

## **SOME THOUGHTS.....**

Well here we are again at another exciting Guild AGM, pulses racing, and anticipation at fever pitch. And would, one asks, the school be the same without the Guild? So much is organised by it, like fun days and golf days and a plethora of other activities, all of which raise funds for us and bind the community together. And both from experience and from hearsay it seems that they've all been a resounding success.

But, see, here's the thing – if they've all been so successful why do we still have to pay fees?? – Well, the solution to me seems perfectly clear – more parties!

Still I suppose that all the improvements we've seen - garden works, driveways, fencing and security - have to be paid for. And all of it seems necessary, that is with one possible exception – security. It seems rather churlish to have arranged things such that the chances of any of our little hooligans getting out and escaping is minimised! But seriously, I guess it does feel quite good to know they're safe.

So, anyway, at last the car park got finished and it's new, vast extent, was proudly displayed, its rules explained to all and its objective, happily, completely achieved.

*Traffic chaos on a scale that could only, previously, have been dreamt of.*

– as Mums (and, perish the thought, Dads) scatter their cars with gay abandon, wherever that last, oh so important phone call, takes them. But now at least we have chaos on a scale of which we can be proud and we can hold our heads up high in front of visiting schools. And are we surprised? Not at all, for in our hearts we always knew that the car would instantly overcome any attempts to tame it.

Possibly the bravest of the undertakings so far this year is the partially complete computer upgrade that, when finished, will link children, classrooms, school and home into one organism. At last, for the children, the computer will start to be part of life, not just a subject taught just like many others. It promises the same sort of explosion in the access to knowledge that was heralded by the Gutenberg Bible nearly six hundred years ago. And, of course the opportunity – necessity even – to modify teaching and learning methods. The world's knowledge is theirs like it never was ours at age ten! The barriers reduce, they must just grab!

But beware!! 200 children means 2000 grubby fingers, dozens of bottles of pop, and the inevitability of a crash. Stoicism will be in demand, and so, a comforting Haiku for that day:

**Chaos reigns within.**

**Reflect, repent, and reboot.**

**Order shall return.**

Or, maybe, the harsh reality: -

**Windows has crashed.**

**I am the Blue Screen of Death.**

**No one hears your screams.**

In terms of fun, the year started, well almost started, with a splash – actually several splashes as the staff members were dumped, unceremoniously, into a large bath of water. Never had such glee been seen as was patent on the faces of the pupils hurling the ball – that is until a maniacal Miss Mac could no longer contain herself and personally sent the Cod to his watery end.

And for just this one event the Guild has fully justified its existence!

Happily, you can see this theme of fun and the ability to poke fun at oneself throughout the year - at galas, sports days and on nearly every page of the yearbook. And an inclusiveness – sport has become as inclusive as possible and not just sport, even the school family has widened. It's refused to let go of Mrs Waller and Mr Taylor's coaching still pays dividends – and even Moles and Pumba have their roles to play - The one with consummate nonchalance, and the other in a singularly more feisty manner – that is between more sedate interludes – and one has to wonder who their respective role models are?

It's been said that to produce well-rounded people (and here we're not talking about pies, puddings and pop) we need to feed the intellect, the body and the soul. Well the intellectual activity is obviously the bedrock of any school and our results give evidence of those standards. Equally, for the body, sport is fundamental here in South Africa – much more so than in many other countries – and again our results far exceed our size.

But the soul, ah, now that's altogether more difficult. It seems to need a variety of nourishment which thankfully is all here in abundance – the moral guidance, a belief, the art, the music, the drama, the interplay with the wider society, the fun, the humour and all of this set in these magical surroundings. And it doesn't just happen; it's carefully nurtured – naturally by the staff, but also by a whole host of parents and, of course, this Guild. And best of all it's recognised formally and publicly at the prize givings and also in everyday activity and so is deeply embedded, is part of life.

And it shows. It shows in our children's' attitudes to each other; it shows whenever you talk with them; it shows in the fact that in the evenings and at weekends you can see children and adults using the school (at six o'clock on a summers evening "let's go to school dad"! – unheard of in my day) – and here's another thing – the privilege is not abused.

But most of all it shows on their faces. So often, after long days, you'll find, lurking under all that grime and dirt, a glow of fulfilment.

So, if change has helped any of this and if there's more to come – BRING IT ON!!

*Bystander*  
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