



# NATHAN HOUSE Newsletter Term 1 2020

**Sola Virtus Nobilitat** - Virtue alone ennobles

Before we get into the housemaster's message for the term, let's start with a few memories of the term....

## Arriving at College





**uShaka!**



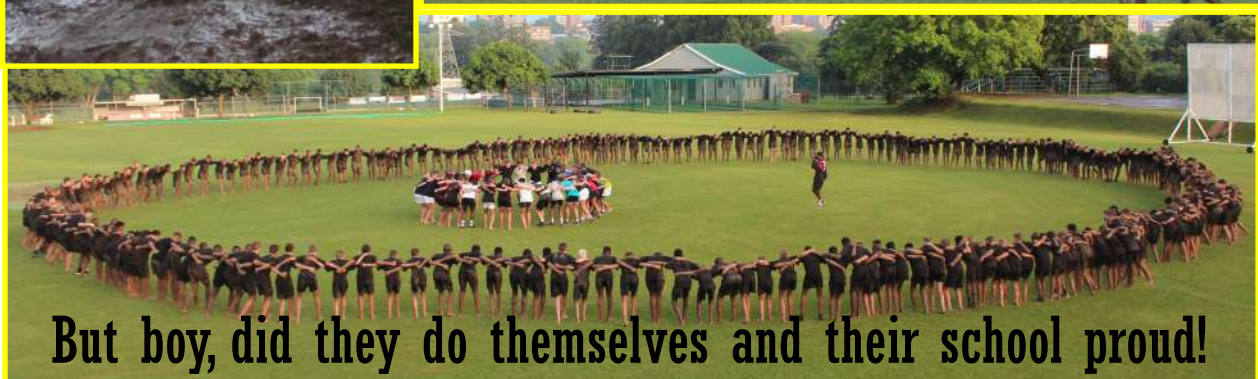
**New friends made in  
no time!**



**Good morning Vietnam!**



**There's no denying that it was tough & physical...**



**But boy, did they do themselves and their school proud!**

**Well done lads!**

## From the Housemaster

I realise this might sound like a typical clichéd end-of-term throwaway line, but I'm going to say it anyway, *what a term it's been!* While most of what happened in your son's life this term was not what you are normally used to, I can assure you that there were certain events that made it quite extraordinary. From having no running water on campus at times, to load shedding, to the Coronavirus—there were certainly enough curve-balls to keep the BE staff on our toes. These are all things that are part of life which do happen and we need to deal with it, but it's not every day that they all happen in one term—certainly not the global pandemic part of it all.

As you know, we have certain rites of passage at College that form part of the overarching College experience and character building that we seek to impart in our boys. From Vietnam, to the more routine chores of games room and prefects' table, these are all deliberate attempts to ensure our boys grow and develop. It is done with the hope that they will appreciate the value of service, commitment and self-discipline. It is not always fun, nor is it always easy, but then again, neither is any other worthwhile endeavour in life. We believe these things to be worthwhile because a good character, although an intangible part of our make-up, will have a far greater effect on the course of one's life than one realises. Knowledge and skill can be acquired with greater ease than an upstanding character ever can. Knowledge and skill is of utmost importance, but it is hazardous in the absence of strong moral character. Unfortunately we've had to witness this far too often in the lives of contemporary leaders. Moreover, we want our boys to be prepared for life beyond the confines of the school. It is difficult to measure how well we as a school prepare our boys for life after school, but it is a noble ideal nonetheless. It is always heartening and perhaps not surprising when we hear the reports of old boys, who oftentimes make friends with old boys from other schools, when they tell us how much better they have coped with the rigours of life compared to their newfound friends. There is a special kind of resilience that is inherent in a College boy which causes him to always rise to the occasion.

Life has a way of being unpredictable. Much of what took place in your sons' lives this term was relatively predictable, such as the routine rites of passage described above. Some of which they experienced, however, was unpredictable, such as the 4am wake-up call for the start of Vietnam and the outages of both water and power. This is a part of life, but it is something that young men need to learn to cope with sooner rather than later. I believe the unpredictable situations the boys faced over the course of the term were good in the sense that they realised that they too can adapt when life happens, even when mom and dad is not around. How well our boys adapt is a crucial life skill in the fast-paced, ever changing modern-day society in which we live. The rate of technological advancement is a good indicator of the amount of change the youth of today will experience in their collective lifetime. Ironically change is a constant in their lives, more so than it was when their parents were the same age. The ability to understand the effects of change and subsequently adapt is becoming increasingly important.

***There is a special kind of resilience that is inherent in a College boy which causes him to always rise to the occasion.***

One phenomenon that is always prevalent in Nathan House, as all the boys navigate the challenges they collectively face, is the social cohesion that takes place in a relatively short space of time. Despite their unique characters and differences, there is a bond that develops amongst the Nathan House boys. With some groups the bond is stronger than in others,



but I can honestly say that this group has bonded particularly well. As you will see in the photos in this newsletter, there are many fun times too. I try to make a point of having a one-on-one chat with as many boys as possible and I always ask them what they like and dislike the most about boarding. Invariably they all say that being with their friends is the best part about boarding. They can certainly get under each other's skins too, believe me, but that is to be expected in a house of 104 *formers*, as the prefects like to call them.

Ultimately each boy is on a journey to manhood and making good men is no mean feat. Much of their development is also up to them and the decisions they make along the way.

In the book of 1 Corinthians 9:24 we read:

*"Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it."*

This journey that the boys are on is more like a race in which they are competing. They are, however, not competing with each other, but each boy competes with himself. Figuratively speaking each boy needs to run this race in order to set his personal best time and when he does that he gets the prize. This race of manhood and life is a marathon though and not a sprint. If we want them to run their best race we need to encourage the boys to be patient with their own development, to be committed to giving their best, to endure and to ensure they always have a good support crew. Everyone has their own race to run, but it doesn't have to be done alone.

Thank you for being there for your boys throughout this term and enabling them to thrive in their new environment. Thank you for your ongoing support of all we aim to do as a school and a BE. Without your support all our efforts would be in vain. Have a blessed extended holiday period with your boys at home. We trust that it will be a time of rest and rejuvenation for every family.

Yours sincerely  
Drikus Hoffman



Some of the Nathan House prefects supporting the Duzi.



The boys getting ready to sing *Oh Boys of Nathan's* for the first time.

**There were so many birthday boys during  
our first three weeks!**



**And a LOT of cake...!**





# Closed Weekend Fun



*We are blessed to have the facilities we do. Over one of the weekends in the isolation period the boys kept themselves occupied all over our wonderful campus, while the parents were wondering what their boys are up to.*





# Old Boys Mentoring

Mentoring is a big deal at College and it takes on different forms. From time to time we have old boys who come to share and inspire our young men. This term things got interessssting when "Dingo" Dinkleman from Dingo's Farm and Reptile Park came to visit.





# Out and About

## Supporting the Duzi Canoe Marathon



We even made the front page of  
The Witness for our efforts!



Our very own Obstacle Course Team



Swimming, braaiing and mates—the good life!



And some core group mentoring





# Looking ahead to Term 2

A theory known as the Black Swan Theory is a metaphor for an unpredictable event that is beyond what is normally expected of a situation and has potentially severe consequences. Black swan events are characterized by their extreme rarity, their severe impact, and the widespread insistence they were obvious in hindsight. I think we can all agree that the Coronavirus falls in this category. Nobody really knows what the next few weeks will look like, thanks to the Coronavirus. The new start date for term 2 is **Tuesday 14 April**, but nothing is set in stone. Please keep an eye on all communication platforms for updates in this regard. Now is the time to make the most of an unusual situation and spend quality time with our families.

## Thank You!

I hope you have enjoyed this term's newsletter. Thank you very much for your support throughout this term. Have a great rest over the holidays and enjoy the time with your boys. We look forward to having you back in the second term.

God bless you!

