

# Oakhill Old Oaks

October 2011

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## Seek and you shall find

I am sure that those of you who imbibed your love of poetry from Auntie Tessa or Auntie Sheila would know off by heart, the immortal words from "The Hound of Heaven" by Irishman Francis Thompson, who like many other holy Irishmen like Matt Talbot et al, were once 'prisoners of the gutter' overtaken by cheap liquor.

"I fled Him down the nights and down the days.  
I fled Him down the arches of the years.  
I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways of mine own mind  
And in the mist of darkness, I found Him."

One could say that a major fetish these days – dominated as we are by buttons to push – is spent in searching for some lost friend, or fleeing some lost foe on the Internet. I recently had an email from 53 year old Sharon, whom I taught when she was 14 year old Sharon. And she does not look a day older (maybe 5 days)!

I am sure that you get the wind that Oakhill will be turning 20 in 2012 and 21

in 2013, but with all the busy-ness and all the focus on building and meetings, nothing yet has been committed to diaries. But it will be imminent. You will guess that there will be a big push to 'flee down" the avenues of the Internet in the hope of missing detection or of being found – lost sheep!

I am sure that some of you are trying to track down those lost souls of your years, ready to pounce on the school so as to: "Call back the past!"



*Scenes around present day Oakhill – College Staff Room and quad*



*It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.*

*- Frederick Douglass*

## Memories faded and fresh

Some of you will remember the first days at Woodmill Lane, when the soccer ball fell onto a diner's plate of spaghetti. Some will remember Joan Taylor painting surfing scenes on the back wall of a classroom only to have Alan Graham remove the painting. Some will remember the first Matric Dance where the entire cost for the décor was R20, which covered a roll of string to tie up the cut reeds and exotic branches that the Standard 9 group used from the nearby bush to transform the dining room at The Lake in Sedgefield into 'The Garden of Eden.'

Some will remember tasting Witblits at Goukamma Game Reserve and being sick for 3 days, or going on night walks on camp, like the time the Grade 9's went to the Eastern Cape and had to lie in a circle by the light of the moon and utter stupid mantras until one of the august teachers got the giggles. Or the time that some senior boys got lost in the Knysna Forest and had anxious mommies worried.

Your memories might pass to the first concert, to designing the school badge with Guy Thesen, or having

Marti Watson and Paul Roumanoff trying to turn you into Laurence Olivier.

But then there was that first league hockey match, or there was the first tour to Cape Town – all in sleeping bags at the old house at Delheim, or the first Oakhill kids chosen for SWD or even for South Africa.

There was the time that you came to realise that your Art teacher, whoever it was, was quite excellent, and that you were indeed lucky. Or those times that Oakhill would win most of its games on grass at Loerie Park B Field – something that is not now possible, because the grass that was planted so that Denmark's reserves could practice on in 2010 for the World Cup has become so slippery that nobody uses it.



*Matric Dance 2011*



*Building renovations during July 2011 – view from Administration Block of Science Lab*

## Bricks and mortar

As mentioned in the last edition, there is a married Oakhill couple: Inge Hewitt and Justin Sherwood, who are living in London. I saw in the social pages of the CX PRESS that Wayne Craig is married with child, as is Carrie Harper and a few other of you guys. Records are highly inaccurate, but might make interesting reading if you feedback data to the school. Please send your data to Elna at e.brown@oakhillschool.co.za.

Newly weds usually buy a house and grab a hammer and knock down everything that exists, as they build their dream house. The present Headmaster, Shane Kidwell must have been born with a hammer and a mortar. Paths have been dug up and re-laid. Walls, weeds, rooms and personnel went the same way!



Then came the great moment. The long awaited moment to be MAD. M for Music, A for Art and D for Drama – all departments that have added so much to your various lives. Well, adjacent to the swimming pool and beneath the top field that used to be a slope covered with Erica and ferns, was lined up to be the site of the new MAD headquarters.



*"One day your life will flash before your eyes.  
Make sure it's worth watching."*

*– Unknown*

Soil was removed, and removed and removed. Down came the rain, and – unsolicited – the soil began to run down gobbling up half the top field. Would the whole of Heuwelkruin be swallowed up? You guys know that when that slope was levelled, the plants and bushes were used as fill, and did not metamorphosize into clay nor rock in consequent decade and a half.



When you finally see the M.A.D. Department, it will be more impressive than what it looks like right now.



## Carl Pasio - The JIT Man



*Under the beautiful Blue Gums gracing the tuck shop*

I was talking to Auntie Sheila about the “Just-in-Time” kids that we have plenty of, except that these days they complain about not having enough T as in JIT to do all the tasks expected – a far cry from Ingo’s days! Ingo, by the way, married a York girl and they have a bonnie lad, and will be living in George soon. Still my greatest captain!

Carl left school, regretted his JITTERING, did a Maths degree, became an engineer, married a champion cyclist, has just had a while in Belgium whilst she cycled and is off to Italy where she cycles and all this is sponsored. So he cycles a bit as well!

Meanwhile Paul Cremer plays hockey for Knysna Men, but works as a chef

and carries a paunch a bit bigger than even PeeBee did at his best/worst!

Gawain Bunnett had visited our kids when we toured Holland in 2005. He recently visited Knysna and paid a visit where he spoke of everything changing “except PB”. Little does he know. I remember Gawain going to the 1995 SWD hockey trials as a keeper with small cricket pads and no box. He did not make the team, because he got a shot in the “einas” first up!

Talking of the top field... This had been laid by Mr Colarossi who had a good healthy Catholic family with a catholic number of children. Claudia visited recently and commented on the positive changes, but forgot to leave details of what she is doing and whom she is controlling these days.

If you visit the school, ask Auntie Elna if you can write details and a message in the “Little Book”. In that way, you will become famous.

Lara Mare, who matriculated in 2000 at York, and had been such great friends with Jessica Hutchings, spoke to the kids. She liked the ‘still happy shouts of children’. She has one of her own, and has written a book for children that hit the market big time.

Nice that Marc Taylor – a 1994 matriculant, and a great chap – brother of Ross who died of cancer in 2010, visited in late June. He chatted to Barbie and Elna. He has his own studio and is offering pottery lessons.

Jonathan Ralph, captain of cricket and hockey in 1998 and once a teacher at Oakhill, has been working with his Dad, Peter, as a distributor of products. He phoned PeeBee a month ago and asked questions on

wine and wine phaseology as he had the prospect of a job of marketing KWV wines in East Africa. Excitedly he went down for a flurry of tests and the very man who got an A for standard grade Maths and an H for higher grade Science, GOT the JOB. Great man Jono!

David Ritchie celebrated his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday at a braai in Plettenberg Bay with a number of his classmates. David has a flair and a love for photography and does daily assignment work for the Cape Argus.

The younger crew also graced our premises, with their coy smiles a few weeks ago. Jessica Nuttal is looking more and more like Amy, and loving her studies at Rhodes University. She came along with Nicole Twaddle – such a hard worker, now completing her Psychology at Rhodes having had so many interesting cases to study as provided by the Oakhill staff, most of whom are under the hammer by now. I am sure that she does not talk the twaddle that psychiatrists are prone to do!

Please remember to pass a thought of goodwill for the Muir family. Pam Muir, a founder of Oakhill, wife of Andrew and mother of Matthew and Robert passed away on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2011, having put up a brave fight against cancer for many years.

Pam was a beautiful, gracious lady and will be remembered fondly by all whose lives she touched in some special meaningful way.

## Dayne Davey and her achievements

I was invited to supper by Marinette Davey – mother of Dayne and Daniel. Daniel is in Cape Town raising a fortune by coming up with previously unthought of ideas on the computer.

Dayne was recently nominated as Woman of The Year in the Southern Cape, but we did not rig the voting, so she did not win. She told me that she would write out the true story of what she did, but she did not, so she gets a reported version.

After studying Evolutionary Zoology at UCT and Rhodes, she researched Meerkats in Lesotho.

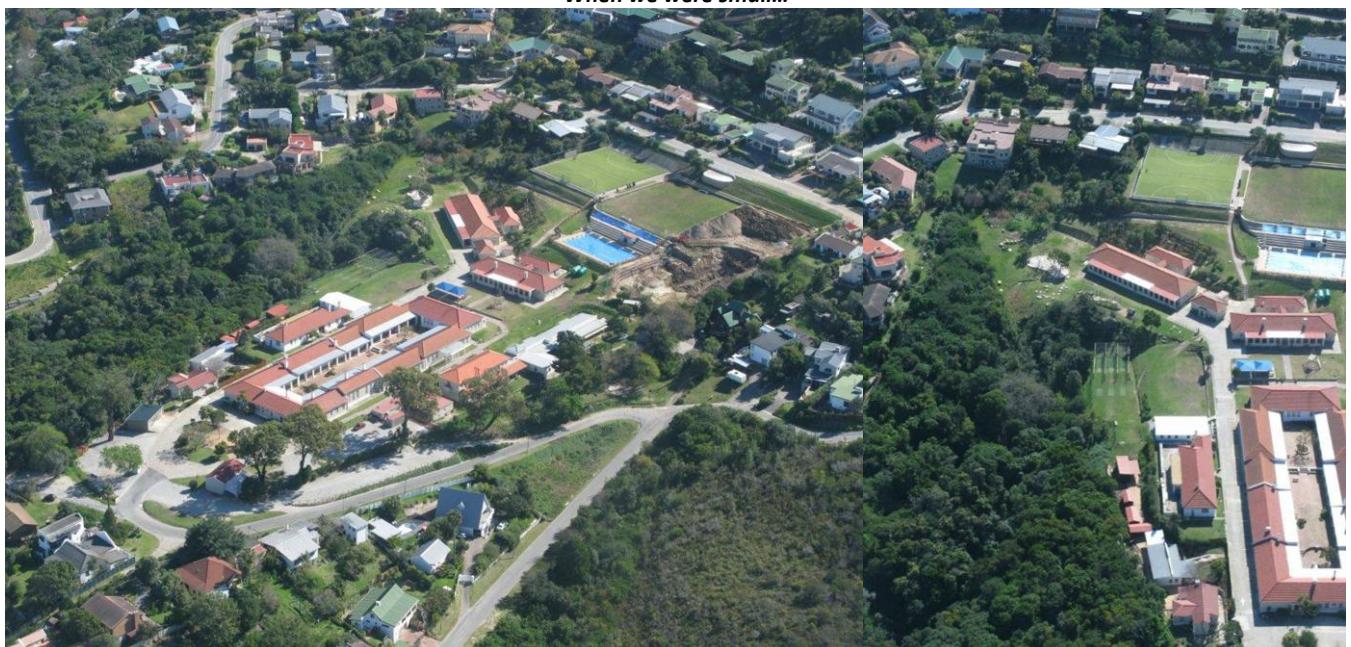
She has set up an enterprise in Knysna with 7 staff and a horde of young European Continental volunteers working on sustainable programs. There are absolutely no hand outs. Recipients have to earn what comes there way, by clearing alien vegetation or by gathering reusable refuge.

She runs a Recycle Swap Shop where those who bring in recyclable junk get tokens for which they can get food. By the time the volunteers (whom Marinette feeds daily) leave, they change their view of Africa. Not a place for hand outs, unless you are in Government.

## Snap!



*When we were small...*



*Oakhill from the air – (images by Chris Tiffin)*

## The hockey at full tilt



I have 2 enduring memories of hockey a decade ago. Alistair Pott, who is probably very conservative now, was worse than 'a long-haired lover from Liverpool'. His hair hung right down over his visage. He went to SWD trials and such was the shock of the selector that he was not even allowed on the hallowed ground. Two weeks later, we played Bastiaan. With time running out, they whacked in a short corner. Alistair dived. It hit his forehead full on and went behind. In true Teutonic fashion, he did not rub it, so the ump thought that the ball had gone behind. Long corner, and a goalless draw was the official result.

The other, concerns skipper, Rory Milne (born – by the way on 23 October). He captained a very weak Hockey X1, but loved to have special tactics to fool the opposition. We had a great dribbler on the right wing. All we did was get the ball to him, and he could dribble all day. In that way the opposition would not get the ball. We were playing a strong team from Bastiaan where some were rather over age.

Whilst I was planning with Rory and the team, the good dribbler was chasing some young things around on Loerie A field. The plan was for the good dribbler to be overfed ball, but 3 minutes before half-time, I would take him off, so that the opposition would not strategise against him. It was not my fault that the umpire added an extra 5 minutes, so that the dribbler sat out for 8 minutes.

Half time eventually came. 0-0. Rory got ready to glow, when said dribbler came up to the gathered team, walked right past and left the ground. Trouble is that his dad, who always brought oranges,

came up, and said "is this an Under 18 or an Under 14 game? The substitute who came on was 13 year old Jared Hersch. Jared had to play the whole second half. Final score 0-0. Great plan, but the dad has not spoken to me since. Anathema.

The hockey is now a little bit more structured. The boys and the girls played in the York Easter Tournament this year. They played in an inaugural Independent Schools contest on Astro in George, went to the Brothers Tournament in July in Cape Town, and played in the SWD Men's and Woman's League respectively. That should please those girls Michelle Eray, Evelyn Brady and Michelle Monsen who started the Girls team in 1995.

In addition we are getting goodly numbers into the various SWD teams, where Dave Pryke coaches the SWD Under 18 Boys, I coach the SWD Under 16 Boys, a young lady teacher, Miss Bouwer coaches the Girls Under 14A and Stefan Weyers who runs Junior sport, is Chair of SWD Primary Hockey.

Gather from this that our dream is to get an ASTRO before you get another increase, and that our kids are hoping to get obstacles behind them so as to tour Spain in March of 2012.

As Ingo says: "We did not get all that!" "I know Ingo, but your son could!"

Who will be the first Oakhill kid to sign their child on? Visit the school, and send us your info.

So says: PeeBee

**Snap!**

*Scenes of current day Oakhill reception and Barbie's office*



*PeeBee, Prep students and scenes around Oakhill*



THE JOY OF LEARNING

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*Canoeing is enjoyed by current Grade 9 student, Michaela Beers*



*The Interact Fashion Show, a must-see event on the College calendar*

Please forward your news, snippets and images to  
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