



Founded 1922

HERSCHEL SENIOR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

No. 1 - 23 April 2021

Dear Parents

Welcome back to Term Two!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANKS: We are hugely appreciative of Herschel parents continuing to pay their school fees. Thank you for understanding the importance of this in supporting the operations of the school and the staff employed here. In light of the pandemic and the impact it has had, we continue to monitor expenditure responsibly, focusing on key aspects of delivery and ensuring that we offer a holistic and meaningful education of an excellent standard, despite the lockdown limitations that apply. Thank you for your commitment to Herschel.

INTRODUCING CANDICE DU TOIT: Mrs Candice Du Toit has joined the Senior School Art Department. Candice joins us from Reddam Atlantic Seaboard, where she taught for 18 years!



An art teacher by profession, Candice's other passion is cooking, with "fillet steak and mushroom sauce" being her signature dish. It is therefore no surprise that her favourite TV show is "Chef's Table." When she is not teaching or cooking, Candice can be found with power tools in her hand as she is a novice carpenter who loves restoring and making her own furniture. She also knows a thing or two about bargain hunting at flea markets! Candice is married with a 13-year-old son, and has two dogs, all of whom regularly get packed into the car to go hiking or camping. We wish her a happy and productive chapter at Herschel (Interview by Chris McEwen, Marketing)

RETURN TO SCHOOL: It was quite a stressful return for some given the massive fires that broke out on Sunday morning resulting in the closure of several access routes, notably the M3. That said, this was inconvenient as opposed to tragic. We applaud the courage, endurance and commitment of the firefighters who have been on the frontlines of the devastating fire, recognising the critical role they play in the city. We wish those firefighters injured in the fire a speedy recovery to full health.

The loss of the manuscripts and texts in the **African Studies Library** at UCT is a tragedy for African Academe.

Academics, both lecturers and students, from many universities, seek access to these texts and research papers. It is upsetting to know that original works have gone up in flames and that considerable original thinking and historical research has been lost. We have yet to find out how much of the work was digitised but there has evidently been a significant loss of manuscripts/papers and texts. As an academic institution we feel the loss of this research, expertise and wisdom.

EASTER SERVICE: On Tuesday 20 April we held a combined Preparatory and Senior School Easter Service at St Saviour's Church. It was a beautiful service, celebrated by the 100 pupils and staff who attended. The service was recorded, and the link will be shared for those who would like to view it. Our collective thanks to Reverend Lorna, Ms Liesel Juries, the Herschel Music Departments, all members of the Chorale and the musicians who accompanied soloists and performers and who played for us. We were indeed blessed to have experienced the music, messages and meaning of Easter during this service.



SPORT: Sport is opening up again and we are looking at ways of enabling parents to view first team games via streaming. The Sports Department is investigating this. We are frustrated at the inconsistency with respect to regulations, but we have to comply with these and will look at providing positive solutions.

CREATIVES: Mr Yaasien Kerbelker's CAPTURE Photography Club went on a walking tour of BoKaap on the 27th March. It was a cool, slightly rainy day on the cobbled streets of this historic neighbourhood in the heart of Cape Town. Anja Bräsler, Grade 9, captured this image:



WORKSHOPPING *The Fall*: This year the Grade 9 English students will study *The Fall*, a multi-award-winning play that closely examined the fall of the Rhodes statue and the subsequent movements that followed in the wake of the statue's removal.

The play is a powerful drama that looks at the conflicting views of students during this time and their struggle for a decolonized and free education.

Twenty-seven years after the advent of democracy, the need for equal education that is of outstanding quality, and available for all South Africa's children, remains a dream. How do we change this?

The answer is not a simple one, but the English department believes that part of the solution lies in encouraging our students to be critical and creative thinkers, with a confidence to shape their future, and how better to do this but through the creation of original performances created by the students about their future. To initiate the process, Tankiso Mamabolo and Cleo Raatus, two members of *The Fall* were invited to speak to the Grade 9 learners about their experiences as students during #rhodesmustfall and #feesmustfall, and the creative process they undertook to transform their real-life experience into a powerful piece of theatre. This led to a rich exploration of ideas in the decolonizing of education. Most importantly, the workshop has initiated important discussions around education and the challenges faced by many today.

We look forward to seeing the engaging pieces of theatre our Grade 9 pupils will now go forward to create.



CONSCIOUS CONVERSATIONS: A group of 25 parents, Council members and Staff from the executives of both the preparatory and senior school

will be trained in conscious conversations by Asanda Ngoasheng on 28 April. This is Phase One of the initiative which we hope will enable robust and open conversations around a number of relevant and important topics on race, culture, classism, identity, gender, the environment, sustainability, curriculum and others. The workshop will be held at Herschel. Following this, we look forward to opening up conversations with all interested parents and staff members, as well as Old Herschelians. We look forward to encouraging robust conversation conducted in a respectful, open-minded and open-hearted manner.

INDUNA TRAIL: 6 Herschel, girls, 1 Bishops boy and a teacher set off on a wilderness adventure from 3 – 7 April to walk the Induna Trail in the Munyawana Game Reserve (KwaZulu-Natal) which forms part of the greater Phinda Game Reserve.



Mornings and afternoons entailed long walks in the bush, guided by two highly trained and knowledgeable rangers, while being educated on the various flora in the reserve, animal prints, the Big 5, the Little 5 and every other animal or insect we came across. Not every classroom has four walls! We were privileged to see a lot of game and enjoy the natural beauty and wonder of the bush. Evenings were spent around the fire pit chatting and sharing stories, followed by sleeping under the stars.

Each person also did a solitary night shift hour at a different time each night.

This involved patrolling the camp area to alert the rangers if there was any animal activity and it presented a wonderful time for everyone to reflect upon the day and be alone with their thoughts, while listening to the roar of lions close by.

The last night was spent in the wonderful Bayala Lodge where we were treated to a swim in the pool, an afternoon and early morning game drive, delicious meals, warm showers, and a comfortable bed to sleep in.

In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks –
John Muir
(Tracy Rousseau, Deputy Head: Pastoral)



TRAFFIC: I would also like to take this opportunity to appeal to parents to be considerate when it comes to drop off and collection times. We have had some complaints of parents double and triple parking, leaving their engines running for long periods of time to keep the air-conditioners on and emitting fumes on campus, and not heeding polite requests from security to do another loop so as not to block the entrance. Being a land-locked suburban school, this is an ongoing challenge and we would ask that you bear this in mind, even in moments of frustration.

The Curious Tale of Benjamin Button is on Netflix currently and contains pearls of wisdom; especially with respect to being open-minded, honest and curious. It is not without its flaws, but it is a stirring film. It reminds us to live more intentionally and to look outwards, beyond the confines of where we live and who we think we are.

We will be distributing a newsletter every second week and will keep you updated with respect to the impact of Covid-19 and the applicable protocols. We hope that this term is a happy and productive one and invite you to participate in the Conscious Conversation circles, coffee mornings and invitational talks that we are scheduling.

Heather Goedeke
(Head)

SOMETHING TO CONTEMPLATE

"For what it's worth: it's never too late or, in my case, too early to be whoever you want to be. There's no time limit, stop whenever you want. You can change or stay the same, there are no rules to this thing. We can make the best or the worst of it. I hope you make the best of it. And I hope you see things that startle you. I hope you feel things you never felt before. I hope you meet people with a different point of view. I hope you live a life you're proud of. If you find that you're not, I hope you have the courage to start all over again."

(Eric Roth, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* screenplay)