

Take Heart

June 2026

Old Girls' Newsletter

Welcome!

Welcome to the first *Take Heart* newsletter of 2026.

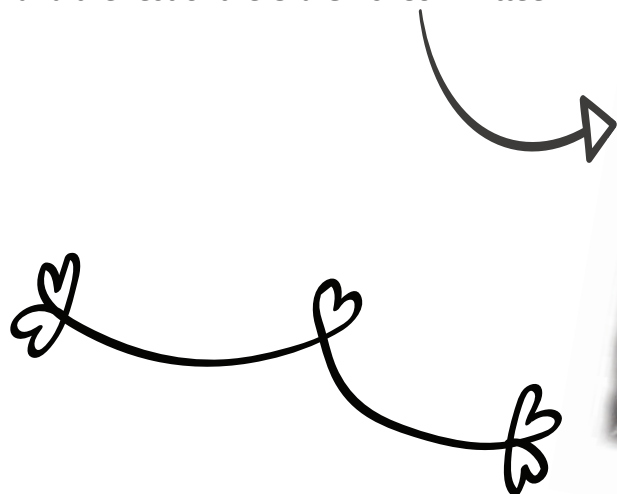
As we find ourselves well into the year, we hope that 2026 has already brought many moments of joy, growth, and connection. This edition is a wonderful opportunity to catch up on news from our Old Girls' community, celebrate achievements, share memories, and stay connected with friends both near and far.

Our alumni network continues to thrive, with Old Girls making their mark in countless ways while carrying forward the friendships and values formed during their school years. In this edition, you'll find updates, stories, and news from fellow Old Girls, as well as information on upcoming events and opportunities to reconnect.

Thank you for being part of our community and for continuing to support and strengthen the bonds that unite us. We hope you enjoy this edition and look forward to hearing your news for future issues.

Happy reading!

**Jane Cole-Edwardes (née Rogers, Class of 2002)
and the rest of the Old Girls' Committee.**



What's Happening at SJS

The Next Generation

At the end of Term 3, the St John's D.S.G. Matric girls were officially welcomed into the Old Girls' Association. They celebrated this special milestone with their moms and took part in a cherished tradition - writing letters to their future selves, to be opened at their 10-year reunion. It was a beautiful evening of connection, reflection and sisterhood across generations.



Claire van Huyssteen Morgan (née Campbell, 1997), Kelly Cutter (née Higgs, 1995), Nadine Steyn (née Wessels, 2007), Megan Schalkwyk (née Janneker, 1998), and Kim Hart, alongside Priscilla Dent (née Raw, 2002), Antje Fourie (née Eggers, 2005), Barbara Redeker (née Hay, 1992), Pippa Brown (née Stewart, 1997), and Phillippa Rohrs (née Chance, 1997). We were also delighted to welcome Jane Cole-Edwardes (née Rogers, 2002), Lisa Twyman (1994), Lara Booyens (née Proksch, 1990), and Zamakhize Mkhize (1994).

Old Girls' News

A Fond Farewell

The St John's D.S.G. Old Girls' Association Committee extend their sincere thanks to outgoing Committee members, Tyra Oberholzer (née Taylor, Class of 2013) and Linsey Wynne (née Leslie, Class of 1990), for their dedication, support, and commitment on the Old Girls' Committee over the past few years.

Their energy, ideas, and willingness to serve have made a meaningful impact on the Old Girls' community. Thank you for the time, passion, and enthusiasm you both brought to every project and event.



A Warm Welcome

We are delighted to welcome the following new members of the Old Girls' Association Committee to the team. We look forward to the energy, ideas and commitment they will bring as we continue to strengthen the connection between our Old Girls.

Sandy van der Waal (née Collings, Class of 2001).

What's one memory from St John's D.S.G. that still shapes who you are today?

Convincing a friend to abseil on one of our school tours and seeing the proud look on her face when she reached the bottom of the cliff. Something so simple, yet so powerful, sparked a passion for coaching. We were always encouraged to reach higher, dream bigger and, regardless of the outcome, we were loved deeply.

Kate Winter (née Waldon, Class of 2000)

Why did you choose to serve on the Old Girls' Association Committee?

I'm looking forward to reconnecting with my old school during this term of service. I hope to help lighten the load for the other Committee members and have some fun along the way!



Robyn Allwood (née Fly, Class of 1992)

What does sisterhood mean to you all these years later?

Sisterhood means something very different to me now than it did when I was at school. Back then, it was about friendships, shared routines, school socials, and surviving exams together. Now, years later, it's about having a group of women who understand where you come from, who cheer for you, and who you can reconnect with at any stage of life. It's the comfort of knowing there's a group of old friends who "get it", even if we haven't spoken in ages. It's the sense of belonging, the shared history, and the quiet support that continues long after school days are behind us.



Kate Bloemfield (née Leaker, Class of 2001)

What is your fondest St John's D.S.G. memory, and how has it shaped who you are today?

Some of my happiest memories are of travelling to swimming galas, especially Hilton College, where the food was legendary. We would shamelessly fill the inside of our blazers with éclairs and every sweet treat we could find, celebrating after a day of racing and teamwork.

At the time, we may have thought the boys were part of the attraction, but looking back, they were always secondary. What truly mattered were the friendships, the camaraderie of being part of a team, and the joy of celebrating together at the end of the day.

Those experiences taught me that life's greatest rewards are not the events themselves, but the people with whom we share them. The friendships, laughter, teamwork, and sense of belonging shaped who I am and reminded me that the most meaningful moments in life are often found in the connections we make along the way.

Welcome to the Committee, ladies! We look forward to the energy, ideas, and passion you will bring to the St John's D.S.G. Old Girls' community.



Engagements

Emma Sorour

Congratulations to Emma Sorour (Class of 2013) on her engagement to Chris Bartle. Emma and Chris will be 'tying the knot' in December. We wish the happy couple all the best for their wedding plans and a very happy future together.

Bella Sale

St John's D.S.G. Old Girl, Gabriella Sale (Class of 2019) got engaged on 20 April to Dante Koster at the beautiful Arch Rock in Plettenberg Bay. We wish Bella and Dante all the very best with planning their special day and many happy years together.



Weddings

Kelly Commins

In January, Kelly (née Moore, Class of 2018) married Micheal Commins at the beautiful Thorner Country Estate in Eston, KZN. It was a joyful day shared with family and friends.

Shortly after their honeymoon, Kelly wrote her Board exam for her Psychology Masters, and we are thrilled to share that she has since received her results and her medical practice licence. She is now officially a registered Counselling Psychologist and has joined The Iris Foundation.

Kelly works with children, teens, adults, couples, and families, supporting those navigating anxiety and depression with a warm, practical, and holistic approach.

We wish Kelly every success and happiness as she begins this exciting new chapter.



Aimee Bartholomew

A huge congratulations to St John's D.S.G. Old Girl, Aimee (née Hohls, Class of 2018) and Luke Bartholomew on their recent marriage. Their beautiful wedding was held at The Groves in Nottingham Road, and Aimee describes the day as "magical!"

We wish the happy couple a lifetime of love, laughter, and wonderful adventures together.



Brenna Wing

Congratulations to St John's D.S.G. Old Girl, Brenna (née Stewart-Burger, Class of 2020) and Jason Wing, who were married in April. The couple tied the knot at the beautiful Gallery Wedding Venue in Nottingham Road surrounded by family and friends who travelled from near and far to celebrate with them.

Here's to a lifetime of love, laughter, and unforgettable adventures for Brenna and Jason.



Babies

Kelly Potgieter (née Fjellvik, Class of 2017) gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, McKenzie May, born on 23 April, weighing 2.87kg. We wish Kelly and her husband, Gareth, all the very best as they take on this adventure of parenthood.



Christening at SJS

On 8 May, Old Girl Jessica Campbell (Class of 2010) returned to St John's D.S.G. to have her 15-month-old daughter, Rebecca, christened in the beautiful school Chapel - a place filled with faith, tradition, and generations of memories. The service was conducted by Rev Di Pickford (St John's D.S.G. Chaplain).

Jessica, who currently lives in Germany with her husband, was visiting family in South Africa when they chose to celebrate this special occasion at St John's D.S.G. The christening had been thoughtfully planned with Rev Di, making the occasion especially meaningful for the family. Rev Di also played a significant role in Jessica's own spiritual journey during her years at the school, adding even greater significance to the day.



Sporting Achievements

Jessica Maré

St John's D.S.G. Old Girl, Jessica Maré's (Class of 2020) Rugby journey started in her first year of university when she joined the TUKS 7s team. In 2022, Jess transitioned into the 15s game with Harlequins and shortly after that, earned her selection to represent the u20 Bulls. During all of this, she managed to complete a BA in Languages, followed by a Postgraduate Diploma in Entrepreneurship. In 2025, she completed a BCom Honours in Tourism Management, and is currently studying towards her Master's Degree in Business Management at UWC. Well done, Jess, on all your achievements thus far. We are super proud of you!



Milla Drakopoulos

Congratulations to St John's D.S.G. Old Girl, Milla Drakopoulos (Class of 2025), on being awarded Freshman of the Year at Michigan University. Well done, Milla.



St John's Day 2026

St John's Day 2026 – what a celebration! The St John's D.S.G. Old Girls' Weekend started in style on Friday evening, 8 May, with a beautiful formal dinner. Guests enjoyed canapés and drinks while watching the 1st Team Hockey side take on TWC under lights, before moving on to a delicious dinner, music, and plenty of dancing.

On Saturday, 9 May, the Old Girls embraced all their cherished traditions - Chapel, AGM, tea on the Top Field, and school tours where the memories (and laughter!) flowed freely. There were also plenty of St John's Day activities for the Old Girls to enjoy, as St John's D.S.G. girls and parents came together for a fun-filled morning celebrating community and connection. It was especially lovely to see so many Old Girls bringing their families along to share in the festivities.

The celebrations ended on a high with the Old Girls' vs Matric Hockey match, which finished in a spirited 1–1 draw, the perfect balance of competitiveness, camaraderie, and fun!

A BIG “thank you” to all who travelled from near and far to be with us! It was a truly special weekend filled with connection, tradition, and countless happy memories.

Once a St John's girl, always a St John's girl!



Reconnecting in Business

Three St John's D.S.G. Old Girls. Three different years. Three incredible journeys, all coming together in the most unexpected way.

After matriculating, Ruth O'Sullivan (2019), Amanda Khumalo (2017) and Snikiwe Mhlongo (2015) each went their separate ways, heads down, building their careers and carving out their own paths.

Fast forward a few years and Ruth, now working at Old School, was involved in an Old School x NBA collaboration when a very familiar name popped up, Amanda Khumalo, now doing incredible PR work at the NBA. What are the chances?

When it came time to secure talent for the shoot, bringing Snikiwe on board felt like the perfect fit. She's built an impressive social media career and was exactly what the project needed.

And just like that, three St John's D.S.G. Old Girls found themselves working together on set for an iconic collaboration. Different careers, different journeys, all connected by the same school that helped shape who they are today.

The St John's D.S.G. Old Girls are so proud of these ladies and everything they're achieving in their spaces.



Hilton Breakfast

The St John's D.S.G. Old Girls enjoyed a lovely breakfast gathering at Garlingtons in Hilton, with around 50 ladies in attendance. The ladies were treated to a delicious spread while enjoying the opportunity to reconnect, share news and catch up with friends old and new.

The morning was filled with warm conversation, laughter and a strong sense of community, reflecting the enduring friendships and connections forged during their school years. Thank you to all who attended and helped make the event such a special occasion.



Class of 1971

A few St John's D.S.G. Old Girls from the Class of 1971 met in Cape Town on Saturday, 9 May, whilst the 2026 St John's Day celebrations were taking place at St John's D.S.G. They enjoyed a wonderful lunch together, catching up on lost time! Pictured: Milly Stead (née van der Merwe), Cindy Bultitude (née Taylor), Dalene Potgieter (née Raubenheimer) and Jackie Plimsoll (née Titren).



Computer says NO!

Picture the scene...

You've spent years carefully updating your contacts, feeling wonderfully organised, when suddenly your computer decides it's had enough. One blink, one mysterious system hiccup, and poof! Some of those carefully stored details have vanished into the digital abyss.

Well... that's exactly what happened to us!

Due to an unexpected system failure, we've unfortunately lost a portion of our recently updated Old Girls' contact database. While we're busy piecing everything back together, we need a little help from our amazing St John's D.S.G. Old Girls' community.

Please take a moment to submit your updated details via the link below. Even if you're sure we already have them, we'd be so grateful if you could complete the form to help us rebuild a complete and accurate database.

Together, we can keep the St John's D.S.G. Old Girls' network connected, thriving, and stronger than ever. Please click on the heart below, to update your contact details.



Future Events

SJS Old Girls' Comittee is coming to the following areas...dont miss out!

- ♥ Cape Town Old Girls' gathering – 21 September 2026
- ♥ Stellenbosch Old Girls' gathering – 22 September 2026
- ♥ Golden Oldies Tea in Howick – November 2026



Area Ambassadors

South Africa

Hilton/PMB:

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

Nombulelo Zulu (2014) bulelombanjwa@gmail.com

Tori Bisset (née Mapham- 2001) torib@lmb.co.za (Old Girls' Committee Member)

Pia Paterson (née Foster – 1998) pia_foster@yahoo.co.uk (Old Girls' Committee Member)

Kate Blomfield (née Leaker – 2001) kjleaker@gmail.com (Old Girls' Committee Member)

Sandy van der waal (née Collings – 2001) sandyvanderwaal@gmail.com (Old Girls' Committee Member)

Kate Winter (née Walden – 2000) kate.walden@gmail.com (Old Girls' Committee Member)

Midlands/Kamberg/Notties:

Kelly Sivright (née Gaylard- 1999) kelly@springmeadow.co.za

Wendy Porrill (née Truscott – 1992) wendy.porrill@gmail.com (Old Girls' Committee Member)

Robyn Allwood (née Fly – 1992) robynneallwood@gmail.com (Old Girls' Committee Member)

Winterton/Bergville:

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

Durban:

Puvithra Naidoo (1991) puvithra@me.com

KZN North Coast:

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

Lucy Kewley (née Pilcher – 1994) thekewleys@googlemail.com (Old Girls' Committee Member)

KZN South Coast:

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

Gauteng/JHB:

Grace Buthelezi (2014) fanelegrace@gmail.com

Nombulelo Zulu (2014) bulelombanjwa@gmail.com

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

Michelle van der Spuy (née Niebuhr - 2017) michelleniebuhr@gmail.com

Cape Town:

Sarah Corlett (née Seggie – 1999) sarahseggie@gmail.com

Melissa Cumming (née Hallet – 1999) meliscumming@gmail.com

Jessica Stegen (2014) jessicastegen96@gmail.com



Area Ambassadors

International

U.K. (London):

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

Kaitlyn Fyvie (2016) fyviekatelyn@gmail.com

Jordan Hulley (2020) jordshulley@gmail.com

Western Europe:

Tiffany Linh van de Walle (née Van de Walle - 2019) tiffanylinhvandewalle@gmail.com.

USA & Canada:

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

Houston, Texas:

Meagen Bremner (2010) meagenmbremner@gmail.com

Australia (Sydney):

Lauren Tischedorf (1998) lm Tischendorf@gmail.com

Australia (Perth):

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

New Zealand:

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

Botswana (Maun)

Sarah (Doembie) Seymour (Class of 2002) doembie@gmail.com

University Reps:

Wits

Nana Mwenechanya (2017) nanamwene@gmail.com

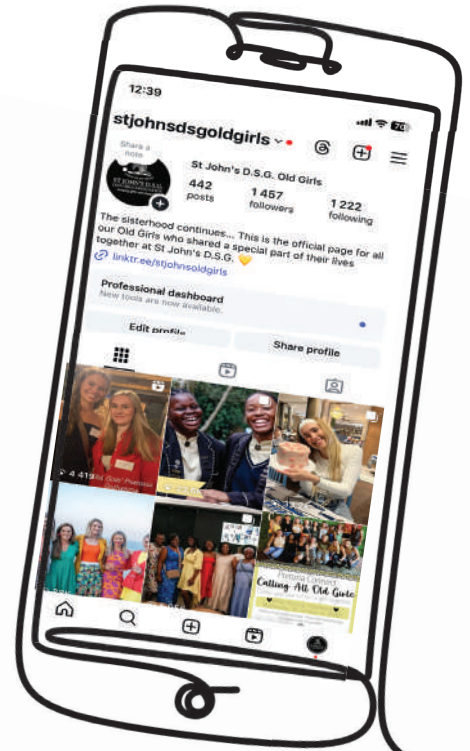
We are still on the lookout for more Area Ambassadors, local and international, so if you are interested in assisting us with organising Old Girls' gatherings in your area, please contact Jane Cole-Edwardes at oldgirls@stjohnsdsg.com.



Let's Keep in Touch

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.

Link to Current News



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.

Giving towards the Old Girls' Association

The St John's D.S.G. Old Girls' Association Fund allows us to give back to the school that contributed our successes today. Contributions help us provide special Matric leavers' gifts from the Old Girls' Association and support various "nice-to-have" projects around the school that enhance the St John's D.S.G. experience for both current and future girls.

Every donation, no matter the size, helps us continue these meaningful traditions and leave a lasting legacy for the next generation of St John's D.S.G. girls. A huge thank you to those Old Girls who continue to generously donate.

If you would like to contribute, simply scan the QR code. A section 18A certificate is available on request. Please email Jane Cole-Edwardes on oldgirls@stjohnsdsg.com.

Bank Details

The St John's High School Trust
FNB

Account number: 509 334 26279

Branch Code: 257355

Branch: Midlands Mall

SWIFT code: FIRNZAJJ

Reference: 9160/110+name



Outdoor seating area for the Senior School girls decorated using funds provided by the Old Girls.