

Oakhill Old Oaks

December 2010

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Oakhillians

All of a sudden, without it hitting my eye, "Someone" – or maybe "Mr Nobody" for those of you who studied poetry under Auntie Tessa - in the midst of eating a crumpet and a cucumber sandwich, started to use the word "OAKHILLIAN". I did not know if it was a choke or a joke, but – seeing that we all need a bit of status – it sounded "One-Up", so we can go with it. Or should

we? Can the culprit stand up, so that history can record you. Who is this OAKHILLIAN? Shall the name replace "Old Oak"?

I dearly hope that this email gets to you. Put up your hand if it did not.



Old Oaks Get Together - POSTPONED until further notice

You are invited to attend an afternoon of Astro & Swimming on **SATURDAY 18th DECEMBER 2010** up at the Oakhill Astro.

who slept at Delheim on our tours in the 1990's. My phone is 0824463377 for sms confirmat:

Pull out your old hockey stick, and run around the block a bit. A braai will be going on and refreshments will be on sale. Last time we had a nice group of Oaxhills hockey boys who played in a group of current players. You will be so impressed by the current crop of kids.

Please RSVP to Peebee's email at peeb@oakhillschool.co.za if you will be arriving on the 18th.

Postponed



The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do.

In the evening we enjoyed a tasting of Delheim wines. I need to know who is coming. If you want a wine tasting, I will get it arranged, and present it – especially for those

Your Email Address

Auntie Elna is accumulating Old Oak email addresses, but we need yours and those of your friends. Elna's email is e.brown@oakhillschool.co.za.

I am useless at FACEBOOK, and even then it is not active at school, so communication with Oakhill will mainly

be through email. Apparently, if you are smarter than I am, you will have access on the Internet as to what is happening at Oakhill.

Oakhill is on Facebook as well as www.oakhillschool.co.za.



Matric 2010 Art – Student: Camilla Dias

The 1999'ers come to town

The eternally tall Lyndon Dafert got married in the St George's Church on Saturday 23rd October. For the occasion, that great leader, Michael Hallick came out from London. Michael has 2 children – 2 ankle biters, as they say. He is moving to the States where he is going into property. Michael's practical kindness enabled some of our boys to go on the Holland 2010 Hockey Tour. Your turn will come – don't worry as there is place in heaven for a few of you.

Also arriving for the wedding, were Cape Town based business partners, Andrew van Heerden and Nicholas Cummings. I made a mistake in referring to two Knysna business partners as "partners" and was nearly sued. Sies! They run a sort of media, advertising, image business and are so

prosperous that 'Cum Cum' has a bigger tumtum than PeeBee!

At our gathering at 34 Degrees, Nicholas had the best questions and comments on wine – and to think that he was so shy at school. We used to call him "Sad Sack", but he was still our best right back ever.

Jacques Antoine, whom I still rate as Oakhill's finest keeper, had worked in Dubai to return to be civil engineer at the Green Point Stadium, the sector nearest all the pubs in the Main Road. He is in fine shape. Lyndon (Din Din) is working as an engineer in Dubai where he enjoys the social life of the not too abstemious Arabs.

Sandy De Grandis has 3 streaks of



The 1999'ers come to town (Cntd.)

grey as he prepares for his own marriage in March.

Shaun Brown (Elna's son) has grown up to be a strong lad. He had quite a shapely Brazilian in tow.

Obviously all of Michael's pals would hope to find easy accommodation for World Cup 2014; and knowing them they will be there, and I will hide in the cooler box.



Matric Art 2010 – Student: Tyrone Mason

School beats Past Pupils

All of these guys played a full game against the Oakhill Boys of 2010 at the York Astro early on the 21st October. The School won 6-2. Jacques, in goals, was that split second slow but I still hold my opinion on him.

Paul Cremer (2005), who works at Ille de Pain on Thesen Island, was brilliantly strong in a tackle. If only I could get him for a coaching session, for our excellent youngsters. Mario Frezza (2008) played his usual unselfish game. I put the deal to Gennaro at Mario's that we rename the place Gennaro's, and that we get Mario to work for the next 15 years. Mario is so kind, he will give all his profits away to the hockey boys.

Jonty Pieters (2006) has lost his Castletum and was as strong and competitive as ever. Leslie and Di were there to observe as younger son, Joshua captained the School team.

We were lucky to have 4 boys who had left Oakhill after primary education. What a player Sean Hallick (Grey and SA Under 18) is. He gets his stick in on a tackle and then comes that body challenge in the follow through. He flattened Wouter, who looked aghast, and who decided to plan the revenge.

Sean played for my Under 16 side when he was 9. Sean McLintock is such a mannerly gentleman, despite finishing at St Andrews as is the little ginger Reitzer. Ryan Gilbert (Woodridge) who scored a great goal from the edge of the box for my Under 16 versus PW Botha when he was 8, and he did not know that Greg was watching - is learning to fly helicopters.

Greg and Rae Gilbert hosted all the lads at their Bosky Dell farm, where Rae is developing a beautiful rose garden as well as 14 hectares of wine grapes. Greg was the action man behind the Astro at Woodridge. What we need is the Gilbert Astro at Oakhill.

If you sponsor the Astro, it will be named after you.



Brothers Unite : Michael Hallick, Josh Pieters, Jonty Pieters and Sean Hallick



The Nature of the Beast

The new headmaster Shane Kidwell let the School boys off early to play. After the York Astro we wanted an afternoon on our own mini-Astro, but the Old Boys arrived late and then the School bus tarried about alignment. Chops and wors and kebabs were provided and our kids enjoyed filling their tummies.

The 1999'ers were so impressed by the quality of the younger players. Jake Turner, aged 11, has so much class. We can so easily lose a boy like this unless he strikes a great bursary. He has so much natural quality, and an interest in all sport.

Wouter Bezuidenhout, 13, again showed his great balance, and ability to compete. Another school is chasing him. Wouter asked to be introduced to Michael. He hero-worships Caleb Bell, 14 who is so brilliant with getting the best out of the weaker players and a true artist. Chris Marrow is as tough a tackler as Paul Cremer and Sean Hallick, and even he is dreaming of other shores.



Caleb Bell (left) pictured with Wesley Robinson

The sad thing is that Oakhill can lose any of these kids in a flash as the kid seeks to reach higher objectives and play for "better teams on Astro", and get recognition, and yet Wouter says "I am always so happy playing with the bigger boys." James Segers wants to play cricket for South Africa and he says he will do it by staying at Oakhill. No other school would have built our kids up better at a young age.

So, the truth is, we need to go further, and get an astro, and become the top Hockey school in the country. We cannot afford to be second best. But, none of us own these little children. If they leave, they must know that they will be better because of having been at Oakhill.

It says so much for Oakhill that we can remember Michael Hallick and his great 1999'ers and know that they served us fully and well and left a legacy – and they came back to visit.



2010 Hockey players Wesley Robinson (top right) and Ryan Smith (below)



Oakhill's Hockey boys

Hockey Tours

Nick Cumming – he of the unfortunate name – scolded me on hearing that Oakhill toured Holland in 2002, 2005 and 2010, and Argentina in 2007, "and all we had was the tour of the Eastern Cape and the tours to the Western Cape" where we were hosted by Delheim, and stayed at Smitswinkelsbaai. I pulled out a circular dated 2.2.1999 where I gave all the FINAL details of a 17 day of June 1999 to Zimbabwe. It was all finalised to dot and

title, but the then headmaster pulled the plug whilst their organiser, Mr Ripper, ripped into me for having been made to cancel.

In the same letter, I wrote "Oakhill desperately needs an Indoor Arena." Chaps, "Oakhill desperately needs an Indoor Arena." We will name it after you. Or an outdoor astro. We will take what you or your granny gives us.

Recalling 1999

I pulled out some 1999 match reports. We drew 0-0 with Outeniqua after their coach disallowed Phil's goal. In 1998 PW Botha beat us 2-1 after their umpire disallowed 2 of our goals so that they would win the SWD League, though we beat them 2-1 in 1999 in another political encounter where Cum Cum was slammed across his legs.

Michael captained in 1998 and in 1999. I can remember him doing a Grade 9 project where he modelled the Indoor Arena on the site of the old tennis court, and giving it to headmaster, Gary Norton for no action to result.

I wrote on 29 May 1999: "Michael did very well not to get phased by all the politics and he kept the machine oiled, so that the best Outeniqua could do was to slam the ball downfield, expecting a Purple Heart".

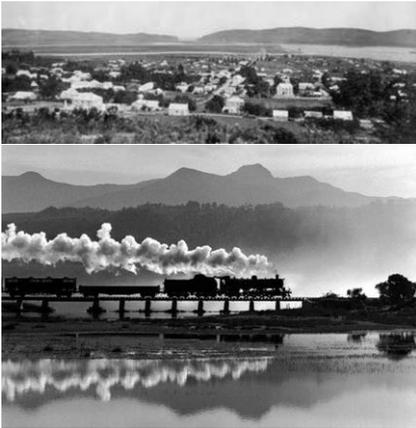


And that reminds me: *We need an indoor sports arena.*



Primary School playground (above) and a school with a view

A 1998 Peebee Circular (before blogging was the fashion...)



(An obviously not subtle hit at the man who never smiled – Sad Sack : Nick Cumming)

The Coming & Going of the first ever Under 14 Match in 1998 – to be read as one circuitous paragraph:

Many years ago, I used to do Soccer reporting in Cape Town. I was commissioned to watch a certain game in Ottery. At half-time, I was to phone the score in to the Argus and give 5 lines. At full-time, I phoned in a fuller report to them, then to The Cape Times and then to the Sunday Times. The remuneration was pleasant. I went to this new field in the sticks. The star player was a guy called "Luyt", who arrived late. Luyt, when he came, scored an early goal, and minutes later, Luyt was late-tackled, and Luyt scored the resulting penalty. Later on, his own keeper was injured, so he took over, and pulled off great saves. Then he fouled an opponent, to concede a penalty that he saved. Later still, he was sent off for a repeat foul. I sent the report in but it was not published. I was never asked to report again, and later found that nobody could understand the late, late, late report and thought that I was inebriated. Thus ended a promising career. I realised that I was living in a mortal world of lesser men. These days at Oakhill, a hockey game is to do with comings and goings. Nicholas Cumming is a star in the First Team, and his brother Allan is a 'handlanger', First team, a regular Under 16 and an Under 14 adjunct. On Thursday, the "Under 14" were set to play Point at Mossel Bay. We could not get going, because coming up the South Coast was a freak storm, which made roads to the Bay impassable, and incoming calls impossible. Mrs Gail Cumming (our telephonist), was not keen on her son going, phoned the news that a storm was coming. After checking with the police, we made hasty plans to rather ask York – at 20 minutes notice – to provide a team for us to be coming to George to get us going! In the Under 14 side were some mortals who had not played before, and some who thought

that a hockey stick was a great appendage to justify the purchase of our lovely new kit – is it not lovely? The Big Foot Combi was late in Cumming, sorry coming. Eventually we got Going, only to find that our opposition was their excellent Under 14 full of provincial players. Bluffing ourselves, we ventured forward in the rain. After a while, not even nodding Alan Cumming knew if we acoming or agoing. Most of the time, the opponents were acoming, and we were agoing. They scored 7 and we did well to score 0. It was not a lovely baptism. But Mark Odello played well, Clayton Mare had a wonderful eye and Robert Dixon gave signs of a great career ahead. But we needed a general – a Michael Hallick, a Nicholas Cumming, a Jonathan Ralph, an Ingo Hilbert, a Guy Jacobs. We needed the Moses who could lead us through the barrenness. There is promise, but they are in the Under 16: Neil Foley's Irish instincts, Richard Mather's burning enthusiasm, Clive Boyd's soccer knowledge. It was sad to lose, and paradoxically, incongruously, we even had a member who laughed at the tragedy. Even an inspired "Super Twelve" level half-time diatribe could not change the comings nor the goings. Oh, and then Bigfoot was Luyt – oops, late – in Cumming – oops – coming, and so we could not get going until the bus was coming, so Mr Bishop did not sleep that night, because he thought "What will Oakhill do to attract some hockey players to the School, so that they are a-coming, and could get us going, without halftime haranguing".

Never take "Go" for an answer.

My goal is to deny yours.

- Hockey saying



Commencement speeches were invented largely in the belief that outgoing college students should never be released into the world until they have been properly sedated.

– Garry Trudeau



I was invited to attend the initial meeting called by Cameron Dugmore that hoped to set up a National Past Pupils' Initiative throughout the country. I decided not to take a prejudiced nor cynical approach, as I had run York High School's Past Pupil's Association for the first 17 years until 1992 with the first headmaster – and father of Cameron – Mr Ron Dugmore, after which it has been run by blonde Sandy Moir (nee Pollock).

Cameron now works for Trevor Manuel. It was interesting listening to the different questions and comments, though about 60% of all questioners actually gave sermons, completely off the topic, and tried to win good grace by starting their monologue either

National Past Pupils' Association Initiative

saying "Comrade" or "Comrades".

Their plaintiff calls were for money for the needs of the schools in their own environment, or to put pressure on the authorities that Mother Tongue teaching should be used right through the system. Those who spoke on the topic were very serious-minded teachers who did not approve of the "Traditional Model" where 19 year olds mixed with 91 year olds and then laced the old school tie, drank whisky and cheered their Alma Mater in the annual Derby, nor even the York Model that met over Sports Matches on significant anniversaries, like 10th, 20th, 25th anniversaries.

The immediate call of the sincere group was that the School become a more significant core in the Community and that those Past Pupils (not just the rich and prosperous, but even the apprentice who is learning a skill) can come to the school and be seen as a ROLE MODEL in schools where the only role models exposed to the kids were the drug pushing gangsters. It is a tragic reality.

The Deputy Minister of Education, Mr Enver Surtey, opened proceedings and then pushed off to the airport. When he was at Murray High the day before, he witnessed drugs being handed through the fences. Others called for "Past Pupils" and other members of the Community to help with the teaching not just as in the many super efforts of World Cup Year 2010 for the Matriculants, but for the little ones.

The argument was that a Matriculation does not guarantee jobs, but skills can ensure employment, and the chance not to take the gang line. One hardworking lady attributed all difficulties in the Western Cape on its non-ANC Government, in that 76% of the Western Cape pupils pass (in her words 'the Model C pupils') but 24% fail (the townships). But then another equally enthusiast said that the real difference was in the word "PLAY". She literally took the words out of my mouth in

saying that the successful schools have teachers who take sport, and that the children play and therefore are exposed to and create their own Role Models – and thus they can create successful Past Pupil Associations.

On the one hand, I got the idea that the UDF forces are still very much alive – and good for them as they realise that the National Government has not fulfilled the aspirations of 1992, but rather enriched a few who do not turn back to their schools to create avenues for others. 50 of the 60 participants were from the Western Cape and the rest from the Eastern Cape. Only York and myself were from the traditional line,

The David Livingstone School in the Eastern Cape created an Alumni Group that is most pro-active in the community, and literally run the school. It is mind-boggling to hear of the difficulties that exist. So excruciating are these difficulties, that many of the "Comrade Activists" began to regard the prospective National Past Pupils Initiative as a cure-all, a panacea, and even an instrument of political change, hopefully not of political opportunity.

I get scared with things like that, as it can be read as a Communist plot to create and control every aspect of life and breathing 'for the benefit of the state'. But this is not the intention of initiator Cameron Dugmore. All he wanted was to have the poorer schools benefitting from contact with their past pupils in the same way as traditional schools gain advantage, and even an instrument of political change, hopefully not of political opportunity.

There are so many things that we are protected from – and the question is asked: "How do we create values whereby we can live?" It is a national problem. It is a worldwide problem. It is a problem on our own doorsteps.

Keep on Rolling

Headmaster, Shane Kidwell, had a great chat to about 10 Oakhillians (cough discretely when you pronounce Oakhillian) who visited his office. He said that they did not think that Oakhill would still be up and going in 2010, and they are so thrilled to see all the developments, and even plans for a second campus. All those Honours Boards are down at the moment as they are being worked on so as to go around the quad. You will be pleasantly surprised.

If any Year Group wants to visit the School at your own time, just ask. The most welcome of all visitors are the OAKHILLIANS. Who will be the first OAKHILLIAN to sign his/her child into Oakhill?



The 20th Birthday

Get a look at and imagine OAKHILL TWENTY in 2012 – a Leap Year - when 20 different functions will celebrate all aspects of the School. The Committee has not yet been formed. I want to propose that the OAKHILLIAN (cough discretely) or Old Oaks Celebrations will be the event for 29 February 2012, where it would be wonderful if the Founding Pupils could rope in Allan Graham for the Schools 7th Leap Year Celebrations – what of Tessa and Marthy and all the Day One'rs or the Year One'rs. Maybe you have another idea. Maybe one of you would like to join a Committee in 2011 that will be planning 2012.

1992, 1996, 2004, 2008, 2012 are in Oakhill's History. 2000 would not have been a Leap Year if it ended in two 0's, but because it ended in three 0's, it is a Leap Year. So why not target the 1992 to 2000 Matriculants to that function, where we have a Founder's Ball, and you just rattle your fingers and let's hear the jewellery tingling or tinkling. Please give your opinion.

We can create a day in August, circa the 8th – a public holiday – the long weekend maybe for the Decade 2000 to 2010 and focus on sport and hikes and culture and art. There may be another day that you propose, but we can end with the Saturday before Christmas as the 3rd function. It seems that the U.K. school holidays are in July.

You all know how auntie Tessa would have handled this. She would have let you have your pennyweight of opinion, gone to a staff meeting just to differ with authority and then come back and given you her decision marked with the stamp of democracy. Do you agree, Tessa? So feed back and make suggestions.

These are only rough guesses. Now, it is your time to talk, and to take the initiative to lead your group. Auntie Elna e.brown@oakhillschool.co.za has a number of email addresses.



The History of Oakhill School

For the educated among you, there are 3 Oakhills. One is the bricks and mortar and the oak tree if it has survived the renovations. Another fits the image of an independent I.E.B. school catering to the children of Thesen Island. And then there are the real stories of the past and present kids that get into the crevices of the rocks.

Shane Kidwell asked me to write a History of Oakhill for the 20th anniversary in 2012. I think a coffee table book can emerge, but there is also all that other stuff. I have read every book on Knysna, on George Rex, of the Barringtons and on the Duthies and Thesens. It is quite interesting reading, and as can be expected, there is much disagreement.

Now out there are you guys, sitting with photos of the early days, or any days of Oakhill. Time moves just too fast for anyone to really sit and capture memories. If you can copy any or email to peebee@oakhillschool.co.za, it would be great if we could use them. It is through showing off about you that we can let the kids who are here know that they can fulfil their dreams.

By the same token, one's Alma Mater can also bring sad memories together. If that is the case, then it would be great if we can offer healing. There have been persons, incidents, remarks that make recalling school days into an unpleasant experience. We owe it to you that your memories are precious and that you are respected.

In other places on our website you will see that our adventure racers came first in the country; and that our water polo players excel against older teams, and that our hockey stands shoulder to shoulder with York (who have 850 pupils and growing). So much so, that our cricket is becoming a minor sport. Some recent successes have been Jonty Pieters (106*); Chris Marrow (108*); Caleb Bell (62*); Tom Marrow (54*) and

Joshua Buchalter (50*). Previous centurions have been Wesley Robinson (104*); Tom Marrow (126*); Scott Walker (123*) and Cheyne Hare (135*). Until Cheyne Hare's score, the record had been 73* by Wayne Dexter against York, beating Michael Hallick's 72 also against York, in the days that we played York.

From your side, Michelle Eray has just come back from winning gold in Portugal with her Canoeing, only to then proceed to the Fish River Marathon. At one stage only Michelle and the Monsen girl were the only 2 doing hockey with me. Pop into Oakhill Michelle and bring SA cyclist Kevin Evans with you.

Sport is not everything. I was reading some of the letters given to me on some of your departures. Jacqui Rodgers had gone to Australia. Now she is a practising physio in Port Alfred. Miss you, Jacqui. Apparently Lara Murphy flies planes. Terror firmer or Terra Firma?

If any of you know contact details of ex-headmasters, let us know – including Allan. Reneira – renieraodonnell@yahoo.co.uk – will update as Allan most certainly will need to come to Knysna in 2012 – probably for Founder's Day; though Reneira likes the idea of herself coming in July, as it suits school holidays in the U.K.

You will read about the glorious success of our Drama under our own Hecate, Jaci de Villiers who bewitched our tallest Matriculant that he now wants not to be Victor Mansfield, but rather a Thesbian. Sadly Jaci is departing our shores. Amy Nuttall's Art was probably the greatest ever. She had some girls with supreme talent. When it was their year to raise Matric farewell money, two girls stepped forward, told me to shut up and raised R42,000.

Holland Hockey Tour 2010



The History of Oakhill School (Cntd.)

Hannalie Viljoen has a little boy, Francois, aged 8, who looks like and wants to be “Jacques Kallis”.

There is much to see. Plan 2012 and allow us to spoil you.

You are an OAKHILLIAN if you were educated at Oakhill, even though you did not Matriculate.

Please forgive me if you sent in your details and ‘that which you have attained’ despite or because of your being at Oakhill, as I have written 5 circulars and this is the third published, so live in the ether out there. So make one more effort and tell us what you would want in 2012; and if you want to initiate your own groups identification with Oakhill in 2012.



Francois Viljoen

2010 Matrics



What can one do?

I will never forget his name – Victor Andreka. It was October 1950. I was at an orphanage – with my twin brother and 47 other boys. My number was 49, John's was 47. Victor came to the school with 4 packets of Life Savers – 12 in a packet. All the "poor white orphans" lined up to get 1 Lifesaver each from Victor, who himself was a "Past Orphan". I only then realised that 4 times 12 = 48, so I did not get a Lifesaver. It was like the previous year, when an older "Past Orphan" – his name was Shephard, but we called him "Faarther Krissmiss" (in good Capey accent) lined us up to hand out Christmas presents. I won a cricket bat – the best prize. The nun took it, and said "This will be good for the boys" – so from getting the best – I suddenly was the only one who got no present at all. Big men don't cry.



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But it taught me something – the power of a Past Pupil returning to his Alma Mater and giving SOMETHING – even a Lifesaver. Sure, the present kids are not orphans. In 2010, Michael helped some kids who were hit by circumstances to go to Holland. Michael, I will get you into heaven- even though you are not a Holy Roman. It will be a lifelong memory for these kids, who will do kindness in turn.

Sometimes a donor wishes to be anonymous, or wants someone specific to benefit. Inevitably, a Past Pupil will sooner or later be tapped (watch out for PeeBee because he sneaks in) for wherewithal. The biggest thing a Past Pupil can give is loyalty to his own group, to attend a Reunion called for that year. Sometimes a guy or gal may want a specific beneficiary. I was talking to the

Headmaster, Shane Kidwell and said that we have so many kids on the cusp of going, and there are so many people who could benefit the school and benefit themselves and benefit their community if Oakhill can get Bursaries – full or partial – especially in the name of the OAKHILLIANS.

Can I throw out the idea that by 2012 – when the School turns 20 – there will be an Oakhillian Bursary, and even right now, there could be a Fund, where – with a monthly R100 – a group – for instance the 1999'ers who got all the attention in this letter – could cover a bursary student for the year – a sort of Adopt Me. That would be a LifeSaver. Hey, I did not mean to say "LIFESAVER" to connect with the story above, but ain't that great - the Goddess of Words?

Neither I, nor we, nor Shane can call the tune on the strings in your heart. You did not go to Oakhill to learn to think of others. You just did of others and gave friendship and hugs. It is for you to decide and propose, but so twisted am I that I am only innocently proposing or insinuating and maybe someone responds to the Lifesaver call, and says: "Who is Number 49?"

Don't you think I write well?

It is better to get Year Groups proposing their own initiatives.

Happy
Holidays!

Please forward your news, snippets and images to
peebee@oakhillschool.co.za