



Collegiate Girls' High School

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NEWSLETTER – 31 JANUARY 2023

Dear Collegiate Community

On Monday 30 January, we bade farewell to Mrs Heather Shaw, undertook the Grade Eight Rites of Passage Assembly and witnessed the Grade Twelves deliver the pledge. I would like to share more with you about these special and bitter-sweet moments of our school calendar.

FAREWELL, MRS SHAW

An extract from the Staff Report in the 2006 school magazine reads: “Miss Sandra Goosen went off early in the second term on extended sick leave and we are most grateful to Mrs Heather Shaw, who stepped in with such good grace at very short notice in the Mathematics Department.” The then Headmistress, Miss Ellis, assured Mrs Shaw that it would be for a short time only. Fortunately, time is relative and it would be almost 17 years later, before we would say farewell to Mrs Shaw.

Always humble, Mrs Shaw did not want any farewell or fuss to be made over her. She said she arrived quietly and would leave quietly. However, it is always fitting to pay tribute to one who has given so much so selflessly to so many.

For the first few years at Collegiate, Mrs Shaw taught only Mathematics before moving into Geography in 2009 and taking over as subject head of Geography in 2014. Passionate about bringing her subject to life, Mrs Shaw has been on many Geography outings, camps and rafting trips down the Orange River (and tutored Maths).

For several years, Mrs Shaw was the Grade Head for Grade Eight learners and her welcoming nature and constant positivity made each new girl feel that she belonged at Collegiate very quickly. She taught the girls the values of respect, service and gratitude not



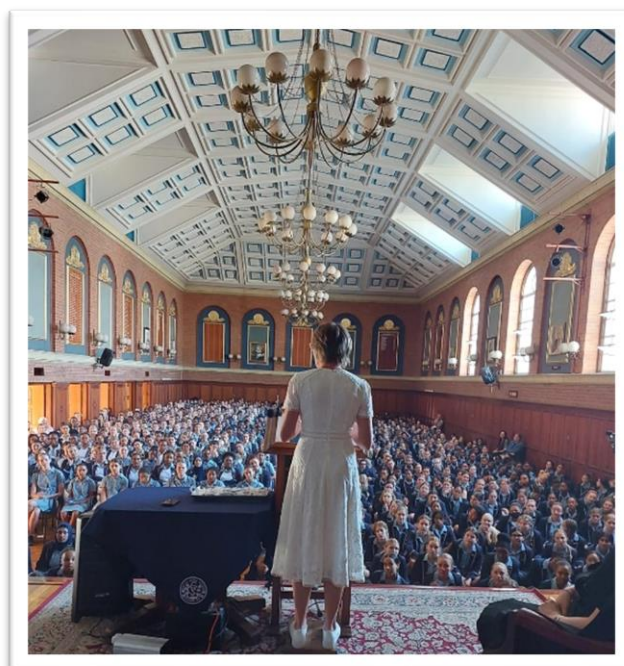
only through words, but by example. In more recent years, when called on to do so, Mrs Shaw was the House Head of Mary House and tackled this task with equal vigour.

A natural teacher, Mrs Shaw exercises great patience and has always been willing to spend time in the afternoons assisting girls who might be struggling academically. This carried over into the Hostel where Mrs Shaw has assisted many boarders at evening prep over a number of years.

Teaching is always so much more than academic work and much about life is learnt through extra-murals. Mrs Shaw has spent many hours on the sports fields with learners teaching them skills and then accompanying them to their sports fixtures.

Her wonderful gift of encouragement would uplift the girls and she would take delight in celebrating their success. At Collegiate she has coached hockey, athletics, swimming, supervised public speaking at All Girls Festivals and managed teams on many tours, not only locally, but also internationally. What a privilege it was for the Hockey Teams in 2011 and 2013 to travel to Holland with Mrs Shaw, a former South African Hockey player herself.

Mrs Shaw has been a stalwart at Collegiate, having served the teaching profession well and touched many lives. She is hardworking, level-headed, loyal and caring, with many stories to tell in a witty and heartfelt way. May she enjoy her adventure in the UK, continue to touch lives and bring joy, always.



GRADE EIGHT AND TWELVE RITES OF PASSAGE

The concept and practice of rites of passage are universal and archaeologists have found evidence that such rituals go back to ancient times. In the more modern world, the phrase “rite of passage” was coined by French anthropologist, Arnold Van Gennep, to ease the transition from one social or cultural role to another. He saw there being three stages to taking on a new role or status:

Separation – leaving the familiar

Transition – a time of testing, learning and growth

Return – incorporation and re-integration

The third stage, return, is what the assembly marks and celebrates through the rites of the handing over of a blazer in the case of Grade Eights, taking a pledge and receiving a badge in the case of Grade Twelve, and the singing of the School Song by all.

When the Grade Eights arrived at Collegiate on the afternoon of 17 January, they had left their familiar world of Grade Seven to enter High School. They may have felt slightly uneasy, nervous, not knowing what to expect. All was unfamiliar. They had

experienced Van Gennep’s first stage of “separation”.

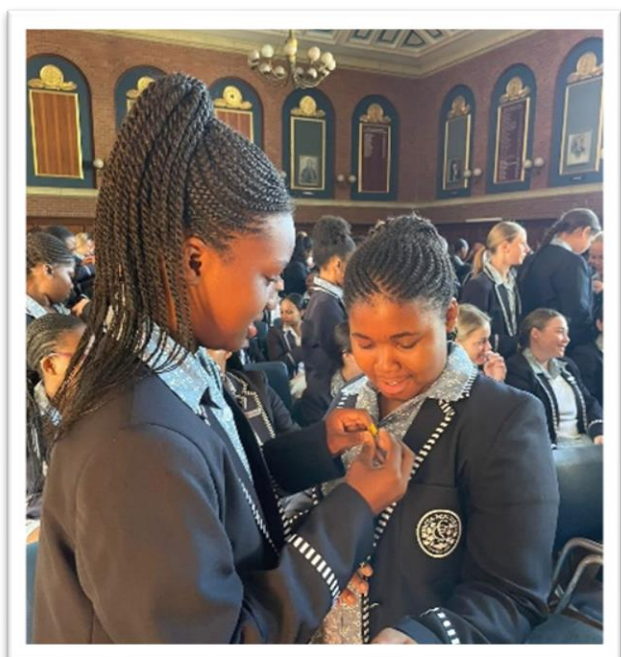
The next two weeks were structured to ease their transition to being a high school learner at Collegiate. Grade Eights were assigned an “Old Pot” who was there to welcome the Grade Eight in her care, to share the Collegiate way and how to survive and enjoy high school. Class teachers spent time teaching Grade Eights what they need to know about the school day and what the school offers; The culmination of this period was the Grade Eight “Camp” on Friday and Saturday when the Grade Eights learnt more about the school, bonded as a class, and learnt the school song.



The third stage of the rite of passage – the stage of return, of incorporation into the school as a fully-fledged Collegiate learner was marked at the assembly. The blazer marks a learner visibly and formally as a Collegiate Girls' High School learner. The placing of the blazer on a Grade Eight by her Old Pot is the welcoming into the fold by the seniors who are the mentors.

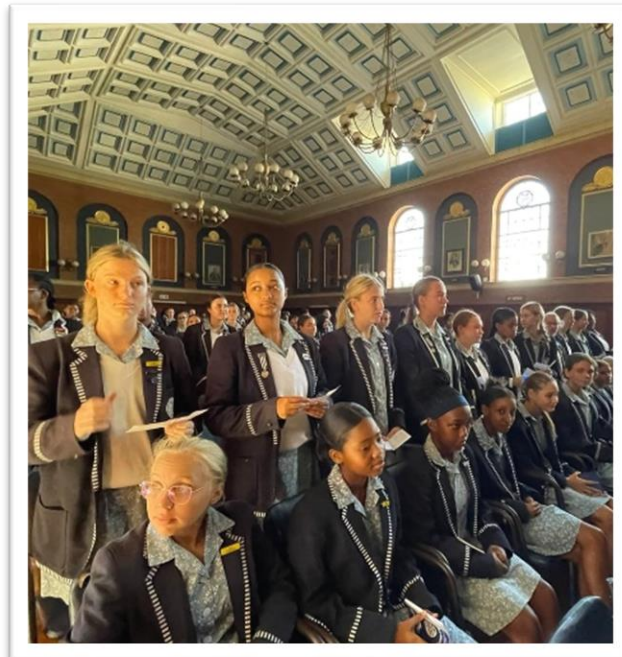


A second symbol of incorporation was the swapping of name badges from one new pot to another. This symbolises the collegiality and camaraderie that



will develop in the grade as they learn, play, laugh, cry and grow together as a grade.

The rite of passage of the Grade Twelves as they move from Grade Eleven to the senior grade of the school is marked by the saying of a pledge and receiving a badge of office, that serves as a daily reminder to act responsibly and with integrity.



Responsibility, is one of our five values. At the assembly, Grade Twelves pledge to uphold those values, values of responsibility, respect, good work ethic, integrity and compassion.



Congratulations, Grade Twelves. May you have a successful and enjoyable final year of your schooling career.

Mrs L Erasmus, Principal