



The sun sets on a memorable camp for the Grade 7s at Dimalachite River Lodge, on the banks of the Vaal River

FROM THE HEADMISTRESS' DESK

Dear parents

In a parent-teacher interview some years ago, I volunteered the information to a mother of one of the girls I was teaching that her daughter "seemed happy".

"I fail to see what that has to do with anything," she shot back at me. "She's not at school to be happy. Is she doing what she needs to do?"

While this baldly instrumentalist approach to education is one we encounter less and less from parents and teachers, I suspect it has not gone away altogether, but still quietly informs discussions on education in a variety of contexts, casual and official. On the other hand, the preoccupation with children's happiness, where happiness is understood as nothing more than instant gratification, is as much a caricature of the educational process as the previous example, offering little insight into how children learn and what makes them want to learn. What is the relationship between happiness and the quality of education? Is it worth considering?

The Happy Schools Project, launched by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's Bangkok office in June 2014, makes a strong case for the investigation of happiness at schools, calling on education systems to "measure what we treasure": "If you treasure it, measure it. If schools do not measure the well-being of their children but do measure their intellectual development, the latter will always take precedence" (Layard and Hagell, 2015). Happiness, then, in its broader application as well-being, is something all schools should be taking seriously. The findings of the study (which includes a desk study, a survey, a seminar and a workshop with school-level stakeholders in selected

countries in the Asia-Pacific region) present 22 criteria for a happy school under three broad categories: people, process and place. I am sure I am not alone in thinking St Mary's is such a place.

At the heart of the concept of Happy Schools lies an emphasis on the collective nature of happiness, which finds its essence in friendships and social relationships among members of the school community, across different grades and schools, and in the broader social community as well. The study also touches on the constructivist nature of happiness, that is, happiness can be learnt from kind, enthusiastic, fair and, dare I say, happy teachers (and parents) leading children through activities involving creativity, perseverance, inclusivity and team work. Schools are also urged to look at the growing imbalance between study and play, to enable students to express their opinions freely, and to reduce the fear associated with making mistakes.

The physical environment of a school goes beyond its learning and playing spaces to include more intangible aspects: what is the atmosphere in the school? Does it feel secure? To give you some idea of how context-sensitive the responses to the survey were, in Japan, a warm and friendly environment requires greetings and smiles; in Russia and Thailand, the emphasis is on discipline, rules and well-behaved students.

Whatever regional preferences were recorded in the study, the overall message was clear: "A happy school is one that promotes holistic learner development, encompassing mental, physical and psychological wellbeing and providing emotional support to become 'a place where the child can grow'."

DR SARAH WARNER
HEADMISTRESS: JUNIOR SCHOOL

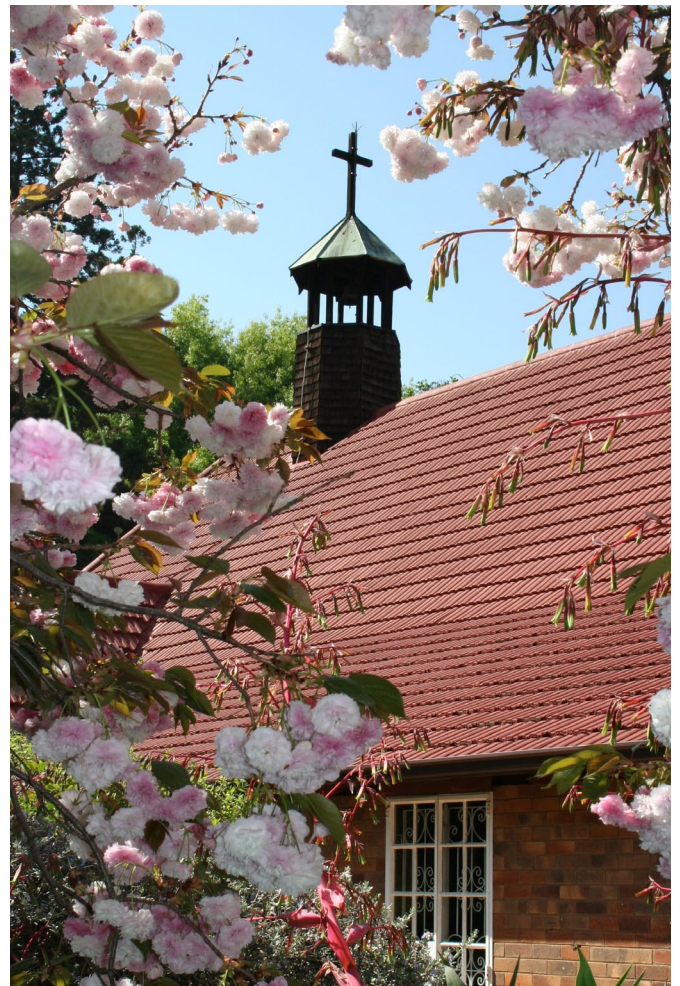
FROM THE CHAPLAIN

LENT ALERT!

Wednesday 14 February marks the beginning of Lent – the six weeks preceding Easter. During Lent, we ask God to reveal the ways in which we prioritise something else (such as personal ambition, others' affirmation) above loving and serving God. Traditionally, Lent involves "fasting". To me, "fasting" has two meanings: firstly, it means making changes in my daily lifestyle (such as giving up chocolates and sweets, or sacrificing a few minutes to do a daily Lenten Bible study) to remind me that this is a season set aside to listen to God and to prevent my being distracted in listening to God. However, "fasting" also means making changes in my lifestyle that will endure beyond Lent (such as being intentional about recycling, committing to serve a community or family in need, or simply being kinder to a loved one). Thus, when my old self (replete with old habits, old ways of thinking and being) symbolically "dies" with Christ on the cross on Good Friday, a truly new self "rises" with Christ at his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

At St Mary's, we enjoy pancakes together on Shrove Tuesday 13 February, firstly to empty our pantries of that which we may choose to give up during Lent in order to simplify our lifestyles and focus on God. Secondly, we celebrate that Lent will mean a closer walk with God as forgiven children of God, beyond Easter. On Ash Wednesday itself, staff and girls come together for Ash Wednesday services in the chapel, to mark the beginning of Lent. During the service, the priest gently rubs an ashen cross onto our foreheads as a symbol of our dying to our old selves.

REVD CLAUDIA COUSTAS
CHAPLAIN



MEET THE PTA CHAIRPERSON

Dale Vice has taken over from Bruce Patience as the PTA chairperson. Dale matriculated from St John's College in 1994, and then attended the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, where he completed his BCom (Honours) *cum laude*. After becoming a CFA® Charterholder in 2003, he and his wife, Leza, spent two years in London before returning to South Africa to start a family.

Their daughter, Sylvia, is now in Grade 2 at St Mary's, while Rowan is in Grade 0 at St John's. They attend St Luke's Anglican Church in Orchards, where Dale plays guitar with the worship group. Dale works at Absa Bank, as the head of change for the Corporate Investment Banking Credit division.

He is the author of two Christian fantasy novels, and volunteers at BizSchool NPC, which helps matriculants from previously disadvantaged backgrounds transition effectively from school to the world of work. Dale believes the PTA is important because, in the words of Jane D Hull, "The most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents."



Dale Vice - PTA chairperson

FROM THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Orchestra from Scratch

As part of the Johannesburg International Mozart Festival, selected girls from our Junior and Senior School orchestras participated in an event that was hosted at Wits Education Campus on Sunday 28 January. Here is an account from an audience member and parent of one of our girls who participated:

"If I asked you to conjure up an image of someone who plays classical music, an orchestral player, my guess is you'd come up with a picture that looked something like this – someone slightly serious, a bit bookish, perhaps. Maybe they'd be pale, from staying indoors too much, practising. Maybe they'd be slightly staid and old-fashioned.

"But what struck me this afternoon, as a delighted audience member at Richard Cock's Orchestra from Scratch, where the Junior Teenager was playing Second Violin, was that so few of the players there fitted any kind of stereotype of what a classical musician might look like.

"There in the hall were 150 amateur musicians, thrown together for just a day. In the violins was a woman in shorts and slops, lean and lithe, with arms that suggested she might do some bodybuilding in her spare time. In the cellos was a blonde, ruddy oke you might expect to see swilling beer at a braai. A viola-playing teenage boy with trendy glasses and an even trendier hairstyle tapped his sneaker-shod foot to Offenbach. At the harp was an ethereal creature with russet ringlets and flowers in her hair. There were hipsters and paunchy old men, teenagers and grandmothers, and skin tones from palest ivory all the way through to dark chocolate.

"They'd practised the programme beforehand and after just a couple of hours together, performed to an audience of family members and friends.

"Sitting practically on top of the strings, enveloped in that thrumming sound, I reflected that this is what music should be. Of course, we have superb professional musicians who are accomplished and wonderful and we should support them wholeheartedly, because they bring beauty and joy to our lives. But there's also something special and life-affirming about a group of amateurs who gather like this, united only by a score and their love for music, for the opportunity to be in an orchestra for an afternoon, and to play for the sheer joy of it.

"And there's something so magical – whether you're singing or playing in a big ensemble – about that moment when, after all the practising, all the parts come together and you hear the full sound in all its complexity for the first time.

"This is the way to democratise music. This is the way to remove the idea that art is for professionals, for those who've achieved some sort of commercially acceptable standard only.

"And it's this: to simply say, 'Come. It doesn't matter that you're an amateur, or that you miss a note here or there. Just come. Bring your instrument. Bring your love for a tune and a stomping beat. Let's play, and let's make a beautiful noise till our souls are restored."

- Mandy Collins

CAROL SHUTTE
JUNIOR SCHOOL HEAD OF MUSIC



Orchestra from Scratch girls



Orchestra from Scratch

MUSIC

Congratulations to the following girls who passed their music examinations in Term III of last year:

Trinity Classical			
Natalie Simon	Drums	Grade 1	Distinction
Alice Thiel	Piano	Grade 1	Merit
Nyakallo Kodisang	Guitar	Grade 2	Merit
Danika Neuhoff	Piano	Grade 1	Merit
Annabel Hardie	Trumpet	Grade 4	Merit
Heather Welchman	Piano	Grade 2	Pass
Olivia Kirsch	Piano	Grade 1	Pass

DUDLEY TROLLOPE
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

MUSE MORNING

Parents of children from all ages are welcome to join us at our first Muse Morning of 2018.

Date: Tuesday 20 February

Time: 07h15 to 08h30

Venue: Senior auditorium, Resource Centre

Speaker: Anele Honono-Skosana and Megan Jones are clinical psychologists working in the Adolescent Unit, Eating Disorders Unit and Outpatient Eating Disorders Clinic at Tara Hospital. Each runs her own private practice as well.

Topic: "Tubby or not tubby: thinking about how we and our children relate to food and our bodies, and when to seek professional intervention"

Coffee is served from 07h15 for a prompt start at 07h30. Refreshments will be available at the tennis pavilion, just outside the auditorium of the Senior Resource Centre (Wantage).

RSVP: Sharon.san@stmary.co.za

FROM THE SPORTS DEPARTMENT



TENNIS

League matches

St Mary's played against St Stithians and Brescia in the first two matches of the season.

The girls have played excellent tennis over the past two weeks. Well done to everyone who played in these matches.

Results 25 January

St Mary's A lost to St Stithians A 14-22
St Mary's B beat St Stithians B 21-15
St Mary's C beat St Stithians C 23-13
St Mary's D beat St Stithians D 27-9

Results 1 February

St Mary's A lost to Brescia A 13-23
St Mary's lost to Brescia B 9-27
St Mary's lost to Brescia C 16-20
St Mary's lost to Brescia D 15-21

Well done to the Grade 4 and 5 girls who played in the league match against Brescia and also to the girls who played in the friendly matches.

CECILE MURRAY
TENNIS COACH

SWIMMING

Results 26 January

A team at Brescia House

St David's	176
St Mary's	160
The Ridge	117
St Peter's	103
Brescia	102
Kingsmead	86
Holy Rosary	63
St John's	38

B team at St Mary's

St Mary's B	130
Pridwin	116
St David's B	101

St Peter's B	67
Brescia B	66
Holy Rosary	24

C and D teams at The Ridge

St Mary's C	125
St Peter's C	116
The Ridge C	90
Pridwin B	74
St Mary's D	66
Pridwin C	28

TARYN DE WINNAAR
HEAD OF SPORT: JUNIOR SCHOOL

WATER POLO

The U13 team played in a tournament, hosted by St Dominic's, on Saturday 27 January.

Results were as follows:

vs St Dominic's U12	12-0
vs St Dominic's U13	5-0
vs St Stithians U13	4-3

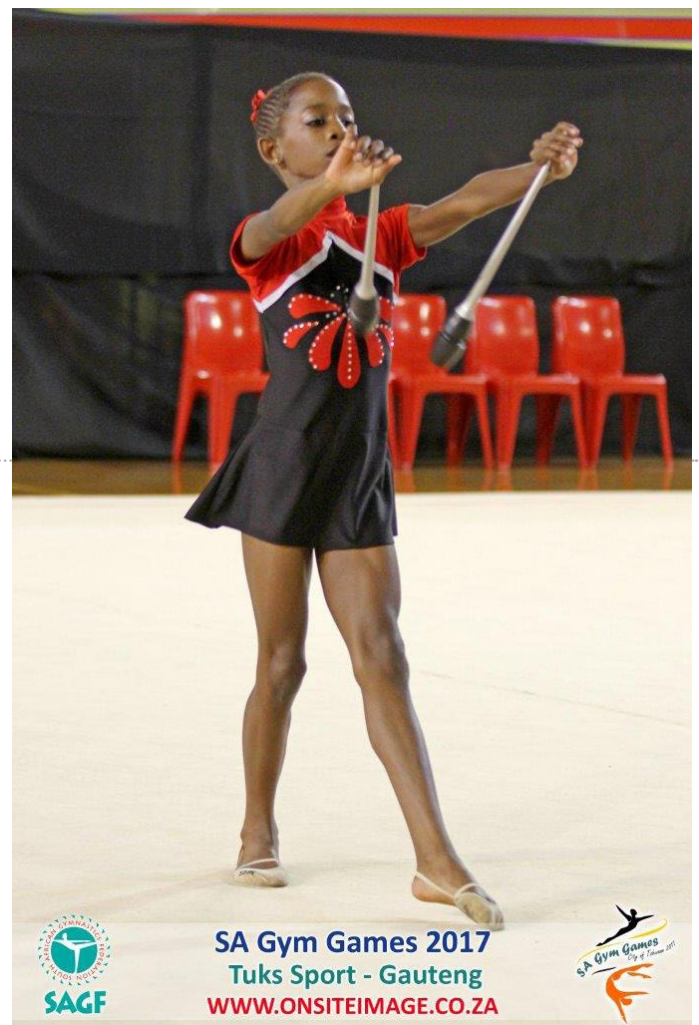
The team put in three solid performances, which is very promising so early in the year. Each player contributed to the team's overall success; we look forward to watching the players develop even further as the season progresses.

TARYN DE WINNAAR
HEAD OF SPORT: JUNIOR SCHOOL



The U13 water polo team

RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS



Zeinab Kone, as a member of the South African Zone 5 junior rhythmic gymnastics team, won five gold medals at the SA Gym Games in December 2017, beating gymnasts from Namibia and Zimbabwe.

LINDA GIURICICH
RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS COACH



To commemorate the school's 130th anniversary, we wanted to create a book that would evoke something of the spirit and the experience of being at the school. The history of the school has been well documented, most recently in the beautiful book produced for the school's 125th anniversary. But the archive also contains a different kind of trace of the past - the school magazines are filled with pages of poetry and art produced by the girls going back as far as the 1930s.

We found these works of imagination have tremendous power to conjure up the experience of school life over the decades: they express what it felt like to be a St Mary's school girl at different times, and through the expressions of the individual girls who were here. It's amazing how some of them have the almost magic ability to transport you back into a classroom, or a dormitory, or to capture those familiar fleeting moments that characterise school life. Some poems evoke personal memories, but also create imaginative connections across the ages - you can imagine what it was like being a schoolgirl in the 1930s, or the 50s, or last year.

We've brought a selection of these poems and artworks together in a single volume. The title of the book comes from a poem written in the 80s called 'Second Last Day', about trying to live in the moment with the simultaneous awareness of the transience of the time just before school ends. The book as a whole tries to bring together some of these transient moments, and to bring the spirit of the school to life through the expressions of the girls. They're funny, they're sad, they're angry, they're angsty, they're innocent and they touch on the intangible distinctive character of the place. It's a trace from the hearts, minds and imaginations of the girls at the school, and an apt celebration of the institution that brought such expression to light.



Genevieve Wood, Form V 1997



Kabelo Maaka Form III, 2010

More than the Sunshine will stay with us can be bought at the St Mary's Clothes Cupboard for R200.

St Mary's Rose

Celebrate Valentine's Day with the St Mary's Rose

*Butterfly kisses and chocolate hearts, the joys of love that always lasts
 The quiet whisper that speaks so loud,
 The dreamy feeling of floating on a cloud.
 The magic of love the heart that glows,
 To say I love you so the whole world knows. Support our gorgeous valentine fairies,
 Buy a red rose at St Mary's.*

The **St Mary's Rose** was propagated to celebrate the school's 120th birthday. It has proven to be popular both as a part of St Mary's School in gardens and as a gift. The rose is a red hybrid tea, which produces an abundance of medium to long stemmed, shapely blooms in bright velvet-red.



The PTA is proud to offer you the opportunity to pre-order the rose in time for **Valentine's Day**. The St Mary's rose is selling for R160. Our Valentine's stock will be sold on a first come first served basis, so please place your order by completing the order form and handing it at the Senior and Junior School receptions by Friday 9 February. The roses can be collected on Tuesday 13 and Wednesday 14 February in the St Mary's car park (stop-and-drop).

ORDER FORM

Parent full name	
Child's name	
Child's class	
Contact number	

Item description	Quantity	Total	Payment method	Parent's signature
St Mary's rose (R160)				

Payment Options:

- Exact amount Cash.
- Direct Deposit/EFT into ST MARY'S SCHOOL PTA ACCOUNT:
 BANK Standard Bank
 BRANCH Bramley Branch 44005
 ACCOUNT NO 002988143
 REFERENCE "Your child's name, grade and Rose"

Please email proof of payment to Masemarag@gmail.com