

Rhenish Old Girls' Union

Rhenish Girls' High School

2016

RHENISH
GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL



1860

A Word from the Chairperson

Deborah Flannery

The invitations are out and if you haven't yet, I'd like to encourage you to RSVP as soon as possible and to join us for the annual luncheon/ROGU AGM. This year, will be special for me personally as my sister (1991 old girl who now lives in

Last year's luncheon was held on the 9th of May and was well supported with seventy five guests spanning the decades from 1954 to 1997. The day itself was blessed with beautiful weather befitting a



Malaysia) will be here and able to attend with me for the first time. I am also aware that the 1986 matrics are planning a 30 year reunion so I am looking forward to seeing as many of them as possible at the lunch this year. Anybody else celebrating a reunion, do please let us know if we can be of any assistance to make the event even more memorable.

ladies' luncheon and with the astroturf established and the new multi-purpose hall complete, the surroundings were transformed. The members of the Learner Council did an exceptional job welcoming guests and ensuring name tags were allocated and refreshments provided. It is not difficult to be transported back 10, 20, 30 or 40 (as the case may be)

Matric 2015



Rhenish Girls' High School Matric Class of 2015 delivered on their potential with a bumper set of results. Ms Slabber was delighted with the girls' performance and had only praise for them and their teachers who had pulled out all the stops to ensure that each girl was able to achieve to her potential.

- 100% pass rate – a record held by Rhenish for over 30 years
- 97,2% Bachelor's Pass rate
- 453 subject distinctions
- 47 Top Candidates

Rhenish Dux Scholar, Jessi Africa, obtained an average of 93,4% with 7 distinctions. Four learners, Talya Beyers, Vanya Conradie, Abigail Fortuin and Tanya Schloms, achieved distinctions in 8 subjects. This is a new record for Rhenish Girls' High. 9 learners obtained an average of above 90%.

The Rhenish community is very proud of the Matric Class of 2015.

years, to the day when we were one of those girls in Rhenish uniform. At the lunch we asked each table to come up with an idea on how ROGU could raise money to support the school in its ongoing endeavours to maintain and improve facilities. The ideas were judged by a panel comprising of Ms Slabber (current principal), Ms Snyman (past principal) and Mrs Commaile (past principal). The two best fund raising ideas were awarded spot prizes. These were centred around crowd funding and a Barnyard Theatre event. More details will be provided at the lunch but diarise 30 July in the meantime!

Our annual cocktail party is now an established event with our third one



held on the 17th of September in the pavilion. The committee were given access to décor from past matric dances and this year's theme transformed the pavilion into

somewhere in Egypt. The weather was the best we have had yet and we were delighted to host about 40 girls, mainly from the 2011 – 2014 matric years. Girls caught up over a glass of wine or non-alcoholic “champagne” with cheese and savoury snacks aplenty. This event has really helped us to get in touch with the more recent “Old Girls” although all are welcome.



The valedictory service was held on the 16th of October and ROGU was represented by Arlene Cloete (1995) who had also facilitated the handing out of prizes at the prize giving held on the previous Tuesday. By all accounts she did a great job

representing us in her old school tie and blazer! Who else still has theirs I wonder? The Matrics of 2015 were given a wonderful send off.

Our aims, as set out in the ROGU constitution, are firstly to retain a link between present and past pupils and members of staff of the school and secondly to help in any way possible to promote the welfare of Rhenish. We do this mainly through the three events outlined above. Any other ideas on how we can fulfil our aim are always welcome and we look forward to hearing from you. Wherever you go and whatever you do, always remember “Once a Rhenisher, Always a Rhenisher”.



For more information or to share your ideas, please contact oldgirls@rhenish.co.za.

155th Birthday and Project 155

In honour of the school's 155th birthday, the Learner Council of 2015 introduced to the school, Project 155.

The Learner Council of 2015 chose to celebrate our 155th birthday through the act of giving. Project 155 comprised of five community outreach projects that exemplified the compassion and willingness of our girls to make a difference in the lives of others.

The largest and most exciting of the projects was the Stellenbosch Can Project. Rhenishers collected 7 167 cans to fill the tummies of Stellenbosch residents in need. The second project was an afternoon concert of drama, dance and music presented to the residents of Azaleahof. Projects 3 and 4 were based on sport and had the girls

collecting used sports equipment and organizing a sporting clinic for learners from St Idas Primary school. The final project was a sandwich drive where Rhenishers made 621 sandwiches that were handed to the Stellenbosch Feeding in action Organisation and delivered to two underprivileged schools.

Some Highlights from 2015/2016



- Azemahle Dyubeni (Grade 12) delivered the **Key Note Address** at the regional final of the S A Teachers' Awards in Paarl.
- Rhenish speakers – Victoria Matthews and Priyanka Govender – ensured that Rhenish brought home the trophy for the **Strand Rotary Oratory** competition for the fourth consecutive year.
- The annual **Thanks Giving Celebration** at the Moederkerk in Stellenbosch was a fitting end to 2015 as we celebrated the talent of our girls and the opportunities that Rhenish and her girls had been exposed to in 2015.
- Professor Jonathan Jansen in December listed Rhenish Girls' High as one of his **top 10 high schools that best combine academic excellence with character building**.

- Rhenish swimmers performed magnificently at the **Sanlam Cape Mile**.
- Rhenish, together with Die Boord Superspar, **hosted a wonderful 4M meeting** in February. This truly was a joint effort: there is not a single learner who was not involved – on the athletics track or field, in the stands, as a helper, a first-aider, or a cheerleader. Every staff member, member of the Rhenish ground staff crew and administrative staff member pulled his or her weight.



Parents too joined the effort through the PTA, through sponsorships and donations or simply by fetching and taking our girls to extra practices and cheering sessions and everyone lent a new truth to the old saying that “many hands make light work” and “a problem shared is a problem halved”.

- Rhenish won the **Boy/Girl Gala** after a nailbiting finish for the 11th consecutive time in March 2016.
- The Music Department hosted their annual **Concert in the Garden** at the home of Stellenbosch artist, **Portchie** – a showcase of musical talent that still has Stellenbosch talking about Rhenish.



News of Old Girls

Samantha Truelove (Quick), who matriculated from Rhenish Girls' High in **1992**, was awarded an MBE in the Queen's New Year Honours List.

The citation:

"Lieutenant Commander Samantha Truelove Royal Navy has been awarded the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) for her work in the areas of Diversity and Inclusion and her contribution to women's sport in HM Armed Forces."



Samantha was born in South Africa and went to school in Stellenbosch (Rhenish) before moving to the USA. She worked as a scuba instructor for four years in Egypt before joining the Army Air Corps in 1996. After a short period as an Air Trooper she commissioned into the Royal Logistics Corps from Sandhurst in April 2000.

Her Service record in the Royal Navy is very impressive. She has served in Iraq and Afghanistan and was stationed on the Ark Royal for a while.

Her work on Human Rights and the inclusion of women and the LGBT community into the armed forces has earned her global recognition and respect. She is the captain and coach of the Royal Navy's Triathlon team.

Nicole Mountain grew up in one of Cape Town's poorest townships. Today, aged just 19, she is gearing up to start her own non-profit organisation, and has just been chosen to lead other talented youth via the international organisation the Young Global Pioneers.



With 200 million people aged between 15 and 24, Africa has the youngest population in the world and increasingly, societies are looking to the youth to provide direction and leadership for the continent. It is a role that Nicole Mountain, a budding entrepreneur and youth leader from Cape Town, is embracing enthusiastically.

She has just returned from China, having been chosen to lead the steering committee for the Young Global Pioneers (YGP), a non-profit organisation that creates networks for young talent across the globe.

During her journey, she also received an Honour Award for participating at the 2015 International Youth Entrepreneur Summit in Xi'an – a moment she says still gives her “chills” to remember.

A school's standard of education is not actually measured by the Grade 12 results; it is measured by the achievements at tertiary level and in the work place. Rhenish is therefore particularly proud of the academic achievements of the two top achievers in the outstanding 2009 class:

- The dux scholar, Helene-Mari van der Westhuizen, was also in the top 20 in the Western Cape. She was awarded the M.B. Ch.B degree *cum laude* by the University of Stellenbosch at the end of last year. She is currently working in a hospital in East London.
- Catriona Reader studied Music at the University at Stellenbosch and obtained her B. Mus degree *cum laude*. She was then accepted by the most prestigious Goldsmith's College which forms part of the University of London and has just been awarded a Master's Degree in Cultural Studies.

Old Girl, **Cassidy Williams**, recently participated in the Global Junior Golf Championships.



Distinguished Old Girl Request

Please give some thought to possible nominations for the annual Distinguished Old Girl Award that is awarded at our Prize Giving. There are a host of Old Girls who are worthy recipients of this award and the school may not always be aware of their many achievements, the difference they are making to the world and to the people with whom they come into contact.

Please contact Mrs Esmé Kinghorn (esme.kinghorn@rhenish.co.za) should you know of a Rhenisher whom you think would be worthy of the title "Distinguished Old Girl".

Distinguished Old Girl 2015 - Roxy Burns

It is a tradition at Rhenish Girls' High to invite a former Rhenisher who has achieved significantly on leaving school and of whom we are particularly proud, to be our Distinguished Old Girl at the Annual Prize-Giving.

In 2015 Rhenish is honoured to have identified Roxy Burns (Class of 2006) as our Distinguished Old Girl. Roxy and her parents attended our annual Prize-Giving where this title was conferred upon her.

Roxy matriculated from Rhenish Girls' High in 2006. She was a prefect whose enthusiasm and integrity were of great benefit to the prefect body of that year. At school Roxy was seen as an intelligent, committed learner with an outstanding work ethic, a learner who worked with insight and commitment. It is clear that she has approached her tertiary studies with the same enthusiasm, determination and focus. After matric Roxy was accepted for a degree in Sports Science at Stellenbosch University where she graduated in 2011. She continued her studies in the field of Foundation Phase Education and was awarded a

Diploma (*cum laude*) from UNISA. This field seems to suit her perfectly since she has always been seen as supportive, loyal and invariably sensitive to the needs of others. She is presently completing an Honours Degree in the same field of education at Stellenbosch University.

Usually our Distinguished Old Girl makes a speech at the Prize-Giving, but Roxy has an inherited genetic condition called Ataxia Telangiectasia (AT). It is somewhat similar to cerebral palsy, although it is degenerative. It affects her balance, her fine motor skills and, to some extent, her speech.

Before enrolling at Rhenish, Roxy attended Paarl School, a school which caters for Special Needs learners. For a number of reasons, the teachers at Paarl School encouraged Roxy to engage in sport. They identified her natural athletic potential and recognised that sport could be one vehicle through which she could realise her potential. Although she excelled in track and field athletics, it quickly became clear



that her real sporting talent was cycling.

At Rhenish she was very actively involved in athletics and especially cycling for the physically disabled. She captained the Western Cape team which participated in the South African Championships. Roxy competed in her first international cycling event in Grade 11 when she represented South Africa at the World Championships in the United States. She won five gold medals and earned the most points of all the South African team members. These points counted towards South Africa's eligibility to participate in

the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing. The second event was the European Championships in the Netherlands in September 2005, where she also excelled. In her matric year, Mrs Kinghorn said of her, 'Roxy is an exceptionally talented young woman, not only academically but also on the sports field.' Since leaving school Roxy has gone on to compete in many international cycling events, including World Cup and World Championship road and track competitions, achieving many gold medal results.

Although relatively comfortable with the excitement of international competitions, nothing had prepared Roxy for the splendour of the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games. She did South Africa proud on this occasion

and followed this up with excellent performances at the London 2012 Paralympic Games. Before deciding to specialise in track cycling, Roxy ended her road competition career on a high note in 2013 by being acclaimed the International Cycling Union *Road World Cup* series winner. (She is only one of two South Africans ever to achieve this). Despite these fantastic achievements on the sporting stage, she has remained true to herself and her humility is truly admirable. Her track racing results in 2015 indicate that she stands a very good chance at selection to the national team that will compete in the Rio 2016 Paralympics.

If Roxy is selected to compete in the Rio Paralympics, she will probably use this occasion as a grand finale for

her cycling career. Thereafter, she imagines herself becoming involved in remedial teaching, possibly working with young children on a 1-to-1 basis.

Roxy's years at Rhenish Girls' High were of the happiest she can remember and she does her very best to serve as an ambassador for the school. The teachers at Rhenish remember her as a friendly, refined young woman with a charming disposition and a lovely sense of humour – a joy and privilege to teach!

Roxy, your courage, perseverance and leadership skills continue to be a source of inspiration to all of us. We salute you and wish you well for the future.

Rhenish – Service before Self

Rhenish Girls' High continues to instill in her learners the value of a life lived outwardly. As Marian Wright Edelman said, "Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time."

Rhenish Girls' High is very grateful to all of her Old Girls who 'play it forward' by investing in their Alma Mater through the many generous scholarships, sponsorships and partial sponsorships of school fees that enable girls to have the Rhenish experience that they themselves enjoyed. This generosity will bear fruit in the kind of young ladies these Rhenishers become and hopefully, when they are in a position to help a future Rhenisher, they too will extend a generous hand.

We run a number of annual community service projects in which we would like to invite our Old Girls to become involved –

The Santa Shoebox Project

Rhenish delivered 850 beautiful gift boxes to the project. Contact paul.vanderhoven@rhenish.co.za for further details.

The Annual Blanket Drive

Annually Rhenishers knit squares and deliver over 200 blankets to needy projects in the Stellenbosch community. Contact Glenys.kruger@rhenish.co.za for details about how you can help. We particularly need people willing to sew the squares into blankets.

The Kayamandi Crèche

Weekly a group of girls visit the Sibongomusa Crèche in Kayamandi. Donations of toys, blankets, and other items that may be required would be welcomed. Contact amy.davids@rhenish.co.za to see how you can get involved.