



RHENISH OLD GIRLS' UNION

Newsletter 1, 2012

oldgirls@rhenish.co.za

From the Old Girls

In the blink of an eye, a year has passed and we are rapidly approaching our lunch and AGM in May. We have put together our newsletter with a mind to bringing everyone up to date with all the exciting things that continue to happen at Rhenish and to encourage you to share information about yourself or about other Rhenishers you may know of who continue to make their mark on the world.

The most pressing matter, and one that needs to be resolved with some urgency, is the election of a Rhenish Old Girl Union (ROGU) committee as, sadly, a number of the members have had to resign during the past year because of poor health and other commitments. We would particularly like to thank Kathi Jones for the wonderful role she played as President in the build-up to the 150th celebrations and Helene Bourquin and Vicki Sabor for their great support.

For the Rhenish Old Girls Union to continue to function and to grow – both in membership and in enthusiasm – it is essential that we establish a dynamic committee. We are all passionate Rhenishers and we live the motto “Once a Rhenisher, Always a Rhenisher”. If we are to ensure that this legacy is carried forward, together with all our traditions, it is essential that ROGU continues to function and that a committee is elected to direct its future function and position in the Rhenish Family.

The committee meets approximately three to four times a year. It arranges – with the assistance of the school – the AGM lunch, the strawberry tea for the Matrics and it has been responsible for maintaining the ROGU data base. We would like to keep ROGU members up to date about developments at the school and projects in which we

may choose to become involved. We would like to urge all of you to consider joining the committee.

For more information, please contact oldgirls@rhenish.co.za.

We would like to update the Rhenish website – www.rhenish.co.za - (alumni page) and Facebook Group more regularly so that old girls are current on Rhenish news. To achieve this, however, we are dependent on you: let us know what you're up to or keep us informed of achievements of old girls of which you are aware. You are welcome to e-mail any news you may want us to add to oldgirls@rhenish.co.za, or add it yourself to the Facebook Group – Rhenish Group.

We would like to encourage all Rhenishers on leaving the school to join ROGU and to stay in contact with the Rhenish Family – not only your closest friends from your year – in this way. Visit the school website, read the weekly newsletter and feed information or comments through to us. Leaving school should not be the end of your connection with Rhenish, rather it should simply be the start of a new dynamic in your relationship with the greater Rhenish Family as you venture forward into the world carrying the values and traditions of Rhenish with you.

The Rhenish Old Girl Union is also an avenue for you to give back to or ‘pay forward’ into the Rhenish community – check out the school’s wish list or consider sharing your advice and/or expertise, and think about where and how you could be involved in what you know to be a fine institution.

Reunions Please send us any details for reunions so we can post it on the website and on our Facebook page, or assist with liaising with the school.

News from the School

Matric Results – 2011

Rhenish girls once again acquitted themselves well in the 2011 National Senior Certificate examinations. They maintained the school's 20-odd year record of 100% pass rate (the longest period of full passes held by any Stellenbosch school) and 99,1% of them qualified for tertiary studies.

In addition, the following girls placed in the top 10 in the Western Cape in the mentioned subject:

Sibongile Jimlongo (9th, isiXhosa 1st Additional Language)

Anathi Bangani (10th, isiXhosa 2nd Additional Language)

Tina Jonker (3rd, Mathematics, Probability)

Caitlin Kat (8th, Italian 2nd Additional Language)

Carey Bridger (9th, Italian 2nd Additional Language)

Carla Brigando (10th, Italian 2nd Additional Language)

With 23 Top Candidates and 219 subject distinctions, these girls proved once again that Rhenish is an academic force to be reckoned with.

We'd like to welcome the 2011 Matriculants to ROGU – we're so happy to have you among us!

Ms Francis Bishop Retires

After 37 years of loyal service to Rhenish, Ms Francis Bishop retired at the end of 2011.

Ms Bishop had almost single-handedly transformed the Life Sciences department and was always looking for new ways to engage the girls in her learning area, to enable them to translate what they learnt in her classroom into real life experiences.

She touched the lives of many generations of girls over the course of her career, she was a valued member of the management team and she was a compassionate, caring and capable teacher whose entertaining and enlightened methods will be missed by all.

Building Projects

Rhenish continues to grow – by a full class per grade for the past four years – and our aging building is

constantly put under pressure to meet the needs of our growing learner body.

A number of major projects have come to fruition over the course of the past year:

The New Block contains 6 new classrooms – girls and teachers are truly enjoying these new, light and bright teaching venues that so enhance the culture of learning.

The New Entrance – in reality, a PTA project, this has been revamped and has really brought our façade into the 21st century. Our entrance is bold and appealing.

The Hostel Revamp – A need had been expressed to modernise the hostel and improve the living conditions by reducing the number of girls in a dorm which would also facilitate studying in the dorms.



To do this three of the study rooms were converted into six dorms, each housing three learners. The laundry room was also converted into two dorms – one accommodates two girls and the other accommodates three.

The wing facing the hockey field was also renovated and the bathrooms were modernised with the installation of four showers and four toilets. A little kitchen was added and the rooms were updated

The hostel girls are delighted with the changes as they have more space, their living and studying areas have more light and there is less noise at night which creates a better environment for studying.

The Upgrade to the Staff Room – a PTA project that has lifted the staff room and the morale of the staff.

Gone are the dull brown chairs and department issued coffee tables – tasteful solid and striped chairs in blue and cream have replaced these and are complemented by the muted shades on the walls and the blinds. No longer a ‘pit’ where teachers ‘stop’ to ‘refuel’ their ‘tanks’, the staff room is now a welcoming haven where they can share a comforting cup of tea and a cosy chat with a colleague.

In addition, a number of classrooms have been fitted with airconditioning units, the computers in the computer room have been upgraded and the quad has been beautified (another PTA project).

All projects undertaken have been done with a view to building on our legacy and enhancing the experience that Rhenishers have during the course of their time at our school.

Swimming Still Tops

Swimming continues to be an area in which Rhenish excels. Our girls took the trophy for the 7th year running at the A-League Boy/Girl Gala, once again claiming the title of “Best Swimming School” in the Western Cape. In addition, Rhenish ‘walked’ the 4M Gala, hosted this year by Paarl Girls’ High, taking first position by 92 points, as well as the Best Swimmer trophy for U14 (Jo-Mari Kleinhans) and Best Swimmer trophy for U19 (Michelle Nieuwstad and Alexandra Quenet).



Principal’s visit to China

On an invitation from the Confucius Institute’s International Office in Stellenbosch, Ms Helmien Slabber travelled to China for 10 days in September last year.

Ms Slabber visited schools and universities in Fuhzou Province and in Xiamen Province where she was impressed by the thirst for knowledge among the youth and their commitment to excellence which is driven by the knowledge that only those with truly excellent results can hope to further their studies.

Mandarin lessons are offered in the afternoons at Rhenish and the relationship between the school and the Confucius Institute will further be enriched later in the year when the Institute will sponsor a trip to China for a number of deserving learners

Hosting of 4M

A major feather in the Rhenish cap so far this year was the phenomenally successful hosting of the 4M athletics at Coetzenberg.

This annual event has grown so big that it now has a major sponsor (Die Boord Superspar) and a number of minor sponsors and contributors.

Every aspect of the organisation of this event was managed by the school with a high degree of professionalism. Parents and visitors have responded with huge support and encouragement. Teachers, parents and learners all pulled together in their efforts and the result was an overwhelmingly successful meeting that has created a positive attitude towards the school.

Events to Support

A number of events are planned at Rhenish in the near future where ROGU members are encouraged to make their presence and support felt:

Blanket Drive – Each year the Rhenish community (girls, educators, mums, grans, aunts ...) spend the winter months knitting squares that are made up into blankets. These are donated to worthy institutions (child care centres, hospitals and old age homes) in the community.

Last year Rhenishers donated well over two hundred blankets in this way. Any old girls who are willing to knit squares, donate wool or sew (or crochet) squares together, are welcome. Please contact Mrs Beth Smart (021 887 6807) should you have any queries about dimensions. We’d also love to see you

at the Blanket Parade – towards the end of August, when the blankets are paraded by the girls and handed over to the charitable institutions.

Golf Day – A major fundraising event, our annual golf day is planned for Friday 7 September 2012. If you are a golfer and would like to participate, please contact the school for details about the day (four-ball alliance). Should you wish to sponsor a hole or if you would like to contribute a prize, please contact the school for details.

Funds raised from this year's golf day will go towards a general upgrade of classroom infrastructure and a hefty donation towards the "Rhenish for Rhenish Fund" which supports learners in need with school related expenses.

News of Old Girls

There are a host of Rhenish Old Girls' making a difference in the world. When we hear about the exceptional achievements of some of our girls, we are filled with pride and very keen to share the news with all our 'sisters'. So, please do contact us and let us know and we can share it with all of you.

Meri Williams (2000)

Meri is the author of a best-selling book "The Principles of Project Management". She specializes in the management of software projects and web design and is the project manager for all of Europe for a large multi-national. She lives in Newcastle in the UK and she recently won the UK Young IT-Professional Award.

Meri has very generously committed to the establishment of a scholarship that is awarded annually to a deserving Rhenisher. Of this, Meri says, "(it) isn't generosity, it is simply me paying my dues. Rhenish absolutely changed my life. I would never have been independent enough to move to the UK, to study here, to get the career I have without the personal development I got at Rhenish, through the investment of the staff and the girls around me. I know exactly how lucky I am – and I want to make sure as many other girls as possible get the opportunity I did."

Sonja Keller (1997)

Sonja obtained her B.Comm in Institutional Investment *cum laude* at Stellenbosch University in 2000, her Hons B Comm in Economics in 2001 (also at Stellenbosch University and, also, *cum laude*) before receiving a South Africa at-large Rhodes Scholarship to study at Oxford University. Here, Sonja obtained a M Phil in Economics in 2003 and her D.Phil/Ph.D in 2009.

While studying at Oxford, Sonja tutored undergraduate students for a year before tutoring M.Phil students in econometrics and macroeconomics. She also held part-time positions as a visiting lecturer in Advanced Econometrics at Stellenbosch University.

In 2004 Sonja served an internship at the International Monetary Fund in Washington DC while completing a research paper that she presented at an international conference at Cambridge University.

Since 2008 Sonja has been employed as a Chief Economist at JP Morgan Investment Bank of South Africa. She has gone from Associate, to Vice President to Executive Director in 2011. In 2010, Sonja was chosen as "Economist of the Year" by South African industry players and Finance Minister Gordhan.

Ha-Eun Grace Kim (2004)

Ha-Eun Grace Kim is the first girl from the two sister schools (Rhenish and Bloemhof) to receive the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship allocated to Paul Roos learners.

South Africa has nine Rhodes Scholarships – four are available to all South Africans, one to a learner from KwaZulu Natal and one each from four schools, namely Bishops, Paul Roos Gymnasium, SACS and St Andrew's College in Grahamstown. Since 2004 the PRG Scholarship has been extended to Rhenish and Bloemhof girls who have studied a subject offered as part of the co-operative teaching programme with Paul Roos.

Grace matriculated with an average of 102%, obtaining distinctions in 7 of her 8 subjects and 76% for Afrikaans 1st Language HG. She is an accomplished violinist and she obtained her BA and her BA Hons degrees cum laude. Grace received her MA in March 2011 and then travelled to Oxford where she is studying for a DPhil in English Literature.

ROGU Luncheon and AGM

Please see below and on the next page for your invitation and RSVP for this exciting event on 5 May 2012.

The Newsletter is only going out via email – please pass on to friends or get them to look on the website to download the newsletter and luncheon details.

Contacting Rhenish Old Girls' Union

Please don't hesitate to stay in contact via email (oldgirls@rhenish.co.za) or through the school website (www.rhenish.co.za).

Payments for the luncheon or any contributions you wish to make to ROGU, our banking details are:

Either send a cheque to P O Box 7182, Stellenbosch, 7599 or transfer funds into our bank account:

Standard Bank, Claremont
Account Name: Rhenish Old Girls' Union
Account Number: 374556768
Branch code: 025109

You are cordially invited to attend the

Rhenish Old Girls' Luncheon

And

Annual General Meeting

When: Saturday 5 May 2012

Where: Rhenish Hostel

Time: 12:00 for 12:30

Cost: R100

RSVP: Please complete the RSVP card below and return with proof of payment to oldgirls@rhenish.co.za

BY 23 April 2012

Surname: _____ Nee: _____

First Names: _____ Title: _____

Years at RGHS (i.e. 2001 – 2005) _____

Home telephone: _____ Work: _____

Cell: _____ email : _____

<input type="checkbox"/>	I will attend the Luncheon on 5 May 2012
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am unable to attend, but wish to make a donation towards ROGU

Even if you are unable to attend our luncheon, we would appreciate it if you could return this form to us with your current details and information – **especially your correct email address.**

If you are attending the luncheon, please make a direct deposit into our bank account and fax (086 614 2204) the RSVP slip together with your proof of payment or email to oldgirls@rhenish.co.za