



Founded 1922

HERSCHEL SENIOR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

No. 2 – 7 May 2021

Dear Parents

FREEDOM DAY, 27th April 2021: We celebrated Freedom Day last Tuesday, 27th April. This is South Africa's 27th year of democracy. Nelson Mandela spent 27 years imprisoned at Robben Island, Pollsmoor Prison and Victor Verster Prison. 27 years. What an incredible sacrifice he made for freedom and social justice, unwavering in his dedication to the cause (alongside many others who also devoted their lives to the struggle). What would Nelson Mandela say of South Africa today? Political analysts asked this question on Tuesday 27th April.

There were a myriad responses, many of which expressed disillusionment, suggesting that Archbishop Desmond Tutu's iconic image of a "Rainbow Nation" has lost its glow amidst the complexity of power, patronage, corruption, state capture, a failing economy, educational crises, and an ever-increasing socio-economic divide.

Despite this, on the 27 April, we paused to appreciate our democracy and the Bill of Rights which describes the rights and freedom of South African people, under the Constitution.

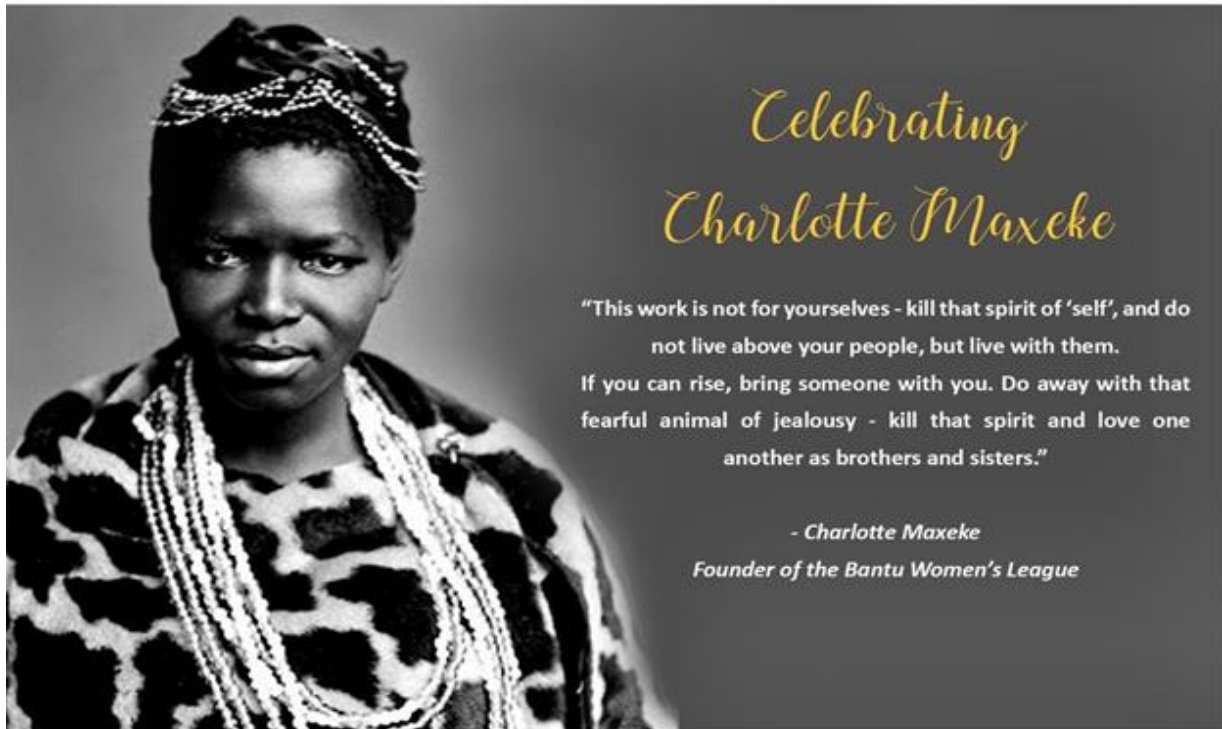
"The truth is that we are not yet free; we have merely achieved the freedom to be free, the right not to be oppressed. We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road. For to be free is not merely to cast off

one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others. The true test of our devotion to freedom is just beginning."

Nelson Mandela

In assembly on 10 May, we will focus on the activism and contributions of Charlotte Maxeke, paying tribute to her remarkable legacy and courage. While we were watching the side of the mountain burning two weeks ago, the Charlotte Maxeke Academic Hospital was battling a fire which saw the hospital being shut down and more than 800 patients moved to other facilities. A preliminary report revealed that the fire affected two blocks of the hospital.





Source:

<https://twitter.com/nathimthethwasa/status/1367062764175446016>

Who exactly is Charlotte Maxeke?

Charlotte Maxeke is the woman chosen to be honoured on Freedom Day, 2021. Below is an extract from the Assembly prepared for the Senior School:

Charlotte Makgomo Maxeke (7 April 1871 – 16 October 1939) was a South African religious leader, social and political activist. She was the first black woman to graduate with a university degree in South Africa, with a BSc from Wilberforce University, Ohio in 1903, as well as the first black African woman to graduate from an American university.

Maxeke became politically active while in the African Methodist Episcopal Church where she was heavily involved in teaching and preaching the Gospel and advocating education for Africans of South Africa. The church later elected her president of the Women's Missionary Society.

Upon her return to South Africa in 1902, Maxeke began her involvement in anti-colonial politics. Along with two other individuals from the then Transvaal, she attended an early South African Native National Congress meeting, and she was one of the few women present. Maxeke attended the formal launch of the South African Native National Congress in Bloemfontein in 1912 and also became active in movements against pass laws through her political activities, by organizing women against the pass laws.

Many of Maxeke's concerns were related to social issues as well as ones that concerned the Church.

Maxeke wrote about the political as well as social issues that women faced in isiXhosa communities. In *Umteteli wa Banti* she wrote about these specific issues.

The Black Women's League under Maxeke was a grassroots movement that served as a manner of taking up grievances from a largely poor and rural base. She led a delegation to the then South African Prime Minister, Louis Botha, to discuss the issue of passes for women. These discussions resulted in a protest against passes for women the following year. Maxeke and 700 women marched to the Bloemfontein City Council, where they burned their passes.

She participated in protests related to low wages at Witwatersrand and eventually joined the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union in 1920. Maxeke's leadership skills led her to be called by the South African Ministry of Education to testify before several government commissions in Johannesburg on matters concerning African education — a first for an African woman. She continued to be involved in many multiracial groups fighting against the Apartheid System and for women's rights.

In 1928, Maxeke set up an employment agency for Africans in Johannesburg and began service as a juvenile parole officer. She remained active in South African politics until her death, serving as a leader of the ANC in the 1930s. Maxeke was also instrumental in the foundation of the National Council of African Women, which served as a way of protecting the welfare of Africans within South Africa. She died in 1939 in Johannesburg at the age of 65.

Charlotte Maxeke is an example of someone who worked actively towards social justice and for change, for human rights and equality. She represented women proudly and selflessly, striving

to create a better society and to effect change. She actioned her beliefs. This is her legacy.

Her name has been given to the former "Johannesburg General Hospital" which is now known as the "Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital". The South African Navy submarine SAS *Charlotte Maxeke* is named after her. Maxeke is often honoured as the "Mother of Black Freedom in South Africa".

The ANC also hosts an annual Charlotte Maxeke Memorial Lecture in her honour, recognising her contribution to social justice and democratic principles. It is indeed fitting that she was chosen to be honoured this Freedom Day.

(Sources: <https://www.sahistory.org.za> and <http://www.africanfeministforum.com/>)

HERSCHEL ANTI-RACISM STATEMENT: You will have received the covering letter and the Anti-Racism Statement on Wednesday. I am very grateful to the teachers and pupils who spent time on this document. It is a well-constructed and personal response, and we are proud of our commitment to creating a school environment that supports a sense of genuine belonging, recognising where responsibilities lie and understanding that processes of learning, unlearning and relearning apply. In assembly on Thursday, I went through the statement with the senior school pupils and staff, contextualising the statement within our collective need to establish a safe, equally inclusive environment.

The Anti-Racism Statement will underpin our approach to transformation, equity and belonging at Herschel.



Pierre de Coubertin said:

"Sport is part of every man and woman's heritage and its absence can never be compensated for."

At the end of last term, a letter was sent out informing parents of the return to competitive sport as well as details regarding each discipline that we offer at Herschel. All trials have been completed and girls have started training with their coaches in the various teams. Herewith some updates on the four sports we offer in winter:

Cross Country: We have had no communication from the Cross-Country committee, but our girls meet twice a week and have a run around the Claremont suburb.

Squash: Fixtures have arrived for some of the leagues. Our 1st team play in the Southern Suburbs U/19A/B boys league and they will have their first match on Friday 14 May at WBHS.

The 2nd and 3rd teams will hopefully start league matches the following week. Social squash has also been well attended, and we look forward to these girls learning the skills and gaining the confidence to participate in future matches.

Netball: We start the season with our traditional Rhenish derby day which, this year, is being held in Stellenbosch on the Rhenish campus. We have 10 teams playing in this derby.

Regarding the league, the fixtures have not arrived, so we will organize some friendly matches for the teams in the interim.

Hockey: On Saturday 1 May we started the season with the U/16A and 1st team playing friendly matches against Springfield. Both teams acquitted themselves well and it was so special to see the girls back on the turf.

Hockey teams are also involved in the Rhenish derby day and our 10 teams will be participating in this. Before our league begins, we have another derby for hockey against Bloemhof at Herschel next weekend, 14/15 May.

The league fixtures for hockey have arrived and the first round is against Bellville at Herschel the weekend of 21/22 May. There are 10 league fixtures this season.

Herschfield: Our annual Herschfield festival for netball and hockey is scheduled for Friday 28 and Saturday 29 May. Springfield is hosting this derby.

Fixture's information: A weekly schedule with details regarding the times and venues of each match will be sent to all coaches and tutors and will be posted on the D6 communicator.

SOCS Sport: We will start making use of the SOCS Sport App for communication to girls and parents with regards to practice times, match details and team lists. Please save this link for easy access – more details on the App can be found on D6 Communicator: <https://sport.herschel.org.za/>
The current password to access the team lists is: **HERSCHEL01**

COVID PROTOCOL: a reminder that unfortunately no spectators are allowed at sport events.

When the girls arrive for matches, they must enter the senior school entrance. They will be screened there and asked to complete the Covid form that Security will have. The girls will then go to the respective venues. The opposition will be admitted through the gate at the Prep entrance.

ART



Josephine Orpen – “Dialogue” – Term 1 2021,
Grade 12, Visual Arts. 100x150 cm
Mixed media: water-based ink, Charcoal, Acrylic
paint, Tippex and pencil.



(Clockwise from top left: **Lucy Paterson, Jessica Petersen, Erin Meyer and Elen Vermaak.**) – “Organic Abstraction” – Term 1 2021, Grade 9, Painting in Oils Elective, each 25 x 25cm oil on canvas.

HOUSE SYSTEM AND VERTICAL TUTOR: We believe each girl needs to belong to a smaller community where she feels comfortable to be herself and where she learns to connect with girls of other grades in order to grow in knowledge, thoughtfulness and confidence. Herschel therefore works on a House system with four Houses: Carter, Jagger, Merriman and Rolt. Within each of these Houses are nine vertical tutor groups – each tutor group having 2-4 pupils from each Grade within the House. Each House is run by a team: House Director, Deputy House Director: Senior phase and Deputy House Director: Junior phase.

So, who are the people managing these Houses? In the next few weeks, we will run a series: “Meet the House Team” so that the school community can get to know the people at the heart of the Herschel House system.

MEET THE HOUSE TEAM: HOUSE DIRECTORS: The House Director is responsible for the overall House management, pastoral care, permissions, and discipline of their House. They are the go-to people for pupils and parents about school matters and will be able to direct them to the appropriate people who can assist if they cannot.



CARTER

HOUSE DIRECTOR: LOUISE VAN WYK

Who am I? I grew up in Oudtshoorn and after studying at the University of Stellenbosch, I moved to Cape Town where I've been teaching Afrikaans for almost 9 years. I currently live in Chelsea Village with my husband, Rudi, and our houseplants. I love Jesus, chocolates, and people with a good sense of humour.

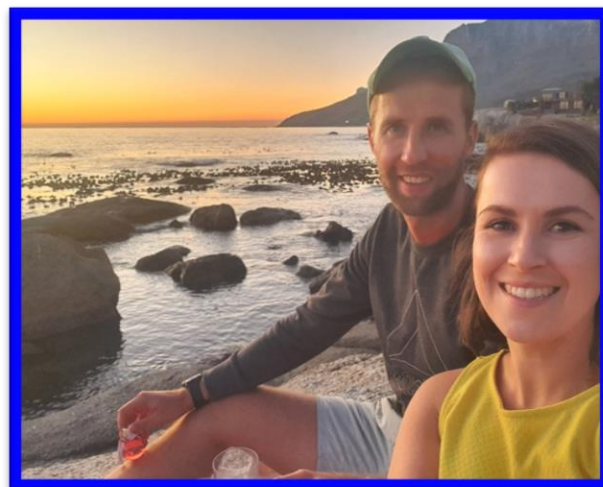
In my free time I like to: Do anything arty or creative. Go camping with my husband. Read. Spend time in nature.

Fun fact about me: One day when I grow up, I want to be a kindergarten teacher.

What I love most about being a teacher: It is a huge privilege to work with children and have even just a small impact on their lives. I also love how dynamic and multifaceted teaching is.

Why I became a House Director: The House System is all about building relationships, having fun and creating a sense of belonging. I love being part of the team who makes all of that happen!

My message to the Carter pupils: Be kind and have fun!



JAGGER

HOUSE DIRECTOR: BONGANI SOPAM

Who am I? I am Bongani Sopam a descendant of the amaNywabe clan of the Xhosa people from the Eastern Cape.

In my free time I like to: I like to involve myself with community development things, I run a Maths and Science project for Engen on Saturdays, which is for learners from previously disadvantage schools. I also do Maths, Science and Biology translation and terminology development for isiXhosa.

Fun fact about me: I Love music and dancing! My learners have had a taste of this in class. 😊😊

What I love most about being a teacher: To build confidence and self-belief with learners who think Maths is their nightmare.

Why I became a House Director: I'm a strong believer in the house system, and with more than 10 years of experience in it I have seen it's worth and significance in growing and supporting the education of young people.

My message to the Jagger pupils: Humans thrives on relationships, and Jagger is your home from home whilst Herschel is your village and or community. I don't know if that makes me the chief... 😊😊



MERRIMAN

HOUSE DIRECTOR: HANNEKE BASSON

Who am I? I am just one of millions of humans trying to make sense of this earthly existence with all its challenges and wonder.

In my free time I like to: spend time with a few close friends or read, travel, play with animals – the things that bring me the most joy.

Fun fact about me: One of my many dreams is to own a cow one day – I adore cows.

What I love most about being a teacher: interacting with adolescents. They have an optimistic, hopeful, we-can-change-the-world energy that I find invigorating.



Why I became a House Director: I want to get to know more students than just the ones I teach. I want to learn new skills and grow professionally.

My message to the Merriman pupils: Be as kind and supportive to others as you possibly can. We are all just trying the best we can manage at a particular moment.

ROLT

HOUSE DIRECTOR: CAROL ALPERT

Who am I? I am first and foremost a single mother of three gorgeous children. My two boys, Andrew and Taylor and my daughter Gina. I am a passionate English and AP English teacher. Prior to being a

teacher, I performed in and directed several theatre productions.

In my free time I like to: I love reading and gardening and drinking copious cups of tea with good friends. I find great pleasure in walking in nature.

Fun fact about me: I love dancing. I taught Robert Pattinson the “Twilight” actor. I played Maria in “The Sound of Music”. I am spontaneous and love having fun and most of all enjoy being silly at times.

What I love most about being a teacher: Teaching gives me immense pleasure -to engage with young adults on a daily basis and to see each individual discover the love of the language and the never-ending messages that reading novels unfold.



Why I became a House Director: I see my role as House Director as someone who will provide the pupils with the opportunity to feel a sense of belonging and to share the joy of the multiple occasions and precious moments their school years will offer.

My message to the Rolt pupils: My message to all of the Rolties out there is that they must remember that they are exceptional and can do anything they put their minds to. To challenge the difficulties with the help of good friends and to keep their faces turned towards the sun and remain positive. Stand tall and follow their dreams.

"Nothing can dim the light that shines from within".
Maya Angelou

