



# RHENISH OLD GIRLS' UNION

*Newsletter 1, 2013*

oldgirls@rhenish.co.za

## From ROGU

Let's fill the hostel dining room at the annual luncheon/ ROGU AGM this year (see below for details of the lucky draws that will take place at the lunch)! The event will be held on the 4 May 2013, to coincide with the school's birthday. If you are celebrating a reunion this year, please let us know and do consider including lunch at the school as part of your celebrations. We may be able to negotiate things like a tour of the school, the hire of facilities or other ideas you have for your reunion.

During the past year we have re-affirmed the aim of ROGU as per the constitution:

- 1) To retain a link between present and past pupils and members of staff of the school.
- 2) To help in any way possible to promote the welfare of Rhenish.

How we do this has been a point of discussion at various meetings held over the past year. Whilst ROGU is not cash flush, and indeed that is not our aim, we did have some surplus cash and at last year's lunch we voted on a donation to the school to assist with the building of the guard house at the gate. The committee agreed on a R10,000 contribution towards the building and you can all take pride in this welcome addition to the school infrastructure, an addition that is so important to ensuring the security and protection of the pupils and staff.

Other ideas on how we can fulfil our aim are being discussed and I look forward to sharing some of these with you at the lunch and hearing your ideas too.

Some of the ROGU committee members have been afforded the opportunity this year to visit the school on occasions such as the valedictory service. It is always with great pride that we enter the premises

and interact with the staff and pupils. Rhenish really is a distinguished marque in the community. "Once a Rhenisher, Always a Rhenisher" continues to ring true. Not least of all in the news from Ms Slabber at our most recent meeting that, in response to an appeal made by the school towards the end of last year, three Old Girls had stepped forward to offer a partial sponsorship, a full sponsorship and sponsorship of the school fees of seven girls currently at the school. These contributions are vitally important to ensuring the continued diversity for which Rhenish is well known.

In order to retain the link between past and present pupils, we need two-way communication. We would like to update the Rhenish website – [www.rhenish.co.za](http://www.rhenish.co.za) - (alumni page) and Facebook Group 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](mailto:oldgirls@rhenish.co.za), or add it yourself to the Facebook Group – Rhenish Group.

For more information or to share your ideas, please contact [oldgirls@rhenish.co.za](mailto:oldgirls@rhenish.co.za).

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## Reunions

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

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## News from the School

### Matric Results – 2012

Academic excellence remains central to Rhenish Girls' High School's vision and every girl is encouraged to develop her academic potential. We are therefore particularly proud of the depth in the quality of our 2012 Grade 12 results:

- Our Grade 12s have recorded a 100% matric pass rate as far back as anyone can remember
- 100% of our 2012 Matric class qualified to study at tertiary level - 93% of them qualifying with a Bachelor's pass
- Rhenish was honoured as one of the Western Cape's top 20 schools in 2012 – we were placed twelfth
- We had 25 Top Candidates in 2012 – our Dux Scholar, Hye Rim Kim, achieved an average of 91,3%. The top seven learners achieved six distinctions or more



*Hye Rim Kim, Dux Scholar, with Ms Slabber*

Twelve girls were amongst the top ten in the Province in various subjects:

- Sarah Pepler (5<sup>th</sup>, Visual Arts)
- Chelsea de Beer (8<sup>th</sup>, English Home Language; 9<sup>th</sup>, Visual Arts)
- Hye Rim Kim (2<sup>nd</sup>, History; 9<sup>th</sup>, Mathematics)
- Samantha Senior (3<sup>rd</sup>, Mathematics: probability; data handling)
- Robin Meyer (6<sup>th</sup>, Mathematics: probability; data handling)

- Anathi Jaca (4<sup>th</sup>, IsiXhosa First Additional Language)
- Nasipi Boltina (4<sup>th</sup>, IsiXhosa Second Additional Language)
- Ziphozintle Mene (6<sup>th</sup>, IsiXhosa Second Additional Language)
- Frances Mattes (3<sup>rd</sup>, Italian Second Additional Language)
- Carla van der Merwe (4<sup>th</sup>, German Second Additional Language)
- Angela Spillner (6<sup>th</sup>, German Second Additional Language)

### **The End of an Era: Ms Elaine Hyland Retires**

After a lifetime dedicated to education, and 23 years to Rhenish in particular, Ms Elaine Hyland decided at the end of 2012 to call it a day and to move into the next stage of her life: retirement.



The fourth term of 2012 passed in what may have seemed like a flurry of farewell functions – one from the staff and SGB, a special Assembly arranged by the Learner Council, a dinner with the Principals of other Girls' Schools and a dinner with the Senior Management Team. As Ms Hyland – never one to enjoy the limelight – somewhat stoically battled her way through these, the genuine fondness and respect with which she was regarded by the girls, her colleagues and the education community reinforced just how widespread her influence and involvement at Rhenish had been.

Areas in which Ms Hyland made her mark were, among others, the Grade 11 Drama Festival, the Grahamstown Festival, debating, drama in general, culture, learner sponsorship, leadership courses, social responsibility initiatives, sporting challenges, and a whole host of others.

Ms Hyland taught Rhenishers to care deeply about issues and about people, to make a difference in the lives of others, to believe in themselves and to pursue their passions wholeheartedly.

Ms Hyland has eagerly embraced her retirement where she is spending some time doing nothing, because, in the words of her friend Winnie the Pooh, “Don't underestimate the value of Doing Nothing, of just going along, listening to all the things you can't hear, and not bothering.”

Ms Hyland has, at times, found herself confounded and perplexed by the learners she has had contact with over the years, but she has also been inspired and challenged by them. They have kept her young.

As life at Rhenish resumes its almost frenetic pace, we like to think of Ms Hyland reading a book, a glass of good red wine to hand.

### Building Projects



As reported elsewhere, an important addition in the past year has been the construction of the security gate house at the entrance to the school. This provides appropriate

working conditions for the security staff and shelter for the girls. The project was achieved through the hard work of our wonderful PTA and we were very grateful for the sizeable contribution ROGU made towards this.

Rhenish Girls' High is in the process of implementing a Development Plan. The learner body has grown to such an extent that we are literally 'bursting at the seams'. We have increased our classes by a class per grade over the past 5 years and now have 5 classes of learners in each of the 5 grades.

The need for teaching 'space' has been compounded by the fact that the prefabricated classrooms (seven of them) – initially a 'temporary' measure to cope with the school's growth some thirty years ago – are now unsuitable (even unsafe) for teaching.

The school's investment in the construction of six additional classrooms two years ago has not been sufficient and two of the hostel common rooms and the library are also now used as teaching venues

while a number of teachers have to share classrooms or roam between classrooms.

We therefore hope to start with the construction of ten additional classrooms this year.

In addition to the need for more classrooms, the School also hopes to include in the Development Plan, a new Forum Hall. The existing hall cannot accommodate all the girls at the same time and when parents or outside guests are invited to an event, a grade of learners often has to be excluded to accommodate the guests. The new Forum Hall will also provide a covered area for the girls during the winter months and will be used for lessons and workshops.

The entire school community is very excited about these proposed developments and we are hopeful to secure some funding from the WCED so that building can commence this year.

Should you be in a position to make a contribution to the building fund, or if you are able to offer your services in some way, please do contact us:

[sharon.hershaw@rhenish.co.za](mailto:sharon.hershaw@rhenish.co.za)

All projects undertaken are 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 8<sup>th</sup> year running at the A-League Boy/Girl Gala, once again claiming the title of “Best Swimming School” in the Western Cape.



We also won the 4M Gala, hosted this year by Bloemhof Girls' in the new Paul Roos swimming pool. Our swimming captain, Alexandra Quenet, was awarded Best Swimmer trophy (U19) and Ash Rutherford took the trophy for Best Swimmer (U16).

### Choir Tours Prague



Just before the end of the school year in 2012, the Rhenish Girls' Choir jetted off to the Czech Republic on tour. The year had been spent planning and preparing for the tour and through huge sacrifices made by parents and by the staff who accompanied them, some fifty odd girls had an amazing experience in the Czech Republic.

The aim of the tour was to participate in the seventh annual International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music in Bratislava and the tour also included Budapest (Hungary) and Prague (Slovakia).



The girls were delighted to see an abundance of snow on their visit – a first for most. They took in all the beautiful sights, they visited the Opera House for a Ballet performance, they saw the Lippizaner Horses at the Spanish Riding School in Vienna and they sang on the Charles Bridge at 12:12 on the 12/12/2012.

In the International Festival of Advent and Christmas Music, Rhenish had entered in the category "Youth Choirs up to 21 years. Rhenish received 85,2%, Silver. Given that we had just come out of year end exams and had very little time to practise, we were very pleased with this result.

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### 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.

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 6 September 2013. 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 cloak rooms for the girls.

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## 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.

### Ruth Alderman (2012)

The Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Award, organised by the Amy Biehl Foundation, goes to young people who – based on the evidence of their initiative and dedication in service to others – are making a difference in their communities. The award is intended to challenge them to greater heights of service.

Ruth Alderman was recognised as Runner Up and was awarded R10 000 towards her studies for her contribution to the community. Ruth's work at the Sibogumusa Crèche in Kayamandi is well known to all Rhenishers and we are incredibly proud of her.

### 5 New CA(SA)'s from Rhenish

There were 5 Rhenishers at the Deloitte celebration function at the Radisson Hotel in Granger Bay on 18 March 2013. They celebrated passing the final exam to become CA(SA)'s, they passed the Public Practice Examination (PPE) of the Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors (IRBA).

Congratulations to Monique Malan (2006), Ellen Duffy (2005), Astrid Ludeman (2005), Melissa Africa (2004). These four Rhenishers are with Deloitte.



Tatum Kate Sole (2006) also passed the PPE exam and is doing her articles at Mazars Moores Rowland.

### Helen Taylor (2006)

The Rhenish community was thrilled and very proud to hear that Old Girl, Helen Taylor, was recently awarded the prestigious Paul Roos Rhodes Scholarship. Helen is the second Rhenisher to be granted this honour since the Paul Roos Rhodes Scholarship



was opened to learners of Rhenish Girls' High and Bloemhof Meisieskool through the partnership in learning that the three schools have (this scholarship is now available to all Rhenishers, irrespective of whether or not they studied at Paul Roos).

Helen is no stranger to either hard work or success. In her matric year she was Deputy Head Girl; captain of both the Boland U18 hockey team and the school's 1<sup>st</sup> team; and, in the September of that year, the violin soloist in a performance of the Stellenbosch Youth Orchestra of which she was also the concert master. At Helen's final Rhenish Prize Giving she was awarded the Letitia Snyman Cup for All-Round Excellence and Service, the Blumberg Cup for Senior Music and the Nikki Liebenberg Award for a special contribution to the school's academic and cultural life.

Not one to rest on her laurels, Helen has continued to show dedication, commitment and hard work while pursuing her tertiary studies. She graduated with a BA (Law) *cum laude* from the University of Stellenbosch in 2009 with THREE majors – the required Law subjects, English studies and Philosophy. Prior to furthering her Law studies, Helen completed her BA Honours in English in 2010 (*cum laude* yet again and, with a final mark of 95, the top student). While studying for the LLB (postgraduate) degree, for which she has just written her final examinations, Helen also enrolled for two Summer School courses in the United Kingdom: in

English at the University of Cambridge in 2010 and in Law at the King's College University of London in 2012. Through all of this, Helen also studied the violin with Suzanne Martens at the conservatorium of the University of Stellenbosch, passing all four years with distinction.

But it is not only academically that this Rhenisher excels and the Paul Roos Rhodes Scholarship places great value on the all-round contribution of its candidates. Helen played hockey for the Maties Women's First Hockey Team and represented South Africa at U21 level. In addition to sport, her passion for the violin has always played a very important role in her life and as a student Helen was a member of the University of Stellenbosch Camerata and the University of Stellenbosch Symphony Orchestra. She is currently a member of the *Camerata Tinta Barocca*, a professional music group based in Cape Town, and has just recently ventured into the world of jazz as well.

As the recipient of the Paul Roos Rhodes Scholarship, Helen will go up to the University of Oxford where she will read for the Bachelor's Degree in Common Law – the equivalent of a Master's Degree.

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## **ROGU Luncheon and AGM**

Please see the attachment for your invitation and RSVP for this exciting event on 4 May 2013.

Three lucky draw prizes of a spa facial and two pedicures, are up for grabs from the ROGU proprietor of "Radiance skin and body therapy" in Stellenbosch.

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**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](mailto:oldgirls@rhenish.co.za)) or through the school website ([www.rhenish.co.za](http://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