

# **ODU COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT**

## **OLD DIOCESAN UNION GENERAL MEETING**



**BISHOPS**  

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**OLD DIOCESAN**

**THE WOODLANDS PAVILION, DIOCESAN COLLEGE**

**10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2016 AT 18:00**

## OD UNION CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT AGM 2016

**BRIAN ROBERTSON**

**10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2016**

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It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the OD Union Committee to present the 120<sup>th</sup> OD Union Annual Report.

To give context to this report, it is important to remind ourselves of what our mission is; *"The mission of the Union is to bring together members of the Union, to keep them in touch with Bishops and the present students, to promote the interest and welfare of Bishops and to establish and administer a fund to provide financial assistance for the descendants of present and past members of the Union (hereinafter referred to as "ODs") to be educated at Bishops."*

As was the format of previous reports, this report is presented under the headings of the four objectives contained in the Mission. However I think it important at this stage to highlight a most significant event which occurred in March 2015.

Your committee along with the Patron, President and a number of Vice-Presidents conducted a strategic planning session where objectives supporting our mission were identified.

The session was conducted by Nicky Bicket who is a member of the Association of Representatives of Old Pupils Societies. The association meets regularly and includes the top independent schools in the United Kingdom. The insights Nicky gains are invaluable to us in terms of exposing us to fresh ideas and new ways of thinking. In many ways we had become insular, inward looking and whilst we knew what we do, we were not sure why we did it. This session answered that question and in doing so highlighted the following four strategic objectives for the foreseeable future:

- To build and promote a mentoring and support framework for ODs worldwide.
- To segment and broaden functions and events to appeal to the widest possible OD audience.
- To communicate with ODs worldwide in a way that is meaningful, relevant and timely, using a range of traditional and social media technology.

- To uphold and strengthen the Bishops reputation worldwide.

You will see the activities supporting these objectives in the report. The strategy can be viewed on our website.

## **1. TO BRING TOGETHER MEMBERS OF THE UNION**

### **REUNIONS**

The following classes held reunions during 2015:

- Class of 2010 (5 year), 28 August: Dugald Robertson
- Class of 2005 (10 year), 29 August: Anton Taylor
- Class of 1995 (20 year), 7 November: Tim Richman
- Class of 1990 (25 year), 16-17 October: Luke Scott
- Class of 1985 (30 year), 12-14 March: Bovain Macnab
- Class of 1970 (45 year), 11-14 March: Leif Eriksen
- Class of 1965 (50 year), 11-14 March: Bruce Risien
- Class of 1960 (55 year), 12-14 March: Alan Ramsay/Sydney Cullis
- Class of 1955 (60 year), 11-14 March: Don Rowand
- During the course of the year a number of classes met regularly for lunch at the OD Union Offices. These groups included John Powell's 1953 group, Colin Boyes' 60s group, Bruce Jack's 1987 group and Don Rowand's 1955 group. The class of 1979 meet annually for lunch on the Friday before the final Rondebosch rugby match.
- These informal gatherings are proving to be popular, particularly now that we have our own premises, and we encourage ODs to do more of them.
- **UK SENIOR OD LUNCH:** held on the 23rd January 2015 at the RAF Club in Piccadilly. ODs were addressed by President Raymond Ackerman (1948S).
- **OD DINNER:** held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at Kelvin Grove. This is a highlight on the OD Union calendar. The Toast was proposed by Patron Michael Watermeyer, OD Union committee member Anton Taylor (2005B), was once again a most entertaining Master of Ceremonies. The Guest Speaker, Dr Gregory Mills (1979O) of the Brenthurst Foundation shared many fascinating insights from his latest book How South Africa Works. President Raymond Ackerman replied.

- **FOUNDERS DAY:** held on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March. At the Founders Day Chapel Service, the OD Union President shared his many and varied experiences of his time at Bishops, UCT and Pick n Pay. He urged the boys to show compassion, not to discriminate, and to contribute towards building a resilient economy and a successful country. A copy of this address can be found on the OD Union website under 'News.'
- **SHOOTING:** Phil Calothi's (1968W) team of ODs won the Sir Wilfred Robinson Trophy beating College by 61 points.
- **CRICKET:** The OD Union fielded seven teams. All seven teams were full within a week of the notice going out. Results are on the OD Union website.
- **OTHER ACTIVITIES:** in which ODs participated included the Avenue Mile, water polo, debating, tennis and basketball.
- **ODs and OHs:** An Old Haileybury Society gathering was held in Dubai on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. A number of ODs were in attendance.
- **STARLIGHT CLASSICS & CHRISTMAS CAROLS:** The Starlight Classics concert was held on 28<sup>th</sup> February at Vergelegen in Somerset West. Richard Cock (1967O) kindly provided the OD Union with an enclosure for fifty guests. The OD Union purchased the tickets and resold them to ODs who have previously attended. Later in the year, Christmas Carols with Richard Cock was held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December in the Memorial Chapel. It was a wonderful evening, with an excellent atmosphere and a full Chapel. Wines at interval were donated by Avondale Estate and the mince-pies by Jonathan Ackerman (1984S) of Pick n Pay. The collection is donated to the OD Union Bursary fund and was generously "topped-up" by Richard to an amount of R10 000.
- **TULLYALLEN TROPHY:** The event took place on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February. The OD team had a point to prove after narrowly losing the inaugural event in 2014. The ODs batted first and finished with a formidable total, beating Bosch by 60 runs. County player Chris Cook and England international Craig Kieswetter both made useful contributions and in no manner weakened the side.
- **OD v OA SUNDAY:** held on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March. Greg Boyes' (1995F) team fell short 20 runs to the Old Andreans.

- **OD BOLAND DINNER:** organised by Martin Versfeld (1977S) on 31<sup>st</sup> July was a great success with 100 ODs attending. Our President, Mr Raymond Ackerman was the guest speaker and left in the early hours only after he had exhausted the questions of a determined group of students.
- **NORTHERN PROVINCE DINNER:** organised by Richard King (1974S) took place at the Johannesburg Country Club on 5<sup>th</sup> June. President Raymond Ackerman spoke on the opportunity that exists in establishing a mentorship programme at the ODU.
- **OD LONDON DINNER:** held on the 5<sup>th</sup> June at the RAF Club in Piccadilly. Just under 100 ODs (with seventy years separating the oldest and youngest OD) attended the dinner. Grace was said by Matthew Golesworthy and Chaaba Jangulo who is currently studying at Edinburg University. Nicky Bicket was an amusing and efficient MC, stepping in at literally the last minute. The guest of honour and speaker was Gareth Penny (1980F). Brian Robertson (1979W) the ODU Chairman introduced Gareth. Special mention was made of our lady-OD-in-her-own-right, Katie Hofman (1981G). It was held in the wonderful RAF Club, Piccadilly through the kind auspices of John Fairweather (1948G).
- **WALKER CUP:** the 33rd Walker Cup was held at the Mowbray Golf Club on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February. The trophy was won by Rondebosch, with 17½ better ball matches to 14½ by ODs. Thanks go to Brian de Kock (Vice-President 1952O) for organising this event.
- **The Henley Royal Regatta** drew out a small but enthusiastic band of ODs to watch the start of the rowing competition. Rob Johnstone (2010G) a superior rower himself, introduced ODs to the joys of the Leander Club on the banks of the Thames.
- **OLD QUAD GOLF DAY:** The annual competition for the Old Quad Golf Challenge Shield, between Old Boys of Bishops, Rondebosch, SACS and Wynberg, took place at The Royal Cape Golf Club on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September. Bishops came in third place. Once again Brian De Kock was the organiser.
- In the UK, ODs took on the Old Tonbridgian golf team at the Royal Ashdown and were narrowly beaten in an exciting finish. This is now to be an annual match. The Senior OD Golf circuit is up and

running thanks to Richard Duck (G, 1964) and this year take on an age-appropriate Old Cranleighan team

- **OD PATRON, PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT FUNCTION:** held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. This event was held after our final committee meeting of the year, and is the final event of the year for the OD Union Committee. The Chairman thanked the Office Bearers for their advice and support during the year. He also gave an overview of recent events and outlined important future events.
- **OPENING OF THE MITRE:** was held to on 13<sup>th</sup> August. Our President Raymond Ackerman was our guest speaker and Bishop Garth Counsell blessed the building.
- **BOOK LAUNCH:** on the 10<sup>th</sup> September OD Union Vice-President Professor Tim Noakes (1966W) along with his co-authors Jonno Proudfoot and Bridgett Surtees launched his book Raising Superheroes. After a thoroughly thought provoking presentation, publisher and MC Tim Richman (1995B) had to stem the unending tide of questions well into the night. A capacity crowd enjoyed the personal one-on-one interaction and the personalised book signings.
- **FILM REVIEW:** on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September the OD Union hosted a viewing of the film Blood Lions introduced by Ian Michler (1977W). The event was held in the Memorial Theatre. Dr Ian McCullum, author of the book Ecological Intelligence, addressed the audience and answered a number of questions, most notably from a group of Prep boarders. Our thanks go to Ian Michler, Dr Ian McCullum, Dave Cohen (1996K) and Nick Chevallier for sharing their insight and wisdom with us.
- **OD MENTOR PROGRAMME LAUNCH:** on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November we hosted an OD Union Coaching and Mentoring breakfast at the Woodlands Pavilion. 50 ODs attended. Our guest speakers were Anthony Farr (1989F) and Raymond Ackerman (1948S).
- **MATRIC FUNCTION:** On the 15<sup>th</sup> October the class of 2015 were invited to the Mitre after being handed their OD ties in final assembly and were addressed by our Chairman Brian Robertson and Dugald Robertson.

- **OD RHODES SCHOLAR DINNER – LONDON** On the 19<sup>th</sup> November twelve Rhodes Scholars based in London met at the Fly Fisherman's Club for dinner and discussion.
- **OD RHODES SCHOLAR DINNER – CAPE TOWN:** On the 20<sup>th</sup> November we hosted a dinner at the Mitre inviting all OD Rhodes Scholars to get together. The ODs were addressed by Dr Paul Murray.
- **TALK:** On the 26<sup>th</sup> November Vice-President Tony van Ryneveld (1942G) held 94 ODs enthralled with his epic story of Sir Pierre van Ryneveld's inaugural flight from London to Cape Town.
- Robert Slingsby (F, 1973) launched his London exhibition "I am" at the Royal College of Art, to much critical acclaim and the delight of the ODs who turned out to support him.
- In the build up to the Rugby World Cup quarter finals, ODs were invited to join the old boys of Rondebosch to "get into the spirit" of the competition, something they needed no second invitation to do.
- Simply Blue performed at the Edinburgh Festival and then gave another performance for parents friends and enthusiastic ODs in the iconic Museum of the Order of St John in London
- Gareth Penny launched his Penhill wines towards the end of last year in the historic South Africa House and ODs were conspicuous by their presence.

## **2. TO KEEP MEMBERS IN TOUCH WITH BISHOPS AND THE PRESENT STUDENTS**

In 2015 we kept ODs connected with one another and with the school in the following ways:

- **MAGAZINE & ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THE MAGAZINE:** There are four electronic and print versions of the magazine, one at the end of each term. I urge all ODs to switch from the print version to the electronic. In doing so we would be in a position to redirect some R380 000 to bursaries and endowments.
- **WEEKLY NEWSLETTER:** The OD Union Office continues to distribute a weekly newsletter on Fridays during the term. The purpose is to bring news about ODs and the school regularly and expeditiously to ODs. The

UK ODU distributes a monthly newsletter to UK-based ODs and for anyone else interested in what's happening with the ODU in the UK.

- **WEBSITE:** the website is regularly updated. We are aware that the platform is not ideal and committee member Nick Durrant has completed a review of our website and social media platforms.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Facebook has become a useful tool for us to highlight various events to ODs by simply creating an event on our page. LinkedIn is perhaps our biggest growing and most efficient medium for connecting ODs who are professionals, entrepreneurs, corporates and who have registered for the ODs Assist ODs Programme. Please join our LinkedIn page as it the more members, the more effective it becomes.

### **3. TO PROMOTE THE INTEREST AND WELFARE OF BISHOPS:**

Solly Satchel came to South Africa as a trooper in the Anglo-Boer War. He never returned home. After retiring as a school inspector he served on the Bishops Staff from the age of 60 for 21 years. In 1949 he made the following statement which can be seen on the wall as you enter the OD Union,

*"It is difficult of thinking of Bishops without thinking of the OD Union. Only those closely acquainted with the administrative side of the College can ever realise what the Present owes to the Past: they may be described respectively as the body and the soul of Bishops."*

This committee is acutely aware that we operate in conjunction with the various constituencies within the school. We do our best to integrate staff – those that choose to become members as per Section 7.1b of our constitution. David Alberts who served over 3 million meals over some thirty years in Bramley House recently became an honorary OD. Likewise we have worked hard at ensuring a smooth "rite of passage" for the boys in matric as they leave school and become ODs. In terms of assistance to the school, in 2015 we provided in excess of R500 000 worth of bursaries to assist sons of ODs. We provided the school with a facility worth in excess of R5 million and paid for the museum to be built and furnished. Many of our ODs are assisting the school financially, by sharing their expertise, their time, advice and commitment.



But the most significant contribution ODs can make in the future is to involve themselves in the mentoring programme. This programme was launched at a breakfast in November and continues to grow. We are excited about the potential of it, the aims of which are to: mentor young ODs, provide ODs with opportunities to network in a professional manner, provide advice for young entrepreneurs and leaders as we develop our entrepreneur and leadership programmes, and finally to provide venture capital and assistance along the lines of the highly successful Etonpreneurs programme.

To those already registered and involved in assisting young ODs, I wish to thank you for being Solly Satchel's "soul of Bishops."

**4. TO ESTABLISH AND ADMINISTER A FUND TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE DESCENDANTS OF PRESENT AND PAST MEMBERS OF THE UNION (HERINAFTER REFERRED TO AS ODS) TO BE EDUCATED AT BISHOPS:**

The Chairman of the OD Union Committee represents the OD Union on the Scholarship and Bursaries Committee. His function is to ensure that the OD Union Bursary policy is implemented.

The Bursary Fund, which is invested, administered and banked separately to the OD Union Endowment Fund currently stands in excess of R11 million.

As mentioned, in 2015 we allocated an amount of R400 000 for bursaries, this allowed us to assist thirty-five sons of ODs who would not otherwise have been able to attend Bishops following in their father's footsteps. As the numbers of ODs requiring assistance increases, so too it is becoming necessary for us to actively look for funding on behalf of these ODs.

**DONATIONS:**

Whilst the OD Union does not actively raise funds from ODs, during the past year we received generous donations from the following donors, for which we are very grateful:

- Class of 1953, Class of 1955, Class of 1960, Class of 1964, Class of 1990, Class of 1995, Class of 2005, Class of 2010, Justice Craig Howie, Pallet Supply Company, Shumani Mills, David Kirkness, Tim Allsop, Christopher Steytler and Richard Cock

### **CONCLUSION:**

In conclusion, I want to thank you all for attending this evening. I want to thank Delré for organising and preparing this evening and the many other evenings enjoyed by ODs in 2015.

Thank you to Guy Pearson and Mike Bosman for all their support, encouragement and effort they put in to contributing to a valuable relationship between the school and the OD Union.

I would like to thank the Branch Secretaries and in particular Nicky Bicket who has created an active and effective home away from home for ODs in London. He has embraced the new OD strategy which stresses the breadth of the international OD Diaspora.

We have 8 secretaries in South Africa, 1 in Namibia, 1 in Zimbabwe, 5 in Australia, 2 in Canada, 1 in France, 1 in Ireland, 2 in New Zealand, 1 in China (incl. Hong Kong and Taiwan), 1 in Thailand, 1 in the UAE, 1 in the UK, 1 in Scotland, and 2 in the USA. In an era of rapid globalisation, it makes sense to build these branches into meaningful satellites for the OD Union.

I want to thank your committee for the hard work and sacrifices they made during 2015.

The OD Union, and indeed Bishops, is extremely fortunate to be able to draw on men of the calibre of this committee who willingly and freely volunteer to serve you.

This school encourages and prepares men to lead, it also encourages them to serve, the best of them - at the top of their professional careers - serve you on this committee. And I want to acknowledge them for that this evening.

To the Patron, we could not wish for a more dignified, wise and supportive man with whom to work. Thank you for affording us that privilege.

To the President, thank you sir for all you have done since assuming the role of President. You have made the role your own, you have attended meetings, spoke regularly at functions, given of your time, shared your knowledge, your expertise and your wisdom. The committee has benefited greatly from your experience and insight – the excellent attendance at meetings is testimony to this.

Finally I wish to make mention of and thank two members of the committee, Moshe Apleni and Arthur Sithembiso Mngxekeza. A few years ago they approached the committee with two objectives – to raise funds for the Hamilton Mvelase Scholarship so they could raise funds and provide young black men the same opportunity as they had been afforded. Secondly they wished to create awareness among Black ODs, to encourage them to provide mentorship for young Black ODs and to make the OD Union a more welcoming place for Black ODs. They have succeeded and exceeded in meeting these objectives. It has been a particular highlight of my tenure to deal with these exceptional men. Their passionate involvement gives me great hope for the future of our union.

None of the men who serve you receive a stipend. None of them ask for travel, accommodation, free lunches or any other perk to which, in terms of the constitution, they are entitled. They contribute because they have learned the worthy value of “noblesse oblige” – to him whom much has been given, much can and will be expected in future.” These are Solly Satchels soul men and you can be proud of them.

Thank you all for attending. Thank you for affording us the privilege of serving you.