

OLD MUIRITE UNION NEWSLETTER

4th Quarter, 2023



2023 VALEDICTORY SERVICE

The Valedictory Service for the Class of 2023 took place on Monday 23 October.

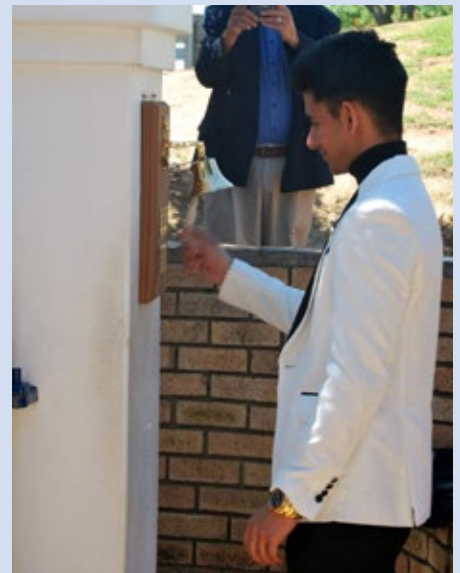
The young Men of Muir were welcomed to the Old Muirite Union by OMU President, Andrew Binning, a number of OMU Committee members and several Old Muirites.

Should any Old Muirites wish to be present at next year's valedictory service, kindly contact the OMU Manager (oldmuiriteunion@gmail.com) to be added to the invitation list.

The OMU welcomes the Class of 2023 to its ranks!



Old Muirites gather outside the Memorial Gates to welcome the Class of 2023



The 2023 Head Boy, Eshaan Prag, ringing the leavers' bell before going through the Memorial Gates



OMU President, Andrew Binning, and 2023 Head Boy, Eshaan Prag



Phakamani Nesi and Ryan Bhana with OMU ties to be presented to the Class of 2023



Andrew Binning, Mark Manlee and Joel Katz enjoying the atmosphere at the Valedictory Service



Vuyo Dyan, Caleb-John Wood and Sive Marola

OMU President's Message

Whenever and wherever I travel I seem to bump into Old Muirites. Its amazing the connection we have and the conversation quickly moves to common experiences and naming Old Boys and teachers from when we were at school. It's a connection that not many others will understand. Recently the Company that I work for organised a trade show in Cairo, Egypt, and it was great meeting up with Class of 1982 Old Boy, **Allen Cunningham**, and having a photo taken of the two of us in front of the main entrance. I encourage all Old Boys to be on the lookout for fellow Old Boys – at work, on the sportsfield, in the shopping centre, when travelling ... it's always great to connect. Send us your photos and feedback.



Thank you to the Old Boys who made the effort to attend this year's Valedictory Service – as well as those who sent video messages (<https://muircollege.co.za/omu/omu-highlights/>) – it was an emotional experience and the OMU is happy that we made the effort to welcome the Class of 2023 into the fold. The OMU-sponsored ties were very well received by our newest members.

The Union would like to thank all Old Muirites as well as supporters for the regular messages of support and congratulations received. The OMU Manager, Wendy Knott-Craig forwards the leadership all your messages and it is really rewarding and motivational to receive such positive feedback.

The OMU can only survive and thrive on contributions made by Old Boys ... its that time of the year again when all Old Boys will be encouraged to make a contribution towards the 2024 running costs of the Union. It is a voluntary contribution – as there is no membership fee to belong to the Old Muirite Union – but all are encouraged to make this recommended contribution. The OMU Manager will be circulating the information soon, if not done so already, for you to contribute early in the new year.

Here's wishing the entire Muir College family a wonderful Christmas and relaxing time with the family. I am excited about what 2024 holds – it's going to be a good one – see you in the new year !

Nec Pluribus Impar

Andrew Binning

Old Muirite Union President

www.muircollege.co.za



Headmaster's Message

In the brief 4th academic term, the focus has primarily been on academic matters, with minimal extracurricular activity.

Cricket has been the sole notable sporting activity, with the junior teams participating in several games. At the end of the third term, the U13A cricket team went on a tour to East London to participate in the 35th annual Richard Kent/Fenner Barnard Eastern Cape Schools Cricket Festival – and returned home with an unbeaten record. The U13 teams also participated in the Hoërskool Despatch 6-a-side tournament with our U13A XI securing 2nd place. These successes bode well for the future of cricket at Muir College.

Our High School cricketers played their first fixtures of the term against Kingswood. The U14A team won, but the U15A match was rained out. Both the 1st XI and the 2nd XI faced tough competition from Kingswood, resulting in losses for our teams. Unfortunately, poor weather conditions led to the cancellation of the other two sets of Saturday fixtures, against Daniel Pienaar and Grey.

It is very encouraging to see the extent of the academic talent at Muir College. During the Senior and Junior speech nights at the beginning of the term, I had great pleasure in congratulating the prize winners on their remarkable achievements – especially the School Dux for 2023, Likhaya Loyiti, who has also become the recipient of the Trevor Winer Bursary.

The annual Valedictory Service marked a significant event this term – our formal farewell to the members of our matriculation class, many of whom have spent half their lives at Muir College. Our gratitude goes to OMU President Andrew Binning and other Old Muirites for their presence at the service, and the thoughtful gifts presented to our matric students.

We are pleased to announce that **Esihlisipho Jacobs** has been appointed Head Prefect of the Senior School for 2024, with **Connor Griffiths** as his Deputy, while in the Junior School the Head Prefect will be **Joshua Ramsammy-Cook** and **Gameem Rockman** is to be the Deputy Head Prefect. We look forward to their leadership in the coming year.

It will be of interest to Old Muirites to hear that Muir has introduced a new blazer for the High School Prefect Body – a navy blue blazer with braiding – and in 2024 the school plans to reintroduce the cream blazer with braiding for honours in the academic or sporting arenas.

Thank you to the OMU for its continued support as we look forward to the new year with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

I wish all Old Muirites and their families a peaceful, safe holiday season and a blessed Christmas.

David Francis
Headmaster



2024 Head Boy & Deputy Head Boy

TREVOR WINER SCHOLARSHIP 2024

CONGRATULATIONS to **Likhaya Loyiti**, the latest recipient of the Trevor Winer Scholarship.

The scholarship is awarded each year to a matriculant, and provides him with substantial funding towards the cost of tertiary education for up to 4 years.

Below is an extract from Professor Margot Winer on behalf of the Trustees of the Trevor Winer Scholarship.

'After a very rewarding and interesting process the Trustees of the Trevor Winer Scholarship are delighted to announce a winner of this year's award for R40 000 a year towards university expenses for four years of study. The Scholarship was established in 2008 by Trevor Winer, a Muir College Old Boy who matriculated in 1955. Its purpose is to financially assist academically gifted students matriculating from Muir College to obtain a degree from a South African university who, due to personal and family financial circumstances, would have difficulty in doing so. As Muir boys have learned over the years this is not simply a merit-based scholarship, but rather one that allows intellectual ability and hard work to flourish in the face of economic constraints.'

'This Scholarship is Trevor Winer's gift to the boys of Muir College - in that way it is different from other awards and prizes that Muir College awards. As we have done in the past, the Trustees assess the top candidates through the interviews and their reports – the students own words and the students own marks. This year we have had the enormous pleasure of speaking to the top five candidates for the award, namely: Eshaan Prag, Daniel Beckley, Matthan Slambee, Likhaya Loyiti, Lonwabiso Gaveni. Well done to these five exceptional young men'

'And to the next five down the line, we saw your marks as well and congratulations to you as well for your hard work!'

'Our conversations with the candidates offered a tremendous insight into a truly exceptional school, into the power of brotherhood, how the strong urge to challenge oneself plays out, into the power of setting goals and dreaming big in the face of financial hardship, and particularly into the role that teachers and peers have played in inspiring, mentoring and nudging these students towards taking this huge step into adulthood. Congratulations Muir College! And congratulations candidates.'

'As Trustees this is a wonderful time of the year, when Trevor Winer is reminded of his academic journey and the places it took him. Enjoy the journey, all of you are well prepared.'



GOING BACK IN TIME

BORN A MUIR 'HOSTEL POT'

When **Ron Dugmore**, accompanied by his wife Gill, attended the historic Founders' Ceremony at Muir in August 2022, he was the sole representative of his matric Class of 1948. He was also the only member of his class to have called the Muir College hostel 'home' from his very earliest days. Born to then vice-principal and housemaster Norman Cecil Dugmore and Iris Dugmore on 25 June 1932, young Ronald began a unique journey through Muir College with something of a 'head start' on his contemporaries as a hostel resident when commencing his school days.

This journey even saw an episode of teaching at Muir when Ron, while studying at Rhodes University, stepped in at short notice when Clifford Barry, a member of the teaching staff, passed away. Even at that time and during his university holidays, Ron returned to the Muir hostel, his home base for almost 20 years. His first teaching post was at Grey High School in Port Elizabeth, and subsequent postings included his appointment as headmaster of Union High in Graaff-Reinet, and thereafter as the founding headmaster of York High School in George.



Young Ron with his parents, 'NC' and Iris Dugmore



Ron's father, NC Dugmore

His success in leading these schools would not have been unexpected, given the example set by his father, the legendary NC Dugmore, who was at the helm of Muir from 1940 to 1948, until his tenure was cut short so prematurely by his unexpected passing halfway through Ron's matric year. More than seventy years later, Ron would add another step to his journey with Muir College when he addressed the school's Founders' Assembly marking the 200th year of the school's existence.

In chapter 24, 'A Muir boy from birth', of the commemorative book *Shout Till the Rafters Ring*, Ron shares many of his school-day reminiscences. For most of his schooldays, his father was headmaster. Even before this, many improvements that took place at the school were wholly or in large measure driven by NC Dugmore while he was vice-principal.

These included the holding of annual musical revues known as Sing-Songs, the introduction of the School Song still in use today and the re-organising of the House system with the names of Inggs, Sutherland and MacDonald. A real milestone was the opening of the Muir College Main Field and pavilion in 1937, which went a long way towards solving the shortage of proper sports facilities. NC Dugmore drove and personally supervised many aspects of this project, such as the planting and maintaining of grass on the new sports field. Several years before that, he and Iris had resuscitated the Muir College magazine, thereby enabling, amongst other things, sports results to be systematically recorded on a regular basis. About midway during NC's tenure as headmaster, the hostel was renovated to provide for junior boarders, who for some years had been accommodated in the adjacent headmaster's residence. It was here that Ron lived with his family during his last few years at school.



Ron Dugmore addressing the Founders' Assembly in 2022

His personal recollections, however, give the most vivid picture of what school life was like in the 1940s: from the tensions between pupils of different schools during the Second World War, to shenanigans during prep time in the hostel and recollecting the quirks of various teachers, and much more. School slang current during Ron's time seemed to have survived several generations: 'fireball' meaning a playground fight; to 'chote' meaning to brag; to 'oes' – the schoolboy version of appropriating something belonging to someone else, normally nothing more serious than someone's lunch ...

Camaraderie among 'hostel pots' was strong, as everyone had to share the same conditions, ranging from life being governed by bells and discipline, to the enjoyment of hot cocoa and pies after the annual school gala down town. Ron recalls that as a young junior in his Sunday church croc (pairs of boys walking in formation) he could never understand why some of the senior boys disappeared en route to church and reappeared during the march back!

Of all things generating school spirit, sport was probably the most significant. Sportsmen of Ron's high school generation such as Tommy Hartzenberg, 'Moi' Gordon and Jimmy van der Riet, together with Ron himself, must have come very close to emulating the achievements of sporting heroes of previous eras whom they revered: the Gillmers, Channer, Canale, Kingwill and many more. Ron recalls with pride Muir's pre-eminence in swimming and tennis, and being one of the league-topping schools in rugby.

When it came to cadets, he preferred drumming in the band to being howled at by student officer platoon commanders. He shares a unique insight into his father's creativity and resilient humour in the face of criticism, once voiced in the local newspaper, of the way Muir cadets did their route marching past Riebeek College. The following edition of the paper carried a reply by NC Dugmore that began:

***When Muir cadets
With epaulettes
Go 'slouching' by
Don't criticise
The little guys ...***

... and ended:

Why criticise?

Just sympathise!

For Ron, the ethos of Muir College in his day was best expressed in the traditions and ceremonies, the concerts, the community singing, the war cry and, above all, in the values of discipline, sportsmanship and respect taught by the staff. When he returned to the school, now in its new campus, for his 70th anniversary reunion in 2018, he was impressed by many things, especially the *"uniform worn with pride"* and the politeness and respectfulness of the boys. Ron concludes his reminiscences with these words: *"May Muir and its special memories always occupy a very special place in your hearts as well."*



Written by:
Charles van Renen,
Class of 1963

A limited number of copies of the full official history of Muir College, *Shout Till the Rafters Ring*, that was published to mark the bicentenary of Muir College, are still available.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



Lance Dodd

(Class of 1984)

recently chatted with
Old Muirites from the 1960s,
1970s and 1980s.

John Wates, Class of 1968

John Wates is a civil engineering consultant and mining services operator with over 45 years of experience in the field of geotechnical and mine tailings dam engineering.

But let us take a step back to where it all began.



John grew up on a farm at Sapkamma, 75km outside Uitenhage, on the Graaff-Reinet road.

He was a border at Muir College from 1964, and was both the Head Prefect and the school dux in 1968 – as was his father, Geoff ‘Rusty’

Wates, in 1936, and his nephew, Guy, in 1997.

John’s passions at school were rugby and cricket, both of which he still watches with great interest to this day. Although he excelled in the classroom, he says he was not particularly active on the cultural front, apart from taking part in the odd debate.

After completing his schooling, John obtained his MSc in Civil Engineering from the University of Natal and an MBA from the University of Cape Town. He is a registered professional engineer and a member of several international tailings review boards that provide independent assurance of safety for large mine tailings dams. He is currently the chairman of Fraser Alexander, a leading provider of mining and industrial services in Africa.

After two years in the Marketing Department of Denel Land Systems, Ashley joined a Swiss/German company - Global Clearance Solutions - as Head of Operations in 2018, a role he still fulfills, albeit from his home office, with lots of travelling. GCS manufactures landmine and explosive ordnance clearance machines, and Ashley is involved in operations, managing the clearance of landmines and explosive ordnance.

John lives in Waterfall, Johannesburg, with his wonderful wife, Margot. He has three children and five grandchildren, all of whom are still in South Africa.



He enjoys spending his free time visiting his family, game reserves and on slack cycling trips. He is currently reading *The Russia Conundrum* by Mikhail Khodorkovsky, a book about the political and economic situation in Russia. He likes listening to music from the 60s and 70s, especially that of Queen, Billy Joel and John Lennon.

John’s fondest memory of being a Muir boy is sharing good times with his friends, some of whom he is still in contact today. The best times were on the playground and playing fields. He’s a firm believer in “*what happens at school, stays at school*” and, as such, he says he prefers not to share some of the things he did that might incriminate his old friends.

A lesson John has learned in life is that it is “*not so much academic results and qualifications, but rather attitude and commitment that set people apart and make them successful.*”

Mark Wates, Class of 1974

Mark Wates grew up in various cities including Salisbury (Harare), Pretoria and Johannesburg before settling in Uitenhage.

During his years at Muir College, Mark had a passion for sports, particularly baseball, rugby (playing for the 4th and 5th teams) and Cake League cricket.

He also participated in the Veld and Vlei outward-bound challenge and took to the stage in the school's production of Camelot in 1973.

After matriculating in 1974, Mark studied medicine at the University of Cape Town, then embarked on a medical internship in East London and served as a medical officer at Cecilia Makiwane Hospital in Mdantsane for three years. He then worked as a senior medical officer at Shongwe Mission Hospital in Mpumalanga for four and a half years.

In the early 1990s, Mark specialised in Paediatrics at the Red Cross Children's Hospital in Cape Town, where he worked until 1996. He then became the Head of the Department of Paediatrics at the Karl Bremer Hospital in Bellville, retiring in November 2022.

Mark has been happily married to Jenny, a primary school teacher, for 40 years and the couple currently reside in Somerset West.

In his free time, Mark enjoys walking in the Helderberg Nature Reserve in Somerset West and visiting Kirstenbosch Gardens in Cape Town. He also has a passion for exploring various natural parks and engaging in various hobbies, including model trains and cars, photography and reading.



Some of the books currently on Mark's reading list include *Like "Water is for Fish: The Power of Story in our Lives by Garth Japheth, Endurance" by Scott Kelly, On the Plain of Snakes by Paul Theroux, The Body by Bill Bryson and Onder Een Dak by Dana Snyman.* He also enjoys listening to artists like acoustic guitarists Tony Cox and Steve Newman, 7th Wave, Nibs van der Spuy, and Simon van Geld.

Reflecting on his time as a Muir boy, Mark has fond memories of the school's traditions and the honour of being taught by Mr "Drop" Edwards, who had also taught his father and grandfather.

One life lesson that Mark would like to share is that one should make the most of what you have been given and to use it to the best of your ability. *"It is amazing how much can be done with little,"* he says.

He also believes in the power of storytelling. *"Tell your story. There is power in your story no matter how insignificant it may seem to you."*



Warren Griffiths, Class of 1982

Warren Griffiths embodies the spirit of growth, learning and a love for the great outdoors. His journey through life is a testament to his diverse interests and a relentless pursuit of self-improvement.



Warren grew up in the Uitenhage suburb of Mosel. (I wonder if he spent as much time playing Pacman at the local cafe as some other old Muirties from the same neighbourhood did.)

Although he was not a boarder himself, Warren nonetheless displayed a generous spirit by sharing his sandwiches with those who were.

During his school years, Warren nurtured his friendships, cherished time spent with friends after school, and made his mark in various activities. He excelled as a cross-country runner, earning a coveted first-team blazer. His sporting endeavours extended to rugby, where he played for the 4th team. Additionally, he showcased his musical talents by playing the bugle in the cadet band.

Warren's commitment to learning continued after he matriculated from Muir College in 1982. He completed a toolmaking trade at Volkswagen, where he developed his technical skills. His quest for knowledge led him to earn a mechanical diploma at the Technical College, and he also furthered his education by obtaining a bachelor's degree in production management from the Port Elizabeth Technikon.

Warren's career has been marked by diverse roles and global experiences. Starting as an apprentice toolmaker at Volkswagen, he progressed to become a process engineer and a project engineer. An exciting chapter saw him working as a resident engineer at a SEAT factory near Barcelona, Spain. His journey continued at Dorbyl Guestro Forging and Machining, where he contributed to building prop shafts. Subsequently, he took on the role of a manufacturing engineer at Tenneco Ride Control, specialising in shock absorber assembly.

Warren has returned to his roots, and is currently living in Strelitzia Park.

In 1991, Warren married Debbie, who been a pupil at Brandwag. They have two children: Kelly, who graduated from Riebeek College, and Ryan, a Muir College alumnus. Family forms a crucial part of Warren's life.

His free time is filled with adventurous and athletic pursuits. He enjoys road running, trail running, open-water swimming, and kayaking. His history of taking part in triathlons includes a full Ironman and multiple half Ironman races, and he has also competed in Two Oceans marathons.

Warren's reading choices include Wilbur Smith's Legacy of War, while his musical playlist is dominated by 80s classics featuring artists like The Human League, Michael Jackson, Yazoo, and Van Halen.

For Warren, the fondest memories of his Muir College days revolve around his involvement in the cadets and the school's hiking expeditions. These experiences probably fostered his love for the great outdoors and adventure.

One valuable life lesson learned from Warren is the encouragement to never underestimate one's abilities. He emphasizes the importance of learning from one's mistakes and never being too old to acquire new skills or knowledge. He also humorously imparts the timeless wisdom that in matters of disagreement, it's best to acknowledge that your wife (or girlfriend) is always right.



Barry Prinsloo, Class of 1984

Barry Prinsloo was born in Bulawayo, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and moved to Uitenhage at the age of 16, where he completed his Standard 9 education at Muir College before matriculating as a member of the Class of 1984.



Although his stay at Muir was brief, his ties to the town of Uitenhage go way back to the early years of the previous century. Barry initially lived with his maternal grandparents who were long-time residents in Uitenhage. His mother was born in Uitenhage in 1932

before moving to Rhodesia in 1952. Barry's mother and her sister were both Riebeeck matriculants and her brother, D E Blignaut, matriculated at Muir in 1955. After his mum and dad emigrated from Rhodesia at the start of 1984, the family lived in Scanlan Street, a couple of blocks up the hill from the old Muir College campus.

Barry's school days were marked by diverse interests. While not a star athlete, he held his own on the cricket field and played rugby for the "fighting fifths." He also dabbled in squash, shooting and cross-country running. His cultural pursuits saw him cast in the combined colleges' production of Oklahoma, directed by Neil Hoare.

"I think we did it to meet the girls!" Barry confesses.

Barry's quest for knowledge led him to Rhodes University where he initially studied Education, Geography, Physical Education and languages, but he finished with commerce-oriented qualifications in Industrial Psychology, Accounts and Business Information Technology. A post-graduate internship at the IBM Systems Engineering School marked the start of a successful career in IT.

Barry started work at IBM straight after varsity (after working numerous vacation jobs as a trainee at PWC Uitenhage with the intention of going the CA route). He progressed through the ranks in systems engineering, and left IBM after almost seven years to join a small start-up IT communication company. He remained in the ICT field until 2008 before venturing into the construction industry, starting a small construction fit-out operation that continued until he emigrated to New Zealand (the home of only three Rugby World Cup titles!) at the

end of 2016. Barry currently lives in Auckland and is still in the construction industry, working as a contracts manager.

Barry says he has had the privilege of having his work career foster his passion for knowledge and travel. *"Bulawayo, Rhodesia and Uitenhage are real 'backwaters' on the world stage, and I always yearned to see the great sights and experience the wonders of our planet. I have managed miraculously to stitch this into my journey thus far,"* he says. His travels and exploits include the USA, Canada, London, France, Italy, Monaco and Asia. Along the way he has experienced great temples, wonderful feats of engineering and architecture – all in places of significance to humanity.

Barry's family life is marked by two marriages and two wonderful children: Michael, who matriculated from Grey last year, and Samantha, who lives in Auckland.

In his free time, Barry seeks adventure through safari trips in Southern Africa and sub-tropical snorkelling destinations like Bali. His true passion, however, is golf, which he describes as a *"great leveller, where the universe constantly reminds you of your fallibility."*

Barry is currently engrossed in Thomas Pakenham's The Scramble for Africa, while his music playlist oscillates between the iconic sounds of Pink Floyd and Neil Young.

Barry wasn't a pupil at Muir College for as long as some other Old Muirites, but he still has many fond memories of his time at our great school. *"I really enjoyed the great camaraderie amongst all at our small school. The cadet camps and having to carry an injured junior down a kloof in the Winterberg on a make-shift stretcher (sticks, rugby jerseys, etc). The guy had twisted his knee badly and was writhing in pain and obviously could not hike any further. We got him out to where an ambulance could meet us."*

Barry shares the following trio of valuable life lessons:

1. Know the difference between right & wrong.
2. Follow your dreams and don't beat yourself up if you don't achieve them immediately. Perseverance will provide results or show you an alternate pursuit.
3. Always support Muir 1st XV v Grey 1st XV - or any other school!

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



Fenner Barnard

(Class of 1998)

and a teacher at Grey High School, interviewed some fellow teachers from around South Africa who attended Muir College in the 1990s and 2000s.

Lyntin Gouws, Class of 1998

An Old Muirite who chose the noblest profession of all for his career, Lyntin Martin Gouws started his education at Muir Primary in the old red-brick buildings in 1990 and matriculated in 1998. He enjoyed his time at the College so much that he decided to stay for another year, joining the Enrichment Year group in 1999. Lyntin was a prefect in grade 12 and he might have the record for 1st XV rugby appearances, having played more than 80 times after amazingly making his 1st XV debut in grade 9!

Lyntin initially studied business computing, but changed his mind and pursued a Bachelor of Education Degree at the former NMMU in 2001. Lyntin served as a rugby coach at Muir College while he was a student and after completing his teaching practical at the school, he became a staff member at Muir College in 2005.

Lyntin is married to Lynne and they have two children, Carter and Emily. Lyntin has taught both Economics and Business Studies during his time on the Muir College staff and he was the 1st XV coach for ten years. He has also played a vital role in the hostel as the Superintendent of Sir Thomas Muir House.

In 2021 Lyntin was appointed as the departmental head of the primary phase of Muir College, which has been an exciting challenge. He has also been a member of the Governing Bodies of both Muir College and College Hill Preparatory for several years. He currently coaches the U13A rugby team.



As a passionate Old Muirite who has dedicated his life to his alma mater, Lyntin said that: *“people often don't appreciate how important school is and how important those that you interact with are during your school years. No matter who they are, how long they were in your life or if you still keep in touch with them, they have influenced the person you have become. Muir College has, and still is, influencing my development as a person. The College is a great institution and I wish more people would see this and get involved. Your contribution, no matter how big or small will surely make a difference to someone.”*

Lyntin believes that the example of the current headmaster, Mr David Francis, as a teacher and head of discipline *“allowed us to see the importance of following rules and regulations”*, while former headmaster Mr Crawford *“planted the seed to pursue education as a career. He saw something in and inspired me to follow the path I am still on today.”*

Lastly, the legendary Godfrey Streso, who was the Enrichment Year Coordinator during Lyntin's year, was also a fantastic role model and mentor to him. *"As both a family friend and teacher, he guided me through some tough times and gave me many wise words to live by."*

Henry Adams said that *"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."* Long may this proud Old Boy continue to impart the example he learned during his time at the Muir to current and future Muirites.

Nec Pluribus Impar!

Neil Harth, Class of 1998

While his career has taken him to other schools, the ongoing contribution of Old Muirites to education, both in South Africa and abroad, should be cause for celebration. Michael Morpugo said, *"It's the teacher that makes the difference, not the classroom."*

This expression is typified by one of the most popular members of the Class of 1998, Neil Harth. He joined Muir College as a standard two pupil, in the red-brick buildings in Park Avenue. Neil was head boy in standard five, and deputy head in matric, and played both first team rugby and first team cricket. An Enrichment Year under Godfrey Streso followed his matriculation – which Neil describes as a fantastic choice.

It was during that fun-filled year that he chose to become a teacher, and he then pursued a Bachelor's Degree in Primary Education at NMMU. He began his teaching career at Westering Primary in 2004, before moving to Grey Junior in 2006, where he teaches Grade 4s, is Master-in-Charge of Rugby and of Golf, and is a rugby and cricket coach.

Neil is a keen golfer (when times allows him to be one) and he enjoys both surf and river fishing with his dad, Mike, who is also an Old Muirite.

A devoted father of three, Neil has two daughters (Emma and Isla) and a son, Caleb. When asked what the greatest impact Muir College had upon him, Neil stated that, *"Manners maketh the man! Being part of an all-boys' school with such rich traditions was special. Even though at the time you thought the teachers were being harsh or mean, the life lessons learned, respect gained and earned, and ethos instilled is something I try to instil in my own children and the boys that I teach."*

When asked about teachers who made a positive impression upon him, Neil had the following to say: *"There were plenty of teachers that played a major role in my development growing up. However, the late Mr CF Barnard at Muir Primary definitely taught me many life lessons in the classroom and on the sports field. I was a bit of a hothead and could have been a bad-tempered sportsman, but "Mr B" often had wise words to keep me on the straight and narrow! I only recently found out that he protected me when I was sent off at Grey in our U13A rugby match, and I dodged a caning!"*

In high school, we were fortunate to have Mr Crawford as our headmaster while I was in Standard 9 and Standard 10. He was an awesome headmaster and I have the utmost respect for him. He taught me plenty about being a leader and being consistent. Seeing his academic gown swooping down the corridor was scary for most, but he was always friendly and knew all the boys by their first names."

It is my hope that Neil continues to impart his love of learning through his easy-going nature to many more young men in his classroom and on the sports field.



Krinesan Moodley, Class of 2000

John Wooden said that *"A good coach can change a game. A great coach can change a life."* All Old Muirites can reflect on the good men and women that guided them through their extra-curricular activities beyond the classroom.

Krinesan Moodley was a late arrival at Muir College, beginning in his grade 8 year, after moving to Uitenhage from East London. He matriculated in 2000, but chose to join the famed Godfrey Streso's Enrichment Year group in 2001. Krinesan was a mainstay of his year group in the hostel and did well in both cricket and hockey. When asked about the impression made upon him by his alma mater, Krinesan says, *"Muir College is about the people. It was a place where I made great connections with people that still play a role in my life today. The staff were exceptional in their commitment to us as pupils and certainly created an environment that brought out the best in me. My closest friends today are some of my Muir classmates and we have been friends since 1996. Muir sets you up for success in life."*

He chose to pursue a career in education and joined the staff at Muir College in a learnership position almost immediately after leaving school. After qualifying and gaining experience in both the classroom and on the sports field, Krinesan took up a position at Kingswood College in Grahamstown, where he taught and administered sport. In 2010 he moved to Pretoria to take up the position of Director of Sport and Deputy Headmaster in charge of Extra Murals at Waterkloof House Preparatory School, a position he held until 2016.

In 2017 he moved to St Alban's College as their Director of Sport. He is currently their Senior Deputy Headmaster, an outstanding achievement. Krinesan is married to Andrea and has two children, Leah and Daniel.

Besides his impressive rise as an educator, Krinesan has been very involved in South African hockey since leaving school. He has had the privilege of being on the coaching staff for a number of national men's hockey teams, which has given him the opportunity to attend international events such as the U21 Hockey World Cup in India, the World Student Games in Russia and various Africa Cup qualifiers over the years. He is currently the South African Schools Boys' Hockey Convenor of Selectors.

Krinesan says that the following teachers had profound impact upon him:

"Mr Fenner Barnard was my first cricket and rugby coach at Muir. He was a role model and someone who I looked up to. I will always remember him for the genuine care and support he gave to my brother and me."

"Neville Rothman - Nev - and I are still friends today. He set me on my hockey path and I have valued his support, advice and friendship since we met back in 1997."

"Rohan Cloete - Uncle Ro, as he was affectionately known to the boarders - continues to play a role in my life and has been a source of advice and support both personally and professionally. Regan Schreiber played an immense role in fostering my love for education and my growth as an individual."

"Mr Bun Hopley possibly had the biggest impact on my life. He gave my brother and I the opportunity to attend Muir College and be boarders. He was an incredible role model, father figure and a great leader."

"I could mention so many more staff from my time at Muir: Mr Dave Francis (I am absolutely delighted that he is the Headmaster), Mr Ernie Trennery, Mr Godfrey Streso, Mr Jacques Botha, Ms Rita Lingwood, Mrs Phillete Estement and Mrs Lynne Barnard."

Albert Einstein said that, *"Education is what remains after one has forgotten about what one learned in school"*, and this writer hopes that Muir College continues to produce men of the calibre of Krinesan who choose to go into the teaching profession. Our country needs good men to be examples to our young people, and while he is far beyond the bounds of Muir College, I hope that he continues the good work he does in both the classroom and on the sports field.



WE DON'T LIKE CRICKET, WE LOVE IT!



*Runeshan-Narendra Modi Stadium
in Ahmedabad*

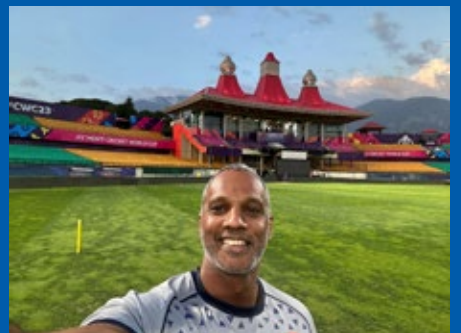
Old Muirite Runeshan Moodley (Class of 2002) has been on tour with the Proteas at the Cricket World Cup in India.

Runeshan, the Conditioning Coach for the Proteas, shared a few photos of his time in India, including a send-off with the South African Sports Minister, Zizi Kodwa.

Although the Proteas didn't make it to the final of the competition, we are still proud of their performance.



Runeshan and Sport Minister, Zizi Kodwa



Runeshan at Dharamsala



Runeshan - Training session in Lucknow

CELEBRATING BOK FRIDAY

'Bok Friday', as each Friday immediately prior to the Springboks playing an important match is known, is an opportunity for South Africans to proudly don their green and gold Springbok shirts in support of our national team.

The day before the 2024 World Cup Rugby Final marked a particularly important Bok Friday, with the entire country feeling the 'gees' and rallying behind the team. Even at Muir College both staff and learners enthusiastically embraced the occasion decked out in their Springbok attire, and the school radiated with national pride and unity.

And to add a little flavour to the excitement, there were several All Black supporters, creating an interesting blend of rivalry and camaraderie that added to the festive atmosphere.

Well done to the Springboks on winning the tournament for the fourth time.

Legends!!



INTERVIEW WITH A TEACHER



Grant Kunneke

(Class of 1993)

spent time interviewing Muir College teacher

Mr Fritz Mynhardt



Muir College teacher, Mr Fritz Mynhardt

Q : Which subject/s do you teach?

Ans: Afrikaans First Additional Language.

Q : How long have you been at Muir College?

Ans: For 6 months now.

Q : Is there anything that you wish you'd known before you became a first-year teacher?

Ans: Not to use your colleagues' coffee mugs nor park on their parking spaces.

Q : What's the best advice you've been given about teaching?

Ans: You work with people. The student in your class might as well be your father, brother, son, etc. Treat them accordingly.

Q : What kinds of qualities do students look for in teachers?

Ans: Trust, honesty, consistency and fairness.

Q : How do you approach discipline and what role does it play in learning?

Ans: Appropriate discipline is of the utmost importance. There can be no education without discipline. Discipline is acquired through respect.

Q : Your funniest moment at Muir?

Ans: One of our rugby boys going in for a certain try, but then catching a "speed wobble", stumbling down and falling over with an open try line in front of him.

LIFE LESSONS

In 2022 the OMU released a booklet for the matrices called “**200 Leadership Life Lessons**”. We approached 200 leaders, including various Old Muirites, community leaders and celebrities to contribute to the project.

Here are 2 Life Lessons from 2 of our Old Muirites.

Bahle Qukubana, Class of 2015

Before anything else in life, take care of your emotions, be kind and patient with yourself and stay true to who you are and let no one take that away from you. Aspire to be something great in life, and forever chase greatness, refraining from putting time frames to things you want to achieve. Instead replace that with hope, consistency, patience and hard work. Yes, life is definitely not going to be easy on you going forward. You are going to be faced with a lot of challenges, but face them! Opportunities will be presented to you, so take them. Be wise, humble, hardworking and be filled with the spirit of a never-giving-up Lion, for that will lead you to a prosperous and successful life. Remember, you are ‘Second to None’ and you are capable.



Paul Frew, Class of 1991

There are many factors that contribute to creating a successful and well-rounded life, while a slight setback in one area easily overshadows all other gains.

Connections: Spiritually, family, and friends are the foundation for a successful life. Quality time is the currency in this department. Losses in this area can be devastating, while the rewards are rich.

Health: When we are young, we feel bulletproof, but our physical health doesn't last forever. Rather than playing catch-up later, it's worthwhile to practice now those things that will keep us healthy long into the future.

Career: Success here is all about playing to our strengths. It means showing up, being prepared, doing our best, and getting along with others. Reading is the turbo-drive button for career success.

Finances: Finally, if we budget, save, invest and give - diligently and early on - it sets us up for a life of financial empowerment, and that in turn supports success in all other areas of our lives. Laying a foundation of connections, maintaining our physical health, building career success and being intentional on your financial journey will all help to build a successful, well-rounded life.



MEET THE BUSINESSES

in the OMU's Business Portal

BookCrafters

An interview with **Joe McDaniel**, *Class of 1961*



- **What's the elevator pitch for your business?**

Joe and Jan McDaniel established BookCrafters in 2007 and have since guided authors through the process of self-publishing over 500 book titles. They are a home-based business in Parker, Colorado, completing their customer's book projects from final manuscript to printing and world-wide distribution. Once the basic manuscript is complete it takes only a few short weeks to publish a finished book.

- **Are you national or local or international?**

Although based in Colorado, we have assisted clients all around the United States and in many other countries. Our work is done online and over the phone.

- **What was the main driver behind starting this business?**

After self-publishing our own travel journals for over ten years, we realized that many authors faced difficulties and exorbitant costs in publishing a book. Most on-line publishing companies were charging thousands of dollars for basic services that we could offer for much less. Self-publishers even had to give away some of their royalties in complicated contracts and would have to purchase large quantities of books initially.

With advances in digital printing technologies (Print-on-Demand) it was no longer necessary to order more than one copy and it became easy to get a book title into world-wide distribution while keeping 100% of the authors earned royalties.

These circumstances provided us with a unique opportunity.

- **What do you love most about this business?**

We meet interesting and talented people and enjoy their reaction when they hold their first published book in their hands. We both love to design and format books, both with text and illustrations/photographs.



- **What advice would you give to other entrepreneurs?**

Never say "I don't know how..." If you don't think you know enough about something specifically, don't admit it! Just go away and teach yourself.

- **What is the secret sauce of your business?**

Hand-holding and close personal contact with our authors.
We tell them it is "Your Book, Your Way!"

- **If you could do it all over again. What would you do differently?**

Nothing. It has been a learning adventure from day one.

- **Who would play you in a film about this business? And why?**

Tom Cruise, as in "Mission Impossible." Or maybe Matt Damon, as in "The Bourne Supremacy." Just kidding.

- **What's leadership philosophy or approach?**

Give ownership to everyone in the business.

- **What's been your most exciting/rewarding project/s over the years?**

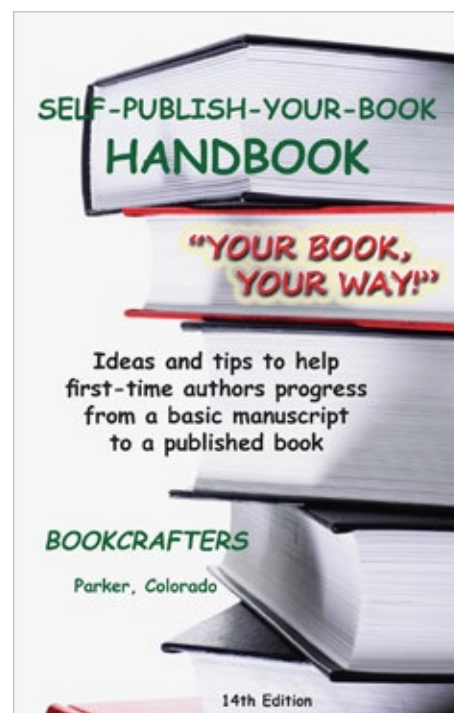
Many. We have published over 50 awarding winning books in a wide range of genres: novels, history/genealogy, cookbooks, personal memoirs, field guides, travel journals, etc.

- **What are you curious about over the next two decades, for your business or sector?**

As the current generation reads books less and relies more on social media, will print books become an endangered species? Will 'spell-check' replace our ability to spell correctly? Will we ever be able to communicate again without mobile phones?

- **What's the best thing South African businesses can do for the well-being of all citizens?**

Maintain high standards in education. Encourage entrepreneurship. Promote technical education opportunities.



Additional information:

I want to add a few comments about my time at Muir College (Matric 1961). It was at Muir that I was taught how to read and write well. It was this basic skill that, more than just about anything else, helped me graduate from Rhodes University. It was this ability as a communicator that steered me through many different careers and responsibilities over the next five decades! Eventually it culminated in forming the business that Jan and I started in 2007. It was our combined interests and skills that have afforded us the ability to do what we love doing, enable us to afford to travel (to Africa - frequently), and keep our minds active as we approach our 80s!

Interviewed by:

Roland Cox

Class of 1987



WALL OF REMEMBRANCE

Our condolences go to the families and friends
of those we have lost in 2023.

If you hear of a classmate who has passed on, please contact
Wendy Knott-Craig (oldmuiriteunion@gmail.com)
with the information.

Albert Boliter
1947

Alwin La Trobe
1956

Roger Meyer
1957

Desmond Thompson
1957

John Carter
1957

Cedric Oliver
1957

Melville Thwaits
1958

Denis Pinnock
1961

Frank Atkinson
1961

Kevin Smith
1963

Johan van Rooyen
1964

Brian Harris
1965

Peter Butlion
1967

Bryan Erasmus
1970

Anthony Hubsch
1972

Alan Kees Jenner
1973

Mike Sinclair
1974

Delvin Vermaak
1976

Anthony Bernstein
1979

Michael Vermeulen
1980

Louis le Grange
1984

Mark Crane
1985

Simon Groves
1986

Bretton White
1989

Thobile Koko Tshazibana
1997

Donovan Eckley
2002

Akhona Baliwe
2009

Thembisile Chris Lukuzo
2011

Sinawo Booi
2014

Shaun Jonga
2022

THE BACK PAGE

Welcome to the last edition of the OMU Newsletter for 2023.

What can we say about 2023?

- Bokke!!
- It went by way too fast
- Bokke!!!!

Some of my highlights for 2023 include:

- Founders' Weekend
 - meeting Bryan Habana
 - catching up with Old Muirites with whom I've become friends over the last three years
 - meeting new Old Muirites
- Forming a Newsletter Committee and the support and commitment from the team. You gents have been amazing. Thank you.
- Growing the contact details on our database. We are still short of many email addresses and WhatsApp numbers. Don't forget to let me know if your details change or if you know of any classmates who aren't receiving our correspondence and would like to.
- Growing the social media numbers.
- Welcoming David Francis as Headmaster of Muir College.



There have been a few challenges to overcome this year, but with the support of so many Old Muirites (young and old), things all fell into place.

I'd like to personally thank those who have assisted me and the OMU in any way this year – your support is much appreciated.

And a big thank you to the gents who regularly reach out for updates, chats, input, suggestions, etc, etc. I so enjoy communicating with all of you.

For those who celebrate Christmas, have a blessed one.

For those who are travelling in December and January, please travel safe.

To those who have to work – vasbyt.

Here's to the end of 2023, and the year ahead!

Wendy Knott-Craig

OMU Manager



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