



ST ANNE'S OLD GIRLS' GUILD

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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 3RD JUNE 2017

- Mrs Kari Greene thanked Rev van Niekerk, Mrs Hibbert, Mr Oosthuizen and the choir for the beautiful chapel service. Mrs Greene declared the meeting open, as a quorum was present.
- She welcomed members to the 110th AGM, as well as Mr Arguile, Mrs Debbie Martin, Mrs Sharon Wells, and the winner of the St Anne award, Jo James, and her sister, Sas Armstrong.

APOLOGIES: Mrs Liz Addison and Mrs Izzy Foss.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:

- The minutes of the 2016 AGM were taken as read and approved, as proposed by Mrs Drummond, and seconded by Mrs Dillon.
- The matric class of 2016 were accepted and welcomed as new members of the Guild, as proposed by Mrs Hoatson, and seconded by Mrs Erskine.
- A minute's silence was observed for the following deceased Old Girls: Linoya Moore (nee Keyter), Angela Watson (nee Dickson), Janelle Coyne (nee Henderson), Stephana Row (nee Lammie), Barbara Last (nee Neale), Wendy Raney (nee Stranger), Carolyn Thomson (nee Cursons) and Morakane Matji.

ADDRESS BY HEADGIRL – MBALI SHONGWE

- Miss Shongwe welcomed Old Girls to the meeting, and said that she was pleased to see that the bonds of friendship developed at the College, strengthened over the years.
- She reported on the improvements to the College, including the new Arts centre, and explained the recent social awareness week, where issues pertaining to society and individuals are discussed in depth.
- Miss Shongwe thanked the Guild for their contribution to the College, and the caring environment that they have helped create at the school. Mrs Greene thanked her for her report and sacrificing her time today.

HEADMASTER'S REPORT

- Mr Arguile welcomed Old Girls back to the College, and was pleased to report that no Old Girls' daughters had been refused places for the 2018 intake of girls. He explained that 90 places had been offered for 2018, and that scholarships have been abolished, enabling them to offer more bursaries to deserving pupils.
- He reported that there is still a great demand for places at St Anne's, enabling them to attract high quality girls. This is partly due to the beautiful campus, excellent academic, sports and cultural results, good social responsibility and spiritual programmes, but mainly due to intangible benefits, like the amazing community spirit.
- Mr Arguile thanked the Old Girls for being good adverts for the school, thereby increasing it's popularity. This is especially evident in the field of Social Responsibility where so many Old Girls have made a positive impact on society. He explained that St Anne's was a unique school with predominantly boarders, and no junior school so that all pupils started out as 'new girls' together. Mr Arguile said that happiness was the most apt description of the atmosphere at the College.

- Mr Arguile thanked the Old Girls for attending this special day and wished them a happy time together. Mrs Greene thanked him for his support and guidance, and thanked his staff for their contributions to OG day.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Mrs Greene welcomed all Old Girls, particularly those attending special reunions, from the 75th to the 10th, and she thanked the organizers for their time and effort spent encouraging their class mates to attend.
- She explained that the School uniform shop, run by the Guild Committee, aims to raise money for the Old Girls Bursary, whereby financial assistance is given to deserving Old Girls' daughters. Three bursaries are currently being paid for from the Guild funds.
- Old Girls' functions have been held in JHB annually and two in Durban recently. One is planned for Cape Town later this year. Social media has been an excellent platform to advertise these functions, and she encouraged Old Girls to keep in contact with the Guild and College via Facebook, Twitter and linked-in.
- Mrs Greene explained the new OG Business Directory on the website, whereby Old Girls who own or partner businesses can advertise them on this site. She encouraged Old Girls to support this initiative.
- The award of Excellence is a new award given to an Old Girl who models determination, success and excellence in her chosen field of endeavour. This year two Old Girls received this award and spoke to the pupils about their work; Susan Abro and Sarah Collins.
- Mrs Greene reported that Old Girls' news; family or career oriented, is posted on the website, and she encouraged Old Girls to share their news and keep their details updated. An 'update details' page will be at each place setting at lunch, together with a complimentary pen.
- In the foyer is a display of old school photos from reunion years.
- To celebrate the school's 140th anniversary and the Guild's 114th, the Committee is arranging a celebratory ladies' lunch, to be held on FRIDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER, with the theme of 'Women of the world, making a difference one woman at a time'. Main speaker will be Tracey Webster, of Starfish Foundation, with MC being Jane Linley-Thomas from East Coast radio (and also an Old Girl). All friends of St Anne's and Old Girls are invited to buy tickets.
- Mrs Greene reported on the Committee's activities during the year; assisting in archiving and cataloguing old photos and other documents, has secured 20% of the school magazine for OG news, implementation of an excellent management and accounting system in the shop, promotion of STEPP, the school's social responsibility programme. Mrs Sharon Wells, the Chairman of the Board, and Mrs Debbie Martin, Deputy Head of St Anne's are both Old Girls.
- Mrs Greene explained that Mrs Sue Whyte is now the Guild Treasurer, taking over from Mrs Lauren Liddell. The Guild is waiting for tax assessments from SARS, and financial statements from PWC. She thanked Mrs Lindi Fairweather and Ms Theresa Alder for their hard work in the shop, and the bursar, Mike Acutt for his guidance and support.
- The Chairman thanked all the Committee members; Theresa Rattray- vice-Chairman, Anne Chadwick - Secretary, Vicki Dillon - Board representative, Sue Whyte - Treasurer, Rosie Drummond – St Anne award, Jane Douglas – OG Functions, Jo James – Memorabilia, Angela Wolf – archives, Debbie Erskine – magazine and Claire Hoatson – St Anne award; she will be taking over from Mrs Drummond who is resigning. The 2017 office bearers were accepted, as proposed by Mrs Wells and seconded by Mrs Mackenzie.
- Mrs Greene thanked Mrs Ascough for her hard work as the Archives and OG liaison officer. Apart from her hard work in the archives, she also manages the OG section of the magazine, runs the business directory on the website, manages OG queries and the OG face-book page, as well as the Twitter and Linked-in accounts.
- Mrs Greene praised Mrs Jenna Mckenzie, the College's marketing officer, for arranging the wonderful OG Day, and her assistance with sourcing and selling the expanded range of memorabilia.
- The Chairman extended her thanks to the hard working, friendly and successful shop manager, Lindi Fairweather.

ST ANNE AWARD

Mrs Sas Armstrong introduced her sister, Mrs Jo James, a deserving winner of the St Anne Award for 2017.

MRS JO JAMES:

- Mrs James worked for the Empangeni Child Welfare, as a social worker, and later became Principal of Sonskynhoekie Special School for mentally handicapped children. At that time, being the Apartheid era, this school was open to white children only.
- In 1981, whilst she was employed as Director of Zululand Mental Health, supervising 3 Zulu Social workers, she was alerted to the desperate need for help to assist the high number of black handicapped children in the area.
- That year, 1981, she started Thuthukani Special School in her garage with 4 children and one teacher. In 2 weeks, the numbers had grown to 10, and within a month to 20 children. She then secured the use of an old SAR & H house from the local municipality. In six months, the numbers had grown to 100 children, and obviously there was an enormous need to build a school.
- After battling to find suitable land in an area close to public transport, she was given a piece of land by a local farmer, and R500 000.00 from the current Government to build a school. The first ever multi-racial special school for mentally challenged children in South Africa was built and officially opened in 1993. (Sonskynhoekie school had amalgamated with Thuthukani school).
- The school now has 412 children of all races, with 180 children on the waiting list, and 102 staff members.
- The school follows an adapted functional academic curriculum focussing on teaching Life skills to make each child as independent as possible. Practical skills such as cooking, carpentry, gardening, cleaning and sewing are taught in an effort to enable the children to contribute to society.
- Sports, music, dance and other extra-curricular activities also form an important part of each school day, and in order to facilitate communication, it is compulsory for every child and staff to learn Sign language.
- After being Chairman of the Governing Body for 32 years, Jo remains a Trustee for the school, despite no longer living in Zululand.

MRS GREENE CLOSED THE MEETING AT 12NOON.