

# OLD MUIRITE UNION NEWSLETTER

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter, 2021



## IT'S TAKEN 200 YEARS and we finally have a date!

2<sup>nd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2022

# SAVE IT!



## 200-YEAR CELEBRATION

Yes... we have a date.... Diarise it and make sure that you plan your month of August 2022 around it.

OMU President, Andrew Binning, said, "this longer than usual Founders' event will include a range of activities, such as: 200 year School Assembly, Gala Dinner, OMU Golf Day, a Guinness World Record attempt, the launch of a 200 Life Lessons Booklet, the burying of time capsules for re-opening in the future, a Remembrance Service, an International Rugby Festival, NC Dugmore Hostel Reunion, launch of the Muir College 200 Year Commemorative book and many more activities."

**Every Class is encouraged to arrange one or two Class events in August 2022 – however, certain Classes are celebrating "Special" Reunions with details listed below:**

ANNIVERSARY	CLASS	NAME	EMAIL	CELL
10	2012	Nathan Dennis	ndennis16@gmail.com	+27 73 130 8384
20	2002	Runeshan Moodley	runesh10@gmail.com	+27 79 220 8773
		Gareth Woods	garuswoods@gmail.com	+27 73 591 1038
25	1997	Guy Wates	guywates@gmail.com	+44 7838176360
		Duncan Evert	duncan@csi-africa.co.za	+27 72 931 5645
30	1992	Zarrin Zehmke	zarrin@expressplz.co.za	+27 82 733 4174
35	1987	George Yerolemou	gyerolemou@ilithepe.com	+27 82 569 2065
40	1982	Dave Snuggs	davesnuggs@gmail.com	+27 83 459 5740
50	1972	Derick Ingram	derick@yocal.co.za	+27 63 857 1274
55	1967	Howard Beckley	fburg@breede.co.za	+27 60 608 0810
60	1962	Warwick Owen	warwick@isat.co.za	+27 82 324 5338



## LAUNCH OF THE MUIR FOUNDATION

On Friday 23 April 2021, the Muir Foundation was officially launched, and the first Board Meeting took place.

The Foundation is a registered non-profit company with registered 18A Status.

### The objectives of the Foundation are:

- Long term sustainability of the School
- Supporting Muir College to attract future learners, educators and support staff of a high calibre
- To ensure all aspects of School life are supported: academic, sport & cultural activities



### THE MUIR FOUNDATION

Visit Us:

<https://muircollege.co.za/the-muir-foundation/about/>





# MEET THE FOUNDATION DIRECTORS



**Andrew Binning**

CEO of Inkanyezi Events,  
Class of 1988  
(Representing the OMU)



**Brett Botten**

CEO of the Spar Group,  
Class of 1982  
(Independent)



**Riaan Claassen**

Managing Director of  
Universal Equipment,  
Class of 1987  
(Representing the OMU)



**Neil Crawford**

Retired ex-Headmaster  
of Muir College & Rector  
of Grey High School  
(Independent)



**Dave Francis**

Deputy Headmaster  
of Muir College  
(Representing the School  
Management Team)



**Peter Else**

Chairman of the School  
Governing Body, CEO of  
Uitenhage Mental Health  
and Mental Health Homes,  
Class of 1986  
(Representing the School  
Governing Body)



**George Yerolemou**

CEO of Acoustex,  
Class of 1987  
(Representing the OMU)



## OMU President's Message

Greetings to all Old Muirites as well as the broader Muir family.

We are entering a very exciting period in the history of Muir College and the Old Muirite Union is proud to be part of the process. The Muir Foundation has been launched and the OMU has gladly accepted the responsibility of managing the drive to support the School via various fundraising initiatives – the first being the Solar Project. Old boys, parents and Friends of Muir are encouraged to support this initiative with funds raised going towards bursaries.

The other exciting recent news has been the dates announcement for the 2022 Founder's Week. The call has been made for every old boy (young and older) to diarise to celebrate Muir College turning 200 years old. 2-9 August 2022 is when it will happen and you don't want to miss out. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity and the OMU appeals to all old boys to make every effort to attend.

The OMU Business Portal is set for an injection of ideas and resources with the announcement of an Advisory Board who will work with the OMU Manager to grow the Business Portal opportunity. Our thanks go out to Asanele Mfengu (Class of 2012), Akhona Maqwazima (Class of 2000), Donovan Kretschmer (Class of 2010), Thabisile Mgwali (Class of 2002), Scott Irving (Class of 1989), Faheem Abrahams (Class of 2003), Nathan Thomas (Class of 2005), Sibabalwe Phillip (Class of 2016), Nceba Mafa (Class of 2016) & Peter Myburg (Class of 2008) for stepping up and joining the OMU leadership Team. The OMU is excited to have you on board and is looking forward to great things.

A successful OMU AGM was held via Zoom on 27 May and my thanks go to the OMU Committee for all the hard work this past year. When everyone on the Committee agreed to stand for another year – it reinforced the fact that we are having fun and all believe we are on the right track.

We will be hosting an online auction during August and September this year and are looking for approximately 10 to 15 items that can be donated by old boys / Friends of Muir. Please contact the OMU Manager should you be able to assist.

On behalf of the Old Muirite Union I would like to thank Uncle Ronnie Lowe for his years of service in managing all aspects of the Muirite Clubhouse. Uncle Ronnie has recently decided to call it a day and our sincere appreciation goes out to him for his exemplary service and time.

Our thanks go to Headmaster, Robin Stephenson and all the teaching and support staff at Muir College for remaining positive under these trying times. It is not easy but we know you are all giving 100%.

Enjoy this quarter's OMU Newsletter !

Nec Pluribus Impar

**Andrew Binning**

Old Muirite Union President





## Headmaster's Message

The term started on a positive note as the extra-mural programme got into full swing. Rugby matches were played against Brandwag, Union High (senior phase) and Handhaaf (primary phase).

Our Debaters performed well in the league and our squash team also performed well, winning their match, while our hockey teams performed adequately. Our new drama club is an exciting addition to our cultural programme.

However, due to the growing number of Covid infections nationally, and the subsequent announcement of the Government to restrict extra-mural activities, we have had to put a stop to many activities. This is a huge blow to our boys.

Reporting on 2022 projects, work on our Resource Centre is due to commence. We are very excited about this facility and the impact that it will have on the academic development of our learners. We will keep you informed about other 2022 projects.

Congratulations go to all old boys who have achieved in different spheres lately – you are an inspiration to our boys.

**Robin Stephenson**

Muir College Headmaster





# SOLAR PANEL PROJECT



The Muir Foundation launched their first project, namely the Solar Panel project, which ensures long-term sustainability, growth and income generation. Income has been allocated for bursaries for the next 25 years.

The #MuirSolar project has 461 solar panels that will be installed on the roof and will be “sold off” for a price of R10 000-00 each. We are encouraging our Old Muirites to take ownership and purchase a panel (or more) – whether you purchase them individually, as a class, via your company, as a family, etc. The Foundation is registered as a non-profit and you will therefore receive an 18A Tax Certificate, and if required, your company can receive BBBEE points too.

To date the following classes have purchased solar panels:

**1978 1979 1987 1988**  
**1991 1993 1994 2008**

To the other classes – let’s get you on the board too.

Thank you to George Yerolemou for accepting the role as **Solar Project Champion** and for facilitating the initial bank loan to accelerate the Project.

For more information, contact:

Wendy Knott-Craig  
[oldmuiriteunion@gmail.com](mailto:oldmuiriteunion@gmail.com)





# ACHIEVEMENTS BY OLD MUIRITES

The Old Muirite Union would like to acknowledge and congratulate the following old boys who have achieved over the last few months



**Brett Botten**, Class of 1982, has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of Spar South Africa



**Siba Phillip**, Class of 2016, achieving great things in the Mr South Africa competition



Congratulations to **Alard Basson** and **Alaric Basson**, Class of 2014, on their swimming achievements this year, with Alaric receiving triple gold medals for Breaststroke at the South African Olympic trials



# ACHIEVEMENTS BY OLD MUIRITES



**Shane Gates**, Class of 2010, has been selected to play for the Japanese national rugby team



Congratulations to **Curwyn Mapaling**, Class of 2010, on his appointment as Senior Lecturer in Psychology, in the Department of Psychology within the School of Psychosocial Health at the North-West University, Mahikeng Campus. This position is usually given to lecturers over the age of 40. Curwyn achieved this under the age of 30.



**Sisanda Magala**, Class of 2009, joined the South African cricket squad. Pictured here with the Gauteng OMU Representatives, Lance Hilliard-Lomas, Class of 1988 and Asanda Singata, Class of 1999.

Please contact **Wendy** at the OMU should you know of any old boys who have excelled in business, sport, art, academic and culture or any other sphere of life – so this can be shared with the broader Muir family.



# MEET THE TEACHERS

## Ayabonga Jonas

Ayabonga has been at Muir College since 2018 and teaches Physical Science, Mathematics, Natural Science and Mathematical Literacy. One of the lessons he wished he had been taught prior to becoming a teacher is that lessons never go the way you anticipate, which is pretty much like life too.

He feels that discipline stems from a relationship of mutual trust and respect, and should help a learner to grow, as opposed to being destructive.

In his spare time, Ayabonga is a musician and song writer.



## Vanessa Viljoen

Vanessa has been with Muir College for 5 years and teaches Grade 4 Afrikaans, Mathematics, Social Sciences and PSW. According to Vanessa, you keep learning as a teacher, and not much prepares you for the job and that you should pick your battles.

Vanessa feels that children function best, and feel safe, when they know their boundaries.



## Thoriso M'Afrika – Marketing Officer

Thoriso joined the Muir College team in 2020 as the Marketing Officer. She attended Victoria Girls' High School in Grahamstown and matriculated in 2004, with provincial colours for debating.

From June you will be able to catch Thoriso on South African MNET participating in Survivor South Africa. She said she entered the competition as she's always been fascinated by the strategic acumen necessary to successfully navigate the game.

We wish Thoriso well in this season.

We thank all educators and support staff for what they do for Muir College.



# SCHOOL ACTIVITIES



**Mrs Sheila Grootboom**  
celebrating 30 years of  
service to the hostel



A new **tuckshop** was built opposite  
the Muirite Clubhouse and is finally  
up and running



**Matthew Botha** -  
EP U16 Squash team



**Top academic achievers** for the first term earning their gold  
badges. The requirements are to obtain 80% and above



**School Governing Body**



**Rugby vs Brandwag**



**Hockey vs Westering**



# CLASS OF 1962

The Class of 1962 recently invited OMU President, Andrew Binning, Muir College Headmaster, Robin Stephenson, and OMU Manager, Wendy Knott-Craig, to join them for their weekly get together. Yes, these gents meet every Friday at the Southender Pub in Walmer, Port Elizabeth (Gqeberha), for a beer and a pie and they have been doing this for several years.

These gents have given themselves the name of “The Nostrils” and this came about many years ago when one of the gents said of a lovely girl in town “Wow! She was so exquisite she used to make our nostrils flare”.

The class is gearing up for their 60th reunion next year, which we expect will be very well supported.

Feel free to join the Class of 1962 – should you find yourself in Port Elizabeth (Gqeberha) on a Friday. Class Co-ordinator **Warwick Owen** is on Tel +27 823245338.



The Southender Pub and Grub can be found at 29 Webber Street, South End, Gqeberha.

<https://www.facebook.com/TheSouthenderPubAndGrub>



# OLD MUIRITES AND WHERE THEY ARE TODAY

## Bahle Qukubana

Bahle grew up in Uitenhage and matriculated from Muir College in 2015. He is currently based at the Sharks Rugby Medical Centre and is a Biokinetics intern.

As part of being an intern with the Sharks, he has met many World Cup Rugby Winners from Siya Kolisi, to Lukhanyo Am as well as learning from top coaches, strength and conditioning coaches, physiotherapists etc. Bahle has his own mobile sports massage business, which is linked to his studies and his goals. His ultimate dream is to be working for the Springbok Rugby team.

Bahle says “Dream big, so that your dreams scare even you. Have a desire to take responsibility of your own life and understand that whatever decision you make today, will affect your tomorrow.” He believes in self-improvement and setting high goals that are attainable.

The life lesson that he learnt from Muir College is that he is second to none! That statement alone is big enough and carries him through his days.



## Clive Bosman

Clive matriculated in 1975 and was the youngest boarder to enter the NC Dugmore House Hostel premises in 1963 at the age of 6. As Clive said, “I guess I have witnessed a lot during this time.” He received his colours blazer for Squash and Cricket, which was on his wish list as it meant that he could leave the hostel on a Saturday to go to the movies (those in the first team cricket and rugby had this privilege).

After school Clive did his military service and went on to study Physical Education for 2 years, followed by Human Sciences at The Nelson Mandela University (then called UPE). His working career took him to various Mining operations in Southern Africa before moving to New Zealand and later to Australia in the Human Resources fields. He is focusing on not entirely retiring just yet but on linking Leadership with Life Coaching.

He currently resides in Australia and says that the traditions of Muir College run deep and strong, and the fundamental values of this school are very much alive today as it was decades back.





# OLD MUIRITES AND WHERE THEY ARE TODAY

## Vernon Slack

Vernon started at Muir College in Primary School, ending his school career in 1991 when he matriculated. His class was the first to complete the full high school lap in the new building. The Slack family has a strong history with the school as Vernon's dad and three brothers, Vernon, his brother and 2 cousins all attended Muir College. An interesting fact is that the legendary Mr Tom Ferreira taught Vernon's dad, Vernon and Vernon's younger brother, spanning a period from 1967 to 2000.

Vernon participated in 2nd team rugby and cricket, as well as Veld and Vlei and was in the top 10 academically. After school he finished his BCom Industrial Psychology at UPE (now called Nelson Mandela University), and more recently completed his MBA through GIBS.

Vernon's working career has seen him in the tyre industry for almost 20 years, working for 2 global manufacturers in various leadership roles in the Sales and Operations portfolios.

When asked about his future goals, Vernon said that his goals have changed somewhat over the last 18 months thanks to Covid. He is now focused on the present – make time to enjoy the now, experience new things and places, stretch himself physically through long distance mountain biking and to develop his Authentic Leadership style.

Vernon has 2 sons who were educated at St Andrews Bloemfontein, which reminds him a lot of Muir College – steeped in tradition and driven by great morals, standards and beliefs.



## Xolile Jonas

Xolile joined Muir College in his matric year in 1991, when the school was opened to all races. Prior to that, he was at All Saints College in Bisho. Xolile played squash for the 2nd and 3rd teams and made many friends from his sport.

After leaving school, he studied Law LLB and graduated in 1998. He then worked for the National Prosecuting Authority (Scorpions) until they were disbanded.

Xolile is currently the Senior State Advocate of the Commercial Crimes Component at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution in Cape Town. His goal is to become a judge or head of the NPA, however his current position fulfils him as they are fighting the fight, regardless of the criticism received from left to right.



# OLD MUIRITES AND WHERE THEY ARE TODAY

## Curtis Young

Curtis Young, Class of 2005 and a hostel border, was both a school and hostel prefect in primary and high school. He played first team rugby and hockey, and received his Academic colours too. After school Curtis did a double major at the Nelson Mandela University – Bcom Rat (Accounting and Economics).

After graduating, he joined Standard Bank as part of their graduate programme, moving from being a graduate to a Portfolio Organisation Manager. In 2016 he founded a digital consulting company with 3 colleagues, and out of this company Fixxr was born in 2018. Fixxr is an online platform which connects car owners with experienced mobile mechanics who can repair your car at your office or home. Parallel to this, he re-joined Standard Bank in 2019 as a Digital Marketing Manager.

Curtis' future goals include extending Fixxr to Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth) and Durban, as well as improving his golf handicap.

Curtis is married with 2 sons, and hoping for a daughter in the future (Maybe he should speak to OMU President, Andrew Binning, who has 3 daughters – for some tips!).



Let fellow old boys know where you are and what you are up to.

Contact the OMU Manager, Wendy Knott-Craig on

[oldmuiriteunion@gmail.com](mailto:oldmuiriteunion@gmail.com)





# CHARLES' PAGE

Did you know that Muir College underwent closures several times during the 20th century? These were only of a technical nature, however, and took place in 1922, 1936, 1961, 1990, 1991 and 1994.

At the end of 1922, a separate Junior School was established in Uitenhage, comprising pupils from both Muir and Riebeeck, meaning both schools became high schools only, in 1923.

At the end of 1936, the Junior School closed to make room for the new Hoërskool Brandwag at the High Street site. Simultaneously both Riebeeck and Muir then 'closed' as high schools and reopened in January 1937, reverting to their previous status of single sex schools from Sub A to Standard 10.

On 31 December 1961 Muir College, closed and reopened on 1 January 1962 as Muir College Boys' High School with a curriculum ranging from Standards 6 to 10. A separate new school came into being on 1 January 1962: Muir College Boys' Primary School.

31 December 1990 saw Muir 'closing' as a 'normal' government school within the Cape Education Department to a 'Model B' institution.

This was an option offered to 'white' schools whereby they were free to determine their own admissions policy, i.e. to admit pupils of any culture or ethnicity.

At the end 1991 Muir 'closed' again in order to change from a 'Model B' to a 'Model C' school when it, like many other schools, achieved semi-private status as a 'state-aided' school.

At the end of the first school term in 1994, Muir College 'closed' as a Boys' High School and reopened on the first day of term 2 with a new academic structure comprising Standards 2 to Standard 10, when Muir Primary amalgamated with the High School.

**Charles van Renen**, Class of 1963, has been commissioned to update the History of Muir College and publish a new Commemorative Book in 2022. We will share a snippet of the Muir College history in each OMU Newsletter.



# MEET THE OMU COMMITTEE



**Andrew Binning**  
President



**George Yerolemou**  
Vice President



**Mark Bakker**  
Secretary



**Joel Katz**  
Treasurer



**Clayton du Plooy**  
Committee Member



**Justin Fourie**  
Committee Member



**Leo Doria**  
Committee Member



**Lyntin Gouws**  
Committee Member



**Ricky Wedderburn**  
Committee Member



**Robin Stephenson**  
Committee Member



**Ross Heynes**  
Committee Member



**Thomas Terblanche**  
Committee Member



**Mark Manlee**  
Committee Member



**Riaan Claassen**  
Committee Member



**Vuyolwethu Dyan**  
Committee Member

Contact details are available on the website:

<https://muircollege.co.za/omu/about-the-omu/>



# MEET THE OMU REPRESENTATIVES

## DID YOU KNOW?

... that we have Old Muirite representatives throughout South Africa and rest of the world?  
Please feel free to contact Wendy Knott-Craig for the details of the representative closest to you.



# MEET THE BUSINESS PORTAL ADVISORY BOARD

The OMU is pleased to advise the extension of its Leadership structures to include the appointment of a 10 old boy-strong Advisory Board. The Advisory Board will provide strategic direction and input into the **OMU Business Portal**. The Old Muirite Union thanks these gents in advance for their leadership and willingness to share of their time and resources.



**Scott Irving**  
Class of 1989



**Akhona Maqwazima**  
Class of 2000  
Emazweni ICT



**Thabisile Mgwali**  
Class of 2002  
Senior Journalist  
with Caxton Local Media



**Faheem Abrahams**  
Class of 2003



**Nathan Thomas**  
Class of 2005  
Global Sales Director  
for Superside



**Peter Myburg**  
Class of 2008  
Entrepreneur



**Nceba Mafa**  
Class of 2009  
Associate Attorney



**Donovan Kretschmer**  
Class of 2010  
Director of a Sports Agency  
called Tridon Sports Management



**Asanele Mfengu**  
Class of 2012  
Data Analyst for Toyota SA



**Siba Phillip**  
Class of 2016  
Owner of PhillpFitness



# ANECDOTES

These insults are from an era before the English language got boiled down to 4-letter words.

A member of Parliament to Disraeli,

**“Sir, you will either die on the gallows or of some unspeakable disease.”**

**“That depends, Sir,” said Disraeli, “whether I embrace your policies or your mistress.”**

**“He had delusions of adequacy.”**

– Walter Kerr (NY Times Drama Critic)

**“I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure.”**

– Clarence Darrow

**“He has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary.”**

– William Faulkner, about Ernest Hemingway

**“I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend.... If you have one.”**

– George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill.

**“Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend second... if there is one.”**

– Winston Churchill in response.

**“I’ve just learned about his illness. Let’s hope it is nothing trivial.”**

**“He is simply a shiver looking for a spine to run up.”**

**“Why do you sit there looking like an envelope without an address on it?”**

– Mark Twain

**“Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go.”**

– Oscar Wilde

**“He has Van Gogh’s ear for music.”**

**“I’ve had a perfectly wonderful evening. But this wasn’t it.”**

– Groucho Marx



# CONTACT US

## CONTACT DETAILS:

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### Old Muirite Union President:

**Andrew Binning**


Email: andrew@inkanyezi.co.za

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## SOCIAL MEDIA

 Thomas Muir

 Old Muirite Union

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 Old Muirite Union

Like/Follow your alma mater on social media  
- regular posts made on all platforms.

## DATABASE

Please advise the OMU should your email address,  
mobile number or city/country of residence change.

Golf! The OMU is looking for old boys who have a GOLF HANDICAP and the old boy who has the lowest GOLF HANDICAP - please send your name, class and golf handicap to OMU Manager, Wendy before 30 July 2021.

## Feature article in the next Newsletter



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