

Take Heart

July 2025

Old Girls' Newsletter

Welcome

The Old Girls' Committee hit the ground running at the start of 2025 with a "Sip & Sketch" evening held for the new Grade 8 mums. It was a really enjoyable evening with lots of interesting stories from the ladies about how their daughters were settling into the first few days as the "new girls", a daunting but exciting time for them all!

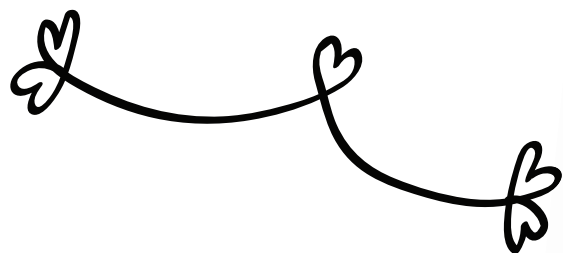
As a member of the Old Girls' Committee, I was invited to attend the wonderful Senior School play "Nunsense", with my daughter who loved the opportunity to walk around my old school. The production was truly amazing and a big congratulations goes to all who were involved!

Then the highlight of the Old Girls' calendar was St John's Day held on 10 May. It was a lovely opportunity for old girls to connect and catch up with friends from their time at St John's D.S.G. There were a couple of special faces in attendance, including Mrs Champion and a good win for the first team Hockey girls against TWC. The beautiful artwork created on the day by Carrie Bennet (local artist and Grade 8 mum), which included fingerprints of all the old girls who attended was simply spectacular.

We anticipate the second half of the year will be just as successful as the first and hope to see you at one of the functions along the way!

With love

Tori Bisset (née Mapham, Class of 2001) and the rest of the Old Girls' Committee.



Tori Bisset with her husband, Kevin and their children, Guy and Megan.

What's Happening at SJS

New Beginnings, Familiar Faces

In January, St John's D.S.G. warmly welcomed their new Grade 8s. It was a joy to see so many bright smiles and eager hearts ready to begin this exciting new chapter! A special moment was seeing some of our old girls' daughters following in their mothers' footsteps — ready to make their own unforgettable memories, just like the generations before them.

Pictured:

- ♥ Candice Seggie (née Leo-Smith, Class of 2000) with daughter Sophie
- ♥ Kate Saunders (née Rake, Class of 2000) with daughter Hannah
- ♥ Yvonne Mabuza (Class of 1992) with daughter Aysha
- ♥ Philippa Morrison (née Johnson, Class of 2003) with daughter Kayla

Here's to a journey filled with friendship, growth and the St John's D.S.G. spirit!



An Evening of Connection and Creativity

In February, the Old Girls' Committee hosted a fabulous "Sip & Sketch" evening with renowned local artist Brent Dodd. The event was specially created to give the new Grade 8 mums the chance to connect, unwind and get to know one another in a relaxed and creative setting. The evening was a resounding success — filled with laughter, warm conversation, and artistic flair.



Old Girls' News

St John's Day

On Saturday, 10 May, we celebrated the remarkable women who once walked the halls of St John's D.S.G., wore the yellow dress with pride, and carried the spirit of true sisterhood.

From heartfelt reunions and cherished memories to joyful moments and shared laughter, the day was filled with connection and celebration. Highlights included a beautiful Chapel Service, spirited support for the school's first team Hockey girls, and a delicious lunch that brought everyone together to reminisce and reconnect.

To all our beloved St John's D.S.G. old girls - thank you for making the day so special. Your presence filled the campus with warmth and joy!



97 Years of Grace, Grit and Goodness:

A Tribute to Barbara A'Bear

One of our oldest and most cherished St John's D.S.G. old girls, Barbara Jean A'Bear (née Shenton, Class of 1945), is nearing her 97th birthday! After the passing of her beloved husband nine years ago, Barbara chose to remain on their beautiful family farm in Zambia, where she continues to live today. She is a proud mother of four, a much-loved grandmother to 13, and an adored great-grandmother to 11.

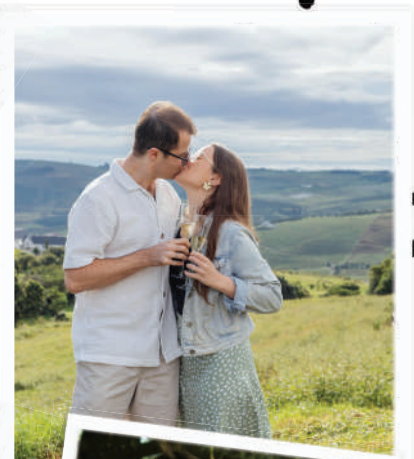
All who know and love Barbara describe her as a truly remarkable woman, full of warmth, strength, and wisdom.



Love is in the Air

Kelly Moore (Class of 2018, and the eldest daughter of St John's D.S.G. Principal, Simon Moore!) recently got engaged to Micheal at a beautiful viewpoint in Garlington Estate, Hilton. Both sides of their immediate family hid in the background to witness this momentous occasion. We wish Kelly and Micheal all the very best with their wedding preparations and many happy years together.

Jessica Barnsley (Class of 2018) recently got engaged on her parent's farm in the Dargle. We wish Jess and her fiancé, Kyle all the best with their wedding preparations!



Wedding Bells

Jess Fourie (née Schmidt, Class of 2015) married Andre on 24 May in an intimate garden ceremony overlooking Umdloti Beach. Jess says, "It was the most beautiful day in the most perfect setting, with our favourite people – some from nearby and others who travelled from far to be with us." We wish Jess and Andre a happy future together.

Michelle van der Spuy (nee Niebuhr, Class of 2017) married Steyn on 17 May at the Lutheran Church in Pretoria followed by the celebration which took place at the Pretoria Country Club. Michelle describes the day as, "absolutely perfect!" We wish the married couple God's greatest blessings for the years ahead.



New Arrivals

Hannah Peckham (née Mayer, Class of 2015) welcomed the arrival of Gina Faye on 13 January. Hannah says, "I am enjoying this new chapter as a mom. Gina has brought us so much joy." Hannah hopes that one day Gina can attend St John's D.S.G. and create the happy memories she had at school.

Keeping it in the Family

St John's D.S.G. old girls, Megan Bedingham (née Carte, Class of 1991), Lesley Anderson (née Carte, Class of 1994), Loretta Mecklenborg (née Carte, Class of 1993), Cath Duff (née Carte, Class of 1996) and Lindsay Du Plessis (née Carte, Class of 2002) are all third generation Cartes living and thriving in the Northern Drakensberg. Combining their heritage, expertise and love for the area, they promote the valley through their three beautiful holiday resorts - The Cavern, Montusi Mountain Lodge and Sungubala Eco Camp.

"Our story began with the inspiring vision of our grandfather, Bill, and while he only had 13 short years at The Cavern, his legacy lived on through our grandmother, Ruth, and now, us, their granddaughters. While business in South Africa remains hard in a sluggish economy, we are determined to be courageous like our grandmother." said Megan.

We wish these remarkable women all the best as they continue their family's legacy with passion and dedication.



Making Connections

In February, we had the privilege of meeting up with some of our wonderful St John's D.S.G. old girls in Nottingham Road and Ballito. We loved catching up with these special ladies and hearing what they are currently up to. It was a trip down memory lane filled with laughter, shared stories, and moments that reminded us all of the "good old days" at St John's D.S.G.

First Picture: Wendy Porrill (née Truscott, Class of 1992), Katelyn Lepart (née Baxter, Class of 1998), Kate Saunders (née Rake, Class of 2000), Jane Cole-Edwardes (née Rogers, Class of 2002), Kate Martens (née Gordon, Class of 2002), Tamlyn Quin (née Leisegang, Class of 1994), Julia Rees (née Norton, Class of 1998), Kelly Sivright (née Gaylard, Class of 1999) and Di Norton (née Bultitude, Class of 1973)

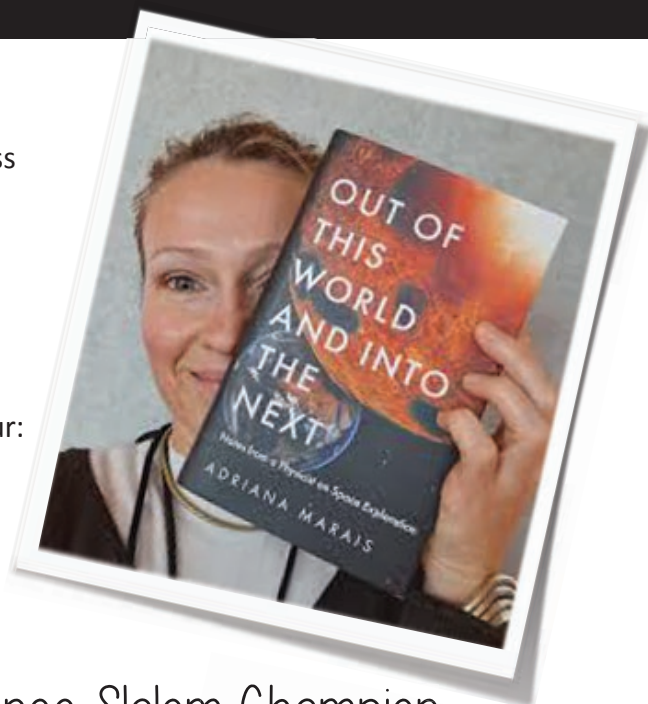
Second Picture: Justine Theunissen (née Smit, Class of 2003), Claire McLoughlin (née Wyrley-Birch, Class of 2009), Bridget O'Sullivan (née Bassage, Class of 2002), Kirsty Heath (née Bowles, Class of 2002), Claire Balmer (née Chennells, Class of 1997), Kate Martens (née Gordon, Class of 2002), Jane Cole-Edwardes (née Rogers, Class of 2002), Dee Van Breda (Class of 1999) and Rita Lutge (née Dittrich, Class of 1999)



Old Girl Author

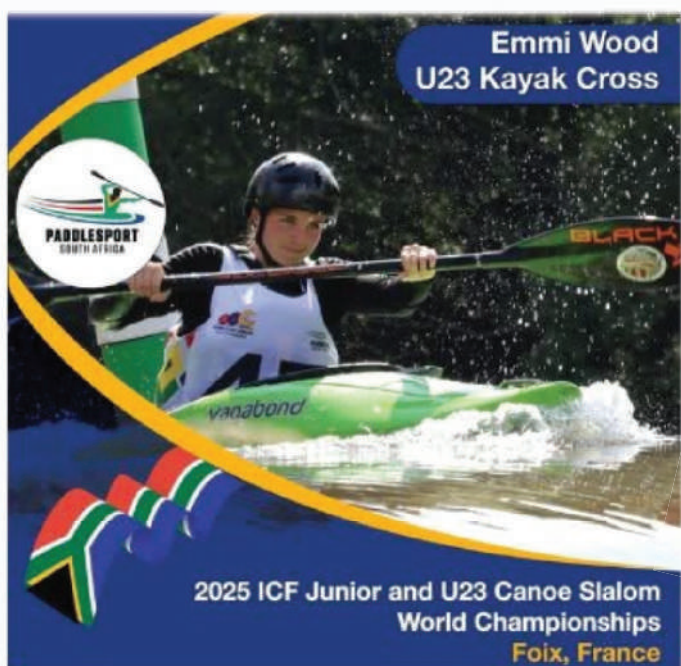
Congratulations to St John's D.S.G. old girl, Adriana Marais (Class of 2000), for publishing her book, "Out of This World and Into The Next: Notes from a Physicist on Space Exploration."

This book has been a decade in the making and is a significant accomplishment for Adriana. In this extraordinary era of rapid technological development, she explores the scientific and ethical questions that stands at the heart of scientific endeavour: How did we get here - and where are we going next? Adriana's book is available for purchase via Amazon.



Canoe Slalom Champion

We are so proud of St John's D.S.G. old girl, Emmi Wood (Class of 2020), who was chosen to represent South Africa at the ICF Junior and u23 Canoe Slalom World Championship, which took place in FOIX, France from 8-13 July. Huge congratulations to Emmi!



Calling All Cooks!

The St John's D.S.G. Old Girls' Committee is cooking up something special and needs your help!

Our St John's D.S.G. Old Girls' cookbook is in the works – and we'd love to fill its pages with your favourite recipes.

Whether it's a treasured family classic, a feel-good comfort dish, or your signature showstopper with a secret ingredient or two, we'd be honoured to include it.

Please send your recipe (and a photo of the finished dish, if you have one) to Jane Cole-Edwardes at oldgirls@stjohnsdsg.com by the end of August 2025.

CALLING

ALL COOKS!



Let's Keep in Touch

Whatsapp Groups

Calling all old girls!

Reconnect, reminisce, and stay updated with fellow old girls. Find your area, and join our official St John's D.S.G. Old Girls' WhatsApp Group to keep in touch and hear about upcoming events.

South Africa

PMB/Hilton: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/GrQQfb0Zfd47pPE5Gk7dgm>

Midlands: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/HSi2wcgCKTA7KxzffOL9PQ>

Winterton/Bergville: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/LpQHRqVcLSD3oBFImxgvUF>

North Coast: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/Ge3ywlJbYP75FKkhpN7gkQ>

South Coast: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/LSLAB1mSpbz23wu0OZVbXo>

Cape Town: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/IN2vmpJnTQG8P34gn7E1go>

Gauteng/JHB: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/lv4d56quSOF6GVI5klropJ>

International

UK (London): <https://chat.whatsapp.com/E5p5j2effKfBevTWVCNzNp>

Australia:

(Sydney): <https://chat.whatsapp.com/DYIFAJBgfPI7pOpKzL4N8>

(Perth): <https://chat.whatsapp.com/Gsu6R5U2aP421c4ubIDY2D>

North America:

(Houston/Texas): <https://chat.whatsapp.com/DYIFAJBgfPI7pOpKzL4N8>



Area Ambassadors

South Africa

Hilton/PMB:

Mary Millward (née Quicke – class of 1985) marymillward3@gmail.com

Nombulelo Zulu (2014) bulelombanjwa@gmail.com

Midlands/Kamberg/Notties:

Kelly Sivright (née Gaylard- class of 1999) kelly@glengarry.co.za

Winterton/Bergville:

Lindsay Du Plessis (née Carte – class of 2002) lindsaycarte@gmail.com

Durban:

Puvithra Naidoo (class of 1991) puvithra@me.com

KZN North Coast:

Kirsty Heath (née Bowles – class of 2002) bowlzie@hotmail.com

KZN South Coast:

Geneé Kilgour (née Liebenberg – class of 1987) kilgour@mweb.co.za

Gauteng/JHB:

Grace Buthelezi (class of 2014) fanelegrace@gmail.com

Nombulelo Zulu (class of 2014) bulelombanjwa@gmail.com

Candice Seggie (née Leo-Smith – class of 2000) candiceseggie@gmail.com

Cape Town:

Sarah Corlett (née Seggie - class of 1999) sarahseggie@gmail.com

Melissa Cumming (née Hallett -class of 1999) meliscumming@gmail.com



Area Ambassadors

International

U.K. (London):

Christina Haralambous (class of 2000) Christine.haralambous@gmail.com

USA & Canada:

Paula Owen (née Munro – class of 1996) info@paulaowen.ca

Houston, Texas:

Meagen Bremner (class of 2010) meagenmbremner@gmail.com

Australia (Sydney):

Lauren Tischedorf (class of 1998) lmitschendorf@gmail.com

Australia (Perth):

Jo Pletts (née Bird – class of 2004) jopletts@icloud.com

New Zealand:

Kirsten Holder (née Talbot – class of 2003) kirstenmarieholder@gmail.com

University Reps:

Wits:

Nana Mwenechanya (class of 2017) nanamwene@gmail.com

Nombulelo Zulu (class of 2014) bulelombanjwa@gmail.com

We are still on the lookout for more Area Ambassadors, local and international, so if you are interested in assisting us with organising Old Girls gatherings in your area, please contact Jane Cole-Edwardes at oldgirls@stjohnsdsg.com



Update Contact Details

We would love to get in touch with all our special old girls. Please take a minute to click on the heart below to update your contact details. Simply update your contact details and you'll be entered into our lucky draw which will take place termly. It only takes a minute – and you might just be our next winner of an awesome prize.

*Click here to update your details for
a chance to win an awesome gift!*



Not Online?

We know that not everyone has access to online resources, so if you know of an old girl who is not online and would benefit from having information posted to her, please email Jane Cole-Edwardes on oldgirls@stjohnsdsg.com with their name and postal address.

Link to Current News

If you aren't already following our St John's D.S.G. Old Girls' social media pages, please do so by clicking the link below. This is where we keep you up to date with what our old girls are up to, as well as any vital information regarding reunions, date changes and future events.



LinkedIn has become an essential platform for anyone looking to grow professionally, whether you're just starting out, building your career, or reconnecting as an alumnus. For alumni, it's a great way to stay in touch, share updates, and support others in your community — whether through mentorship, recommendations, or collaboration.

Online Store

The St John's D.S.G. Old Girls' Committee has some stunning Old Girls' memorabilia for sale. If you would like to order, please contact Jane Cole-Edwardes on oldgirls@stjohnsdsg.com. These will be on sale for a limited time and until stocks last.

