

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the OD Union held in the Woodlands Pavilion on Wednesday 15th March 2017 at 18h00

Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the 121st AGM of the ODU.

Present: The Patron of the OD Union: Michael Watermeyer; The President: Raymond Ackerman; Vice Presidents: Clive van Ryneveld, Tony van Ryneveld, David Carter; Principal: Guy Pearson; Headmaster of the Prep School: Greg Brown; Chairman of College Council: Mike Bosman; Chairman of the OD Union: Bruce Jack; College Chaplain: Rev. Terry Wilke; Dave Burton, Phil Calothi, Mark Campbell, Unathi Diniso, Nick Durrant, Robert Frater, Judge Craig Howie, John Macey, Mnotho Makhoba, Arthur Mngxekeza, Michael Mynhardt, Adam Pike, Brian Robertson, Anton Taylor, Lourens van Zyl, WP van Zyl, Mark Webber and Jeremy Wiley.

Apologies: Ian Byers, Brian de Kock, John Gardener, Mike Gear, Anthony Gregorowski, Guy Lanfear, Lionel Opie, Michael Owen-Smith, Alan Ramsay, Dirk van Doorn, Anthony van Hoogstraten and Gavin Watson.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the AGM of 10th March 2016

The Minutes of the 2016 Annual General Meeting, having been approved by the Committee and published in the June 2016 DC Magazine and on the OD Union Website, were taken as read.

Approval of the Financial Statements

Simon Peile presented the financial statements: Please see attached.

Proposed: Adam Pike

Seconded: Jeremy Wiley

Presentation of the Annual Report:

The Treasurer's Annual Report was delivered by John Macey: Please see attached.

There were 3 questions in reply:

- 1) Jeremy Wiley asked how many OD Bursaries were awarded. Simon Peile explained about 25, consisting of mainly $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$ bursaries.
- 2) Mark Webber referred to the high percentage of offshore investments (about 70%). Simon Peile explained the need due to high sensitivity over the past five to seven years. Mark asked about Naspers, and whether it is on- or offshore. Simon explained that it is a local company that is also listed offshore.
- 3) Phil Calothi asked why the Rand was going to weaken long term. Simon explained the principal of purchasing Power Parity. Phil then asked if we are going to have higher inflation. Simon explained that we pay for sovereign risk.

WP van Zyl presented the Executive Manager's Report: Please see attached (An update of the OD Union Mentoring Programme was attached to the Executive Manager's Report).

WP highlighted 4 areas:

- 1) The wonderful work done by Nicky Bicket (1973F) under the Mentoring Program
- 2) The range of events held at The Mitre

- 3) The wonderful weekly newsletters sent out by Delre' O'Rourke (a 2015 OD survey indicated that 45% of ODs prefer communicating via e-mail)
- 4) That this lengthy report only represents a small cross-section of ODs, making the combined efforts of ODs all over truly remarkable.

OD UNION MENTORING PROGRAMME

Where to from now?

Background:

The OD Mentoring initiative started in the UK during 2014 and quickly built up to a panel of 55 Mentors covering a range of professions and functions. 37 UK-based ODs have received mentoring from them. In November 2015, the OD Union launched a global mentoring initiative which by August 2016 had over 200 mentors (excluding UK mentors) but no mentees (again, excluding the UK).

I was asked to coordinate the whole programme which I took over in September 2016. To-date we have, in total, over 300 mentors worldwide and have mentored just under 100 ODs. They cover 92 disciplines/professions. The willingness of ODs to put themselves forward as mentors has been extremely gratifying and, are very willing to take these mentees.

Anecdotally, the programme is viewed by ODs as a valuable intervention and supports the purpose of the OD Union of "ODs helping ODs".

After almost three years of the programme's existence, it is time to review its efficacy, make improvements and explore how it can be extended to benefit the most number of Bishops boys and ODs.

Aside from its current offering, I think there are at least six other opportunities which link to and support the programme's objectives:

1. *Vastly improving the marketing of the Mentoring Programme and its objectives*
2. *Providing training and support for mentors*
3. *Introducing mentoring to Bishops boys (linked to the careers' guidance)*
4. *Implementing a buddy system for first-year university students*
5. *Widening the job-opportunity market – linking employment opportunities with available talent*
6. *Recruiting mentors from the wider Bishops Society (parents, past parents, staff, retired staff, etc.)*

Marketing:

A product or service, no matter how good, requires marketing to enhance its demand and reach.

Currently, the mentoring programme is "advertised" via the OD Union website via the weekly Friday broadcasts and monthly UK newsletter.

The ODU website is not fit-for-purpose and the mentoring section difficult to find and, if found, difficult to access. We are all aware of the opportunity cost of the website (not just for the mentoring) and it is hoped that this will be remedied in the not-too-distant-future, but until then, remains a constant barrier to uptake.

If we believe that the Mentoring Programme is a valuable and valued service provided by ODs through the ODU, then marketing it has to be a priority. Other than the website (which should house the mentoring video) and the newsletters, there are other opportunities:

- *Dedicated communication (i.e. not mixed together with other news) from the ODU office at least four times a year*
- *Communication to Grade 11 and 12 boys about the programme and how to access it, either as schoolboys or as soon as they matriculate. This is especially pressing if we launch the University Buddy Programme.*
- *Communication to parents of current schoolboys describing the programme and its benefits*
- *Referencing it in speeches at prizegiving, assembly, etc.*
- *Linking it to the Careers' Events held at the School*
- *Using OD Mentors to present at the School Careers' Event*
- *Encouraging mentees to advocate the programme to fellow-ODs and providing (anonymous) testimonials posted on the website and communicated in all other broadcasts.*
- *Leveraging the ODU social media presence (Facebook and LinkedIn in particular)*
- *[Other]*

Providing training and support for Mentors:

It is probably safe to say that 95% of all the OD mentors have no experience or training in mentoring. What they have is a deep commitment to helping younger ODs through their own experience and wisdom. This may not be enough to make the mentoring objectives attainable.

The remaining 5% of mentors have some sort of formal exposure to the principles and practice of mentoring and it seems that leveraging this capability for the benefit of the other mentors is not just a good thing to do, but in itself is a form of mentoring.

Mentors are scattered all over the world, with the majority in South Africa, and of those, the majority in Cape Town. Some ideas to support mentors include:

- *A mentoring workshop in Cape Town using experienced OD mentors*
- *An online mentoring training programme developed for non-local mentors*
- *A half-yearly survey to all current mentors asking for suggestions, criticisms and improvements to the programme*
- *As above for all mentees*
- *An annual survey/questionnaire to all mentors calling for general comments on the programme*

Linking with the Bishops Careers' Event:

I have met with Bev Morris (Kemball) to discuss the OD Mentoring programme and see whether it could be integrated/linked to the Bishops Careers' Event. There are five reasons why this would be of benefit:

- *Career choice is not just about selecting from a menu of possibilities and a mentoring approach would provide greater insight into the range of options available and how once the choice is made, exposing boys to the myriad of new variables which present themselves.*
- *It starts a lifelong mentoring relationship which, while obviously not continuous, is an established source of safe and wise counsel*
- *Boys are aware of and exposed to the value and benefit of mentoring (and the ODU) earlier rather than later (or not at all)*
- *OD Mentors are successful in their fields (not to suggest that other career advisors are not) and there is a synergistic link between advising on a career choice and taking the next step as*

a result. Importantly, ODs have been in the same position in the same School as the boys they are talking to.

- OD Mentors/Career advisors will also provide insight into the university curriculum to be followed for specific career choices

Implementing a university buddy system:

The step from school to university is a big one. Emotionally, socially and academically, the changes and challenges of the transition are daunting. UK schools have understood this for some time and wrapped into their mentoring approach is the provision and matching of buddies who are either final-year undergraduates or postgraduates to alumni first-year students at their university.

Reports on the success of this initiative are very positive and encouraging and is found to be invaluable to first-years who are able to accelerate and smooth their integration into university life.

This stream relies on knowing where matriculants are going to university and, if possible, what they are going to study. I'm told that Bishops doesn't have this information. The argument that this is not possible to know until the boy has registered for his first year has been dealt with in the UK. The system of provisional/conditional offer and acceptance and registering is the same there. But for 90% of the matriculants intending on pursuing further education, their choices are known and their acceptance more or less certain by the time they leave school.

Knowing (and publishing) this information creates two benefits:

- A good shop window for prospective parents (where and how many Bishops boys go onto university) and
- The ability of the Mentoring Programme to match school leavers to university buddies in a timely way.

Employment Opportunities:

The idea that ODs give "an extra tick" to ODs applying for jobs seems, in certain quarters, to smack of nepotism and elitism.

While this is an easy argument to understand, it's not so easy to accept. Throughout a boy's time at Bishops, and to his parents before he even joins, the School proclaims the excellence and inspirational influence of a Bishops education. It goes further, although I won't.

It then seems to me to be contradictory to suggest that given this incredible and unique education that, all things being equal, ODs wouldn't recognise and appreciate this in other ODs and would be only too happy to employ those boys who are products of such an elite (not elitist, hopefully) education. Why not?

This practice of "looking after one's own", aside from the evolutionary influence, is not nepotism – all other things being equal. There are some ODs (and organisations) who get this, but most don't and shy away from preferring ODs when employment opportunities arise.

The objective of this stream would be to deliberately market employment opportunities to ODs and to encourage them to "go for them".

This could be done through:

- An OD Job Shop which posts and matches opportunities and CVs (web and newsletters)
- Through the ODU who know what talent and opportunities are "out there"
- The OD LinkedIn Group
- An "ODs seek out ODs" programme

- *And then celebrating these successes/appointments publicly*

Recruiting Mentors from the wider Bishops Community:

Although overall, the number of mentors is greater than that of mentees, on closer inspection this is a bit misleading. We have many mentors who are in fairly niche professions/disciplines and are not likely to be called on often or at all. On the other hand, we have mentors who cover very popular career areas – asset management being a notable example – where some mentors have been called on more than once.

And then there are areas which have no mentor coverage. So we always need more mentors.

I would imagine that there is a wealth of experience – and importantly willingness – for parents, past parents, teachers and retired teachers to want to become involved in the programme. In that way, the programme provides a worthwhile avenue for them in which to be involved and provides additional resources to assist as the Programme gathers traction.

Finally:

I put this out as a discussion document. I think the programme as it is now is a very good start at something which is valued and valuable. I think though that augmenting it in the way I've suggested – and in other ways that anyone else might suggest – builds on all that is good about Bishops and the OD Union and ensures that a Bishops experience is lifelong and not just what happens at school, which is the shorter (by far) relationship within the overall Bishops system.

Proposed: Arthur Mngxekeza

Seconded: Brian Robertson

Election of Office Bearers

The Committee recommends that we maintain the services of current unpaid external auditor, namely Martin Luyt of Luyt, Proudfoot and Associates.

In terms of Section 10.4.4 of the constitution, the committee recommends that the Patron Michael Watermeyer continue in his current position. We are delighted that he has agreed to do so.

In terms of Section 10.4.5 of the constitution, the committee propose Judge Craig Howie to the appointment of Vice-President in recognition of his outstanding service to the Union and to Bishops.

He's proposal was unanimously approved by the meeting.

Competent Business

There was no competent business.

The Chairman drew the OD AGM to a close.

With the requirements for an AGM, as set out in Section 10.4 of the constitution completed, the Chairman opened the floor for general information:

Remembrance List

The College Chaplain, Rev. Terry Wilke, read out a list of ODs who had passed away since the end of the previous AGM. A prayer was said, and a moments silence held in their honour.

Principal's Report

The College Principal, Guy Pearson, delivered the Principal's Report:

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT TO OD AGM

WEDNESDAY, 15 MARCH 2017

It gives me great pleasure to present the Principal's Report for the past year. It has been another excellent year for the school and our boys continue to excel in all aspects of school life. The School's achievements have been reported in the quarterly magazines and so I am not going to dwell on the detail but merely highlight some important aspects.

1. Admissions and Enrolment At the start of this year, the school opened with a record number of 1420 boys across the three schools. A significant event was the opening of the new Grade N block in which sixty new four year old boys were enrolled. The Pre-Prep is now a fantastic facility with its new Grade N classrooms as well as their new hall which will make a tremendous difference to the operations of the school. In the College we also enrolled a record number of 777 boys at the start of this year, the highest in our history. Demand for places at Bishops continues to be very high and the admissions process is very difficult from the perspective of over-subscription. A good, but also a difficult position to be in as many families and boys are disappointed in not obtaining admission to Bishops.

2. Academics The Class of 2016 achieved outstanding academic results in their final NSC examinations. 16% of all subject results were above 90%, while 48% of all subject results were above 80%. All boys passed and 98.6% achieved a Bachelor's degree pass. There were fifty nine A aggregates which constitute 39% of the class. The top student was Daniel Tate with an aggregate of 96% followed by Nicholas Janisch with 95%. Nicholas achieved nine distinctions, while Ahmed Dhansay, Luke Baker, Jonathan Rossouw, Francois Stassen, Daniel Tate, Drew Turpin, Stuart Mesham and Anton Volkel all achieved eight distinctions. Ahmed Dhansay, Nicholas Janisch and Alexander Peile all scored 100% for Mathematics. At the WCED Awards Ceremony, Bishops received a merit certificate for being one of the top three Independent Schools in the Province (the others being Springfield and Herschel). Bishops were the top Independent and Public School for boys in the Province.

There has been much comment about the academic standards of the NSC following publication of the results. I want to make it clear that at this stage the NSC serves Bishops well.

The fact that often results are adjusted upwards benefits us because our boys are generally at the top end of the spectrum anyway. Bishops boys are gaining admission to the faculty of their choice at Universities and as I have said before, many of our

boys are gaining placement to the top Universities in the world. In the Class of 2016, Nicholas Janisch has been accepted as an undergraduate student at the University of Cambridge, Alexander Peile to the University of Columbia in America and Luke Baker to the Wharton School of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania.

What is important is that we continue to benchmark ourselves in other ways, including participation in national Olympiads and Expos. Last year our boys once again did exceptionally well in these

competitions. It is important that we are never complacent and part of our new Head of Academics, Dr Stephen Sproule's brief is to re-examine our entire academic programme, and in particular the exit examination which we choose to write.

3. Culture The culture programme at Bishops continues to thrive. I mentioned before the extraordinary statistic that 450 of our boys at Bishops play a musical instrument. Our musicians continue to achieve outstanding results in external examinations such as the ABRSM and Trinity. Last year the school produced the musical 'All Shook Up' and during this week the play 'One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest' is being performed in the Memorial Theatre. The standard of these two shows was truly exceptional and the performance of our boys has been superb. Later in the second quarter we look forward to our annual Eisteddfod, and 2017 is another year for 'Classic Pops' which takes place early in August; something to look forward to! Our Clubs and Society's programme continues to be vibrant and thriving and provides an outlet and extension for boys in areas of particular passion and interest to them.

4. Sport

Bishops continues to compete well in the sporting arena of the Western Cape and South Africa. One of the factors that sets Bishops apart from other schools is the 22 different sports on offer. While this is fantastic and gives boys the opportunity to compete in such a wide range of sport, it can on the other hand be deemed as a weakness because it dilutes our strength in certain traditional sports. Having said that, we continue to achieve great success in our major sports of hockey, rugby, cricket, waterpolo and rowing. 2016 and 2017 have been outstanding years in particular for waterpolo, hockey and rowing, the School having achieved some of its best results for many years. The reality is that games such as cricket are under threat because of the inclination of the youth to gravitate towards sports which occupy less time and, in their view, are more exciting. This year our 1st X1 hockey side and the development side will be undertaking an exciting tour to Holland during the Easter holidays, and will benefit greatly from the tremendous expertise in coaching and playing in that environment.

5. General Matters

At the start of this year we established a sustainability committee which has been incorporated into our overall sustainability initiatives with a particular emphasis to ensure a greater sensitivity to the diversity and transformation issues for boys and the Bishops family as a whole. This is in response to the external environment, particularly at Universities, and the feedback that we have had from a number of our students that they feel ill-equipped to cope with the issues facing them at Universities once they have left school. The bottom line is that we need to create an environment at Bishops where all boys and staff feel that they belong and that they are respected for who they are, no matter their race, religion or gender. We need to examine the potential alienating practices which we have and find a way of creating an environment in which every boy is accepted for who they are.

In closing I would like to thank the OD Committee for their support during the past year. The President remains a pillar of strength and support for us, especially in difficult times, and his wisdom and support is sincerely valued and appreciated.

I have also enjoyed working with the Chairman, Bruce Jack and the OD Union staff WP Van Zyl and Delré O'Rourke. The relationship between school and OD Union can never be taken for granted and I am pleased that at the moment it is on an even keel.

I have always enjoyed my interaction with OD's at the various dinners and functions that I have attended. 2017 will be a year of great challenge for us as you will be aware that our Head Boy, Christian Rohrer, was diagnosed with osteo-sarcoma on his fibular. It is going to be a long tough road for Christian as he undergoes chemotherapy. This will also have a significant impact on his peers in matric and the school in general. We all continue to hold Christian and his family in our thoughts and prayers.

Guy Pearson PRINCIPAL

Pro Fide Et Patria

Chairman's Report

Bruce Jack delivered the Chairman's Report:

Chairman's AGM Report 2017

It gives me great pleasure to present the Chairman's AGM Report at this, the 121st Annual General Meeting of the Old Diocesan Union. In our Constitution under point 10.4.1 the AGM must discuss "The approval of the Financial Statements and Annual Report as at the end of December each year."

In recent years, under the Chairmanship of Brian Robertson, this Annual Report encompassed, in engaging detail, what had transpired the previous year and was known as "The Annual Chairman's Report". I have decided to split the "Annual Report" required in our Constitution from "The Chairman's AGM Report" for reasons that will become clear. Our Executive Manager will be responsible for the Annual Report, which will focus on what has happened since our last AGM. I will use the Chairman's AGM Report to look forward.

But to do so, let's first take a step back. Last year my predecessor, Brian Robertson, highlighted the March 2015 Strategic Planning Session conducted by Nicky Bicket. That session highlighted four strategic objectives:

- *To build and promote a mentoring and support framework of 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*
- *To uphold and strengthen the Bishops reputation worldwide*

I believe we have excelled at the first two objectives (our mentoring programme and functions). We will continue to work hard at these. We are improving our communication all the time, but this really requires focus and action this year. And it is an obvious given that we will continually strive to uphold and strengthen the Bishops reputation worldwide.

Last year in May 2016 we held what I called a “top-up” up Strategic Session. The purpose of these annual sessions is to look at immediate challenges and opportunities in an holistic way.

The main learning from last year’s session was that without a very hands-on Chairman such as Brian, we needed to employ an executive manager to drive our Mission and Objectives as outlined in our Constitution. As a direct result of this session and after a thorough, transparent process, we appointed Dr WP van Zyl (K,1997) to the position of Executive Manager of the ODU. He took office on the 3rd of October 2016.

I would like to thank Simon Peile, John Macey and Adam Pike for joining me on the Appointment sub-committee for this job.

The looking-forward focus of my Chairman’s ODU AGM Report this evening reflects one of the significant shifts in our committee structure and philosophy, which will see the Chairman’s role become increasingly strategic and hands-off.

As you will know the OD committee serves on a voluntary, non-paid basis. For interest, I asked your committee to put an annual figure, based on their current remuneration, to the time they spend on OD matters. Excluding any value of lost opportunities, your committee commits somewhere in the region of R2.4 million per year towards the ODU.

As this rather astonishing figure will reflect we are fortunate to have committee members of high calibre and deep institutional knowledge serve you.

This is just as well because the ODU has ambitious plans. To utilise properly this pool of talent and experience we must become more efficient and effective as a committee. This requires a re-organisation of more structured and responsive sub-committees to help The Mitre Administrative team carry out our ambitious plans. Where appropriate we will invite non-committee members of the Union and members of the school staff to join these sub-committees.

We have invested in our physical infrastructure (The Mitre), we have invested in the human resources required to run our Union and now we must commit to further investment in the systems and communication infrastructure needed to leverage our initial investments and update the operational structure of the ODU. This will ensure long-term sustainability and effectiveness in carrying out our Mission and Objectives.

To this end we have earmarked a further R1million of our funds under management to be spent over the next two years in this regard, and have planned to run at a small operational loss for at least the next two years, probably three.

This will allow us to support our Mentoring Programme and other targeted initiatives of our branch secretaries. It will allow us to build a vastly improved, more engaging and useful website for effective communication. It will mean we will be able to activate a database management system and launch an interactive, on-line global OD entrepreneurs’ platform, among other projects.

Long-term sustainability and success, however, will rely primarily on operational efficiency. We must increase revenue and cut unnecessary expenditure.

As a small example, our OD events are currently run to breakeven (with some running at a small loss). With targeted, ad-hoc sponsorship we will make them fund-generating without any impact on the wallets of our members.

Cost-cutting measures, as any of you who run businesses will know, are like endless trench warfare. With Mukesh Govan and Sean King supporting us from the school we have already rationalised our banking activity, cutting out costs.

A priority for The Mitre administrative team is to streamline all our financial processes like petty cash control and the management and sale of memorabilia.

Most significantly, we will be running your Union to a planned, inclusive annual budget, which for the first time, will be informed by an agreed 5 year business plan with the school executive and the Chairman of Council. This will be periodically monitored by both the committee and the school's business unit.

We are investigating ways to make our magazine financially sustainable. Currently this critical component of our stated Mission costs us in the region of R120 000 per year. The likelihood is that it will cost more than double this going forward.

Specific strategies to address this include targeted advertising and charging for postage. To ensure we handle this sensitive matter correctly, we have gathered a sub-committee of print and internet media professionals from our OD family to guide us. I would like to thank committee member Anton Taylor (B, 2005) for leading this very important sub-committee.

The timing is good for a rejuvenation as there will be a change in our ODU magazine anyway. The school has chosen to produce an annual magazine which will stand separately and be distributed separately from the ODU magazine.

I believe this is a wonderful opportunity to improve on our current printed magazine offering, while retaining all the elements of tradition and content that are important to us.

In line with our Constitution your ODU committee is committed to help bring ODs together and closer to Bishops. I believe we need to do more than this - the rapidly changing world around us demands it and our Constitution makes provision for it.

As a result we have set ourselves the task to investigate and establish what is being called 'The Bishops Benevolent Society'. This needs form and substance by the end of 2018.

Point 2.2.3 of our Constitution states that one of our objectives is "To apply its funds and services to other South African charitable and welfare initiatives where deemed appropriate and which may render an ancillary benefit to Bishops or its students;"

Our vision is to establish a Bishops Benevolent Society to support ODs in many different ways. Of particular concern are young black ODs who leave Bishops and have almost no support structure in place to help them through those crucial first five years after school.

Whether through The Benevolent Society's structures or not, it is clear the ODU must make much more effort to be an immediate support for young black ODs when they leave these school gates for the last time. The ODU must be a friendly, accessible ladder leg to grasp onto. We are indebted to the work of the BODs on the ODU Committee for guiding us in this process.

Another issue for the Bishops Benevolent Society to address are those in the Bishops family who have fallen on hard times. We have an alarming number of ODs living rough on our city streets for example.

Fortunately, within the OD family we have all the professional experience and expertise to support each other; from doctors and psychologists to those running night shelters and places of safety.

With the launch of The Bishops Benevolent Society we will be able to organise pro-bono support from many quarters. The Society may, in time, also be able to financially support indigent ODs and retired teachers.

In 2017 we will launch The Sophie Gray ODU Art prize for Bishops students. Working closely with the Head of the Art Department, Peter Hyslop, we will establish a prize for the best Grade 12 artwork exhibited at their final matric examination assessment. We intend for this assessment and award ceremony to take place in The Mitre and for the winning work to become the property of the ODU and part of a long-term curated ODU collection.

The obvious, positive spin-off of the prize and the artwork will be a proudly visual representation for young ODs leaving school that they are very welcome in the ODU.

Still focused on the younger members of our Union, we will hold more regular and varied Young OD Club gatherings.

Linked to our Young OD members, but with ambitions to tie into the Mentoring Programme it is our wish to establish The OD Entrepreneurial Society by the end of 2018.

We all know the major issue facing South Africa is joblessness. The significant future contributor to job creation lies not in big business or government, but in small to medium-sized entrepreneurial businesses.

It is absolutely vital that we help to create an entrepreneurially-friendly environment for ODs. Both your President and I are passionate about this. The platform and structure we want to roll out over the next two years will include the aforementioned interactive on-line platform (the new ODU website) that will allow OD entrepreneurs to communicate, share experiences and learnings, raise funds, and do business. There will also be networking opportunity talks and events to which Bishops students will be invited.

A personal goal for WP and myself over the next year is to establish a formal affiliation between the Old Boy and Old Girl organisations of our neighbouring Cape schools.

However, without a doubt, our main focus for the next twelve months is to support The Bishops Trust. Our school is in dire need of funds. Not only do facilities need upgrading, but we must establish a useful endowment fund and expand our scholarship and bursary reach. Above and beyond all the general support we will commit to, we will facilitate effective communication between ODs and The Trust.

As part of this general support, we will rejuvenate and relaunch the Hamilton Mvelese Bursary Fund for intellectually gifted students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.

There is concern expressed by many ODs about the colour make-up of the Bishops student body – it still appears far too white to many, myself included. However, there are complicated reasons why this is and it is not an easy fix. Importantly, our role is not to interfere with how the school is run at this level, but we can and should create structures to help facilitate this change.

The Hamilton Mvelase Bursary Fund will allow us to provide the school with the financial support to achieve sustainable transformation with the right candidates who in turn will become proactive and proud ODs.

Besides the relaunch of this Bursary Fund we intend making a difference to the black pupils already at the school by encouraging ODs, especially black ODs, to mentor black kids at Bishops and help them navigate the often culturally alienating, sometimes racist, school environment.

In conclusion I want to thank all of you for attending this evening and for Delre and WP for organising all the things that need to happen in the background of events such as this.

We have placed a massive burden WP's shoulders. I believe he has risen to the task. We are asking him to help lead us in a fast-paced, dynamic, uncertain environment.

WP, much is expected of you by both your committee and the wider OD family. I'd like to personally thank you for taking on this responsibility and for doing so well.

My predecessor was passionate about strengthening our branch offices around the world. I am determined to carry this baton for us and we thank all our branch secretaries in advance for all their effort and support we will require to achieve our goals this coming year.

Once again special thanks and mention must go to Nicky Bicket in the UK whose tireless, innovative and engaging work is a model of what a branch should be.

Your committee, we have already learnt, is much poorer as a result of the time and effort that goes into serving you. As a new Chairman I am grateful for the patience and loyalty shown towards me and my new way of doing things. Thank you for your hard work, persistence and commitment to the Bishops cause.

To our Patron, thank you for your support and calming presence.

It is one thing inheriting a committee of this stature, but quite another, far more daunting matter to inherit a President such as Raymond Ackerman. Thank you, Raymond, for your passion, insight, carefully phrased challenges, wisdom, kindness, generous counsel and most importantly your unwavering, inspiring commitment to Bishops. It has been a true privilege spending time in your presence.

A big thank you must also go to Guy Pearson and Mike Bosman, not just for your support and commitment to a close, collaborative relationship between the school and the OD Union, but especially for allowing us to make use of the school's business unit. Both Sean King and Mukesh Govan have been instrumental in establishing the parameters of good financial governance and simplifying our financial day-to-day dealings.

Finally, and importantly a huge thank you to all the staff that help out at The Mitre on a daily basis. Donovan Murray and Rashied Golliath deserve mention and thanks in this regard.

Thank you once again for attending this evening's AGM.

After his report he invited everyone for refreshments in The Mitre.