalised group. It's about a community of people who have chosen justice and love as their ethos and the way of living in the world. Which means that these important political identities are not to be ignored, but understood within the great framework of building justice through love in the world.

I like to encourage parents and students to read this quote, penned at a congregation of the civil rights movement in the United States of America, the Congress of Racial Equity (CORE), in 1961: “We believe in the parenthood of God, the sisterhood and brotherhood of humanity. We believe that all are made creatures of the Divine. All of us dwell on the Earth, free and whole. Children of a common parent sharing in the family of humanity. We are called, therefore, to love our fellow men, all of them; to love our fellow women, all of them; with all the risks that that implies and all the privileges that it promises.”

There is an important ask. We are called to love people with all the risk that implies. The risk of vulnerability. The risk of reflection of where we come from, and all the privileges it promises. Privileges of love. Privileges of being able to drive around our country and not be afraid of each other. Privileges of living in community and giving over to our young men a better world than what we inherited.

Today we can decide - like tomorrow and the day after that - to choose justice, love in public, and to contribute to each other in new ways. To write new codes of interaction and step into new understandings of one another. We will learn what we must learn, as old as we are, that we are never too young to pick up a new idea. That learning about love may well be the most profound act or leap of faith that any of us could do. 🍷



*Mbongeni Allan Magubane is the Deputy Headmaster: Transformation & Community Engagement at St John's College. He is a teacher of social justice, and his research interests include diversity, equity and belonging, and social justice literacy. He also has experience in the corporate and higher and basic education sectors as a leadership, strategy and diversity consultant.*

## Leap of Faith

Our Leap of Faith document is the strategic plan for transformation at St John's College, guided by three core pillars:

### Growth: Cultures of learning

We must learn about the things we have absorbed over time in our childhoods, growing up in South Africa - the most unequal society in the world. What does that mean for each adult? What does that mean for the ways in which we parent? What does that mean for the ways in which we teach? And what are the ways and the shifts required in teaching and in parenting and in loving for our young boys so that we can help them transcend some of the darkness under which we had to grow up.

### Stewardship: A culture of service

Community engagement is an important part of us living not just our Christian ethos, but our social responsibility and our civic responsibility - of realising that being in the most unequal society in the world means we do not just get to sit and enjoy our beautiful estates and privileges and resources. We must use them for the betterment of the society around us. It is crucial that community engagement as an act of stewardship becomes a real part of every Johannian's life - that they go out into the world ready to serve a South Africa - to serve a world - desperately in need of loving hands, of loving eyes, of loving ears.

### Equity: Building cultures of access and fairness

The question of equity must not be confused with equality or sameness. At the heart of building cultures of equity is the question of redress. This, in simple terms, is an acknowledgement that we have not treated people equally or justly in the past and therefore will take steps to redress that, because not all within the community enjoy the social currencies of privilege. Under this pillar is the review and accountable practices in terms of our admissions and staff recruitment policies. It is the review of our sports offerings and investigating sports codes previously unexplored or not offered.



# Service, Connection, Renewal & Enrichment



Meet **Graham Kerr-Phillips**, the newly elected chair of the Old Johannians Association (OJA). Graham is an advocate at the Johannesburg Bar and comes from a dynasty of Old Johannians - one of five brothers who matriculated at St John's, his sons are also Old Johannians. Vita chatted to Graham about his new role.

**Q** Tell us about your family's long association with St John's.

**A** My four brothers - Clifford, Guy, Matthew and Timothy - and I, all matriculated at St John's. We all had different experiences and rated the school differently. But one thing is certain, and I think I speak for them all when I say that our lives were enriched for having been educated at St John's College.

My brother, Clifford, sent his two sons, Richard and Thomas, to St John's. Sadly, they left for New Zealand before matriculating. My two sons, Edward and William, matriculated at St John's. Edward has just completed his master's in architecture, cum laude, at the University of the Witwatersrand and William is studying law at City U in Hong Kong and will be entering his final year. My wife, Frances, currently teaches at St John's.

**Q** What does it mean to you to be a Johannian, and to be taking up the reins as the new OJA chairman?

**A** Every member of my family who has been associated with St John's would testify that they have tasted that indescribable essence of what it is to be associated with the St John's community. We are all grateful for what was given to us. In my working life, I have tried to spread that essence in all my dealings with colleagues in the legal profession and with my clients. I know the same is true for my siblings, sons and nephews in their professional and personal lives.

Service is one of the essential parts of being a Johannian. As chairman, I hope to play a role in securing as many opportunities as possible for young men and women to share the same education my

extended family has received, so that they too may share with their communities the proceeds of the talents they learn, wherever they find themselves in the world. I hope to assist in making the facilities of the school and the association available to all Johannians, who perhaps need to revisit what it is to be an Old Johannian, or simply meet their friends and reminisce.

**Q** Why is an association such as the OJA important to a school?

**A** Through the OJA's activities and functions, it brings Old Johannians back to the College. These are, and should be, times of fun and celebration. Old Boys and girls are the DNA of the College. As Old Johannians recharge their spirits in visiting the school, the students and teachers currently at St John's gain inspiration from what past pupils have achieved. The OJA plays a crucial role in this process of renewal and enrichment.

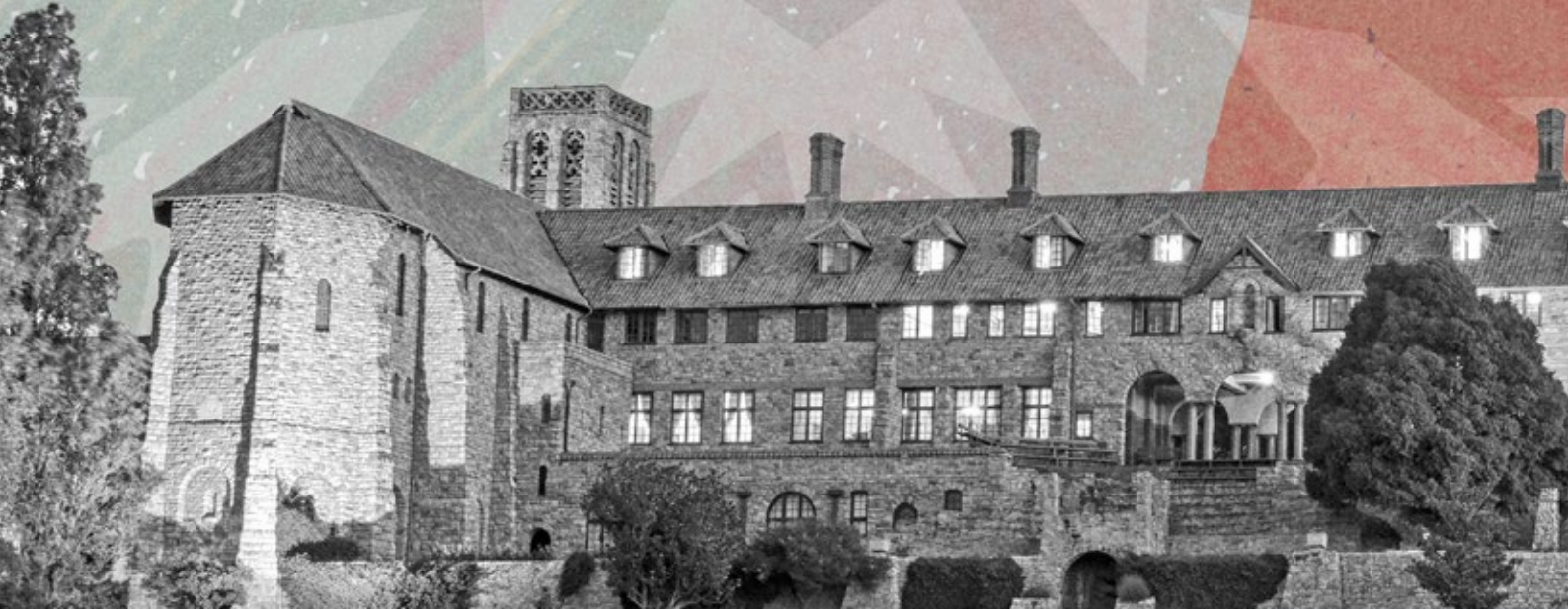
**Q** How do you envisage the OJA evolving during your tenure?

**A** My committee and I wish to increase the OJA's stamp on the development of the College. We see our role becoming increasingly important. I see our role as assisting the school administration in bringing the St John's experience to the widest possible group of young men and women from all walks of life. South Africa needs the services of persons who hold the St John's values. One of the avenues that we, as a committee, can follow is to assist the College administration to raise funds to reach out to this broader group of youth and, in so doing, spread "the St John's way". ❶



# Letters

With Alistair Bashall & John Gear  
Belinda Craig (Barton)  
John Gordon  
Ray Dearlove



## Two OJs fighting up North may seem like an unlikely team

*This is not a story about two special Old Johannians. Many Old Johannians and numerous health professionals have done much more and continue to do amazing things in South African health-care delivery. It is a story of the journey of one student and his mentor. No, this is not about WWII in the 1940s, this is about frontline fighters in the Covid-19 pandemic, write Alistair Bashall (Clarke 2011) and John Gear (Thomson 1960).*



*Prof John Gear bridging the generations in the classroom – chalkboard meets the laptop.*

We met at Tintswalo Hospital, a remote rural hospital in the northeast of Mpumalanga, in 2017. “Ali” was doing his obligatory final-year “rural block” at Wits Medical School. John had established this rural programme at Wits in 1982. Ali was staying at the Wits Rural Facility near the hospital, founded by John and his wife Joan in 1989.

Tintswalo offers a range of research and teaching facilities and a choice of accommodation options. John, now “retired”, was working part-time as the Medical Director of Tshemba Foundation and as one of the foundation’s many volunteering health professionals, which included teaching Wits medical students.

Early in his stay, Ali accompanied John to an outlying rural clinic where he was given an opportunity to see patients and then present them to John for guidance and teaching – an experience that was pivotal in his growing passion for rural health care. During his six-week stay, the friendship grew and John spent every Wednesday teaching Ali and his colleagues. Unbeknown to Ali until his graduation night, John was to be the guest speaker at his medical graduation ceremony. Afterwards, on the steps of the Wits Great Hall, Ali promised John he would return to Tintswalo in his community service year to continue his new-found love for rural medicine.

Ali arrived back at Tintswalo in January 2020 to fulfill his promise, just as Covid-19 struck the world. January and February passed uneventfully, but with a growing recognition that Covid was way bigger than initially feared.

In March John stopped his twice-weekly hospital visits, moving to a virtual and remote role from the relative safety of his home. Ali was thrust onto the frontline of the local Covid-19 response. John remained deeply involved as facilitator and advisor to the Tintswalo team out, of which an emergency response team – Hlayisekani – emerged, working in parallel and in support of the formal provincial structures.

Able led by two dedicated young clinicians, Ali and several other caring and passionate clinicians became key members of this team. Hlayisekani helped Tintswalo and its surrounding clinics prepare in advance for the predicted surge in coronavirus infections. Late nights and weekends were spent marshalling scarce resources into an action plan, all this while managing daily hospital duties. The activities and outcomes were quite wonderful, signalling the power of teamwork combining youthful energy and optimism with sage words of direction from one elderly physician. John was relied upon by Ali and colleagues for advice and his seemingly endless source of specialist contacts – aside from the Covid-19 response, we were still trying to improve the quality of regular hospital services. Referral hospitals were suddenly unable to accept all but the most ill patients – Tintswalo’s young doctors, combined with John’s expert contacts, compensated for this with some creative telemedicine solutions.



*John Gear and Alistair Bashall practising social distancing.*





John had a track record in epidemic management extending back to his childhood: during the key role his father, James (Thomson 1919), played in the development of the polio vaccine; and John's own leading role in managing the Marburg Fever outbreak in Johannesburg in 1975, which again involved a number of OJs including Anthony Gear (Thomson 1963), James Gear and Tom Bothwell (Alston 1941). You can read more about these individuals in Jon Patricios' article Much More than Just a Mafia.

Hlayisekani's successes included fundraising to buy enough personal protective equipment, building an isolation facility and training hospital and clinic staff in both specimen collection and patient care. All was in place before the first surge struck and Tintswalo coped admirably, with Ali a key clinician in the Covid-19 wards where patients were managed highly effectively despite no access to skilled nursing and sophisticated equipment.

Alistair, in consultation with colleagues in other rural hospitals, helped perfect the design of a simple mask respirator, pieced together from disposable hospital supplies, and able to deliver concentrated oxygen with a small amount of positive pressure to keep the lungs expanded. This delayed the need to use invasive ventilation via endotracheal means. Interestingly, this seemingly

desperate approach, developed to compensate for a lack of ventilators and trained staff, has become the norm for Covid-19 treatment worldwide. Avoiding invasive ventilation until absolutely necessary is associated with better patient outcomes. Although the CPAP units used in other settings use considerably less insulation tape to remain airtight.

When the second surge of infections started, Tintswalo was fortunate to still have doctors involved in the first surge to assist. But the Community Service Doctors' contracts ended in December. Ali and his colleague, Sarah Bristow, stayed on as Tshemba Volunteers to assist the new crop of doctors adapt and cope in a resource-scarce environment. Their generosity was rewarded when (thanks to John), Right to Care, a leading health rights and health-care delivery foundation, secured them salaries, allowing them to stay on a little longer. The second surge was more calamitous, but with Ali's and Sarah's presence, maturity and compassion, Tintswalo coped, despite floundering at times.

It has been an ordinary and yet extraordinary story of an extraordinary time in global health. Two Old Johannians were there and continue to be there, fighting for a better ending, particularly for those non-Covid patients who were almost forgotten in the uni-dimensional focus on Covid.



The story is yet to end. The catastrophic costs of Covid will be measured in jobs lost, a surge in psychological trauma, much of it long-lasting, other illnesses neglected, domestic violence and an economy way more in need of CPAP than the relatively few patients we did help. History will judge the response to Covid-19 harshly, despite the many remarkable scientific achievements, most notable of which has been vaccine development.

*John Gear was the recipient of the Golden Eagle Award in 2018*

## Belinda Craig (Barton)

(Sixth Form Thomson 1982/3)  
London, United Kingdom

Dear Vita

I attended St John's VIth form in 1982/3. Back then it was regarded as a "Boys' School" with Jan Breitenbach as Head. He was a lovely man and very keen on girls attending the school.

My father worked in the textile industry and my family had relocated from Hong Kong to Johannesburg. Having completed my O Levels in Hong Kong I didn't really understand the Matriculation system and wanted to sit A Levels. St John's was the only place which could accommodate this.

With only 12 female A-Level students in a school and hundreds of boys, the girls were a shock to the establishment. The boys loved us and most of the staff feared us. There was no girls school uniform. We were constantly reminded we were "ladies" and had to dress appropriately, which meant "capped sleeved tops and skirts no higher than the knee" and definitely no make-up or outlandish hairstyles.

St John's wasn't just about our academic education. We had plenty of social time; our own common room in which all the VIth formers congregated when we weren't



in lessons. A tray of Chelsea buns was brought in for us to eat every day and we had copious tea and coffee. We had a big bay window in the common room, which we adorned with news articles and posters. We called it "The Alternative Corner". I remember we had a Free Nelson Mandela poster on the wall and articles on the Sharpeville Massacre.

As a teenager who had grown up in the UK and moved to a very cosmopolitan Hong Kong at 12, it was very strange relocating to Johannesburg and trying to adjust to a new set of rules. I didn't understand apartheid and didn't want to. Separate public transport, separate entrances to shops and rules about where you could go and with whom.

We had a handful of black students in VIth Form who were referred to as the "Shell Scholars" - bright young men whose education was bursary funded by Shell. I became quite friendly with one, played chess with him at lunch times and was warned from pursuing the relationship any further because I was a "white" girl, and he was a "black" boy. I remember sneaking into invitation-only parties to listen to live Kwela music. People enjoying themselves, joined through a love of music. We were young but not carefree. There were consequences we were well aware of.

It doesn't sound daring now but in the thick of apartheid we all would have been in serious trouble if caught in a police raid. Inconceivable now that we had to sneak around like that, but that was "normal" in 1980s South Africa.



I have a love of art and literature and naturally pursued these at A level. I left St John's to study Fine Art at Wits. You think your career path is predictable at 18 – that you will have a career in your chosen field, and you'll be successful. I was offered my first job in my preferred field – as a graphic designer – for a local TV station in the UK. I turned it down to become a police officer and then went into social work after my son was born.

I'm 56 now and semi-retired, but I'm still in touch with many of my old classmates from my St John's days and still think of myself as a Johannian. My career certainly didn't follow the path I expected, but I have enjoyed every job I've had and I'm happy. I suppose the legacy St John's has given me is that you will experience change throughout your life. It's up to you to embrace it and not to fear it.

## John Gordon

(Nash 1953)  
Johannesburg

Dear Vita

Ben Oosthuizen's music department and the whole team involved produced a magnificent performance for the online version of Nine Lessons and Carols, and congratulations to all concerned. It came at precisely the right time to bolster the religious aspect of Christmas for many. It was special for me to suddenly see my grandson James reading the Fourth Lesson so beautifully as he had not told us he was reading.

I would like to fill in some historical background. In 1947, when I was a boarder in L4 and right up to the late 1970s, the school year ended early in December with Speech Day, attended by the Bishop and the whole school – including the Matrics, who were not dismissed before the official end to the school year. The school was much smaller and there were only Nash, Hill, Thomson and Alston Houses.



Proud Johannians: John Gordon (OJ, Nash, 1953), Mark Gordon (OJ, Thomson, 1978)

Nicholas Gordon, (OJ, Thomson, 2010) and James Gordon (UV, Head of Thomson)

To accommodate numbers Nash/Thomson and Hill/Alston combined for various events and activities including the Carol Service.

There were three services in one week after exams. One attended by Nash/Thomson with parents and some OJs. One attended by Hill/Alston with parents and some OJs. One open service in the Cathedral due to the demand for seats by parents, past parents, OJs and friends of the school who could not be accommodated in the services at the school. The choir included Prep boys and the lessons were read by the School prefects.

This format continued until the school grew too large and more Houses were added.



## Ray Dearlove

(Hill 1965)  
Sydney, Australia

Dear Vita

I have been writing poetry for many years, mainly about friends and family, for special occasions and the family dogs. In 2013, I became more involved in and informed about the crisis engulfing rhinos, and started writing about these iconic animals, earning the moniker "Rhino Ray".

I wrote this poem while contemplating the impact of Covid.

### COVID 19 (Sydney 2020)

*As we sit in not so splendid isolation.  
Our days and nights subsumed by the dreaded virus. Confined to our homes and fear across the nation. Learning some harsh lessons, it's not all about us. We yearn for the peace of the bush and all. We dream of the freedom of travel. We long for the fish eagle's call*

*When will this situation unravel?*

*Then we pause for a while and consider our circumstance. We have a home, a freezer, power and light. What of those less fortunate, do they have any chance? Each day is about survival, now stop and consider their plight.*

*Our healthcare is world class, our doctors and nurses the best. The speed and intensity of this virus puts all to the test. Consider the poor, the homeless and the lonely. No power, no doctors, no clean water, death may come slowly. So as this terrible disease takes its awful toll. Nobody is spared, but mostly the frail and the old. There is no other place in the world that I would rather be. But on this special island that is girt by sea.*



# Obituaries



*Two Peters, well-known members of the Louis Trichardt community, recently passed within 10 hours of each other. Both Old Johannians, 84-year Peter Knott (House, Year) died on 27 November 2020, and 80-year-old Peter Henning (House, Year) passed on 28 November 2020. Both men were born in Louis Trichardt and had been friends since childhood.*



Peter Henning (Left) & Peter Knott (Right)



## Peter Benjamin Knott

(23 SEP 1936 – 27 NOV 2020)

UIV 1953 | Hill

**Peter Benjamin Knott** died on Friday, 27 November 2020, at his home in Louis Trichardt, surrounded by family. Peter was born in Louis Trichardt. After completing his schooling, he started farming with his father, the late Herbert Benjamin Knott, in the Soutpansberg district, Alldays, Tshipise and then what was called Southern Rhodesia. In 1960, he married Maureen Knott (née Hacksley) and the couple celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary shortly before his passing.

Peter farmed with citrus, avocados, macadamias, cattle, and game on various farms in the Soutpansberg district. As an avid conservationist and hunter, he established Greater Kuduland Safaris after converting his cattle ranch into a game reserve in 1974. A pioneer in the industry, Peter held the very first game auction in South Africa that same year after successfully introducing plains game species onto the reserve, including kudu, gemsbuck, red hartebeest, giraffe, eland, and wildebeest. The first clean herd of Cape buffalo was introduced in 1976, followed by the white rhino in 1977 and roan antelope in 1988.

“Peter lived a full, prosperous and exciting life and has left behind an incredible legacy of honour, determination, respect, gratitude and love, that will never be forgotten. A true gentleman that will be sorely missed,” said the family.

He leaves his wife, Maureen, their four children Howard, Denise, Lindy and Wendy, along with his 13 grandchildren and two great-grandsons.



## Peter Bernhard Henning

(5 MAY 1940 – 28 NOV 2020)

1957 | Nash

**Peter Henning** died peacefully in the early hours of Saturday, 28 November 2020, after a short, fierce battle with pancreatic cancer. Peter was born at Elim Hospital and grew up on the farm Sweetwaters with his older brothers, Poog and John.

His schooling to Standard 5 (Grade 7) was at Laerskool Louis Trichardt, then he matriculated from St John's College in Johannesburg. He spent the next three years at Tuks, studying Law. Before finishing, he left for Sweetwaters to take charge of the dairy.

His application and interviews in former Rhodesia were successful and he was awarded a sugar farm in 1965 with a guarantee of £8000 from his father. In November of that year, UDI (Unilateral Declaration of Independence) was declared, cutting his sugar quota because of sanctions. In 1967, he ploughed up half of the new sugarcane for cash crops. Four years later he bought the neighbours' property in a 50% partnership with his brother John.

In the same year, the bush war accelerated in the South Eastern Lowveld and in the latter part of 1977, a large Joint Operational Command was set up at Buffalo Range Airport. Peter later became a Flight Lieutenant in charge of the Air Force Reserve.

In 1979, he relocated his family to Louis Trichardt to assist in persuading the South African government not to appropriate the family farm. He simultaneously purchased Masapas Ranch 80km north of Chiredzi (Zimbabwe) for cattle. It subsequently became a game property.

After a two-year drought in the Lowveld and after his three children had completed their schooling, Peter moved back to Chiredzi in 1994, where he was instrumental in establishing the Savé Valley Conservancy, contributing to its early development and formation, being the largest private wildlife conservancy in the region.

In 2000, the farm invasions began and finally he was pegged for A2 squatters in 2004. After many successful court cases, the family managed to stay in the homestead until 2009, when they were forced to return to South Africa or face arrest for staying in his property/homestead “illegally”.

The family returned to Louis Trichardt, fighting for justice from afar, returning every six weeks to the Chiredzi Magistrate's Court for three years to remain in the homestead. In December of 2012, he was sentenced to \$100 or two weeks in jail. Peter continued to fight tirelessly for justice.

The family said they were grateful to the following medical practitioners and care givers, namely Dr Casper Venter, Dr Anton Stroebe, Elsabe Wonde and Jernay McCleod.

He is survived by his wife Moraig Henning, son Greig Henning, daughters Liesl Biehn and Bronwyn Henning and granddaughter Caitlin Biehn.

*This is an abridged version of the obituary which first appeared in Zoutpansberger.*





## Andrew Philip Faure Williamson

(14 JUL 1942 - 28 DEC 2020)

**Andrew Philip Faure Williamson**, who has died aged 78, distinguished himself both as a lawyer in several key anti-apartheid trials in South Africa and as a labour and employment lawyer of significance in the UK.

His immediate family – widow Jill, daughter Jessica and son Matthew – and many friends remember him as a loving and deeply loyal character holding strong views delivered with vigour. He was an all-rounder: a talented sportsman excelling in cricket and a keen golfer, which included his captaincy of the Royal Ashdown Golf Club in Sussex in 2002. He was immersed in history, wildlife and the African bush and was a lover of fine wines.

His strong opposition to apartheid persuaded him to leave South Africa in 1978 and start a new life in the UK. During more than two decades as a solicitor in Britain, he specialised in high-profile work as The Guardian’s legal adviser, and in the media industry and especially corporate take-overs and disputes.

Born in South Africa to appeal court judge Arthur Faure Williamson and Erna Templin, Williamson married Patricia Jill Denoon in 1968. She was awarded an OBE (2013) for her charitable work on human rights and the rule of law in South Africa.

During his legal career in South Africa, Williamson represented South African author and anti-apartheid activist Breyten Breytenbach in his sensational trial in

1975 under the draconian Terrorism Act which was frequently used to criminalise opponents of apartheid. Breytenbach was sentenced to nine years in prison — avoiding the death penalty provided for by the act — for seeking to launch a “white” wing of the outlawed African National Congress of Nelson Mandela which sought to overthrow the white minority government in South Africa.

Diplomatic pressure from France led to Breytenbach’s early release in 1982 and one of his first ports of call on arriving in the UK in 1983 was to accept an invitation to attend a dinner at the Williamson family home in Sussex to pay tribute to the lawyer who had defended him against what could have been a far harsher sentence.

On hearing of Williamson’s death, Breytenbach wrote expressing his shock and of contending with a “flood of memories”. “Andrew was that rarest among humans wherever and whenever — a species that seems to have died out: an honourable and decent man. I wish I’d known him far better. Isn’t it terrible that one misses most that which cannot be recuperated?”

Williamson was instructing solicitor to the distinguished barrister Sir Sydney Kentridge in several cases in South Africa and the two lawyers maintained a close friendship after they both moved to the UK in the late 1970s.

“Andrew had a lively sense of humour. But he was serious about serious things, and, indeed, pugnacious when circumstances called for it – as they frequently did in the apartheid years,” said Sir Sydney, who won international acclaim for his devastating cross-examination of the South African security police inquest into the death in detention of Black Consciousness Movement leader Stephen Bantu Biko.

Williamson continued his human rights commitment through his voluntary work in the UK, first of the Legal Assistance Trust set up and directed by his wife Jill Williamson OBE.

Later in 2012, Williamson became a trustee and treasurer of the merged Canon Collins Education and Legal Assistance Trust.

## “Anti-apartheid lawyer and UK solicitor Andrew Williamson was an all-rounder, an honest and decent man.”

Williamson was an extraordinary character who lived life to the full. He was both volatile and spiritually generous, and his humanity always transcended his passionate dislikes, which were as ardent as his likes.

From retirement in 2002, Williamson channelled much of his formidable intellectual energy into nature and climate crises. He began to correspond with the noted environmentalist, Jonathon Porritt, and was very supportive of Porritt’s organisation Forum for the Future. Porritt describes their correspondence as, “sharing the woes of the world – and reasons to be cheerful!” and when remembering their conversations about nature and climate said, “three words come to mind: ‘passion, pragmatism and jollification’”.

He is survived by his wife Jill, daughter Jessica, son Matthew, granddaughters Lyra and Rosie and grandson Nathaniel.

*This is an abridged version of the obituary, which first appeared in the Daily Maverick.*

*John Battersby is a former editor of The Sunday Independent in Johannesburg and a former southern African correspondent of The New York Times and The Christian Science Monitor. He and his family have been close friends of Williamson and his family spanning four decades.*

### Mark Andrew Mosely Moses

(6 AUG 1961 - FEB 2021)

Matric 1979 | Nash

### Rodger Martin

(4 MAR 1948 - 14 MAY 2021)

Matric 1965 | Clayton

### Anthony Wayne Babb

(12 JUL 1939 - 19 APR 2021)

Matric 1956, Sixth Form 1957 | Thomson

### Leonard George Baerveldt

(2 NOV 1945 - 14 APR 2021)

Matric 1961 | Thomson

### Raymond George Powter

(7 MAR 1935 - 29 MAR 2021)

Matric 1952 | Nash

### Ian Garth Macfarlane

(24 JAN 1950 - 23 MAR 2021)

Matric 1968 | Clayton

### John Armstrong Lamb

(11 NOV 1934 - 18 FEB 2021)

Matric 1951 | Alston

### Stanley Arthur Russell Cooke

(18 MAR 1932 - 2 FEB 2021)

Matric 1949 and Sixth Form 1950/1951 | Nash

### Sandile Sibeko

(12 JUN 1978 - 23 JAN 2021)

UIV, 1996 | Nash

### Jake Visser

(22 MAR 2007 - 20 JAN 2021)

Remove, 2021 | Clarke

### Robert Hartley

(20 MAY 1937 - 12 JAN 2021)

Matric 1955 | Hill



# Step Up

By *Nomathemba Mabaso*

We must all exercise self-control and selflessness as South Africa approaches a third wave, writes **Sister Nomathemba Mabaso**, School Nurse at St John's College

With the news of patient zero on 5 March last year, there was a sense of cautious anxiety as we began to plan for the worst and develop mitigating policies and protocols. As the School Nurse, heading up the St John's College Sanatorium, I was approached by our compliance manager to be part of our Covid-19 Management Team, which also comprised representatives from the Sixth Form, College, Preparatory and Pre-preparatory schools, and the sports department.

Having a co-ordinating body was crucial to make sure we all remained abreast of the latest information, were able to align our responses to medical and governmental advice and regulations, and were able to communicate effectively with our students, staff, parents and government departments.

We had to remain level-headed and give medical direction to the St John's community. We provided education and advice regarding testing; when to test, where, who needed testing, the difference between isolation and quarantine and the number of days associated with these terms.

While schools were closed during the national lockdown, the team worked tirelessly to prepare the School for the students' safe return. We set up screening stations at all campus entrances, issued a mobile app to compile risk and screening information in a central database, entrenched social-distancing and hygiene protocols across the school, and established a well-resourced Covid-19 Clinic and a government-approved quarantine site.

When our students returned in June 2020 we were excited and anxious to welcome them back. The lifeblood of our school, their wellbeing was, of course, our first priority, followed by returning as best we could to our regular academic programme.

As we settled into this strange new routine, I found that students and staff would visit me to ask questions, to discuss their fears, and sometimes just to talk. We have all hungered, not just for knowledge, but for human connection. I was no different, and am grateful for my colleagues in the Sanatorium who assisted and supported me with warmth and skill. We felt the burden of our responsibility keenly but were also gratified that the school and parents entrusted us with their children's health and safety.

It might sound clichéd, but St John's is a family. We felt the responsibility of our family to remain selfless enough to protect one another. We understood early on that the safety of all depends on us each living up to our standards of responsibility and care.

I have been profoundly impressed over the past year by the willingness of all parties to listen, to understand and to make necessary sacrifices to ensure the safety of our people. The school has spared no expense to ensure we have a well-resourced and comprehensive set of response mechanisms and structures in place. The Departments of Education, Health and Environmental Affairs have been supportive and helpful in co-ordinating



#CovidAffectsEveryone



“An effort of will is needed, once more, to keep those in our care safe.

responses across the education sector. We have felt part of something unified, which exists only to serve and protect us all. It has been gratifying.

At this stage, increasing Covid-19 case numbers across the country appear to indicate the start of the anticipated third wave. In May, St John's discovered a positive case, and then, through our close-contact tracing protocol, 10 additional cases. We successfully quarantined those at possible risk and isolated those who tested positive. We worked closely with the departments of Health and Basic Education, who congratulated us on our response. The situation is under control and has not impacted the academic programme. But it is a reminder that the pandemic's threat has not abated.

It is important to remember that these waves are inevitable. Their appearance, and severity, are determined by our actions. We have lived with the threat of Covid-19 for more than a year. We are all tired, whether or not we're at the front lines of Covid-19 prevention. But complacency will only make our situation worse.

Parents: if your children are unwell, keep them at home. And please limit high-risk behaviour outside of the school. Students: please don't treat screening processes and protocols as meaningless formalities. We're trying to protect one another; be honest in your self-assessments. Staff must continue to sanitise and enforce social distancing. And we all need to hold one another to account.

We all know the steps we must take to ensure the third wave is less severe than the previous two. These simple but effective steps are not new or surprising. What it does take is an effort of will – the will to do what is inconvenient or troublesome, the will to be selfless and the will to put the needs of our collective community above our own.

But given my experience since March last year, I know this selflessness is within our reach. I have been impressed, time and time again, by the kindness, care and respect we have shown one another. It's time to show that again.



## Covid Pledge Video



As we combat Covid fatigue after more than 420 days of living with the virus, and try to keep community morale up as our students process the loss of their traditional sports fixtures and other activities this Trinity Term, we cannot afford to become complacent or to let our guard down.

The student leadership has pledged their dedication and commitment to a safe St John's ... do you?

# MAKE ST JOHN'S COLLEGE YOUR BENEFICIARY



TAP, FLASH & GIVE  
to the St John's College  
community engagement initiatives

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ST JOHN'S COLLEGE



MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet  
MAKE EVERY SWIPE COUNT



# Why Our Names Matter

(And How We Say Them)

By *Dudu Mashele*

I always begin my Social Civic Justice through Christ classes – aimed at teaching our St John's boys to be good, moral, ethical people – by introducing myself. I tell the boys that my name is Duduzile, and I explain why my parents gave me the name.

It's a sad story – and a happy one.

When I was born, my mother and father were still mourning the loss of my baby sister – who passed away when she was just nine months old. They called me Duduzile, which means to provide comfort. My birth, my parents often told me growing up, brought them much comfort and allowed them to deal with the pain of their loss.

I tell the boys in my classes that to mispronounce my name or to get it wrong shows a lack of respect to my parents and to me. Names are important. They are our identity.

However, I temper this talk with two words used by the Nigerian author, Chimamanda Adichie, when she addressed the graduating Harvard class of 2018: intention and context. She was at pains to point out that intention and context should never be disregarded.

In her speech, she talked about a woman who was tasked with introducing her at a public event. The presenter had spent time practising Chimamanda's name but became flustered and called her Chimichanga (a Mexican burrito) instead. But, the author said, the presenter's intention



was good – she had tried. It was a mistake, not malice. Like Chimamanda, I believe that trying to learn how to pronounce a name that does not trip easily off the tongue makes a difference.

I recently ran a course for the teachers at St Johns in which I explained why it is essential for them to pronounce students' names as close to how they say it themselves as possible. I did this because I often get voice notes from teachers asking me to help them pronounce a difficult name, usually an African one.

The importance of getting names right, of meeting the requirement on where the emphasis is placed, the pronouncement of the sibilants or the tongue-twisting of a click is often borne out during my SCJC sessions. I ask the boys to introduce themselves to their classmates; to say their name, surname and clan name as well as the meaning of their name. If they want, they can give their parents' names and those of their siblings (one boy even described how his baby sister was given a name that translated into Unexpected because she was a surprise).

I firmly believe that teaching is about relationships. Therefore, it's of critical importance for teachers to begin their interaction with the students by investing time in learning about them. I encourage teachers to take all the time they need to do this.

Once the boys know that Ma'am or Sir is interested in getting to know them, to say their name accurately, I find that problems associated with discipline often vanish. It's about developing and demonstrating mutual respect.

A teacher told me the story of a boy with a particularly difficult Russian name. The teacher repeatedly asked how to pronounce his name, practised over and over, finally getting the pronunciation right. Her reward when she did? He beamed.

We, here at St John's, are on the path of transformation. We are on a journey to recognise, acknowledge and appreciate our diversity. Our aim is to let our students know that all boys matter.

Over the years, the school has grown from strength to strength as the levels of diversity have improved. We have travelled the path of transformation with complete focus and purpose and the results are now visible on our campuses.

The SCJC is there to ensure that the young men who go through our academy of learning know what constitutes the kind of behaviour expected of a "good" man. Being given the respect that they deserve – which starts with teachers and their fellow students pronouncing their name correctly – is part of that scenario. It is about learning and practising respect, dignity and the acceptance of difference.

We've come a long way from the days when issues such as the magnitude of correct name pronunciation were largely ignored – not necessarily on purpose, but thoughtlessly. I am proud that we at St John's have taken the oblivion of the past and turned it into a programme that creates a respectful environment.

Children are often the product of their families – the dining-table talk reflects in their opinions. It is my fervent hope that the kind of behaviour practised on our grounds provides new conversation topics for the family dinner table too; that transformation goes beyond the borders of St John's.

Like Chimamanda Adichie, I place high store in trying. For the teacher or the student to be seen to be trying acknowledges the fact that they know the importance of getting it right. ●

*Dudu Mashele is Deputy Head: Transformation, Diversity and Inclusion at St John's Preparatory and heads up Social Civic Justice through Christ (SCJC). She has a distinguished 17-year tenure at St John's.*

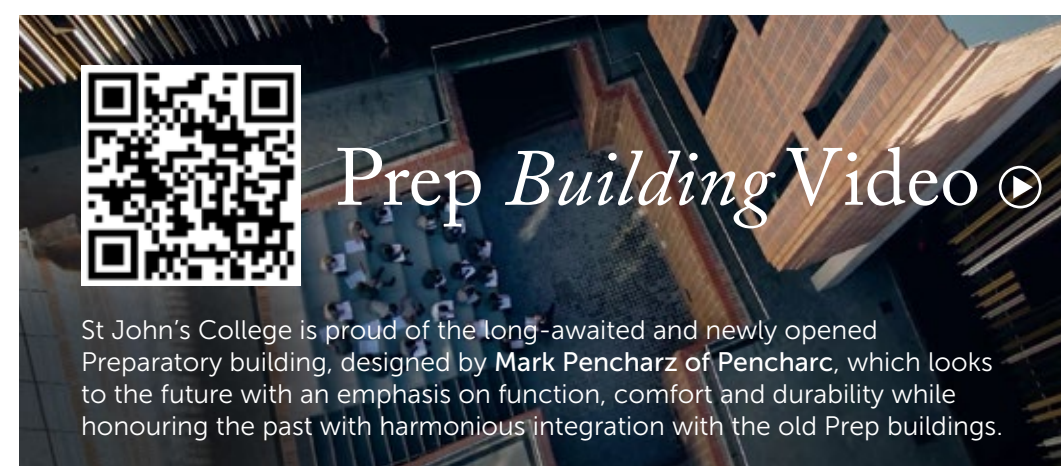


# Our new *Prep Building*

A Visual Journey

St John's College is proud of its striking new Preparatory building. The design, by Mark Pencharz of Pencharc, looks to the future with an emphasis on function, comfort and durability, while honouring the past through the harmonious integration of the new building with the older facilities.





## Prep Building Video

St John's College is proud of the long-awaited and newly opened Preparatory building, designed by **Mark Pencharz** of **Pencharc**, which looks to the future with an emphasis on function, comfort and durability while honouring the past with harmonious integration with the old Prep buildings.



# Waiting for the Shot...

*As countries around the world roll out their Covid-19 vaccine programmes, Vita chats to Prof Martin Veller, previous dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the University of the Witwatersrand.*



**Q: What has proved to be the surprise “silver lining” of Covid-19, in what has otherwise been an enormously challenging, turbulent and tragic time?**

A: The collaboration, speed and commitment demonstrated by the health sciences community has been remarkable. This is evident on the one hand, by the remarkable agility of the medical community to develop treatment protocols for a new disease that rapidly resulted in improved clinical outcomes. On the other hand that by early 2021, just one year after the Sars-CoV-2 virus was discovered, multiple vaccines using different technologies were already being administered. In addition, some of these vaccines are already being adapted to deal with the emerging Sars-CoV-2 variants which, not surprisingly, also have changing antigenic profiles. These developments have demonstrated what is possible given new technologies, adequate resources, a sense of urgency

and collective will. By comparison, the previous fastest vaccine development - for mumps in the 1960s - took four years from virus sampling to vaccine approval. The advances made in vaccine science are important, as it is likely that other widespread infectious diseases will emerge with increasing frequency.

**Q: What is the downside to the rollout of the Covid-19 vaccine?**

A: As such there is no downside to rolling out effective vaccines but vaccine rollouts will always be controversial. For example, at this early stage, demand for vaccines still outstrips supply. Rich countries have pre-ordered consignments well in excess of their needs, leading to severe criticism from the World Health Organisation (WHO) as it undermines access for poorer countries. WHO head Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has called the vaccine scramble a “catastrophic moral failure”.

Further, some countries have not planned appropriately, which has resulted in substantial delays in developing appropriate population-wide immunity. The effect of this is not only that the population's health is affected but that the negative impact the pandemic has had on the economy is prolonged.

The other substantial concern related to the vaccine rollout is the low level of trust that many societies have in mass vaccinations campaigns. The most important approach to address this is by how society leadership behaves and how they communicate on this topic. That political innuendo is particularly dangerous when it does not align with the principles of public health, in times such as these, has clearly caused much suffering.

**Q: What hope do vaccines offer for a “normalised” future?**

A: Vaccines will definitely be a major part of restoring a balance. In South Africa, we can expect to see a greater normalisation of social and economic life after roughly two-thirds of the population is immunised against Covid-19, keeping in mind that more infectious virus strains need a higher proportion of the population to be simultaneously immune to reach “herd immunity”. The slow start to the vaccine programme in South Africa means we are unlikely to see a more normal life this year. It is also important to remember, and Covid-19 certainly highlighted this fact, that South Africa does not exist in isolation. All countries, globally, need to be focussed on vaccinating their people for the pandemic to finally end.

**Q: Why is the anti-vaccination narrative so dangerous?**

A: Because it is anti-fact and puts lives at risk. The approved vaccines have passed rigorous safety reviews and have been shown to be effective. This has been particularly important when looking at the new technologies used for the development of some of the vaccines. No medical intervention can

be absolutely safe, and a very small proportion of people will have complications that are severe. The value of these vaccines in reducing the number of people developing severe complications and dying from Covid-19 will, however, be multiple magnitudes higher. It is therefore extremely disheartening to see the spreading misinformation and conspiracy theories about the virus and its vaccine. History has proved the efficacy of vaccines in infectious diseases, to claim otherwise is ignorant and reckless. ▼



*Prof Martin Veller is the former Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Wits University. Martin has a long history with St John's. His two sons, Marcus and Carl, matriculated from the College in 2005 and 2006, respectively, and he is a previous Chairman of the Parents' Association. He has served as a member of the St John's College Council twice.*



# A Metamorphosis in Teaching & Learning

*The Covid-19 pandemic has been the greatest disruptor to education around the world in recent history. It has sparked a metamorphosis in the way teachers teach and students learn, writes **Margot Long**, Second Mistress: Academics & Staff Learning, St John's Preparatory School.*

For years, educators have discussed the importance of 21st-century skills in education, and the need to better merge content acquisition with the skills students need to thrive in a rapidly changing world. The importance of these skills has been highlighted very clearly through the pandemic, for teachers and students alike.

Given the speed at which our teachers had to migrate and adapt to an online learning programme, flexibility and agility were important skills as we tried to predict the way forward, and constantly to adapt our programme to keep ahead of the changes. Collaboration with teaching colleagues was key in finding solutions that worked. Teachers taught teachers, or learned and shared from online resources, developing 'just-in-time learning' skills as the need arose. Global awareness of how other schools were managing saved so much time and we gained tremendous insight through many webinars, workshops, publications and conversations with IBSC colleagues and friends around the world.

The importance of communication and critical reflection was paramount. Regular open and honest communication with all stakeholders alleviated anxiety and helped build trust. We collected data from our parents as to what was working well and what needed improvement in the online learning space. While many schools offered a more asynchronous model, we soon realised that with many of our parents under pressure working from home, or working away from home as key workers, teachers needed to be available to boys throughout the morning, taking a more synchronous approach. This need to maintain open and effective feedback loops is critical to ensure programmes continue to improve, whether online or face-to-face.



Grit and perseverance have been displayed by teachers and students alike through this time: persisting through the challenges of online learning and tech challenges; adapting to mask wearing and the constant check-in and sanitising protocols; managing social distancing restrictions and the sense of disconnection and isolation that can bring; the list is long. Learning that difficult things happen in life that are not ours to control is important. We learn then too that a growth mindset enables us to find the positives in any situation and to discover our problem-solving strengths during these tough times.

We have learnt that school is not just a set of buildings – it’s about relationships, engagement and ideas. Our teachers continue to be our most precious asset. While technology is a valuable tool, connections and relationships remain vital for successful learning. Research has shown that boys are relational learners – they learn from teachers who know them and care about them; who are firm but don’t sweat the small stuff; who laugh and play; and who ultimately earn and deserve their trust. Psychologist Michael Reichart’s words resonate: “Boys experience their teachers before they experience the lessons they teach.”

Technology needs to be used thoughtfully and deliberately to enhance what teachers do. There are many successful

examples of this, which will be retained and refined. A more blended approach in future is inevitable.

It is important to acknowledge the challenges to health and wellbeing faced by our teachers, our boys, and their families. Learning to acknowledge that at times we all need support may help us develop a better understanding of mental health and stress, develop health and wellness literacy, and ensure that appropriate structures are put in place to help.

Equity and access have become increasingly relevant in education. Disparities created by unequal access to devices, high data costs, unpredictable connectivity, varying degrees of parental support, different working conditions in homes, and so on, have focused the spotlight on these challenges. For example, how can online assessment be fair if there are so many different factors at play? How do we ensure that boys with learning difficulties and who may struggle to self-manage also thrive in these new learning spaces? How do we measure student success going forward? How do we adapt our learning goals?

There is much work to be done, and much to be discovered. I am confident that with our talented team of leaders and teachers, our extraordinary and enthusiastic boys, and the wonderful new Prep buildings we teach in, tremendous learning and wonderful achievements lie ahead. **V**



**Margot Long** is the Second Mistress: Academics at the Prep, and runs the staff professional learning programme as well as the intern programme. She has held this position for 15 years and is particularly passionate about teaching English. She has worked for 13 years as the Action Research Programme Director for the International Coalition of Boys Schools and has recently moved across to assist the National Coalition of Girls’ Schools to establish a similar global programme.

## Teachers reflect on online teaching...

“Connection and relationships are most important. You cannot learn from someone you don’t know and trust. Relationships are the foundation of rich learning.”

- **Chris Hoy**

“I learned to use technology to really amplify the boys’ learning experience.”

- **Vincent Masango**

“We put into practice many new and different online platforms we had heard about in staff learning sessions but that we had not had time to actually use before. Some boys are better suited to online learning so making more use of tech in the physical classroom is beneficial.”

- **Jessica Gultig**

“The most valuable lesson was to learn how to be patient, to listen, and let others speak before you could do so yourself.”

- **Patience Leshaba**

“Teaching online made me look at my own content with fresh eyes.”

- **Kuhle Tyembile**

“I learned that it is possible to maintain connections remotely, even though they may be extremely different to what we are used to.”

- **Hugo Meirim**

“I’ve learned to keep it simple.”

- **Mark Hood**

“Technology needs to be used thoughtfully and deliberately to enhance what teachers do.”



# OJ Chris Soal is DIOR'S YOUNGEST DESIGNER



*Chris Soal (Fleming 2012)* recently collaborated with Dior on the fifth edition of Lady Dior Art, the youngest artist to have been invited. He has designed three bags with Dior, each of which has been produced in a limited edition of 100.

Despite a long list of accolades, Chris says his most remarkable achievement to date is probably the privilege of being a full-time artist. "The fact that I can make a living, make the art that I want to, and provide employment and income to so many individuals as a result of what I do is such a wonderful thing. The additional accomplishments and achievements are all secondary to this."

"I was fortunate that I had great art teachers while I was at St John's College. Even though at the time of matriculating I hadn't decided to go into the arts, with hindsight I can see the seeds for my career path were definitely planted during my College years. My art teacher at the time, Leslie Mackenzie, purchased a set of drawings from my IEB submission portfolio, as did Jane Lane (the Pre-Prep Headmistress, and former Constitutional Court Art Collection Curator). By doing so they both started sowing very important seeds of confidence in me that art could become a viable career path.

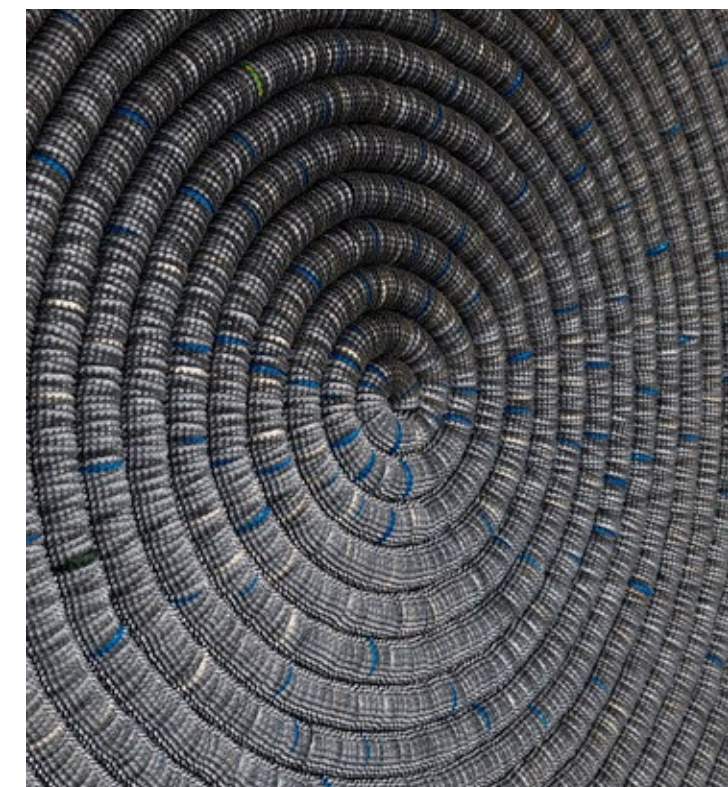
"In addition, the ethos and character that St John's breeds in its students benefited me greatly. The habits and strong discipline formed in my years as a student there have helped me tremendously in the professional world, especially as a self-employed, independent artist," says Chris.

As an award-winning, emerging artist, Chris lives and practises in Johannesburg. He uses unconventional found objects, such as toothpicks and bottle caps, with concrete and other industrial materials, to negotiate structural impacts on urban living and reflect on ecological concerns, while considering the philosophical and psychological notion of the "self".

His spatial approach to sculpture reveals a sensitivity to texture, light and form, expressed in an abstract minimalist language.

His advice to his younger self - and to youngsters inspired by his story - is clear: "Keep fighting fear, keep being wholehearted."

Basketball at St John's College also proved to be a valuable teacher: "My fondest memory of my time at St John's College is probably being a part of the basketball first team and being coached by Ron Garura. He left an incredible legacy and impression upon my life - he is remembered fondly. I joined basketball only two years before matriculating and had to put in a load of work to make the first team. It still came as a surprise when I was awarded Most Improved Player at the end of my second year in the first team (2012). This really meant a lot to me and through the encouragement of my teammates and the guidance of Coach Ron, I started to see that I was capable of accomplishing even more than I had thought possible."



In 2017, Chris graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts (Hons) from the University of the Witwatersrand. He was awarded the PPC Imaginarium Award in 2018 and named the winner of the Sculpture category. He has been awarded residencies internationally and exhibited in group shows at the Iziko National Museum (2020), FRAC MECA, Bordeaux (2019), Wits Art Museum (2017) and Stellenbosch University Museum (2018). Chris's work has been included in many notable private and public collections locally and internationally. 📍

[www.chrissoal.com](http://www.chrissoal.com)





## Kai Luke Brümmer's TALENT SHINES

**Kai Luke Brümmer** (*Nash, 2011*) has gained international recognition for his lead role in the critically acclaimed Oliver Hermanus film, *Moffie*, which premiered at the 76th Venice Film Festival. He describes the premier at the festival as one of his career highlights thus far.

Kai's lead role in *Moffie* sees him play the character of Nicholas van der Swart, a gay recruit in the apartheid-era South African military. Against the backdrop of a physically and emotionally brutal regime of the early 1980s, his character's queer identity emerges. *Moffie* was nominated for the Best Film at the 2019 London Film Festival and received two nominations at the 2019 Venice Film Festival.

Following this acclaimed performance, Kai was named one of two best new up-and-comers at the Venice Film Festival by *The Guardian UK*. *The Hollywood Reporter* called his performance "mesmerizing" and "magnetic".

Kai's highlights from his time at St John's College include the school productions with Russell Untiedt and Pippa Sandilands as being "an absolute stand out". Kai went on to attend the University of Cape Town and graduated with a BA (Honours) in Theatre and Performance.

In the relatively short period since finishing drama school, Kai has performed in numerous stage productions, including Athol Fugard's *Master Harold and the Boys* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, for which he won a Naledi Award for best actor. He can also be seen playing Tom Welling's younger brother in Michael Colleary's action-adventure TV series, *The Professionals*, which started production in May 2019, in Ireland and South Africa. Kai is now based in London.

He says, with hindsight, his maxim to himself has become: "slow down, be present and don't be distracted by worldly measures of success. This sounds incredibly 'corny' when I write it down, but I am slowly coming to an understanding that true fulfilment lies in falling in love with the process of perpetual learning rather than an outcome".



## Meet the top STUDENT OF 2020

**Andi Qu** (*Clayton 2020*) says being in matric in 2020 was tough. "On top of all the work, there was the Covid-19 pandemic that meant we all had to adapt really quickly to a strange and unfamiliar situation. Our teachers were fantastic, though, and we got great support in the online learning environment. St John's handled final exams really well, too. The exam set-up was seamless, and didn't add to the stress."

Andi is presently doing a software development internship in Johannesburg but leaves in September to pursue his Computer Science studies in either Singapore, the United States or the United Kingdom.

Andi was a Maths tutor for matric students at the St John's Academy (the after-school enrichment programme for boys from disadvantaged backgrounds who attend schools in communities close to the College). He represented South Africa in the 2020 Mathematics, Computer Science and English Olympiads, winning both the Maths and Computer Science events and achieving a top 10 spot in the English Olympiad.

He's a keen chorister and has been singing in the St John's choir since he first arrived at the College as a boy of 10. He also plays the piano, flute and clarinet. He loves Vivaldi's *Gloria* and remembers the 2017 St John's College choir performance of *Gloria* that was, he says, one of the highlights of his years at school.

Eight distinctions: Afrikaans First Additional Language, English Home Language, German Second Additional Language, Life Orientation, Mathematics, Music, Physical Sciences and Advanced Programme Mathematics. Featured in the IEB Outstanding Achievements list, in the top 1% of candidates per subject.

**Average: 96.4%**

Trinity Term 2021





# Centenary SCHOLARS SOAR



Tumelo Mogano

*The St John's College Class Of 2020* returned an impressive set of matric results. The school celebrated a 100% pass rate, with 98% of the class achieving BD (bachelor's degree) passes. The 126 boys in the matric class of 2020 achieved 357 distinctions between them.

Of the 126 St John's College boys who sat the matric exams, seven achieved an average of at least 90% (5.6% of the class). An average of at least 80% was achieved by 46 boys (more than a third of the matric class), while 64 boys achieved an average of at least 75% (more than half of the class). Six or more distinctions were achieved by 22% of the St John's College Class Of 2020.

Stuart West, Executive Headmaster, said these achievements would be exceptional under any circumstances – let alone a year so severely affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The St John's matric students drew heavily on their developed resilience, disciplined work ethic and confidence to problem-solve on their own to achieve excellent results across the board, he said.

Dr Henning, Deputy Head: Academics, said: "While we celebrate these top achievers, we also recognise all of the young men who worked incredibly hard to achieve their personal best in their final examinations."

Andy Qu featured on the **IEB Outstanding Achievements** list, achieving within the top 5% in six or more subjects, including a distinction for Life Orientation.

Gustav Kruger, Kei Prior, Cameron Quiding and Taylor Williamson featured on the **IEB Commendable Achievements** list, each achieving within the top 5% in five subjects, including a distinction for Life Orientation.



Craig Moug

St John's College matriculants featured in the top 1% of candidates per subject, including Andi Qu (English, Life Orientation, Music and Physical Sciences), Kei Prior (History, Mathematics and Physical Sciences), Taylor Williamson (English, Geography and History), Gustav Kruger (Afrikaans First Additional Language and Dramatic Arts), George Macris (Dramatic Arts), Gregory Thompson and Cameron Quiding (English), Ben Renele (Geography and Physical Sciences), Sven Solot (Information Technology) and Jorg Kampmann (Mathematical Literacy).

In addition, the **Centenary Scholars** soared, with Tumelo Mogano and Craig Moug earning six distinctions each. The Centenary Scholarship programme was introduced in 1998, with scholarships awarded to academically deserving black South African boys from disadvantaged backgrounds. St John's College accepts 10 Centenary Scholars into Remove each year.

The College was also gratified with the exceptional results produced by the **2020 A and AS Level** students in the Cambridge Assessment International Education examinations. The subject pass rate of the students who wrote the A Level examinations was 99%, with 84% achieving A to C symbols across all subjects. The Lower VI students achieved 26% A symbols across their subjects, which bodes well for their Upper VI A Level 2021 year.

"We are particularly proud that our Sixth Form students and staff achieved a level of excellence that surpasses all previous years in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic," said Mrs Kate Byrne, Head of Sixth Form.





# Academy

## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

The young men of the St John's College Academy achieved a 100% pass rate, with many of these students achieving a BD pass.

"Despite their difficult circumstances, these results are very pleasing and we are incredibly proud of the boys," said Mrs Agnes Nugent, former Head of the St John's College Academy.

The St John's College community generously stepped in during the Covid-19 lockdown with donations that enabled us to assist Academy students and their families with data to continue their studies online as well as a stipend for food. Many of these families, who reside in

our neighbouring communities of Hillbrow, Yeoville and Berea and Alexandra, were hard hit by the pandemic and ensuing lockdown, either not able to work or losing their jobs altogether.

"We salute the St John's Academy students on their NSC results. We applaud their hard work, dedication, perseverance and commitment to excellence under the most trying of circumstances last year. Well done!" said Mr Stuart West.

**Rofhiwa Netshipise** secured three distinctions in his final matric examinations and, as one of the top Academy students, was awarded a bursary to St John's Sixth Form to study his A Levels this year. A levels, he says, are incredibly tough. "I'm doing bridging courses in all my subjects, so I'm effectively doing two years' worth of work in one year. But being a boarder at St John's helps a lot. It's a quiet environment, conducive to study. Plus, I'm with my friends here, and we support each other."

Rofhiwa, who attended Highlands North Boys' High, achieved a distinction for Mathematics, Physical Sciences and Life Orientation. "Being part of the St John's Academy was a fantastic opportunity and experience for me," he says. "The academic enrichment was really valuable, and the teachers helped me make sense of my curiosity, enabling me to find out who I really am and what I want to do with my life." He has his sights set on becoming a doctor.

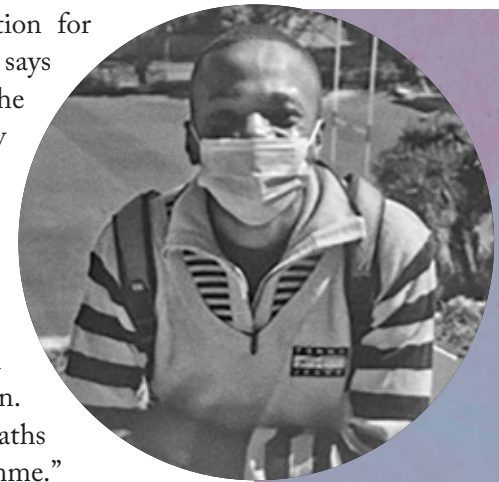
Rofhiwa enjoys watching soccer to relax and is a huge Kaizer Chiefs fan. "I try not to miss a single match. Amakhosi for life!"



**Aristote Badibanga**, who achieved a distinction for Maths, Physical Sciences and Life Orientation, says he really was surprised at how well he did in the final exams, as he found remote school and study during the Covid-19 lockdown really tough. It took everything he had to knuckle down to academics.

Aristote enrolled in the AP Maths programme introduced to the Academy students by Mrs Kim Jacobs. He said that doing AP Maths in Grades 11 and 12 definitely contributed to his Maths distinction. "It was so amazing," he says. "Maths makes sense. Maths is fun. I love Maths just because of that AP programme."

Aristote has his eye on doing an electrical engineering degree. He's a keen basketball player and played in the first basketball team at Highland North Boys' High.



**Joel Dilungidi**, 2020 Academy Head Boy, achieved distinctions for Mathematics and Life Orientation, and aced matric by indulging his night-owl tendencies. "Studying is a skill that needs to be learned," says Joel. "I started at the beginning of high school trying to remember everything. But I learned in the St John's College Academy that knowing your material is much better than memorising it."

Joel was a learner at Barnato Park High School. As one of the top Academy students in 2020, Joel was also awarded a bursary to St John's Sixth Form to study his A Levels this year. He's still pondering his future study options but has narrowed the field down to software engineering, actuarial sciences and medicine. "But no matter which of those I finally choose, I will need a bursary for tertiary education. I'm leaving the door, and my options, open." Joel enjoys running in his spare time. "A jog around the neighbourhood is a great way to clear the cobwebs," he says. He's also a poet and is writing a book on his experiences as a 13-year-old fleeing the DRC to come and make a new home with his aunt and uncle in Johannesburg. 📖

## SIXTH FORM STAR

Following a fantastic set of 2020 St John's Sixth Form Cambridge results, a number of our students featured in the Best in South Africa and High Achievement categories in their AS and A Level examinations.

We are particularly proud of **Micaela Marais (Runge 2020)**, who achieved the best marks in South Africa across her three A Level subjects, making her the top A Level student in South Africa.





A subtle magic:

# The Language of St John's College

*New members of the College community find themselves confronted by mystifying nomenclature in various aspects of School life. To such bewildered novices, it must seem as though an unintelligible dialect is spoken here. Soon, however, they themselves adopt and use this vernacular, thus contributing to the vitality of parlance and rituals that have characterised College life for more than a century. Dr Daniel Pretorius, Chairman of the Heritage Committee, explores the origins of some of the peculiar terminology, and dusts off a few terms that used to be heard in our hallowed halls but receded into oblivion.*

The ancients and veterans of the St John's College community instinctively use our distinctive (some may say recondite) terminology, seemingly without giving a second thought to the meaning or origins of our argot. Many ingest and adopt this Collegiate vernacular axiomatically, as though it was decreed irrefragably by our reverend founders, John Darragh and Joseph Hodgson, at line-up on Monday 1 August 1898, and taken for granted ever since.

The truth, as always, is slightly more nuanced: some of our terminology has been part of our institutional culture since antiquity, but much of it has evolved over time, as one would expect in a dynamic institution.

For example, many assume that the St John's academic year has been divided into Easter, Trinity and Michaelmas trimesters since the beginning of Collegian time. But that is not so. For decades, St John's had four terms: Lent, Easter, Trinity and Advent. The quarterly system was adopted for the sake of uniformity with other local schools, and because it was thought that a term of 13 weeks' duration would be "too great a strain for both staff and boys at this altitude." The three-term system was only adopted in 1973, and so is not of such antediluvian provenance as might be supposed.

## Forms: Remove, Shell & Transitus

So too the names we give our forms (nota bene: not "grades"! ) have evolved over time. To start with, there was no Pre-Prep; the boys in the Prep were divided into Classes I, II, III and IV, while College boys were in Forms I, II, III, IV and V (although for many years there were more than five forms in College).

The term 'Remove' (the name given to the most junior form in College, the equivalent of standard VI or grade 8) appeared as early as 1912. There is a common belief that this name is given to this year group because they have been 'removed' from the Prep to College. This is a misapprehension. In fact, for some time the term 'Remove'

referred to the form that today we call Lower IV. At some English public schools which have a Remove form (such as Haileybury), it is indeed the most junior form in the upper school. But at most schools that have a Remove form (e.g. Shrewsbury, Ampleforth, Harrow, Mill Hill and Eton), it is not the first year in the upper school. Moreover, there was a period when we had a Remove form in St John's Prep.

For a while there was, as in some English public schools, a form called 'Shell' (roughly the equivalent of today's Upper IV) at St John's. In the 1920s there was even a short-lived form called 'Transitus', which was a bridging year between Prep and College.

Gradually, however, the form system came to assume the form familiar to us. By the mid-1930s, Upper III was the most senior class in the Prep (as it remains to this day), and College extended from Remove, via Lower IV, Upper IV and Lower V to Upper V (as it remains today). The College also introduced Form VI in the mid-1930s. There were no girls in Form VI until the early 1970s.

## A distinct calibration of terms

Although the St John's form terminology finds faint echoes at similar schools, both here and abroad, it is probably unique in the specifics of its calibration, giving St John's its distinctive flavour.

Big School (the hall contiguous to Tutu Quad) was not always called Big School. It was not even always a hall. It was originally, in 1911, built as a gymnasium and only converted into a school hall in the early 1930s. The name 'Big School' will be found at some public schools in England, where masters give lessons to several classes in different corners of a large schoolroom, which came to be known as 'the big school' and, eventually, 'Big School'.

Apropos of 'masters': the principal of St John's College was historically known simply as the Headmaster, and the deputy principal the Second Master.



Other members of the College teaching staff were called Assistant Masters (interspersed with a few Assistant Mistresses from the late 1910s onwards). We have had Housemasters in the College since time immemorial (well, since about 1907), although female Housemasters (yes!) are an innovation of recent vintage. Periodically, the College had a Senior Assistant Master, although for many years he ranked behind the Housemasters in the hierarchy.

*“Some of our terminology has been part of our institutional culture since antiquity.”*

The Prep had Headmistresses (Miss Caldecott, Miss Turner, Miss Stone, Miss Thomas) in the early days. From 1935, when Mr Dodson took office, the Prep had a succession of Headmasters. The Prep also had Boarding Housemasters – the two Prep boarding houses (long since closed) were known as School House and New House. And, starting with Mrs Green in 1970, the Pre-Prep has had a succession of Headmistresses.

A system of prefects was introduced in 1906. Today the head prefect is called the Head of School. This appellation dates back to the early 1940s. Initially, the term Senior Prefect (and, occasionally, Captain of School or Head Prefect) was used. There was no deputy head boy until 1971, when the position of Second Prefect was introduced.

## Old Johnians, Johanniennes and Johannians

We all know that alumni of St John's College are called Old Johannians. However, this was not always the case. Initially, old boys of the College were called ... well, Old Boys. Fr James Okey Nash first used the term 'Old Johannian' in 1910, but the term did not immediately gain general currency. Instead, while the term Old Boys

remained in general use, the terms 'Old Johnian' and 'Old Johnnian' were sometimes used – presumably in imitation of St John's College, Cambridge, whose graduates are known as 'Johnians'.

After the First World War, the term 'Old Johannian' gained favour. The first edition of the College magazine, *The Johannian*, appeared in 1920, and the Old Boys' Association changed its name to the Old Johannian Association in 1922. At the OJA annual dinner in 1921, John Brown Powrie OJ quipped that, in years to come, visitors to Johannesburg might imagine that the town was named after the Old Johannians.

Initially, girls who completed Form VI at St John's were sometimes called 'Old Johanniennes'. But this was an ephemeral denomination; these alumnae soon came to be known as Old Johannians, and the feminine version of the name vanished into the haze of history.

## Prizes and “lazy” boys

The College's first prize-giving ceremony was held at the Masonic Hall in Plein Street on 19 December 1898. For many years, the annual prize-giving was called ... well, the Prize-Giving. The early 1930s saw the term Speech Day make its appearance. And Speech Day it has been ever since – even when the ceremony is held at night.

Over the decades, generations of St John's Housemasters have used the dreaded 'satis card' as a mechanism for encouraging underperforming (previously called 'lazy') boys to exert themselves more diligently in the academic sphere. The 'satisfecit' system was introduced by Fr Nash in 1907: boys whose work did not meet the required standard were detained ('by master having cane') for an hour every day, after which the master had to sign a card issued to each lethargic boy and annotate it either 'S' or 'NS' i.e. 'Sat' or 'Non Sat'.

This might require some explanation in view of the fact that, in 1962, our scholastic powers-that-be decided that it would no longer be compulsory for St John's boys to

study Latin. In Latin, the word 'satis' means 'enough', and the expression 'satis facio' means 'to make amends' or 'to make reparation' (or 'to give satisfaction'). So, an 'S' annotation was good, and an 'NS' annotation was ... well, not satisfactory. Although we no longer have cane-wielding masters, we do still have satis cards (technically, now mere pieces of paper). So, let all boys who produce sub-standard work be warned ...

## Adsum!

Another consequence of the ill-advised decision to demote Latin to an optional subject is that, increasingly, boys do not fully understand what they are saying when they say grace at dinner in Darragh Hall ('Benedictus benedicat, per Iesum Christum dominum nostrum').

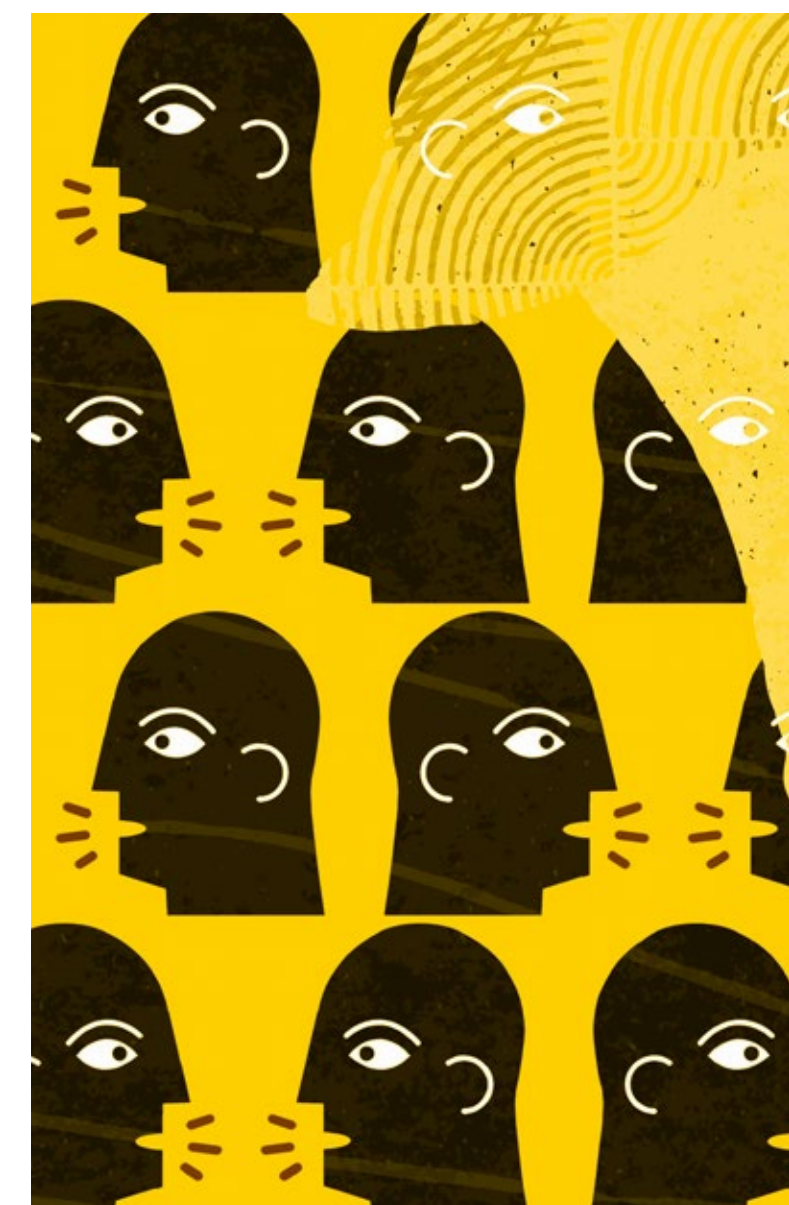
So too boys (at least in some Houses) have gradually unlearned the proper response to hearing their names called out at roll-call. When the Housemaster or Head of House calls out a boy's name at line-up, the boy is supposed to stand erect (almost to attention, but not quite) and proclaim (preferably not sotto voce) 'Adsum'. This is Latin for 'I am present'. Instead, nowadays the ceremony (at least in some Houses) has degenerated into exclamations of 'Yes' (occasionally, 'Yes, Sir') or 'Here' or 'What? Who?'

There are other terminological foibles about St John's. For example, the Bishop of Johannesburg (whose school we are, as a diocesan college) is called 'the Visitor'. One of our Prefects is called 'the Custos'. The boarders get 'rations'. When we play a match against another school, we 'verse' them (real poetry in motion). Et cetera, et cetera. But these are topics for another day. As are the secret subterranean passages (historically known as 'cunicles', it can now be revealed for the first time).

Meanwhile, may our rituals and parlance thrive. They constitute one aspect of what makes St John's College the school it is, and part of what distinguishes it from other schools. One is reminded vaguely of what Oscar Wilde wrote in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891): "Words!

Mere words! How terrible they were! How clear, and vivid, and cruel! One could not escape from them. And yet what a subtle magic there was in them! They seemed to be able to give form to formless things, and to have a music of their own as sweet as that of viol or of lute. Mere words! Was there anything so real as words?" ▼

## Collegium Sancti Johannis – vivat, crescat, floreat!





College characters from the past:

# Archbishop Trevor Huddleston

By *Dr Daniel Pretorius*

St John's College has been blessed by the presence and contributions of a diverse range of talented, visionary and, sometimes, idiosyncratic personalities. The names of some of these College luminaries have become immortalised in our folklore and physical spaces. But some are not remembered as well. Dr Daniel Pretorius reminds readers of some of these interesting persons – all important in their distinctive ways – and of their contributions to the College.

The Community of the Resurrection, a monastic order of Church of England priests and lay brothers, ran St John's College from 1905 until 1934. They rescued an embattled little school from almost certain extinction, and converted it into a thriving institution destined to become one of South Africa's leading schools.

Fr Trevor Huddleston (1913-1998) is today perhaps the best known of all the CR brethren. Yet, paradoxically, his link to St John's College, and the role he played here, is largely unknown or forgotten.

Trevor Huddleston was an old boy of Lancing College in Sussex. Ordained a priest in 1937, he joined the CR in 1939, and took his vows in 1941. Shortly afterwards he was sent to South Africa and he took charge of the CR mission in Sophiatown in 1943.

Fr Huddleston soon became well known and respected in Sophiatown and in Orlando, to which many black families were relocated from the early 1930s under the government's increasingly segregationist racial policies. At the time, St John's assisted the CR mission mainly through Chapel and Carol Service collections.

In 1944, Fr Huddleston visited St John's to speak to the boys about the work of the CR's mission. He described the appalling situation in Sophiatown, Pimville, Newclare and Orlando. Visits by senior boys to Sophiatown and Orlando were resumed, where Fr Huddleston showed them the CR's work.

In terms of the Native Resettlement Act of 1954, the government forcibly moved the black residents of Sophiatown to Meadowlands. Fr Huddleston was instrumental in resisting the implementation of these forced removals, and in supporting the communities torn apart by them.

On 26 and 27 June 1955, the Congress of the People was held at Kliptown, near Soweto. The meeting, attended by 3 000 people of all races, adopted the Freedom Charter. Fr Huddleston, along with Chief Albert Luthuli (president of the ANC) and Dr Yusuf Dadoo (chairman of the clandestine Communist Party), became the first recipients of the Isitwalandwe medal,



the highest award given by the ANC to people who had made an outstanding contribution to the liberation struggle. At this time, Fr Huddleston was a member of the College Council, representing the CR.

During 1956, Fr Huddleston's book *Naught For Your Comfort* was published. It was an incisive account of the injustices of, and tragedies associated with the apartheid system. In 1959, Fr Huddleston was involved in the founding of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in the UK. He was consecrated Bishop of Masasi in Tanzania in 1960, where he remained until 1968, when he became Bishop of Stepney and a suffragan bishop in the Diocese of London.

Meanwhile, in 1964, an Old Johannian, Hugh Lewin, had been prosecuted under the Sabotage Act as a result of his involvement in the anti-apartheid African Resistance Movement. In Lewin's statement to the court at his trial, he explained that he had spent the bulk of his school career as a boarder at St John's College, matriculating in 1956 and completing Form VI in 1957. He continued: "During my last years at school I spent a number of Sundays as a guest of Father Trevor Huddleston ... in Sophiatown. Here, for the first time, I was brought into direct contact with the poverty and suffering of the African community that lived there." Lewin had sometimes accompanied teachers to High Mass at the Cathedral, where Fr Huddleston "would launch into a thunderous sermon ... a weekly parable about life under apartheid – the denial of justice and human dignity."

Lewin was convicted and sent to jail. After his release in 1971, he described his experiences in his book, *Bandiet: Seven Years in a South African Prison*. The preface was written by Bishop Huddleston: "Every individual of whatever race, colour or creed is of infinite value because he is the child of God: 'made' as Scripture says 'in the image of God'. Governments (like that of South Africa) which deny this truth by their violent and unceasing assault on human dignity must be opposed. And this opposition is the responsibility not only of courageous young men like Hugh Lewin ... but of us all."

Trevor Huddleston was elected chairman of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in 1981. In 1998, he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II and chose the designation "Bishop Trevor of Sophiatown".

In his book *A History of Christianity* (2009), Diarmaid MacCulloch writes that, of all the Anglican Communion's socio-political work, its role in the South African liberation struggle should perhaps give it most pride: "It is a story of heroic individuals who turned what was often a personal singularity ... into a stubborn refusal to compromise with evil. Exemplary was the monk Trevor Huddleston ... tireless in his anti-apartheid work alongside the ANC." ▼



*Daniel Pretorius has had sons enrolled at St John's College continuously since January 2000. He served on Council from 2008 until 2012, chairing the Building Committee. He taught History at the College from 2013 until 2018, was Housemaster of Clarke House from 2014 until 2018, and was master-in-charge of Debating. He has been the chairman of the Heritage Committee since its inception in 2017. In his dreams he wanders around the College grounds in the 1920s and has tea with the brethren of the Community of the Resurrection.*

A sign of the times. Young Johannians attend Amphitheatre masked and socially distanced.







# Building & strengthening our community

*Advancement: Suzie Coppertbwaite, Mickey Mashego, Allan Magubane, Shelley Roberts and Kate Lowings.*

The Advancement Office started at a great pace this year with the added energy and enthusiasm of our recently bolstered team. We are extremely eager, given the setbacks and frustrations of 2020, to move forward with clear purpose in advancing the School.

The Advancement Office connects the School, the Foundation and the Old Johannian Association. While we address the immediate needs and material costs of our community engagement and capital projects, the office also actively works towards creating sustainability

through fundraising and strategic partnerships. St John's College must remain accountable, relevant and on the cutting edge of education in South Africa and the world.

The St John's College Academy and the Centenary Scholarship Programme are the School's core community outreach projects, and the Advancement Office works closely with Allan Magubane, Deputy Headmaster: Transformation and Community Engagement, and Mickey Mashego, Head of Community Engagement to fund these initiatives.

Mickey Mashego heads up these programmes which provide opportunities to talented students who would not otherwise have the means to attend St John's. These students benefit from a St John's education and resources and, in doing so, lives are changed through upliftment and opportunity.

The Academy has welcomed full classes in 2021 in both the Prep and College; it is wonderful to have these boys back on site and to welcome a new cohort. Selected from more than 100 applicants, 10 new Remove scholars were awarded full bursaries this year as part of the Centenary Scholarship Programme and we look forward to watching these talented young men fulfil their potential at St John's.

The Advancement Office is also a point of contact for Old Johannians. We remain hopeful that we can facilitate and host class reunions and other events this year. A date for Gaudy Day has been set and we look forward to welcoming you to these celebrations, Covid-19 permitting, on 26 June 2021.

Our team aims to strengthen and unify our community of scholars, parents, staff, donors, partners and old boys so that we may together ensure the future of this great School and contribute meaningfully to our neighbouring communities. As we approach the 125th anniversary of the founding of St John's College, we hope the work we do today preserves its legacy and sows the seeds for another thriving 125 years as a world-class Christian, African school.

We are realistic about what can be achieved in the current economic environment and conscious that the effects of the pandemic will be felt for years to come. But we are determined to move forward, strengthen our community, build new narratives and make a difference where we can.

We look forward to working with you and sharing this vision. 



# Meet *the* Team

## Advancement Office



### *Shelley Roberts*

Shelley started at St John's as the Head of Advancement in 2020. Prior to that, she devoted 12 years to the advancement of higher education institutions - through fundraising, alumni relations, events and communications - first as the Head of Development at Rhodes University and then as Fundraising Manager at Wits.

Shelley believes that institutions of educational excellence, such as St John's, are vital pillars that give strength and stability to society. She considers herself privileged to be part of a team of committed people working to ensure that the school continues to thrive for generations to come.



### *Kate Lowings*

Kate has joined in the role of Advancement Administrator & Database Officer. She brings a wealth of experience and an unparalleled work ethic to our team as she drives the key project of updating and refining our databases. In her previous position, Kate provided administrative and fundraising support to the Roedean Academy, where she was integral to securing tertiary education placements for the programme's graduates.



### *Suzie Copperthwaite*

Suzie takes on the challenge of Fundraiser & Strategic Project Coordinator. She is a keen collaborator with a passion for community, networking and creating access. With a master's degree from Wits, Suzie has a background in the visual arts where she has worked as a specialist consultant in the areas of project management, client liaison and communications.

## Community Engagement



### *Mickey Mashego*

Mickey Mashego joined St John's as Head of Community Engagement in 2021. Mickey leads the St John's College Academy and Centenary Scholarship programmes and aims to grow the school's impact in our neighbouring community through meaningful partnerships and programmes.

He is a passionate mentor and advocate for equality, self-development and positive change. He brings a wealth of experience from his years spent as Head of Facilities at the Oliver Kahn Safe Hub in Cape Town, a global initiative supporting the young people of Gugulethu and Mannenburg.

Mickey works in close partnership with the Deputy Headmaster: Transformation and Community Engagement and Advancement team to promote and sustain these critical programmes.



# How to Give

If you, or your company, would like to make a donation to the St John's College Foundation, or would like to find out more about the work the Foundation does and the benefits of giving, we would love to hear from you.

You can also find out more or make an online donation here: [sjc.co.za/donations](http://sjc.co.za/donations)

Bona fide donations will receive a Section 18A tax certificate and companies may be eligible for BB-BEE points.

The St John's College Foundation is an independent trust, reference number IT 7894/04(T); a Non-Profit Organisation, reference number: 021-654-NPO; a Public Benefit Organisation, reference number: 130003224 and SARS reference number 3006621845.

For more information, email [foundation@stjohnscollege.co.za](mailto:foundation@stjohnscollege.co.za)

Scan *here* to make a donation



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE



## ARE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS UP-TO-DATE?

We invite all Old Johannians to update their contact details with the Old Johannian Association so that we can keep in touch.



[sjc.co.za/ojaupdate](http://sjc.co.za/ojaupdate)  
[www.oja.co.za](http://www.oja.co.za)





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