



ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE

17 September 2009

Headmaster's Letter 10 of 2009

Dear Andrean Family

The Michaelmas Term is well under way with the steady hum of industry from matric studies as the Grade 12s settle down to prepare for their final examinations! The athletics team competed valiantly in the annual **Quadrangular** on Saturday hosted by Grey High School in Port Elizabeth. They were placed 2nd with 42 points, behind Grey on 43. The result came down to the last event, the 4 x 200m.

This week marks the start of the **John Axe Arts Week**. John Axe was a larger than life character, an inspirational teacher and a great supporter of the performing arts at College. John Axe had a wicked sense of humour and he could easily have written the report comment below on the English comedian, Stephen Fry:

School Report for Stephen Fry (b.1957-)

English comedian, playwright and novelist
From Uppingham School, Norfolk 1970-1972

Headmaster: He has glaring faults and they have certainly glared at us this term (1970)

English: Bottom, rightly.

Headmaster: I have nothing more to say. (1971)

Acknowledgment: Could do Better – School Reports of the Great and the Good ed. by Catherine Hurley, Pocket Books 2002)

At the Staff Meeting at the beginning of term I discussed report comments with the academic staff. There is no doubt that school reports can cause considerable tension for the recipient. I hope that parents and the boys found our reports informative and that they gave insight into your son's attitude, behaviour and academic progress. As a parent you want to hear about your son and not receive a bland, generic, computer generated comment which could have been written about anyone. Teachers, often tormented and frazzled by the end of term, have to steer a careful line between putting down what they feel whilst at the same time being motivational. Report comments have changed hugely over the last 50 years and we have moved away from comments such as the one above. A lot of time goes into the writing of reports and I hope that the majority of the comments are not simply summative, but are also encouraging to raise performance and expectations.

Staff

We welcomed **Ms Maretha Potgieter** back from maternity leave at the start of the term. **Mr Aidan Smith** has officially taken up his role as Deputy Head (Academic) at College and we look forward to the skill and expertise that he brings to this position. All queries of an academic nature including subject choice, academic performance, examinations etc. should be addressed directly to Mr Smith.

Headmaster: Paul Edey BA HDE (WITS) Hons (SA) FDE (RAU) PMD (GIBS)

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Membership includes: ISASA SAHISA AHISA HMC ICP

I regret to inform you that **Ms Clare McIntyre** will be leaving College at the end of the year to take up a position in adult education in Saudi Arabia. Ms McIntyre has made an outstanding contribution in the classroom teaching English and Mathematics to senior grades, and extramurally in public speaking and debating, where she has taken College to unprecedented heights both locally and internationally.

Mr Stefan Lourens has been appointed Director of Rugby at St John's College, Johannesburg. In the short time he has been with us, Mr Lourens has had a significant impact on College rugby and the 2009 season saw 5 boys selected for Eastern Province sides and Brian Skosana for the SA Schools' Team.

Congratulations to **Mr and Mrs Holderness** on the birth of the second daughter, Lucy, during the holidays, and to **Mr and Mrs Lourens** on the birth of their second son, Llewellyn.

Holiday Activities

The holidays were once again busy and I highlight some of the activities below:

History Tour to Europe

26 DSG and SAC pupils and 3 staff enjoyed an unforgettable tour to Russia, Germany and the Czech Republic visiting the cities of Moscow, Berlin, Munich and Prague. The itinerary included visits to St Basil's Cathedral, The Red Square, The Kremlin, History Museums and Art Galleries, moving World War II sites such as Checkpoint Charlie, the Holocaust Memorial and Dachau, and the cultural wealth and beauty of Prague.

Music Tour to Port Elizabeth

The Senior Orchestra, Wind Orchestra, the newly formed Rock Band and a Choir performed at schools and youth centres in Port Elizabeth. Highlights included a shared concert with the orchestra of Alexander Road High School, and a concert at Collegiate High School for Girls where 8 College boys singing *Goodnight Sweetheart* brought the house down! Six concerts were performed in 4 days and the musicians were most impressive with the Rock Band being a huge hit at every concert.

Water Polo Tour to Hungary and Croatia

The aim of the tour was to develop skills and expose the boys to a high level of water polo in countries where water polo is a national pastime. In training matches the boys were coached by top Hungarian and Croatian coaches and were challenged by strong opposition. Some time was also spent attending the Junior World Championships in Croatia, playing water polo matches in the sea in Zadar, enjoying the thermal water polo pool in Eger and exploring the sights of Budapest and the Dalmatian coast.

Cricket Tour to Namibia

The 1st XI enjoyed a very successful and stimulating tour to Namibia playing against the Namibia U17 side, club players and national players. The batsmen enjoyed the favourable batting conditions, the bowlers adjusted well and fielders took some sparkling catches. The team's positive attitude and sporting and competitive spirit throughout the tour made for a most enjoyable experience. (Full results are on the web).

Golf Tour

The Golf Team competed in the prestigious St John's Sun City tournament at the start of the holidays.

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Rowing Camp

The Rowing Club was also active during the holidays enjoying a busy pre-season training camp in Port Alfred.

SAHISA/ISASA HEADS' CONFERENCE – SWAZILAND 6-10 September 2009

The Independent Schools' Heads' Conference was packed with speakers who challenged traditional methods of education and also encouraged our schools to become more diverse. I include the following quotes:

Can we get to the horizon we perceive using traditional methods and faculty?

The goal of education is not to gain mastery of subject matter but of one's person.

How do we enable our children to build constructive lives but also to work for the common good?

A lot of education literature suggests that children don't necessarily learn better in small classes. It depends on WHAT is being taught, HOW and WHERE.

(Peter Cobb – in an address on *Redesigning Education for the Future*)

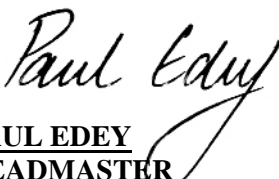
Dr Mamphela Ramphele took the delegates through the Dinokeng scenarios and urged us to walk together as a nation. She said that we are standing at a crossroads as a country and that it was critically important for South Africans to become more involved in civic life. She also urged us to become activists and to work together to increase accountability.

(See www.dinokengscenarios.co.za for further information.)

If you want to walk fast, walk alone.

If you want to walk far, walk together. (African Proverb)

Kind regards


PAUL EDEY
HEADMASTER