

Issue 9 of 2023

RHENISH
GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL



1860

RHENISH NEWS

Excellence ● Compassion ● Accountability ● Integrity ● Diversity ● Respect

Photos: Mr Piron and members of Rhenish Media Services
All photos at Ms Slabber's Farewell - Stephan Meyer
@afrikaansvatter



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— *Ms Slabber*

Happy Birthday, Farewell and Thank You



While we have known it was coming, it also seems to have come upon us quite suddenly. In the blink of an eye, the term has passed and Ms Slabber's departure is imminent.

How does one begin to say farewell to someone who is so central to the fabric of this school? Thirteen years of service to the school is two and a half generations of Rhenish girls who have been moulded and shaped by Ms Slabber's vision for the school, her management style and direction and her nurturing manner.

Thank You

I suspect that you begin by saying, "Thank You". Thank you for the early mornings and late evenings at your desk, answering mail, directing questions, dealing with staff matters or learner issues. Thank you for attending so many of our sports matches over the years. For being game for anything - playing tennis or netball with us, attempting the 'walkie-talkie' chicken at Siyaphambile evenings, dancing at the isiXhosa functions and hostel dances. For not being too timid to have your hair spray-dyed for a cancer drive or to participate in the ice-bucket challenge.

Thank you for caring about our school and for ensuring that Rhenish has excellent facilities. You broke ground for the astro, for the new classrooms, for the Ebenezer and for the swimming pool. You went to battle with the WCED for funding to support our building projects and the replacement of the roof - and for them to replace everything they destroyed in the process. Even when it meant that you had to work out of a container in the pool area.

Thank you for pushing us all - learners and staff - to be our best. To work harder, to work smarter and to reach our individual potential. Thank you for recognising the need for the introduction of eLearning even when you too were uncertain and unskilled in the use of technology in teaching and learning. You learned alongside us and dragged many of us, kicking and screaming, along with you until we find ourselves today quite challenged NOT to use technology in the delivery of our lessons. And, you have always led from the front and by example.

Thank you too for the difficult times - for calling us out when we don't represent the school properly in town or when we don't greet or if we behave poorly. You have always dealt with us - again, learners and staff - with respect and you have earned our respect and complete loyalty.

You guided us through the dark days of Covid, encouraging all of us from your desk at home to 'keep on keeping on'. You kept us - parents, staff and learners - informed and encouraged. You fought to ensure that all of our learners had access to data and the internet so that they could access lessons on line. You made us all accountable, in spite of the trying circumstances, for ourselves, for our friends and family, and for our work. You encouraged us by your example to get up, every day, to come to school and to do our jobs. To support each other, albeit through a mask.

You have held us when we thought we could not go on any more, when we lost members of our community and we could not see our way forward. You grieved, but you were strong and steady. You held us in our devastation and encouraged us to put one foot in front of the other and simply to keep on.





It is therefore perhaps fitting that we say farewell to our beloved Principal on the day of her 60th birthday!

We are so very fortunate to have been able to share 13 of her birthdays with her. We have had picnics, tennis parties, rugby parties and a host of other treats over the years.

This year the learners have combined her birthday celebration with their farewell to Ms Slabber and they have delighted her with tennis at Wimbledon and Formula One racing - two of her favourite activities.

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So Long ... Farewell

Now, it is time to say goodbye. You will be missed. But, you are also woven into the fabric of Rhenish Girls' High. In the buildings you have helped erect, in the traditions you have both established and upheld, your presence will remain.

You have forever left your mark at Rhenish Girls' High through your compassionate yet firm leadership, through the relationships you have nurtured with our neighbouring schools and through your love for and pride in the school you have served so selflessly for 13 years.

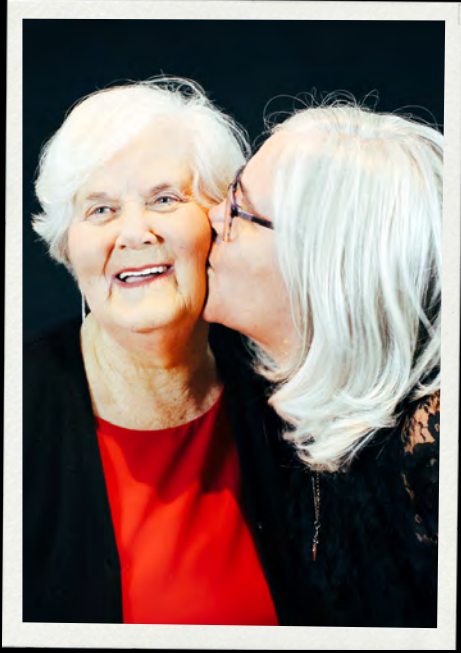
Ms Slabber, we wish you a long and fruitful retirement.

We are confident that we will see you around. After all, "Once a Rhenisher; Always a Rhenisher."

Happy Birthday

There are few things Ms Slabber likes more than a birthday celebration - especially her own birthday. She anticipates the day with child-like enthusiasm and her joy in the moment is infectious.

She has celebrated 12 of our school birthdays at Rhenish Girls' High School and she has been pivotal in ensuring that the aging old girl is pampered and receives the odd facelift. The birthday on 1 May is always celebrated with a respectful nod to tradition and then ... a wonderful party. Gifts, balloons and presents are mandatory!



30 March 2023

To my dear Rhenish girls,

Thank You and Farewell

I don't know where to start after the fantastic day I have had today and the very kind words from all of you. I really appreciate it very much - thank you.

I arrived at Rhenish 13 years ago, in 2011. Grade 8s, you may not even have been born yet, or, if you were, you had just seen the light! Grade 12s you were 5 or 6 years old then.

Rhenish has undergone a complete transformation in this time. Then, we had no security guard house, no astro, no Ebenezer Hall, no fancy Aquatic Centre, just a swimming pool that was home to ducks, geese and frogs. There were fewer classes in the D Block, 8 prefabs where the matric quad is now and we also replaced these with 8 more class rooms (B block now). We had a tar road which frequently featured potholes like those you find in all the other provinces. Even our school uniform has undergone a renewal. Change and evolution like this takes time and does not come without its challenges. Many people were involved in the success of these changes and I am very proud to have been part of the transformation of Rhenish into the sleek, modern, 21st century school it is today. The fact that the oldest girls' school in South Africa is able to stay abreast - and often lead - developments in education is something that I am very proud of. While our history is important, it is also important that we are forward thinkers, innovators and change-makers and this is something on which Rhenish prides itself.

Over the years I have encountered many Rhenishers as they make their way through our school. It has always been my intention to put our girls first in all of my decisions. I may not always have made the 'right' decision, but I do believe that we have retained our focus on the collective best interests of the Rhenish girls more often than not.

You may not know this, but I have a book with your photos and names in my office and each year I try to remember faces and names (I have not always been successful here either), but I have always tried to find out something good about every learner. Every single learner has a positive attribute or two in my book - I don't want to hear anything negative about any learner! In my job I deal with so many negative things that I have made it my business to try to focus on the good in each of you. I know your names without you knowing it sometimes. I have watched you from the sidelines without you being aware of it. I am your biggest champion. I always have been.

Some of you have visited me in my office - you may have been there because you'd been naughty, or you had achieved something spectacular, or you may just have popped in for a chat. I have always tried to treat you with respect and I have tried to extend second and even third chances, because I really believe we are all capable of making a mistake and, when given a chance, we are capable of doing better, of being better. You have always treated me with respect, most of you have greeted me when you pass me in the corridors and I have tried to do the same. Thank you for being so special, thank you for always greeting me, thank you for always embodying the spirit of a true Rhenisher.

I believe in equal opportunities; I believe in every Rhenisher (even when you have been in my office for some kind of misdemeanour), I believe in Rhenish and in our teachers, I believe that Rhenishers can go into this world and make a difference and I have experienced the truth of this many times.

I know that some of you are faced with impossibly difficult situations at times, that life for you can be challenging and that you too experience hardship and loss. Through all this, rest assured I have been rooting for you, wishing only the best for you and for solutions to your problems that result in a happier more content you. Sometimes, the nature of my job means that I cannot always speak my heart to all and sundry about my concerns for you, but my black book holds all my thoughts and concerns about all of you that I carefully note down and check up on regularly. You are always on my mind, in my thoughts and in my prayers.

This will not change just because I am leaving. I want to wish each and every one of you all the best for your future. Rhenish, the building, is not going anywhere, but you and the next generation of Rhenishers have a big responsibility : to fight for this institution and to support this institution, her values and traditions, in the future. You have to become responsible Old Girls and learn to give back to your old school. While you are still in the school, you need to treat this 162-year-old institution with respect, treat your teachers with respect, treat your friends and every Rhenisher with respect as well.

May all your dreams come true and remember to enjoy yourselves while you are young. I thought to end off with a little message:

Time is slow when you wait

Time is fast when you are late

Time is deadly when you are sad

Time is short when you are happy

Time is endless when you are in pain

Time is long when you feel bored

Every time, time is determined by your feelings and psychological conditions and not by clocks.

So have a nice time always.

My message is short and sweet - have a nice time always!

I will always be the biggest supporter of this beautiful institution, therefore it is so true: Once a Rhenisher, always a Rhenisher.

EBENEZER

This is me, Helmien Slabber, signing out.





PRINCIPAL
HELMIÉN SLABBER
JANUARY 2011 - MARCH 2023



SIYAPHAMBILI

A photograph of two young women standing outdoors on a paved area. The woman on the left is wearing a black long-sleeved top, a vibrant orange skirt, and a large, multi-strand necklace made of orange and black beads. She has white decorative markings on her forehead and is smiling broadly. The woman on the right is wearing a black top, a white skirt with a black and white striped pattern at the bottom, and a white jacket with black geometric patterns. She also has white decorative markings on her forehead and is smiling. The background shows green trees and a building.

CULTURAL EVENING

March, 2023

Asemahle Mayekiso

2023 Deputy Head
Siyaphambile



Preparation for the Siyaphambile Cultural Evening began in earnest quite some time ago and, as the Deputy Head of the society and the emcee of the event, this has been both exciting and, at times, overwhelming.

This was the first time in three years that we have been able to host the event and we were determined to ensure that it was the best and most memorable of all such evenings. For their guidance and assistance in realising this dream, we are deeply indebted to Mrs Jikela, our liaison teacher, and Mrs Boo. They played a crucial role in the success of this event.

The cultural evening is an event that promotes South African culture and traditions through different forms of entertainment such as singing, dancing, poetry, acting, fashion and art.

We had spent weeks putting together a first class event. Not only were we performing for Rhenish,



we had also invited Rondebosch Boys', St Cyprians', Westerford and SACS and we were determined to put on a good show.

From Rhenish, we had performances by the Acapella group, the Marimba band, the very talented Sinesipho Silani and Asemahle Khumalo, the Siyaphambili Choir, Poetry and Hip Hop groups.

Prior to the Cultural Evening, we ran a Siyaphambili Workshop. Here we worked on mastering our performances and we did some arts and crafts beadwork that we plan to distribute to the school in Term 2.

The Cultural Evening was very well supported by representatives from the schools we had invited as well as by our fellow Rhenishers, their parents and families. We are also grateful to our educators, Mrs Smit, Ms Davids and our Principal, Ms Slabber, for their attendance.

We look forward to hosting more Cultural Evenings like this and we hope that you will make the effort to support us in the future.



"Here's to one of the best events at Rhenish!"

The Siyaphambili Cultural Evenings are always jam-packed with fun experiences and wonderful performances and this year certainly lived up to the hype.

I was so proud to be on that stage for the last time as a member of Siyaphambili and to lead the Hip-Hop group. I danced my heart out alongside people who I have practised hard with over the past few months, in front of a lively audience of supporters.

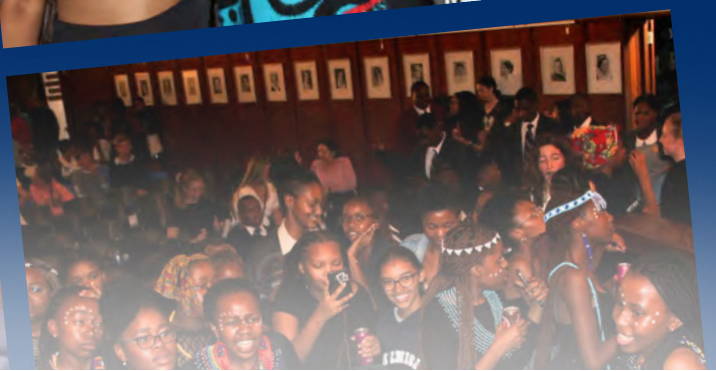
Siyaphambili is such an amazing society that promotes and represents a variety of cultures and I am thankful that, as the Hip-Hop group, we have had the opportunity to showcase our hard work."

**Lutho
Ndlela**





MEMORIES





24 - 26 MARCH 2023

GLU CAMP

by Sienna Wilk

Good words for Great Souls

The long-awaited GLU camp was held this past weekend from 24 March 2023 to 26 March 2023. We were so blessed to be hosted by The Simonsberg Christian Centre team on the beautiful Kanonkop wine farm, just outside Stellenbosch.

Although the weather was grey and rainy for most of our time there, it only made for a cosy atmosphere and the Rhenishers did not pass up the opportunity to enjoy multiple cups of tea, coffee and hot chocolate throughout our days there.





We are proud to announce that over 60 girls were in attendance and many lives were changed over the course of the weekend.

Although sleeping arrangements and small groups were not chosen by the girls, the out-of-comfort-zone experience made for the creation of many new friendships, and the deepening of the bond between those who already knew each other.

Between delicious dinners, live worship sessions, small group discussions and quiet time, and late-night chats, the girls definitely made many memories that will be cherished for a long time to come.

Thank you to Mrs Pretorius, Mrs Kleingeld and Ms de Villiers who accompanied our girls on this journey.



This included prayers for the matrics and their future and for Mrs Pretorius, who will be stepping down from the position of leading GLU at the end of the year. We also learnt much from the three speakers who were kind enough to make the journey to pour into our hearts and lives.

The excitement for next year's camp is already growing and we can't wait to meet and spend time with new sisters in Christ and experience the love of the Lord together.



MODEL UNITED NATIONS DEBATING

SASKIA BOSMAN

On Thursday, 23 March, Rhenish's Model United Nations (MUN) society had the privilege of participating in a "mini" MUN conference at Wynberg Girls' High School.

During a Model UN debate, students take on the role of an assigned country's delegates, research and discuss global affairs and, finally, come up with a joint resolution to the issue presented to them.

This time around, we discussed water-related issues, such as pollution, scarcity and inadequate treatment of water all around the world. We then had to form alliances with other countries, come up with solutions and eventually, we were able to agree and sign off on one resolution.

For many of us, it was a first and we were extremely nervous prior to our arrival. We had absolutely no idea what to expect and no amount of preparation felt like enough. However, by the end of the day we had improved not only our public speaking skills but also our ability to think critically and inquisitively. We left the meeting with greater knowledge of other countries, new insights into global issues and new realisations about how we, the youth, can make a difference.

Ream Uheida in Grade 11 was awarded 3rd best speaker overall.





FOR THE LOVE OF READING

By Ream Uheida
Deputy Head Librarian



On 29 March a group of librarians, as well as a few other enthusiastic volunteers, went on an excursion to the Usiko Aftercare in Jamestown to share their love of books with young children.

There, they patiently and passionately read to the little ones and entertained their playfulness with some fun and games.

It was a beautiful experience and one that was enjoyed by all. This has long been a tradition at Rhenish Girls' High School and a favourite experience among the librarians.

Covid put an end to it but we are delighted to have reignited this experience both for our learners and for the youngsters who are encouraged in their reading by our learners.

Rhenish will continue to have regular outings to Usiko and, hopefully, to other similar institutions in the future.

A special thank you to Mr Hartung, our estate manager, for assisting with transport and to all who contributed to the organisation and the success of this popular Community Outreach project.



"One of the greatest gifts adults can give—to their offspring and to their society—is to read to children."
—Carl Sagan



U14A DF MALAN *salt* TOURNAMENT

Frankie Henn

Another weekend? Another tournament for the U14 A girls!

This time with much tougher games. With 3 good wins and 2 very close losses we ended off our pre-season with much excitement, preparing for top 12 and many other challenges that will come our way.

We arrived after school on Friday and beat Somerset College 4-0 on their home turf.

Saturday brought us the warm up match against DF Malan. With a promising 4-0 win, we were fired up for

our game against Paarl Gymnasium. After a captivating match they came out on top beating us 2-1.

Fairmont was our first game on Sunday. A 5-1 win set us up mentally for our biggest game of the weekend...St. Cyprians. We left everything on the turf and after 40 minutes of hard work, sweat and determination, they managed to slip in a goal in the first half. We spent the rest of the game fighting hard to get it back but, unfortunately, it did not go our way.

We are ready to bounce back and are thrilled to start our first season playing for Rhenish!

Thanks & Goodbye Sharon

a True Rhenisher



Over the past 12 years, we have got to know Sharon as a very professional and talented woman. Her loyalty and commitment to Rhenish is evident in all the amazing newsletters, magazines, thousands of letters to parents to communicate about sport, culture and academic news and in all of our social media posts - profiles that Sharon initiated and has grown to their current strength and high standard.

We will miss her weekly newsletters, put together in such a professional magazine quality finish which we eagerly watch our mailboxes for without beginning to understand how much hard work, effort and responsibility goes into putting together the puzzle of a single week in Rhenish's busy life. These are indeed going to be big shoes to fill.

Her hand in organising our Open Days has been a major contributing factor in their unique character which leaves a lasting impression on those who attend them.

Sharon will be remembered as someone who never put herself in the forefront, preferring to work behind the scenes, keeping the focus where it rightly belongs, on the Rhenish girls and the Rhenish brand. She has worked hard at conveying the Rhenish message, irrespective of the nature of the news that had to be published, while remaining true to the Rhenish culture, ethos and vision.

Sharon has been fundamental to the building of the Rhenish brand - over which she is fiercely protective, regarding herself as the curator of a brand synonymous with excellence and tradition. A brand that continues to stand the test of time.

She will be remembered for her integrity and loyalty in all she did - and her love of coffee. The staff coffee club will think of her fondly when they grab their daily fix from the coffee machine she donated years ago, determined to wean us off our "Koffiehuis".

Sharon, Rhenish is going to miss you very much. All the best in your future endeavours. Ebenezer.

Rika, Sonja and your Rhenish Family



This newsletter and all newsletters since 2012, our school yearbook and all social media post, were edited and designed by me, Sharon Hershaw.

I would love to help you grow your business, build your social media footprint and get your message out there.



Sharon Hershaw

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That's it for Term 1. If you are going away during the break, please travel safely.

We will see you all back on 13 April.

that's a
wrap