

# ROGU Newsletter



Rustenburg Girls Schools, Cape Town



## Farewell to Averil Keller-Booyesen

Given her association with ROGU that has spanned more than three decades, it has been incredibly difficult to say farewell to Averil Keller-Booyesen, our outgoing President.

We will miss her kindness, her efficiency, her beautifully penned agendas and notes, and her warmth that helped the ROGU feel like an extension of the Rustenburg family. Both

the Junior and High Schools have extended their sincere thanks to Averil for her dedication and commitment to ROGU.

Averil has been associated with ROGU for 32 years, first as an ordinary member, and then elected as a committee member, later becoming the

1

**AVRIL**

We wish her well in her retirement.

2

**E 2016 REUNION**

Charlie's Hope was alive with laughter in September.

3

**IN THE NEWS**

Rustenburg appeared in the Tatler, our local newspaper



### Founders' Day 2018

Hosted by the High School in Thomson Hall, 26 January 2018.



### The Matrics of 1977 recently

got together for a 40th reunion at the Royal Cape Yacht Club. A wonderful time was had by all.



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Class of 1956 challenge to other classes planning their reunions.

Honorary Secretary, Vice-President and serving as President for many years. Averil has made the decision to resign as the President of ROGU.

Fellow matriculants, past ROGU Committee members and hostel staff, Pam van Dyk and Karin Evans, made the following observations: “Averil has always shown exceptional loyalty to both the Junior and High Schools. She strongly upholds the values we were taught as Rustenburg Girls. We admire her dedication to the school, primarily shown through her involvement with the Old Girls. We appreciate the way that Averil made a great effort to include Old Girls in old age homes, to keep them informed about advancements made at the School and also that she did much to draw in girls from our own year, 1974.”

Ms Mary van Blerk said: “Averil became involved with ROGU in her early days as an Old Girl, which was greatly valued, especially as at the time the Union was served mainly by much older women. She has shown dedication as President over a long period and has kept ‘the show on the road’ with distinction. We owe her our warm thanks and appreciation.”

Dr Elizabeth Fullard commented: “Over the years, Ms Averil Keller-Booyesen has always stayed connected to Rustenburg and attended almost every formal event at the school. Her commitment and presence will be missed.”



Principal of Rustenburg Girls’ Junior School, Ms Di Berry spoke highly of Averil saying: “Over the last nine years I have found Averil to be passionate, enthusiastic and always have the best interests of the Rustenburg schools at heart.”

Principal of Rustenburg Girls’ High School Mr Michael Gates added: “Averil has served ROGU with dedication and loyalty. I hope that she will feel welcome to stay involved in the activities of both Schools. We wish her well in her retirement.”

## E2016 REUNION

ROGU held a reunion for the Matrics of 2016 in September. It was a special opportunity for the ladies to reconnect and share stories of their after-school journeys so far.

The evening was filled with laughter, stories, snacks and a beautiful cake that had the grade photo of the E’16 Matrics printed into the icing. The ladies were greeted by a few of their old teachers and also had the opportunity to meet the new headmaster, Mr Gates.



# Rustenburg in the News

Rustenburg appeared in the Tatler, our local newspaper, not once but thrice in one week – excellent coverage for our school.

## Waste pioneer- article from Mail & Guardian newspaper

Rustenburg Girls' High School in Rondebosch, Cape Town, is pioneering learner waste management. The school recycles all its waste material. Yes, you read that right — there is actually no municipal refuse collection service — every single item of waste generated at the school is recycled.

“We were sending 26 bins of waste to landfills a week,” says campus manager Myles Siebrits. “That was 1 400 bins annually, which equated to 350 cubic square metres of waste – enough to fill the school’s swimming pool.”

## MATRIC CLASS OF 1967

The Matric Class of 1967 presented the school with a drinking fountain, crafted from Table Mountain sandstone that has been reclaimed from elsewhere on campus, it is located near the cricket nets, where the outdoor gym equipment is located. With the current water restrictions, there has not been an official ‘switch on’ as yet, but hopefully it will be well-used in the future.



Pictured here with Principal Michael Gates are Janet (nee Crisp) Stander; Sally (nee Smith) Jamieson and Christine (nee Barnett) Morgan.



seedlings, which are grown out and harvested on campus and then taken home by the grounds and cleaning staff to feed their families.

Solids are sorted and sent to recycling companies, while organic and food waste is processed into compost on campus. Sanitary and medical waste is incinerated and converted into turf grass feed.

Additionally, money received from the sale of compost is used to buy vegetable



## Awards

Buhle Ngaba (E2008) won two Kanna Theatre awards.

Former head girl Buhle Ngaba (E2008) won two Kanna Theatre awards in May for a show she performed, wrote and produced.

In her acceptance speech, she said: “I often get asked what I think the role of the artist is during this time. Roughly translated, what I'm being asked is what I think the role of the artist is



while the world is burning. My answer never changes. We do what we do. We tell stories. Except this time, we try to be braver. We try to do better. Let's tell the stories that aren't seen or heard.

Let's tell stories that even history is afraid of. Let's exhume bones and evoke old ghosts and hear their voices.”

## Class of E1968

We are very excited about Alumnet, our new, user friendly and secure portal for past pupils, allowing them to update their details and list themselves in the Rustenburg Alumnae network. Class of E1968 - Please update your details on <https://rustenburg.alumnet.co.za>, or contact [baerecke Betty@gmail.com](mailto:baerecke Betty@gmail.com) to check that you are on the mailing list for the 50<sup>th</sup> reunion in January 2018.

## “Other news”

Charlie's Hope, refurbished in 2008, is mostly used for music lessons and the tuck shop. But in July this year it was also the site of a most joyous occasion – the wedding of Delicia Carol, a member of the school's cleaning staff.



## Alumni Convention

Acting Chair of Rustenburg Old Girls' Union Ruth Romburgh and RGHS's Marketing & PR Geila Wills at the South African Schools Alumni conference at St. Stithians, Johannesburg. Ruth commented: “What a wonderful learning and sharing experience. I look forward to implementing some of the ideas with ROGU.”



# Appeal to Matric classes planning their reunions

## Class of 1956 challenge to other classes planning their reunions.

Mary Rose Berrisford (Merilee) (1956) and her classmates last year were able to award bursaries to two deserving Matric girls for their studies. She says that the only help the school is able to give girls needing a helping hand is from a fund made up of monthly contributions from the staff. This means that any contributions from Old Girls would make a significant difference to the futures of girls currently in Matric who could do with some extra financial assistance. Merilee's class has thrown out the challenge to other classes planning their reunions to consider sponsoring bursaries too.

## Bursary Winners

### Winners of the bursaries kindly provided by the Matric class of 1956 give thanks.

Merilee wrote to Grace Crocker, who was awarded the full bursary of R30 000 on Founders' Day in 2016 and Jessica Jamieson, who received R13 000 a few months later after two members of the class were so impressed by the school when they visited for their reunion.

#### **Below is an excerpt from Grace's letter:**

I have many people to thank for their continued support; my mother and siblings, the incredible teachers and Rustenburg and maybe above all your matric class who so kindly supported my final year of high school last year. The bursary I received was such a blessing and really took a burden off my mother's shoulders allowing both of us to really focus on my studies, involvement and finally my matric exams during which I really felt like I gave my all.

Right now I am sitting in my new room in Sonop Dameskoshuis at Stellenbosch University. I am so lucky to even be sitting in the very room that my cousin had in her first year at Stellenbosch in 2009, so it really feels like everything has fallen into place! I am studying BA (Law) currently, with my electives being English, Psychology and Classical Legal Culture (extending my love for History!)

Being at Rustenburg I've been lucky to be exposed to the kind of diversity that exists in Stellenbosch as well. This has made my adaptation to university and residence life a bit easier I believe. My education in diversity, social skills and manners have really been a blessing at university. There are also so many incredible community interaction projects that I am so excited to get my hands into!

#### **Jessica said the following about her studies:**

I am so grateful to the whole class of 1956 and especially to the two donors Caroline and Jill for my bursary to Rustenburg. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!! I now realise how privileged I was to be at such a magnificent school as Rustenburg, which gave me every opportunity possible to pursue my dreams. In addition, boarding at Erinville was simply one of the best and most enriching experiences of my life. At the moment, I am studying a B.Com (Industrial Psychology) at Stellenbosch University and was awarded a Stellenbosch Bursary/Loan (called a SU Bursary). Luckily, I got into Serruria Ladies Residence.

Rustenburg continues its great influence in my life. The lessons I learnt there, I know, will stand me in good stead forever. I hope our class can be as close as yours is. There are a lot of Rustenburg girls from my matric class at Stellenbosch and whenever I bump into them I feel like I am bumping into a sister! We have an unbreakable bond.

# In Memorium

Rustenburg Girls Schools, Cape Town



## JOSEPHINE MCINTYRE

(5 October 1930-2 April 2017)



Mrs McIntyre (centre) with Mrs Mary van Blerk and Mr Michael Gates.

It was with great sadness that we heard of the passing of Mrs Josephine McIntyre, past principal of RGHS, on 2 April 2017. Mrs McIntyre, who was first a teacher and then head of English at the school, served as principal from 1980 to 1991. Upon her retirement, Mrs McIntyre wrote the history of Rustenburg's first 100 years in the book "White Stoep on the Highway". She also edited the newsletter of the Rustenburg Old Girls' Union for several years. As a resident at Peers Village in Fish Hoek, she was an active member of the St Margret's Anglican Church there.

Mrs Mary van Blerk, subsequent principal, in her tribute at the memorial service had the following to say: "Mrs McIntyre will always remain a very important part of Rustenburg's

history. Not only was she a distinguished headmistress for nearly twelve years, but before that she was a fine head of English, having first started at Rustenburg in 1970. She took over as headmistress in 1979 when Ms Thomson retired, and ran the school with dedication. The school flourished under her leadership.

She is survived by her three daughters and a son.

## PRISCILLA HALL

(27 March 1939-11 July 2017)



Remembered as a human rights warrior, writer, editor and "renowned lifelong champion of the oppressed," Priscilla was an old girl of both the junior and high schools. A special memorial was held in Rondebosch for Priscilla, who died at the age of 78 at her home in Grahamstown.

## BILLIE FOSTER (MAY TRAINOR 1935)

(14 April 1919 - 4 May, 2016)



Billie Foster, known in her schooldays as May, has the distinction of being one of only two ROG's to have formally celebrated her Rustenburg 80<sup>th</sup> year reunion. In March 2015, she and her head girl, Greta Gericke (Bremer), spent a morning at Rustenburg, first being honoured in assembly - what a cheer the girls gave them - then nearly three hours in the headmistress, Laura Bekker's study happily chatting, remembering their times in class with remarkable clarity.

Billie had been a feature at many Founders' Days celebrations; being the very oldest ROG there (I would bask in reflected glory, introduced as, "niece of Billie Foster")

Growing up on the farm, Balmoral in Constantia, May went to the Wynberg Girls' schools but part way through high school she wanted to move to Rustenburg and had the gumption to organise this herself. Further education included UCT and the Cape Town Teachers' Training College where she specialised in what is now known as Foundation Phase with music as an important component. Many years later, Billie, in her fifties, returned to UCT to do the year's course for remedial teachers.

Billie's first teaching post was in the wilds of the old Transkei at Engcobo; some years at a school in Somerset West followed then marriage to Fossie Foster, a friend from the Mountain Club who'd been a Prisoner of War. The young Fosters lived in the Western Cape on a farm and in villages before moving to Cape Town. There were four children, one son tragically drowning at three. The oldest son, Donald became a professor of Psychology at UCT, Patrick is a sound engineer, Katharine went to Rustenburg (E 1967) and now lives in Edinburgh; she graduated Doctor of Ministry at the George Fox University in Portland, Oregon in 2010.

Fossie died in his fifties but Billie was by then well-established as a teacher; she taught at countless schools in Cape Town as in those days married teachers had to give way to newly-qualified, unmarried ones. Then there was a change bringing exciting new experiences: Katharine and her husband worked for Youth with a Mission and through this, Billie became involved in Christian education. For some months she worked in Hawaii, she was in Australia for a year compiling a Christian school curriculum and back home she was founding principal for a Christian school in Durbanville. Billie was a very active member of the Mowbray Presbyterian Church attending her last service in April.

Retirement for Billie was a rich time and it lasted for many years. She travelled to Scotland regularly to visit Katharine, to enjoy grandchildren, their weddings, and then great-grandchildren. Family was always very important to her and all of us, her nieces and nephews are grateful for her friendship; our children knew her well. At eighty, she played the piano accordion to lead the guests to an open-air wedding site; at ninety she allowed herself to be chained and padlocked to a chair as part of the treasure hunt at a great great-nephew's party. She was an active, much-loved matriarch.

Music was always part of Billie's life - a piano was there to be played; deep into her nineties she went once a month to play the piano for community singing for the "old people" at Arcadia Place in Observatory\*. At the end of her family birthday party, her 97<sup>th</sup>, just three weeks before her passing, she ended the festivities by playing her favourite tunes and we danced. As a UCT student she and her brother were in a trio of yodelers performing brilliantly at the Rag Concert in the City Hall.

Billie had been a keen member of the Cape Bird Club and the Natural History Society; she was a real nature lover, having hatching praying mantis in her classroom and hatching monarch butterflies in her garden. At ninety she took her stick and doggedly walked along a rough track to be one of a few to see the second citrine wagtail known to visit SA. Always there was a garden, with well-tended plants flourishing.



Billie and Greta having a bit of fun in front of Miss Bleby's portrait and

Billie embroidered – beautiful cushion covers, a tablecloth with self-portraits done by her pupils one year; she knitted – great-grandchildren all wore her jerseys, - her hands were never idle. She did tai chi when mobility was challenged.

Billie's home for the last twenty years was Pinewood Village, Pinelands. She thrived there; she loved having people around her and enjoyed gatherings of Village ROG's. She could have her piano, a garden and a succession of beloved cats, even when she moved to her little "assisted living" flat. It was very fitting that her memorial service was held in the dining room; it was packed. Bill Webster, retired minister of Mowbray Presbyterian Church took the service; niece Jean Cohen (Trainor E1968) played the piano, her son Donald and the writer gave tributes; Katharine gave a thank you. President of ROG, Averil Keller was there and countless other ROG's, notably niece, Eleanor Quinton (Tindale E1965) who had come from Perth, Australia to support Katharine in the last days. A grandson, Oliver, came from Brazil. and a succession of beloved cats, even when she moved to her little "assisted living" flat. It was very fitting that her memorial service was held in the dining room; it was packed. Bill Webster, retired minister of Mowbray Presbyterian Church took the service; niece Jean Cohen (Trainor E1968) played the piano, her son Donald and the writer gave tributes; Katharine gave a thank you. President of ROG, Averil Keller was there and countless other ROG's, notably niece, Eleanor Quinton (Tindale E1965) who had come from Perth, Australia to support Katharine in the last days. A grandson, Oliver, came from Brazil.

Billie was one of the splendid beacons in life, shining for all generations; she will always be a beacon for her family and friends as they go forward in their lives, inspired by the memories of an exceptional person. Billie's ashes are scattered on the hillside above her holiday house at Pringle Bay

\*Our Miss Thomson was chairman of the Board of Arcadia deep into her eighties.

## Water Appeal

Parents of current pupils have been asked to help take RGHS off the 'water grid'

With the water crisis as it is, we are looking into alternate methods of ensuring the school can remain functional at all times and to reduce our impact on water use. To this end we would like to install a water purification system that would allow us to use the iron-rich borehole water in the school and hostel, effectively taking us off the grid. This is subject to local legislation and ecological impact on the underlying aquifer. This is outside of the normal budget and we are looking for contributions towards this project. Unlike other 'fundraising' initiatives this affects every single learner at the school. Please consider making a donation towards this project, no matter the amount, so that we could reach the R1 800 000 that this would require.

Such contributions are tax deductible and the finance office will provide the necessary documentation for you to claim your tax benefit. Please mark any donations made through EFT with the following code: H2O2018; or scan the snapscan code to make an instant payment.



## Grotto refresh





## PRE-FOUNDER'S DAY NIBBLES AND DRINKS

Please book your seat on Quicket. [CLICK HERE](#)

You are invited to attend Pre-Founder's Day Nibbles and Drinks in the Orton Hall at Rustenburg Girls' Junior School. Come and enjoy a relaxed evening with friends and Rustenburg Family.

Should you not have access to the Quicket online booking system, please call Geila on 021 686 4066 ext. 254 or email [willsg@rghs.org.za](mailto:willsg@rghs.org.za).

**Date:** 25 January

**Time:** 18:00

**Venue:** RGJS

**Cost:** R75

**RSVP:** by 18 Jan

Please note that payment must be received, to confirm your booking.



## FOUNDERS' DAY 2018

Please join RGHS in celebrating Founders' Day on 26 January 2018.

**10:30** Tea Centenary Quad (complimentary - provided by the school)

**11:30** Founders' Day Assembly Kemp Hall

**12:45** ROGU AGM Kemp Hall

**13:15** Founders' Day Lunch Thomson Hall

**15:15** School tour

Cost: R150.00 per person. Only 120 places available.

**Starter:** Salmon fishcake with tossed greens and micro-sprouts

**Mains:** Filleted chicken breast filled with spinach and ricotta, served with Mediterranean grilled vegetables

**Dessert:** Homemade chocolate brownies and ice cream

Should you require a vegetarian meal, indicate this on your booking form. All food will be Halaal.

Please note that payment must be received, to confirm your booking.

Please book your seat on Quicket. [CLICK HERE](#)

Should you not have access to the Quicket online booking system, please call Geila on 021 686 4066 ext. 254 or email [willsg@rghs.org.za](mailto:willsg@rghs.org.za).

Please let Geila know of any specific year reunions that will be held at the lunch.

Bookings close on Friday 19

