



1st April 2020

Good day my fellow Old Collegians

“College closed due to an epidemic – boarders allowed to return – but day-boys debarred from attending school for a while.”

Sadly, this is not some poor April Fool’s joke – or even a new directive regarding the COVID-19 crisis. This is my paraphrase of Simon Haw’s *“For Hearth and Home”*¹ and refers to the two times the school was closed in 1918/19 due to the Spanish flu, and some of the impacts on life at College. It is with a heavy heart that I compose this dispatch to you regarding Old Boy activities in the coming months.

Two of the principal events on our calendar are Reunion Weekend (23rd May) and Veteran’s Luncheon (1st August). With the recent global developments, given that the re-opening of the school and the timing for any of the winter fixtures are unknown, *alea iacta est (the die is cast)* and we as an Executive Committee have had to make the following decisions with regard to the coming year *Deo volente*.

- **Reunion Weekend (21-23 May 2020)** has been postponed – this includes all the activities such as golf, bowls, soccer matches, dinner, chapel service, lunch etc.)
- A smaller **Reunion Day** will take place on **1 August 2020** – this will take the form of the traditional Reunion Day festivities (chapel service, wreath laying, Wall of Remembrance, luncheon and Saturday sports fixtures, should these take place)
- A bumper **Reunion Weekend** is planned for **May 2021** (the exact dates for this can only be finalised once the 2021 academic timetable and sport’s fixtures are finalised – and that in a normal year only occurs around September). This will include an extended dinner to celebrate this year’s anniversary classes (1960/70/80/90/2000/2010 etc.) in addition to those classes celebrating in 2021. We will also use this time to launch the MCOBA 125th Anniversary year (which is in 2022)

There were no easy options available to us as we debated the alternatives. It was clear that any deviation from the current situation was not going to suit everyone in the community. But the wellbeing of the current boys, the Old Boys and their families and the greater community was the priority in the decision making. We appreciate the impact current circumstances are having on members of our community. The current learners are having their studies severely curtailed; the 6th formers are losing a large proportion of their final year at College and all that goes with it; a number of our OCs are bound to their new countries and travel bans are in place possibly preventing cross-border travel even in 7 weeks’ time; there are serious health concerns for many of you OCs and your families, especially those with pre-existing medical conditions and there have been some serious economic impacts on our businesses that will only be fully understood in the coming months.

¹ pp 216 – “Haw,S, For Hearth and Home (1988)

Maritzburg College Old Boys’ Association



Over the next few weeks and months we will endeavour to send out regular news updates from the school and the MCOBA community as a means of staying in touch and keeping the College brotherhood connected. We call on OCs around the world to share your stories and experiences with us, to help both uplift and inspire (email oldboys@collegeoldboys.com) – use the #CollegeBrothers2020 in your social media to highlight our solidarity.

As Old Boys, the College ethos is deep within each and every one of us. Therefore, we choose to stand together – we choose to stand even if we have been knocked down – we choose to stand as a brotherhood in these times – we choose to be an example. I'd like to leave you with the words of our founder – the great Mr RD Clark who penned this in 1911. The words ring just as true today, as they did over a century ago.

“This College is destined to take no small part in the nation-making of South Africa.

The present of today will become the past of tomorrow and will in turn assume the halo with which beneficent time will soon invest it. If each generation worthily runs its lap, this institution cannot fail of a great and a glorious history.

My constant and heartfelt prayer in that regard is, ‘So mote it be!’”

Let us now run our lap.

Pro Aris et Focis

Regards

Grant Little

President MCOBA



Grant Little

PRESIDENT: Maritzburg College Old Boys Association

TEL: 033 342 9878

MOBILE: 071 333 7546

www.maritzburgcollege.co.za

51 College Road, Pietermaritzburg 3201 | PO Box 398 Pietermaritzburg 3200

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