

# ROEDEAN

ONE HUNDRED YEARS • 1903-2003

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*'Their Work Continueth'*





# ROEDEAN · SCHOOL · PARKTOWN ·

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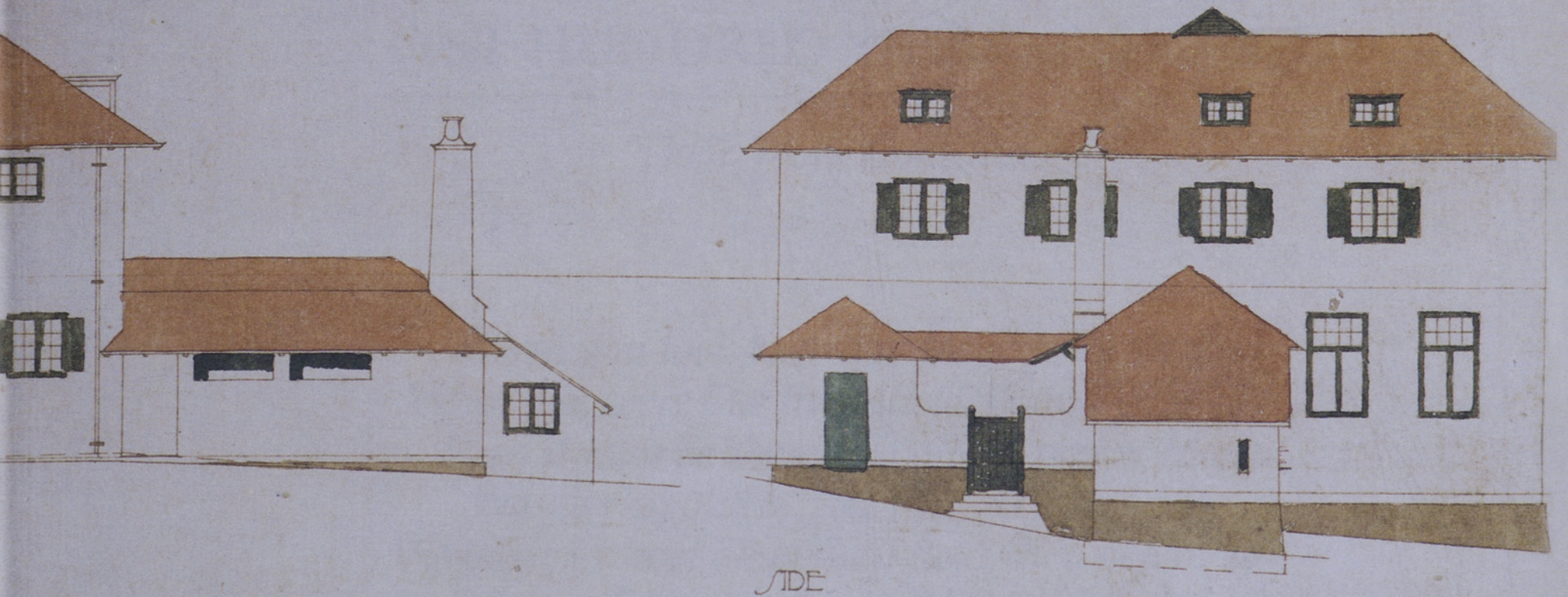
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# ROEDEAN

ONE HUNDRED YEARS • 1903-2003

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*'Their Work Continueth'*

*'When you look back and forgetfully wonder  
What you were like in your work and your play,  
Then it may be there will often come o'er you  
Wandering notes, like the catch of a song,  
Visions of school days shall float then before you –  
Echoes of dreamland shall bear them along.'*







*Roedean girls at the Buckle Gates, 2002*



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*'Their Work Continueth'*

*Compiled by Michele Magwood*

*Text by David Robbins*

*Additional Photography by Nigel Day*



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# CONTENTS

|                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS                   | 6   |
| FOREWORD                           | 7   |
| PREFACE                            | 8   |
| A CENTURY OF TRADITION             | 11  |
| I IN THE BEGINNING                 | 22  |
| II '... A CODE OF RIGHT BEHAVIOUR' | 36  |
| III TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS         | 56  |
| IV CELEBRATIONS AND COMMEMORATIONS | 66  |
| V BRICKS AND MORTAR                | 86  |
| VI A VERDANT HERITAGE              | 104 |
| VII CULTURAL ENRICHMENT            | 116 |
| VIII THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME        | 134 |
| IX THE JOURNEY BEGINS              | 148 |
| X STEERING THE SHIP                | 168 |
| XI THE FUTURE                      | 176 |



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**T**he amount of work and research involved in a book of this nature is beyond anything most people would imagine, and we would like to thank everyone who went beyond the call of duty to ensure that it became a reality.

We are grateful to the current Executive Headmistress, Mary Williams, for opening the archives and facilitating the myriad details that were required to make this process possible, and to Jan Mallen, who gave us access to the Junior School. We would also like to thank the Roedean Board and the Roedean Centenary Steering Committee for their assistance and confidence in the project.

A committed team of people spent hours delving into old boxes, researching and cataloguing, reading letters, diaries, magazines and house records, identifying photos and following up information. They investigated reports, recognised and named faces, memorials, and places. They walked through every inch of Roedean verifying facts; re-discovering long forgotten memories. They photocopied, labelled and sorted information. They completed the arduous tasks allocated to them with good humour and tremendous enjoyment. Without their efforts, enthusiasm, dedication and energy this book could not have been written. Peta Ward headed this group. She took on the Roedean archives, and sourced the majority of the material with grace and an unflappable calm. She was ably assisted by Paddy Lake, Maryon Goodwin, Lorna Thomas, Mariana Katz, Jillian Carman, Sylvia Van Heerden, Paula Monteith, Trish Klosser, Gill Reid, Liz Reid, Amanda Furber and Alison Somerville.

Dolores Fleischer and Angela Lloyd provided insight and background into past times at Roedean, and also brought their expertise to the reading of the proofs. Sue Antonie kindly donated her charming sketches, which are a valuable record of memories at Roedean.

The archives provided most of the historical material, but Roedean was fortunate that Nigel Day, a professional in his field, found the time and energy to capture the images of Roedean today. His task was made easier with the assistance of Sharon Sampson. Thanks also to *Garden & Home* magazine for allowing us the use of Nancy Gardiner's photographs, and to Paula Monteith for providing sterling assistance to Anne Lorentz, who wrote lovingly and knowledgeably about the Roedean gardens.

Once the piles of material had been collected, they had to be sifted and shaped into a coherent book. We were extremely fortunate that the award-winning journalist and editor Michele Magwood Jenkins agreed to take on this Herculean task. She compiled the book with both professionalism and creative flair. Despite her working commitments and family life she completed the job in record time and almost never lost her sense of humour.

David Robbins, prolific author and raconteur, has succeeded in capturing the spirit of Roedean in his introductory texts to each chapter.

Grateful thanks go to Jonathan Ball for accepting this special project and to Francine Blum who understood and managed the publishing process from its inception. Michael Barnett designed the book, and Kevin Shenton and Karin Liebenberg put it all together in record time.

Along the way we were helped by individuals too numerous to mention and our sincere thanks go to those members of SAORA, the Roedean staff and administrative staff, and the girls and their families who helped to make this book possible.

*The Roedean Centenary Committee, Johannesburg 2003*



## FOREWORD

*'... And suddenly the memory revealed itself. The taste was that of the little piece of madeleine which on Sunday mornings at Combray (because on those mornings I did not go out before mass) when I went to say good morning to her in her bedroom, my aunt Leonie used to give to me, dipping it first in her own cup of tea or tisane.'*

**T**his passage is one of the best-known pieces of early twentieth-century French literature and appears in Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*. When Proust samples a piece of a plump little cake – a *petite madeleine* – it inspires memories of people, places and events which have delighted him over the years. Leafing through this book will be like sampling your own delicious *petite madeleine*.

We, as Old Girls, will always have the memories of special friends, the teachers who inspired us and sometimes terrified us, the rules we obeyed and sometimes disobeyed, St Margaret's Day, Foundation Day, Speech Day, participating in school plays, house nights and games, the gracious buildings and beautiful gardens. In this way, when we leave, we take a part of Roedean with us.

Treasure this book as you delight in your memories of your time at Roedean.

*Anastasia Martalas (Lambrianos)*

President

South African Old Roedeanian Association



## PREFACE

When a school like Roedean decides to celebrate its centenary by producing a book, a series of emotions occur: delight, awe, excitement and anxiety. The latter primarily because it is almost impossible to see how any book can do justice to such an extraordinary school and the generations of girls who have been part of the past 100 years. Endless discussions took place between the various members of the Roedean Community. It had been made clear that everyone wanted a book, but what kind of a book? There were pitfalls in every choice. A chronological history might be dull; endless lists of Matric results, heads and prefects, and achievements which though important at the time have dimmed with age and lost their lustre as the protagonists have gone. There was also the risk that someone might be left out or forgotten, or that something which the authors deemed relatively unimportant would be omitted, which might cause serious offence to some members of the community. There is always the risk that the archivist – or, in this case, the author – brings his or her slant to the collection of the archives and that this bias may not accord with the archival memories of others.

As the weeks passed, it seemed to those responsible for making the decision about the nature of the book that Roedean was far greater than the sum of its parts. The school possesses an almost preternatural and inexorable energy, and the feeling grew that a mere chronological history would not capture the extraordinary essence of the school. In order to do justice to the love, honour and respect in which so many generations of girls have held the school, it would have to be more than a series of chapters with dates and reminiscences; it would have to capture the thousands of memories that were part of the understanding of the school. Like Jung's theory of collective memory, there were layers upon layers of memories of each girl's time at Roedean which seemed to form part of the collective experience of the school. This narrative needed to be retrieved; faces and occasions that were part of the ethos of Roedean and were concealed in memory needed to come to light, and a sense of what Roedean had meant to the hundreds of girls who had spent their formative lives at the school needed to be revealed and honoured.

The nature of the book began to emerge: an *aide-mémoire*, a trigger to memory, a collection of pictures, old letters, extracts from the house diaries and the memories



of the Old Girls, which would allow each person who flicked through the pages of the book to recreate their own days at Roedean and honour their own years at the school.

Inevitably, countless diaries, old letters, memoirs and photographs have been lost; stored in boxes, mislaid in moves, destroyed when death demanded that drawers and cupboards be cleared out when houses were sold and families moved away. The committee delegated to research the book would only be able to work with the material that was available. The Roedean and SAORA archives were limited, and many of the earlier photos were unnamed; sources had moved or died and memories were uncertain. One of the most troubling areas was how the Old Girls should be honoured. It seemed that there were no careers or professions at which Roedean Old Girls did not excel, and yet it was felt that for every successful person who was named someone would be left out. After all, the ethos of Roedean is to honour each and every girl for her individual qualities and abilities. Thus it was decided that this book should be nothing more and nothing less than some of the parts that make up the exceptional whole that is Roedean (SA). There will be holes in the fabric of the narrative but it is the intention that each person who reads the book should in their memory weave their own colourful threads into the cloth to complete the tapestry.

Like the panes of glass in a stained glass window – each may glow with its individual light, but as a whole the window tells a compelling and beautiful story. The process is ongoing, the story will not be complete and ‘their work continueth’.

*Nicole Jaff*

Chair

Roedean Centenary Steering Committee







*WH Coetzer's painting of Roedean*



## A CENTURY OF TRADITION

Every morning during school term, the bell in the old school tower is rung 22 times. Every afternoon, it is the same. The rope is pulled by hand by a roster of prefects. The tolling permeates the school gardens, seeming untouched by the roar of the rowdy city beyond. At the beginning and end of school terms, the ritual is extended. The bell tolls on these occasions no fewer than 747 times, while the main driveway fills with a procession of cars, and pupils and parents and luggage mingle in the bustle of arrival or departure.

What is the significance of the numbers – 22 and 747 – that the bell so clearly and regularly articulates?

The answer provides an insight into the meaning of the word 'tradition' as it is constantly manifested at Johannesburg's illustrious educational institution for girls, Roedean School (SA). The humble 22 reflects the number of pupils who attended during the school's inaugural year in 1903. The larger number indicates the pupil complement 100 years later. So the bell describes an extraordinary growth. More importantly, though, it links the beginning of the school's first century with its end, thus emphasising that sense of connectedness to the past which characterises the very essence of tradition.

The initial impression of Roedean is of arched white buildings trimmed with green, terracotta roofs and canopies of mature trees. The school buildings are nowhere clearly visible from the road. Access is from Princess of Wales Terrace in Parktown, through the Buckle gates, and down a drive with a chapel and gardens on the right and some of the school's oldest buildings on the left. Within these walls shaped viburnums guard a doorway, water splashes gently in fountains and the tended lawns and flowers create the sense of seclusion and peace.

The chapel was consecrated in 1934, and its dark brick walls and timbers are laden with Anglican convention. Small brass plaques and even the narrow stained-glass windows stand as permanent reminders of individual people, and the kneelers were all hand-made by past pupils. The past breathes through the elegant space.

The benches of Pleasaunce beckon from under an intricate canopy of jacarandas and pin oaks. Dappled shade lies across mellow paving, and there is a sense that the gardens are hallowed ground. Across the drive, the original school buildings were designed by Herbert Baker (later Sir Herbert), the most famous architect to work in South Africa around the turn of the nineteenth century. Baker's design was unadorned, unplastered brickwork painted white. It combined Dutch and English architectural elements, a



significant mix because the building was erected in 1904, hardly two years after that bitter South African conflict, the Anglo-Boer War, had come to an end.

The original Baker building has been much added to. School buildings – the senior school, the upper and lower junior schools and the St Margaret's Block – flow down the hill all the way to Houghton Drive and The Wilds. Newer buildings, such as the Maud Sumner Arts Block (1985), the Computer Centre (1993), and the Technology Centre (1998), have been designed to blend in with the original architectural style.

Memories of the aftermath of the Anglo-Boer War are again recalled in the wording on a plaque attached to a wall in the junior school. A building had been partly financed by a Sir Henry Strakosch, who had wished 'to foster unity between the two white races of the Union of South Africa'. The date on the plaque is 1953. Now, at the beginning of a new century, these words are a slightly jarring memory of a different South Africa.

In the north-eastern corner of the school grounds, at the bottom of the hill, the tennis courts and hockey fields, the latter clothed in the brilliant emerald of Astroturf green, are spread out. The bush of The Wilds crowds against the boundary walls. Close by stands a wood-and-iron structure bearing a small brass plaque:

*This building was erected in 1895 as the old lighting station for Parktown. Sir Percy Fitzpatrick then stabled his horses here. Subsequently, this busy little structure has been used by Roedean as a laboratory, a laundry, Theresa Lawrence's bedroom ... In later years, it served as the workshops for Roedean's estate managers ...*

It is still that in 2003. Beyond glass doors can be glimpsed a circular saw and a room full of lawnmowers. Yet history invades the present. Sir Percy had helped the founders of Roedean to acquire the land on which the school was ultimately built. Theresa Lawrence was one of the founders. The present will not be cast aside, however, even in its humblest guise. Beyond a window in another part of the humble building, plastic washing baskets hold assortments of hockey sticks, tennis rackets hang in bundles against the walls, and rows of kitbags stand humped on wooden racks up to the ceiling.

\* \* \*

But it is back in the main buildings of the school that its present nature and its history – these two elements which are so intimately connected – become most forcefully felt. It is no surprise to learn that some of today's teachers were once pupils, and that the mothers and even the grandmothers of many current pupils once attended Roedean themselves. This idea of families returning through generations inevitably directs one's attention into those corners which might hold clues to the idea of the school's tradition, its essential ethos as something that is constant and self-perpetuating.

'My mother was a pupil here, and I matriculated in 1971,' a Roedean teacher told me. 'Then I joined the staff in 1998 and now my daughter's here. Yes, the bell has always rung at ten to eight each morning. And, yes, we've all worn our famous djibbabs since year one. An understanding of the origins of the school and its traditions is an intrinsic part of being at Roedean. We didn't see it – the past or our knowledge of it – in any way as extraordinary. There's always been a strong emphasis on extra-curricular activities and a broad general education but also on tradition. Take the school's motto: *Honneur aux Dignes*. Honour to the worthy. There's an emphasis on honesty: speaking clearly about what is believed to be right. An often-quoted credo from the Founders, that



Roedean girls are 'seemly in conversation, courteous and kind' is instilled in everyone. The girls still call their teachers 'madam' and they still curtsy when receiving prizes ...'.

The teacher took me on a tour of the school. We had been talking in what had once been Lambs' sitting room, now the office of the Headmistress's secretary. St Agnes', St Ursula's and St Katherine's, or Lambs, Bears and Kats as they are known, were the original boarding establishments of the school and are the names of the school houses. We walked past the staff room which looks onto Bears' lawn (which only matric girls are allowed to walk across) and along Bears' Terrace. In the original Herbert Baker building, we paused in Kats' courtyard, which is ornamented by a fountain dedicated to Margery Barry who had died at the age of fourteen while still at Roedean. The corners of the courtyard are softened with generous ferns. The passages in this old building are dark and imbued with the past. Old photographs adorn the walls.

Here is the house in Jeppestown in 1903, in which Roedean (SA) was established. Another photograph shows the 1925 cast of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; bright-eyed girls sitting in their costumes in the branches of winter-bare trees. The school bus is depicted a year later, canvas sides rolled up to reveal a crowd of Roedean girls in white panama hats. By 1930, founders Theresa Lawrence and Katherine Margaret Earle were elderly women smiling at the camera. A more general photograph, taken from the high places of The Wilds, shows the extent of school infrastructure by 1949.

The breadth of the education available at Roedean becomes increasingly apparent as one moves between the various facilities. So does the sense of individual nurturing. In the Grade 0 classrooms, teachers are called Madam Hedgehog and Madam Squirrel. Jan Mallen, the Junior School Headmistress, can often be seen with a child on her lap. In the grounds of the St Margaret's Block there is a fairy garden, intended to counteract what Jan calls 'the opacity and sheer literalness of technology'. Yet by Form III (Grade 5), every girl in the school has her own e-mail address, opening up possibilities for international friendships and access to the Internet in the newly built Computer Centre. Music is taught in the Hersov Music Block, named for the family who built it for the school and who have been associated with the school for several generations. There are 17 full- and part-time music teachers at Roedean. Small practice rooms, each named after a famous composer, are arranged around a central hall for performances.

In the new Sports Centre (built in 1993) there is a broad variety of activities on offer, from indoor hockey and squash to gymnastics. In the gymnasium one of the exercise bikes is adorned with what looks like a Valentine's Day rose. Then there's the Drama Block, the source of a biennial theatrical production. The Art Block is named after Maud Sumner, South Africa's foremost impressionist painter and a past pupil of the school. Wherever one goes in Roedean, her paintings are to be found hanging on the walls. On the notice board of the Sumner Block are newspaper cuttings exposing pupils to contemporary issues, like the one headed 'Outcry over photo exhibition showing Christ as a naked black woman'. On the first floor, there are some memories from the past: examples in glass cases of early djibbahs; a few old cricketing photographs of the Roedean First Eleven from the early decades of the twentieth century.

'No cricket any more, of course,' the teacher said. 'Certainly not in my day. Not even in my mother's – although she did play lacrosse.'



We ended our tour in Founders' Hall, reminiscent of the chapel with its dark brick walls and even darker timber ceilings, the elegant beams of the roof exposed. Portraits of the Founders hang over two large fireplaces built into the long side wall. The opposite wall is gilded with the names of past Head Girls, which continue from one polished wooden board to the next. School assemblies take place here, as do Matric dances and other school events, but the hall is much more than a meeting place. There is a definite sense, particularly in the richness of its silence and the lists of golden names, of being at the heart of things. Particularly, too, in the portraits that hang along the walls, which outline the main periods of Roedean's century of history.

Here, hanging over the fireplaces, are Theresa Lawrence and Katherine Margaret Earle, both grey-haired, grave and dignified. They led the school from its beginnings in 1903 to 1930. Carved over one of the fireplaces is *'Trouthe and Honour, Freedom and Curteisye'*, followed by the initials of the two Founders. Over the other fireplace, the inscription reads: *'Their work continueth.'*

It was continued first by Ella Le Maitre, painted smiling in a mortar board and gown. Appointed a few years after TL and KME had retired, she remained the Headmistress for nearly a quarter of the Roedean century, finally relinquishing the reins in 1958.

There follows a painting of Joan Raikes (1960 to 1966, and 1969); and Brian Law (1975 to 1987), Roedean's only Master, and finally Lyn Nelson, who led the school from 1988 almost to the end of its first 100 years.

They all gaze silently into Founders' Hall, their eyes expressing austerity sometimes, but considerable kindness and concern as well. Above all, though, these faces suggest a sense of permanence and mission as they represent a century of remarkable education for girls. At the same time, the portraits and the atmosphere of Founders' Hall turn one's attention inevitably to the beginning of it all.

\* \* \*

The beginning is to be found in Victorian England and in the responses of a remarkable family to the strictures of the age, particularly those placed upon women. The Lawrence family lived in various places in southern England (and for a spell in Germany) during the second half of the nineteenth century. There were eight Lawrence sisters and four brothers. Three of the sisters in particular – Penelope, Dorothy and Millicent – developed considerable intellectual abilities. All studied at institutions of higher learning (although degrees were not bestowed upon women), and all became teachers, one of the few professions open to women at the time.

In 1881, their father had a serious fall from which he never fully recovered. In response to the ensuing family economic crisis, the three Lawrence sisters decided to enlarge their educational activities at home (where two of them were already engaged in educating their younger siblings) in an attempt to make ends meet. The resultant school was so successful that it was soon moved to larger premises in Brighton, where the original Roedean was established in 1885.

Roedean was one of the earliest boarding schools for girls that could rival in quality of education venerable male establishments such as Winchester or Eton. There is no doubt of the essential spirit of the Lawrence sisters' endeavour. Millicent was active in the Women's Suffrage Movement, and they all 'adopted, or even initiated, the most



modern ideals for the education of girls, providing them with the same kind of sports, the same kind of "higher education" as was given to their brothers' (*The Founders of Roedean*, published in 1935.) 'Girls at the Misses Lawrence's school played cricket and hockey as well as tennis, and hardened themselves in the rigours of the gymnasium.'

There is no doubt that Theresa, the youngest Lawrence sister and the one who brought the Roedean spirit to Johannesburg, would have absorbed the ideas and ideals of her older sisters. 'How well I remember,' she wrote in 1935, '... how from the age of fifteen I never tired of talking "school" with Penelope, and how thus early she imbued me with the idea of what a school should be. To her direct influence is due the fact that Roedean was ... the first of a modern type of school.'

Armed with these modern concepts that girls should have the same education as their brothers, and inspired by the rights of women, Theresa Lawrence and her close friend, Katherine Margaret Earle, sailed to South Africa with the intention of establishing a second Roedean thousands of miles south of the original. It was a remarkable act of pioneering. Two young women, both in their early thirties, Cambridge educated, coming out to a country that had just been ravaged by a bitter war, and to a rough mining town that had not existed on any map a mere 17 years before. They came in the true spirit of that independence of women so sturdily supported by all the Lawrence girls.

This is how Roedean South Africa began. The details of the first crucial years are well documented. The school flourished, moving in 1904 to its present site, which was then 'out in the country'. Today the buildings of Hillbrow are striding over the southerly ridge. Office parks are gaining a foothold all around. Yet the tolling of the Roedean bell continues, as it did in the days of Theresa Lawrence and Katherine Margaret Earle. They led the steadily expanding school for 27 years. They retired in 1930, the year that the franchise was finally extended to women, with their mission accomplished and the foundations firmly laid.

Their pioneering and independent spirit permeates the school to this day. The extent to which it has done so was brought home to me by the comments of three Grade 11 girls (Ante-matrices, in Roedean parlance), with whom I chatted one morning.

'We're whole individuals growing up as independent women,' they said. 'Roedean gives us the confidence and knowledge to be equal with males in the job market. Women have more than proved their equality. But we don't want to deny our femininity.'

Such expressions seem to emanate from the heart of the Roedean tradition. The subtext is becoming familiar. Strive for truth and honour, freedom and courtesy, and in all things be kind. By this course will your wholeness and dignity as women be assured. Here were the bright faces of three young women articulating a feminine assertion and style as old as the school itself, but now removed from the nineteenth-century imperatives and expressing a calm assurance that demanded respect.

\* \* \*

By 1934, Ella Le Maitre had been installed in the study of the Headmistress. The Founders had retired, but for a time they continued to live on the school grounds. It was a difficult time. Johannesburg was in the grip of the Great Depression and its impact was clearly felt within. But Ella, in her late thirties when she arrived, was a woman of formidable talents. She had served for 13 years as classics mistress at Roedean in England, and was



frequently referred to as 'Brighton's great sacrifice for Johannesburg'.

'That woman always made me feel as if I'd left my shoelaces undone,' one of the Old Girls told me. She was one of the Roedean class of 1942. I was having tea with some of the Old Girls, all close to 80 now, yet all vivaciously remembering their former school. I recalled some contemporary Roedean girls saying: 'Once you're in, you're in forever.' Here was proof of that around a tea table in a northern Johannesburg suburb. We continued to speak about the Ella's era, an era which they had shared in the late 1930s and the early years of World War II.

Did I know that at first the dormitories had no windows, only canvas blinds that banged in the wind? And the bird bath used to freeze solid, night after night. 'We were certainly tough ... after Prayers, we used to have to run round the whole school to warm up ... the hockey fields used to be a rubbish dump ... very dusty ... and after the first rains up came the mushrooms which would be sent to the hospitals and convalescent homes for wounded servicemen ... and don't you remember, doing gym in those atrocious black bloomers?

'A very structured school ... old-fashioned ... a powerful sense of duty and responsibility ... rules ... doing things at certain times, like Monday afternoon riding, so we wore our jodhpurs at lunch ... games for all ... we played lacrosse and cricket ... and during the war some girls from Brighton had braved the torpedoes to continue their schooling here ... we were very patriotic ... we adopted a Royal Navy minesweeper – *HMS Sondra* – and knitted socks for the sailors ... there was also rationing ... the butter was divided into ten pieces, and the girl who did the dividing got the last piece ... and there were no school dances during the war.'

But they remembered some dances. They remembered a girl asking if they could wear a little make-up to one of them. Ella Le Maitre had studied her over her spectacles. 'Yes, why not,' was the reply, 'you're a very plain lot.'

Laughter and the tinkling of china cups, and a vague intimation of the woman who had helped to mould them. That formidable Headmistress in mortar board and gown and slightly owlsh spectacles. 'Ella ... showed the same courage, foresight and determination which the Founders had shown in the early years of the school's history,' wrote Joan Raikes in 1978, the seventy-fifth anniversary of Roedean. She also quotes Ella herself as saying: 'Our whole system revolves round our chapel. We do our best to give a sound Christian education, which implies a sense of responsibility towards one's fellow men, the idea of service, and good citizenship without regimentation.' That emphasis on individual responsibility again. Individual choice, emanating as surely out of the early emphasis on women's rights as out of Ella's Christianity and concern for others. Her guiding hand was upon the school for a quarter of its history. She retired in 1958, dying only two years later. Her ashes are preserved in a wall of the Roedean chapel.

'Ella would certainly have been thrilled to bits by the multi-cultural aspect of the school today,' said one of the women at tea. 'Her big dream of incorporating everyone into the Roedean tradition is now realised.' Another remarked that Ella would also be thrilled about the current academic results.

After Ella Le Maitre there followed quite a list of Headmistresses. Muriel Mills, educated at the University of Cape Town and Oxford, led Roedean through 1959; then Joan Raikes graced the school with an impressive seven-year stint (1960 to 1966), to be



followed by Barbara McCormick (1967 to 1968). Mrs Raikes stood in for another six months, before Ann de Frisching steered Roedean into the seventies (1969 to 1974).

Joan Raikes was an impressive woman, with wide-ranging interests and a formidable intellect. She first came to South Africa to teach history at Roedean, and she ran the history department at the University of the Witwatersrand during the war years. As well as her distinguished career in education, she developed a keen involvement in the Girl Guide movement and the Black Sash. She was also a classical scholar who was fluent in Greek. Through her talents, achievements and interests, Joan (who had married Dr HR Raikes, the principal of the University of the Witwatersrand) brought a special quality to Roedean. She also brought a keen perception of humanity and tradition. Once, when she was asked by an anxious parent just before a long weekend to speak to the girls about their behaviour out of school, she replied: 'I will not. Roedean girls know how to behave.' Her most fitting and lasting memorial is her detailed account of Roedean in *Honneur aux Dignes*, published in 1978 on the occasion of the school's seventy-fifth anniversary.

After training at London University, Barbara McCormick came to South Africa and taught at Kingsmead in Johannesburg and Herschel in the Cape before coming to Roedean as Headmistress in 1967. She was followed by Ann de Frisching, also from England with a First from Cambridge, who came to Roedean with a reputation as a scholar, linguist, teacher and administrator. One of her gifts was her intuitive understanding of those in her care, whose problems were handled with kind sympathy and put into helpful perspective which uplifted and restored a sense of balance. For many in the Roedean community, an enduring memory of Ann de Frisching is of this dignified woman walking her bulldogs around the hockey field in the late afternoon before returning up the drive to The Lodge.

'Then our only Headmaster came in,' the members of the class of '42 told me. 'He really got the school going. He was certainly right for the time.' They were acknowledging the contribution of Brian Law, who became Master of Roedean in 1975 and stayed until 1987.

His first aim, he said in a recent interview, had been to establish a period of stability for the school. He wanted girls to go right through the school from an early age, and to develop a feeling of belonging to a strong and secure community. His second aim, equally important, was to restore the value of steadily improving matriculation results. He wanted to instil a love of learning and to inspire a diligent work ethic among Roedean girls. He gave the final results prominence wherever he could, and he put them into the prospectus each year. Brian Law started the tradition of Roedean tours, thus turning the face of the school out towards the country in which it operated. He also admitted the first girls of 'other race' to Roedean at a time when this practice was all too rare.

To talk of 'other race' girls at Roedean seems very dated now. Lyn Nelson, the Headmistress who succeeded Law, made a revealing count not long before she retired in 2001. She found that 56 nationalities were represented in the pupil population, that they spoke 27 different languages at home and represented no fewer than 14 religious faiths. Roedean girls, all.

\* \* \*

Lyn Nelson was the woman who piloted Roedean from 1988 to 2001 – in other words,



through the 1990s, a momentous decade for South Africa and one of significant growth for Roedean. In walking round the school, I was frequently reminded that her term as Headmistress had been characterised by remarkable physical growth. The Drama Centre, the Technology Block, additions to the Hersov Music Centre, St Margaret's Block – all materialised within her arrival and departure dates.

Lyn Nelson was an excellent Headmistress, a force to be reckoned with, whose work at Roedean was based on a solid philosophical rationale. In her own words: 'I think the work of first-class education should be based on the concept of multiple intelligences. If children have an area of strength, it should be allowed to develop. So let's seek out many areas for self development at Roedean. Let's have variety. We directed the school towards making strong young women, each one finding her own particular set of potencies.'

In the 1990s the school entered another phase of rapid expansion – ultimately from around 500 pupils in the late 1980s to more than 700 girls by the turn of the century. This emphasis on variety and individuality accorded powerfully with the Roedean tradition. At the same time, the changes inside the school gates seemed perfectly tailored to the swift socio-political metamorphosis occurring without.

The idea of transplanting a nineteenth-century English public school for girls into one of Britain's most troublesome, newly acquired colonies seems, in retrospect, preposterous. To expect it to last through the various metamorphoses of that colony seems even more so. Ironically, though, the colonial experience in all its manifestations served to cocoon the original – that spirit of striving for equality for women coupled with the great traditions of truth, honour, freedom and courtesy which run in a line from King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table straight through to the inscription above the fireplace in Roedean's Founders' Hall. That is why the notion of acculturation seems too crude a label to attach to the processes taking place in this remarkable school.

'Yes, it was an English school. That's the tradition,' one of the black Ante-matric girls told me. 'It still is. But it's becoming cosmopolitan. It's changing. You should have seen some of the spectacular African influences in the dresses at the Matric Dance ...' And later in our conversation, she said: 'You know the things I most looked forward to when I knew I was coming to Roedean? The library, the books. And Kat's courtyard – it's so gentle and beautiful.'

Lyn Nelson left at the end of 2001, to be replaced by Mary Williams, a woman whose career so far has deeply involved her in the private school sector in South Africa. 'My mandate,' she says, 'is to take a school that is at the top of its class and in today's very troubled educational world create a much more nurturing environment. The rigorous work ethic must obviously be retained, but we must strive for happiness as well.'

\* \* \*

One morning I spoke to the Junior Headmistress Jan Mallen, whose grandmother was a founding member of the Roedean Board, and whose mother is one of the oldest Old Girls. 'As a teacher, I'm working as much with values as I am with education,' she remarked. Her vision for a sound foundation in a child's education is one where values, respect for oneself, integrity and kindness, are as important as the discipline of learning and a striving for excellence.



For Jan, linked to the teaching of these values must be a determination to make them sustainable in each individual life. 'We encourage the children not only to strive for originality but to develop empathy and gentleness, too. There is an extraordinary community spirit in the Junior School, between parents, pupils and staff,' she told me. 'We have created a support network; there is a fellowship; love and trust – these sustain us as individuals.'

Jan is concerned about the impact of technology on children's lives. Television, computers, cell phones - all cause an emotional and creative alienation. 'It also means that children may exercise less. They may live their childhoods indoors ...'

That is why she has introduced hopscotch and is so keen on the enormous jungle-gyms that are a feature of Roedean's Junior School play areas. Sport is an integral part of the Junior School curriculum. She also stresses the importance of life skills and of what she sees as '... educating the girls for the future and a global world. The curriculum is geared to this concept. And so the girls learn chess, but also take classes in junior entrepreneurship, where they begin to grasp the concept of entrepreneurial problem solving.

'But everything we do here in the Junior School,' she continues, 'is designed to give girls the space to be children. That's why I love the fairy garden and the fairy dell. Fairies have a central place in the Junior School simply because they are so important to the imagination, and imagination is the most important intellectual tool we've got, linking directly into reading, creating, using knowledge rather than just accessing data. It's only through the imagination, through the ability to dream and see fairies that data has the potential to become knowledge.'

Behind Jan Mallen in the Roedean century stand some significant Junior School figures. Lorna Thomas (Park) was Headmistress between 1983 and 1993. She came to South Africa from her Scottish birthplace, via Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), taking up a teaching post at Roedean in 1974. She was much loved by staff and girls alike, and her elevation to Junior School Headmistress was immediately popular. Her running of the school, according to contemporary documents, proved to be 'impeccable'. She employed an open-door policy, and in dealing with problems her 'good Scottish common sense' invariably prevailed. One of her many achievements as Headmistress was the planning and construction of the St Margaret's Block. But above all it was Lorna's love of people (not least the children under her care) that added so much to the quality of the Roedean Junior School tradition.

Maxie Kuhn, widely known as Mevrouw among her pupils, taught for 37 years at Roedean. During the final 11 of these she occupied the Junior Headmistress's chair, retiring in 1982. Before Kuhn, such illustrious names as Rosemary Snow, Joan Lewendon, Rena Mackinnon and Mabel Bayley graced the school. Miss Bayley was Junior School Headmistress from 1923 to 1931. She was multi-talented, like many women of that period, and became well known for writing plays for her pupils to perform, and also did much to enhance the beauty of the gardens, particularly those that had been left wild.

Individual idiosyncrasies and achievements aside, all these women appeared to possess the right balance between sound educational practice and that extraordinary caring for their charges that has become the hallmark of the Roedean Junior School. They possessed something more besides: a holistic view of human beings and the varying contributions



they can make to the world. As Rosemary Snow wrote in 1968:

'Education is not measured only by academic, sporting or cultural achievement. What one is is as important as what one does. There are many people who make their contribution to the world as much by being as by doing. Particularly is this true of women, whose role, whatever profession they may practise, is, most often, to be the heart and soul of a home.'

Back in the present, Jan Mallen showed me an upstairs space called the Discovery Zone, consisting of the Junior School Computer Centre, the Library and the Fairy Dell, where a class was in progress. The girls sat on small chairs at small tables. Posters hanging from the ceiling explained the Dewey system. The teacher said to the little sea of bright faces that a system now installed on the computer would assist pupils 'to be independent users of the library'. A picture of the three Brontë sisters adorned one wall; on another a quote from Francis Bacon: *Some books are to be tasted, others swallowed, and some to be chewed and digested*. All at once a burst of singing filtered up from downstairs, then some foot stamping and a cascade of chords played on the piano. The girls in the Library were hardly distracted. They were writing in their work books the title and author of the book they had been reading over the weekend: *Holes*, *Walk Two Moons*, *Tomorrow when the War Began*, *The Wind Singer*, and so on. In another part of the Discovery Zone, a row of tousled heads bent over computer keyboards.

\* \* \*

There may be a perception that Roedean is an elitist school, but that perception is negated by the girls themselves. It seems clear that much of the perceived elitism was rooted in people's responses to their own sense of colonial superiority. To begin with, all Roedean teachers tended to come from England. The syllabuses were loaded with things English, such as English history and English literature. It is paradoxical that one of the school's strengths – its rootedness in an established cultural continuity – should also be at the heart of some people's objections to it. The elitist school; the privilege, the cost of the fees; the excellence of the education, all combine in some manifestation of the colonial imagination into a badge of self-conscious superiority. In talking with the wide diversity of Roedean girls, however, nothing could be further from that image.

'Of course we do the Brontës and Shakespeare,' an Ante-matric told me, 'but we also read JM Coetzee's *Disgrace*.'

'Oh, the elitist thing,' a group of lively Matric girls said. 'Of course, there are wealthy families here, but you don't really know who. Nobody flaunts their wealth any more. It's just not done. If Roedean had a sense of its own elitism in the past, it's definitely shedding that perception now.'

There can be little doubt that the social and political changes of the 1990s, the eye-to-eye contacts with diverse cultures, have brought a new sophistication and self-awareness to the school, but the ethos of the school remains indelible: the constant emphasis on knightly honour, the quest for truth, the value of courtesy and kindness to others. Such an ethos is hardly conducive to elitism.

'I came from an Afrikaans co-ed school,' said one of the Matrics. 'I was kicking and screaming about it. I hated the idea of coming here. I thought of all those reserved English girls drinking tea with their little fingers sticking out. But of course it was quite different.'



This comment brings us back full circle to those questions that presented themselves when one first encountered the school. What is the essential nature of Roedean? What lies behind the sometimes glib use of the word *tradition*? What, essentially, has lasted through the school's first century, and why?

Listen to the girls themselves:

'The motivational atmosphere. I suppose it comes from the early gender battles. And the old traditions like the prefect system, like calling our teachers "madam", like the rewards you get in extra privileges as you pass from one standard to the next.'

'The original Englishness of Roedean did last for a long time. But we're definitely a cosmopolitan school now. We're southern African. Strangely, though, this just seems to make the original traditions stronger. It's as if we're all determined to carry our value as a school, and that includes our traditions and our origins, on into the twenty-first century.'

'Roedean girls say what they think. They're not shy to have their say. You're allowed to have opinions, so long as you express them politely. And yet Roedean girls have this quiet air about them. We have a strange ability to melt in. We're adaptable. I think this is so because we've been taught to be polite, with a firm tradition behind us. And we're not attention seekers.'

'A teacher said to us the other day that she had noticed that all Roedean girls are beautiful. Not just pretty, but beautiful. It was a quality coming from the Roedean "air", the pride, the confidence.'

'I think the school is getting more and more real,' a Matric girl said. 'There's a good balance between tradition and modernisation. Our education is geared to the twenty-first century, no doubt, but the real tradition of Roedean has got to do with developing the individual wherever that may lead. Value your individuality, be proud of it, grow it, respect the individuality of others. That's one of the most valuable things we're taught at Roedean.'

While I spoke with this particular group of Matrics, one of them with a prefect's badge slipped quietly away. I asked where she was going. 'She's gone to ring the bell,' came the reply. In a moment we heard it: that gentle volley of 22 strikes commemorating the founding pupils.

\* \* \*

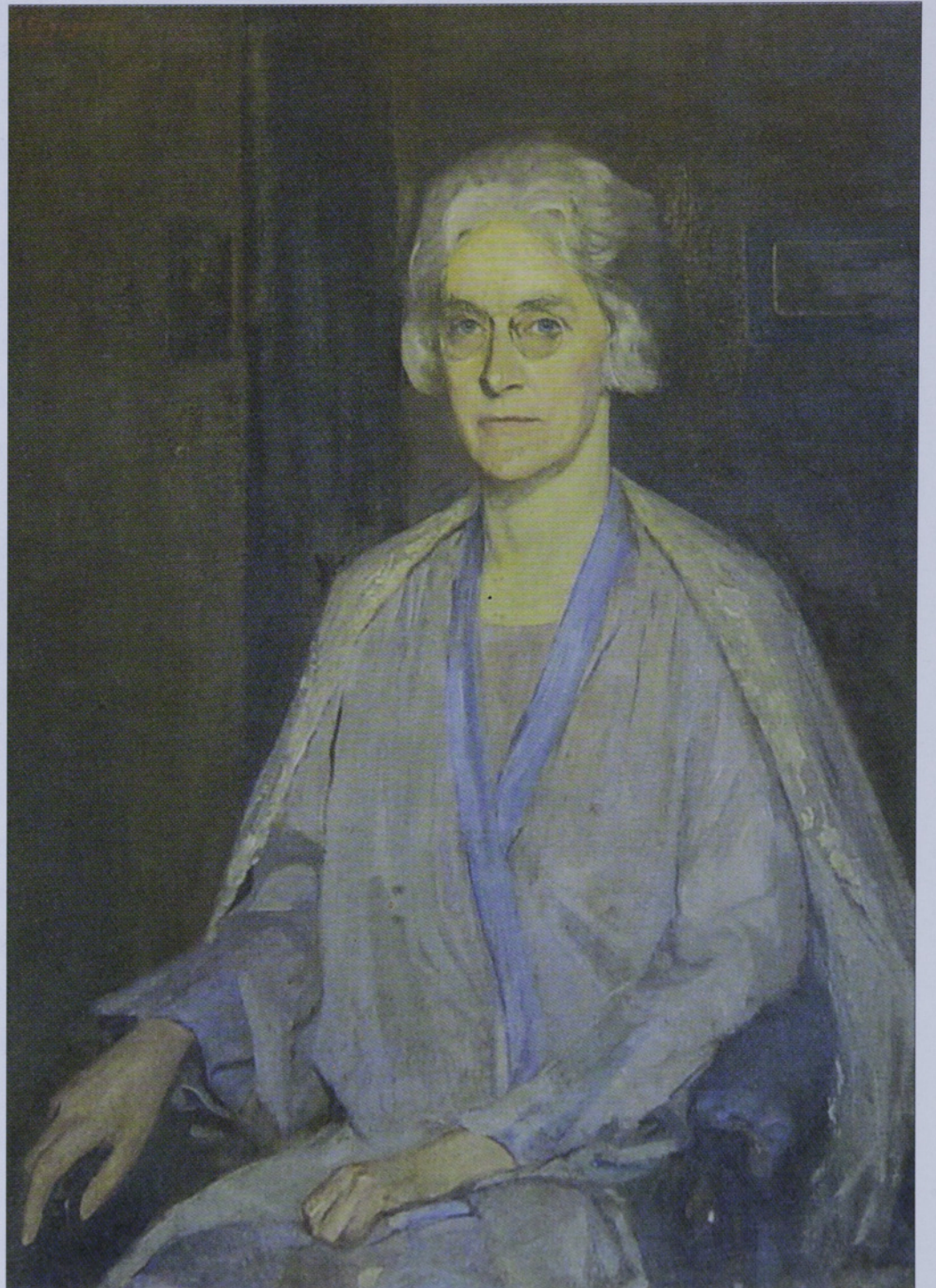
In 1993, Roedean commemorated its ninetieth birthday. It was decided to celebrate this event by having a rose named after the school. There were several excellent varieties from which to choose, including one that manifested what are called 'somatic mutations'. The blooms were often streaked with red or pink in unusual ways, and no two blooms were quite the same. When a group of Ante-matrics was shown the favoured varieties, one of the girls pointed to the rose with somatic mutations. 'That's Roedean,' she said. When asked why, she replied without hesitation: 'Because every bloom is different, like every Roedean girl.'

Thus, through this spontaneous expression of the nurturing of the individual embedded in the school's most instinctive reflexes, was *Rosa Roedean* born. What follows in this centenary book is as much about the many individuals counted within the school's family as it is about the school itself.



# I IN THE BEGINNING

*'Now pay we homage to Founders who loved us,  
Loved us, and taught us, and gave us our code.'*



*Portraits of Theresa Lawrence (left) and Katherine Margaret Earle (right), the  
founders of Roedean in South Africa.*



**T**heresa Lawrence and Katherine Margaret Earle are names that will never be forgotten at Roedean. Nor will the name of Rebecca Scott, the third person in the Founder triumvirate. But it was the first two, known simply by their initials – TL and KME – who were primarily responsible for a Roedean presence in South Africa. From whichever angle one cares to approach them, the Founders of Roedean must be described as remarkable women.

Their courage was astonishing. These two educated young women forsook friends and family in England to travel to South Africa at a time when the whole country was still staggering in the aftermath of the Anglo-Boer War. Johannesburg in those days was little more than a mining town; a powerful one, it was true, but it would be several decades before it could claim to be South Africa's premier city. Conditions were wild and difficult compared to those prevailing at the mother school at Brighton on the English south coast. Yet they came with that fine Victorian ideal of service to others, and with a desire to promote the equality of women and the importance of an education to match the claim.

But what were they really like, these intrepid pioneers? They certainly looked the part, as the early photographs testify. They were dignified, and they brought with them to the rough and mercenary mining town a determination to succeed in a man's world, plus a genuine love of gentleness and beauty. KME in particular possessed a keen appreciation of beauty which constantly inspired her contribution to developments at Roedean. It was she who began the task of laying out the school gardens, which have given such pleasure to generations of Roedean pupils and teachers alike. TL was more focused on the practicalities of the school. She was constantly aware of the cost of things. She did the school accounts. And it was early noticed that both Founders paid out of their own pockets for many extra things needed at the school.

Rebecca Scott (universally known and loved as Scottie) came from England after Roedean had been established. She was the matron of the various dormitories, and did much of the routine secretarial work as well. After TL and KME (by then in a wheelchair) had retired, Scottie was tireless in her care of them.

Together, these gentle but definitely not faint-hearted individuals extended their interests far beyond the perimeters of the school. They started a women's reform club in Johannesburg, thus creating a forum for the discussion of such burning issues as women's suffrage and all those laws that, in the early decades of the twentieth century, were unjust to women. Not content with mere discussion, the Founders also established a refuge for destitute girls – and there were many of these in the aftermath of the Boer War.

TL and KME retired in 1930. It was the year that the vote was granted to women. Nearly a third of the century we now celebrate belonged to them; and we have the results of their influence – their ideals, their humanity, their constancy – around us still.



*Girls playing cricket at Roedean Brighton in 1907. The school was founded in 1885 by the three eldest Lawrence sisters, Penelope, Dorothy and Millicent, fondly known as 'The Firm'.*



*Pictured from left: Penelope, Dorothy and Millicent Lawrence. The redoubtable sisters were determined to offer an education similar to that found in boys' public schools in Britain. It was Millicent who had the vision of a Roedean overseas, and their youngest sister Theresa took up the challenge.*

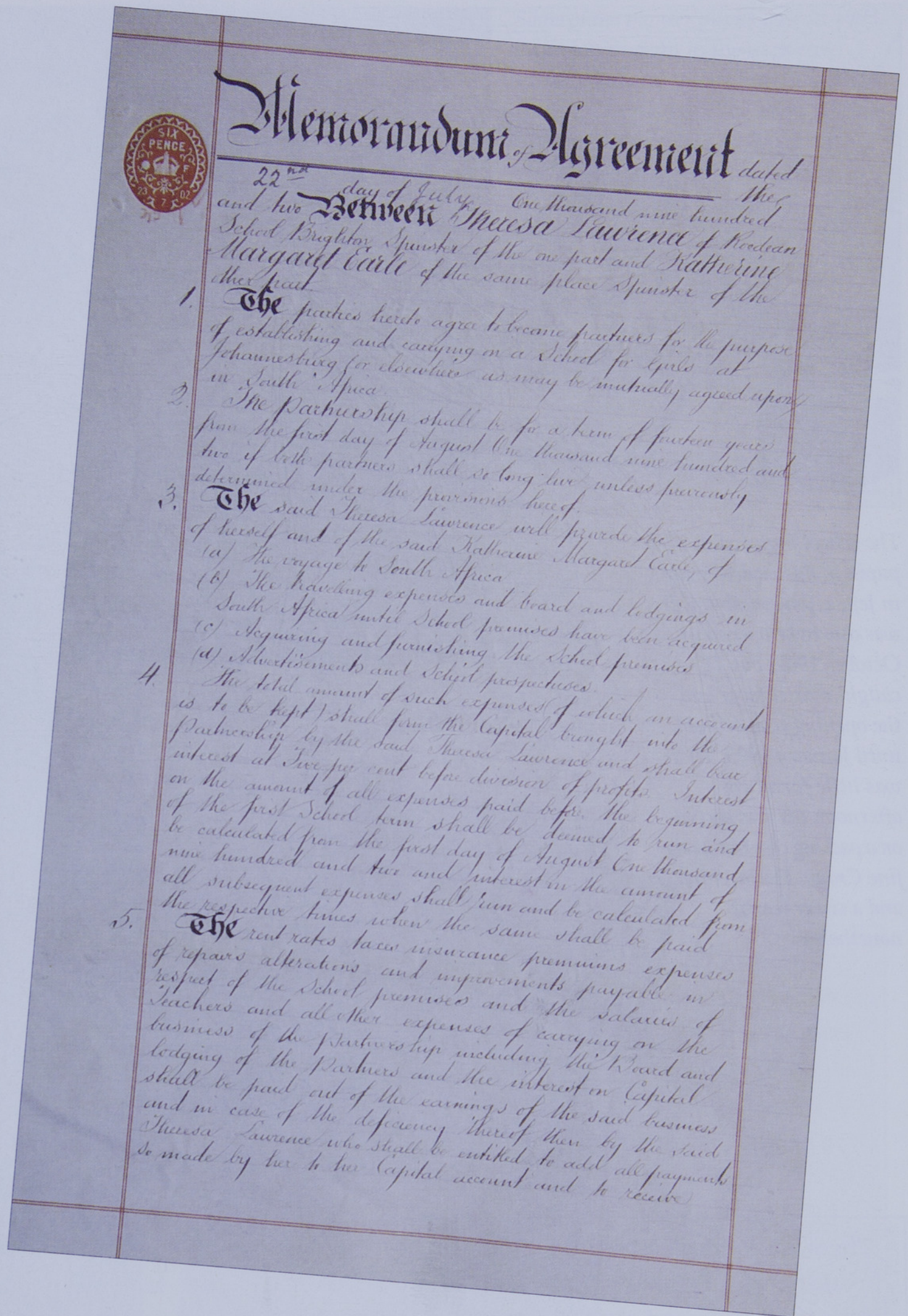




Theresa Lawrence was the youngest of eight Lawrence sisters, and was born in Germany in 1871. She was schooled at Roedean Brighton and went on to study at Cambridge, a rare achievement for women of that era. She returned to her sisters' school to teach history before coming out to South Africa.



TL persuaded her close friend Katherine Margaret Earle to accompany her to South Africa. 'KME' was the daughter of an Oxford professor, the Reverend John Earle. It is said that as a girl she was doted on by Lewis Carroll, the author of Alice in Wonderland, who was a colleague of her father. She met TL when they were at school together at Roedean Brighton, and she, too, studied at Cambridge. She was a fine classical scholar and an inspired teacher.



A formal agreement was drawn up between TL and KME on the founding of Roedean (SA), and still survives in the Ark.





The school began with 22 pupils in this modest house in Jeppe, Johannesburg. It was due to be opened in October 1902, but TL caught scarlet fever and the opening was delayed until January 1903. There was little furniture – afternoon tea was served on a packing case but using fine Crown Derby china and a silver teapot nonetheless.

'... When I first came under their rule, as a very small junior, they were in their early forties; fine and fastidious ... T.L. large, untidy and kind, used to drift about the school and gardens (often with a tray of untasted mid-morning tea balanced on one hand) with what we soon learned to be a quite misleading air of vagueness and absent-mindedness ...

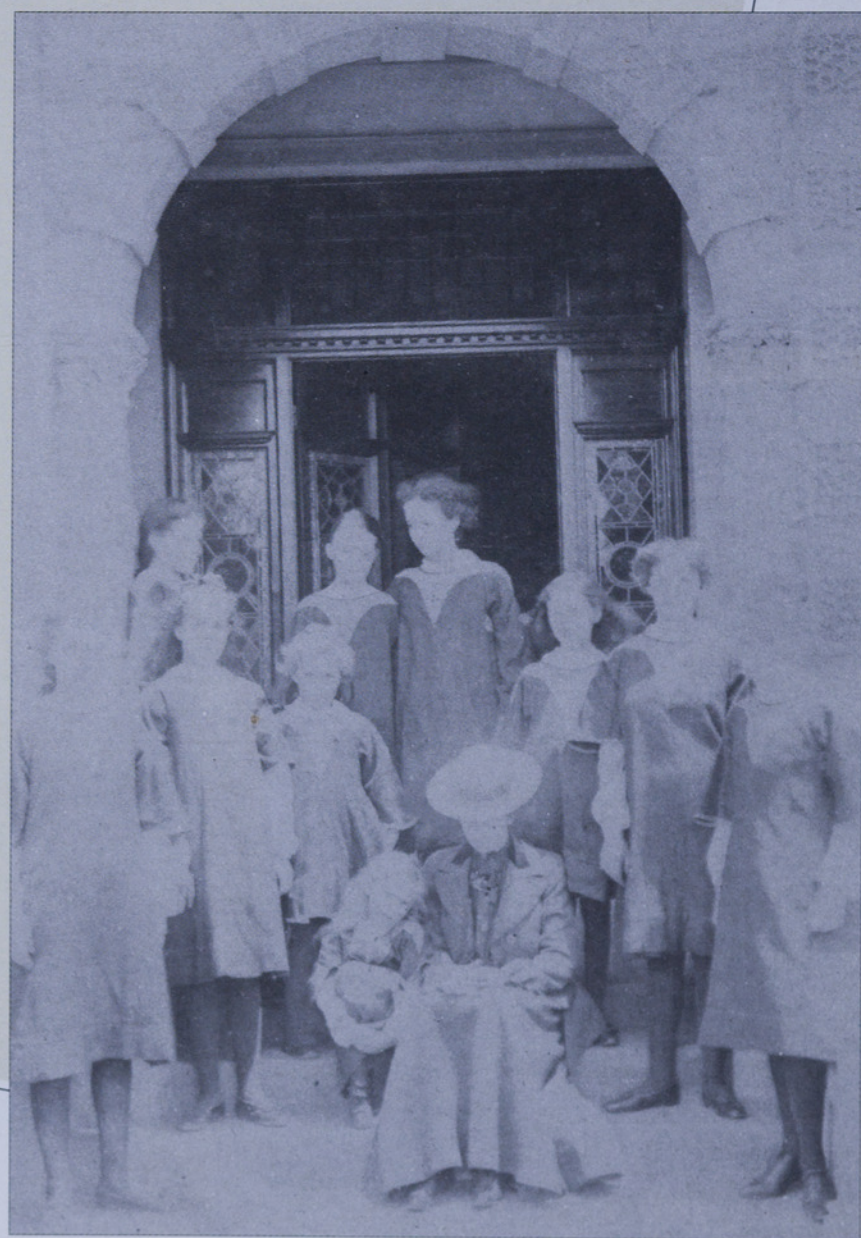
Anyone trying to describe T.L. must stress her magnanimity, her complete absence of pettiness or self-consciousness, her physical and moral fearlessness and her child-like zest for life. Her zest might be child-like, but she was in no

way childish. She was capable of formidable wrath when she came into touch with meanness or injustice; she was ingenious and resourceful in practical matters, she had the habit of authority and she pursued her ends (always disinterested) with single-mindedness and relentless pertinacity.

'K.M.E once said of her that she showed to the full a quality enjoyed by all the Lawrences, that of "felicitas", the quality of being fortunate. "T.L.", she said, "nearly always got what she wanted, and what she wanted was nearly always right, if not for the expected reasons then for reasons that could not have been foretold."' Lucy Sutherland, Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

'There were the usual scares of people breaking in. T.L. bought a revolver and invented a system of burglar alarms: tin baths of water on the stairs with strings across the banisters. The results were rather alarming when she forgot these preparations and wandered upstairs waving her revolver before her.'

Ida Wagner 1906–1914.



Pupils and staff pictured in 1903 at the next house in St Andrew's Road, Parktown. As the number of pupils was increasing, space was limited and TL and KME were obliged to sleep in the stables. The school moved once more, to a slightly bigger house in St Patrick's Road, Parktown before the founders were able to start building their own school on the kopje.





Some of the pioneer pupils pose in 1903. From left to right in the back row: Florence Raine, Connie Britten and Molly Lorentz. Middle row: Ilma Marx, Madge Bell and Winnie Britten. Front row: Waldemar Marx and May Lorentz. In the early years several boys attended Roedean, and it is said that more than one Old Boy owed his ability in cricket to the coaching of T.L.

'It is nearly half a century since I first met T.L. I was a very small new girl, and she was a beautiful young woman with almost snow-white hair, bubbling over with humour and kindness ... My most outstanding memories are of her complete selflessness, her generosity, her vision, and above all her understanding and love of all girls. The stupider and more tiresome a girl was, the more T.L. gave of herself.

'There was nothing to which T.L. could not turn her hand. I have known her add to her duties as Headmistress the teaching of history, French, Latin, English, maths and gym – and to act as Matron at the same time. Many an old girl must remember T.L. walking through the dormitories at all hours of the night, comforting a sick girl or giving hot milk to one who could not sleep.'

*Extract from a letter to The African Roedean magazine by Former Head Girl – Ernestine Fouché.*

**ROEDEAN SCHOOL**  
To the Editor, "Rand Daily Mail."  
Sir,—In the account in your paper of the opening of the new buildings at Roedean School, you refer to it throughout as "the" Roedean School.  
This is a slight error, but it is illustrative of the curious fact that though the school has been in Johannesburg for twenty years there is still a general misunderstanding as to its name. It is very seldom pronounced rightly, that is, with an equal emphasis on each of its two syllables; and it is often spelt "Rhodian" or "Rhodean." There seems to be a vague feeling that the school is in some way connected with Cecil Rhodes, which is quite erroneous.  
Roedean School in England (which is the parent school and in such close connection with this Roedean that the two almost form one school) was called after the hill on which it is built—Rodean, "the little hill of the roe." The school overlooks the sea half way between Brighton and Rottingdean, and over the rise is the little village of Obingdean (made famous by Harrison Ainsworth). In fact, "dean" is the old name for hill in that part of Sussex. The school arms represent a roe upon a hill.—I am, etc.,  
OLD ROEDEANIAN.

'I taught at Roedean in 1921 and when I was sufficiently irritated by a young woman's cheating, I complained to T.L. She said "Yes, dear, I know she cheats, but have you ever thought what lovely hair she has?"'  
Ida Wagner.

A cutting from The Star newspaper, early 1930s, explaining the meaning of the name 'Roedean'.



Term 1922 (December)

Dec 4-11. Food. Junior 157-13-11 Senior 164-10-6

Wages.  
Petty Cash.  
Disbts.  
School Exps.  
Music.  
Dancing & Games.  
Salaries. (Includ 2540 Dets).  
Chemist & Doctor.  
Garage & Garden.  
Sundries.

46 - 6.  
5 - -  
6 16 6.  
8 - -  
232 18 10  
11 11 -  
1391 8 -  
41 10 -  
10 - 3  
4 10 -

1753 3 11

Dec 20

Food. Junior 157-13-11 Senior 164-10-6

Laundry.  
Repairs & Renewals.  
Disbts.  
School Expenses. (Includ 2540 Dets).  
Music.  
Stationery.  
Dancing & Games.  
Coal.  
Conveyance.  
Chemist & Doctor.  
Garage & Garden.

326 14 5  
49 16 9  
31 12 6  
22 - 8  
86 18 8  
5 3 11  
8 5 2  
3 16 6  
14 2 6  
114 - -  
2 10 7  
10 9 1

605 0 9

Dec 18-20-

Wages.  
Petty Cash.  
School Expenses.  
Salaries.  
Garage & Garden.  
Sundries.

34 13 9  
2 10 -  
2 4 -  
5 - -  
2 14 -  
100 10 -

127 6 9

2505 10 7

83 3 4

2688 13 11

Bal. off.

Reconciliation

Credit Bal. per Pass Book.

Less chs/p. rec. Pearce 2579

Dec. Sumner. 75 40-0 off.  
Pearce 28 5-0 off.  
Said 96004 5-0 off.  
Goodwin 21 5-0 10 p.  
Dares 23 3-9 4 p.  
Somes 46 17-0 off.  
Luttrell 50 10-0 off.  
Gough 51 1-9-6 p.

61 11 8

66 11 8

Credit Bal. per Cash Book.

83 3 4

This page from the 1922 cash book shows the monthly expenses for the school. TL and KME frequently paid for items such as music and dancing lessons out of their own pockets.



Pr

|         |              |     |         |
|---------|--------------|-----|---------|
| 1904    |              |     |         |
| July 26 | To Chg       | 703 | 5       |
| 27      |              | 4   | 2 10    |
| Aug 2   |              | 8   | 8       |
|         |              | 6   | 1 1     |
| 3       |              | 9   | 66 5 3  |
|         | Rubber Stamp |     | 14      |
|         | Class 1 C    |     | 83 10 3 |
|         | Just         |     |         |

Pr

1904  
July 20 By Cash 75  
Aug 2 345

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Food 1095

Oct 17 - 1900

to MISS LAWRENCE and MISS EARLE.

de Pauline

|    |    |
|----|----|
| 13 | 13 |
|----|----|

1 11 6

10

10

Disbursements :—

|                                            |  |    |   |
|--------------------------------------------|--|----|---|
| Conveyance                                 |  |    |   |
| Disbursements:—                            |  |    |   |
| Drawing Materials 4/- Ribbon 1/6 Pills 2/- |  | 7  | 6 |
| Music 2/6 Algebra 2/- Songs 1/- m.me       |  | 5  | 6 |
| de Siqué 1/- medical fees 10/-             |  | 11 |   |

14

Cheques to be made payable to THE MISSES LAWRENCE and EARLE.

Matriculation Fee

|    |    |   |
|----|----|---|
| 1  | 4  |   |
| 17 | 8  | 6 |
| 2  | 5  |   |
| 19 | 13 | 6 |

Ernestine Fouché



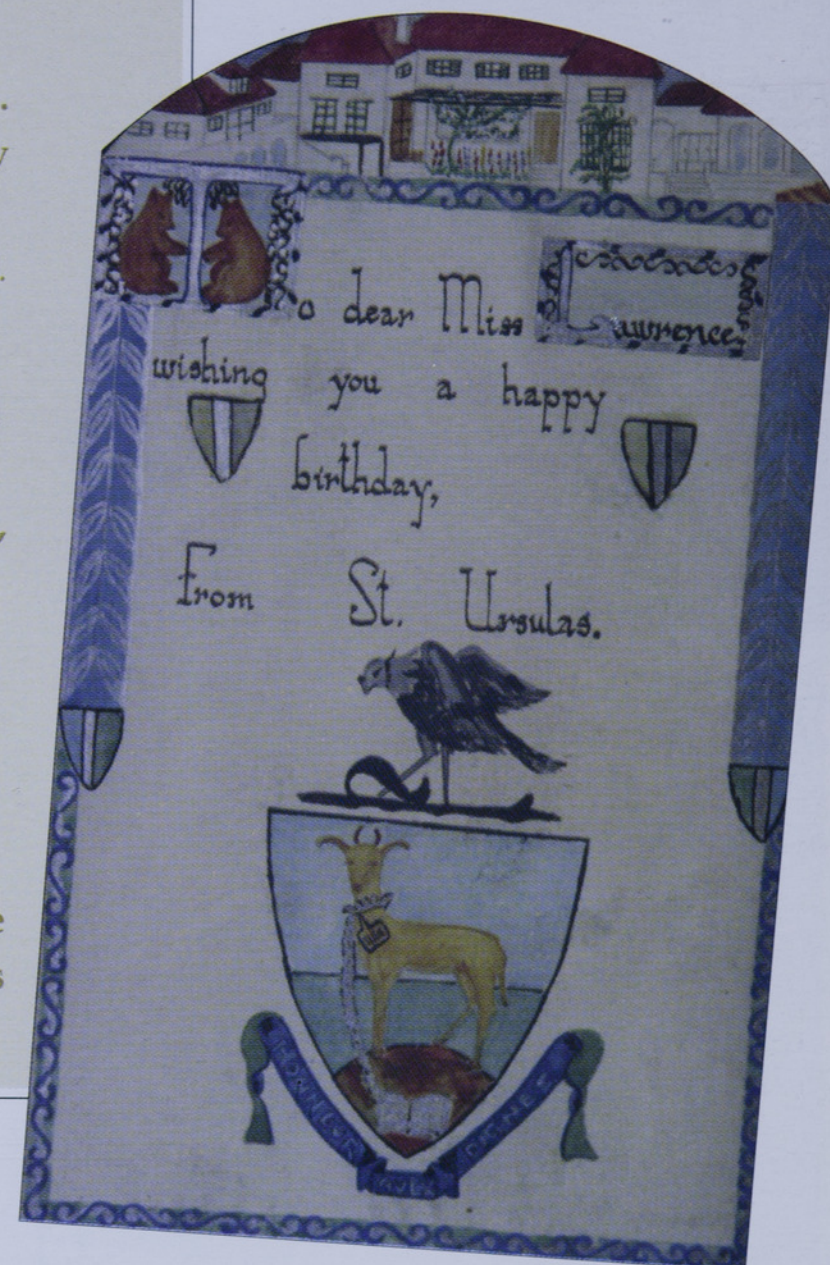
'... Few people seem to remember what Miss Lawrence and Miss Earle did for this city, apart from their valuable work at the school. They felt the women of Johannesburg needed some organisation to protect them and their children, so they started the Women's Reform Club ... I was the first secretary. [Our main aim] was to get votes for women. Both Miss Lawrence and Miss Earle felt women should be in every political activity, and they worked with this object in mind.'

*An extract from a letter by Mrs PB Lys to The African Roedean magazine.*

As well as women's suffrage, the club's object was the reform of unjust laws relating to women. Georgina Walker, a Vice-Principal of Collegiate School in Pietermaritzburg, remembered a dinner held in T.L.'s honour. At first she found T.L. disappointingly vague, but then, '...when everyone else was harping on the difficulties of giving women the vote it was T.L. who ruthlessly cut away everything, leaving the principle to stand out uncompromisingly: sex should and could never be a bar to individual franchise, and that any deviation from this principle on the score of possible eventualities was entirely unethical.'

T.L. and K.M.E. also started a refuge home for destitute girls in Bree Street. It grew so large that it was later incorporated in the Children's Aid Society.

*An undated birthday card made for TL by the girls of St Ursula's.*



*Katherine Margaret Earle. One early pupil wrote: 'She opened our eyes to all that was great and beautiful in life.'*



'The K.M.E. of those early days was a strikingly handsome woman, always beautifully dressed, and extremely active – she was always busy at some task or other; nothing was too trivial for her; some tasks indeed, such as "nightly foot inspection", would probably surprise modern members of staff ... Her brilliant mind found interest in everything; her adopted country, its peoples and problems were enthusiastically studied – she set herself to learn Dutch, and when Afrikaans became the official language she took up the study of that language, too, reading in it systematically to the end. Keenly interested in politics, she was always ready to talk to us on the questions of the day, both domestic and foreign. Our sluggish interest in Latin prose would be suddenly stimulated by having an Ulster manifesto set us to turn into Latin. On Sunday evenings she read to us, and for many of us this was the first awakening of interest in literature.'

*Ernestine Fouché*





*KME in front of the new school building in 1904. It was only in 1922 that the Founders bought a Buick motor car; until then they travelled to town or called on their neighbours in a trap.*

**'In Latin lessons we were required to write in capital letters across the top of the page POSSUNT QUIA POSSE VIDENTUR – They Can because They Think They Can and this was emphasised again and again by K.M.E.'**  
*Iris Botha*

**'... She had a particularly beautiful speaking voice, and would read aloud to us in the evenings poetry, plays, stories, articles, imbuing verse and prose alike with a rare musical quality, which instilled into us a permanent love of fine language and literature.'**

*Erica Thompson (née Barry).*

*KME suffered from a progressively crippling disease. As one Old Girl noted: '... Her sheer cold courage was incredible ... In Miss Earle, if in anyone, we saw the spirit made visible as the body wasted. And yet her bodily presence was beautiful: there was nothing about her that was not exquisite.'*



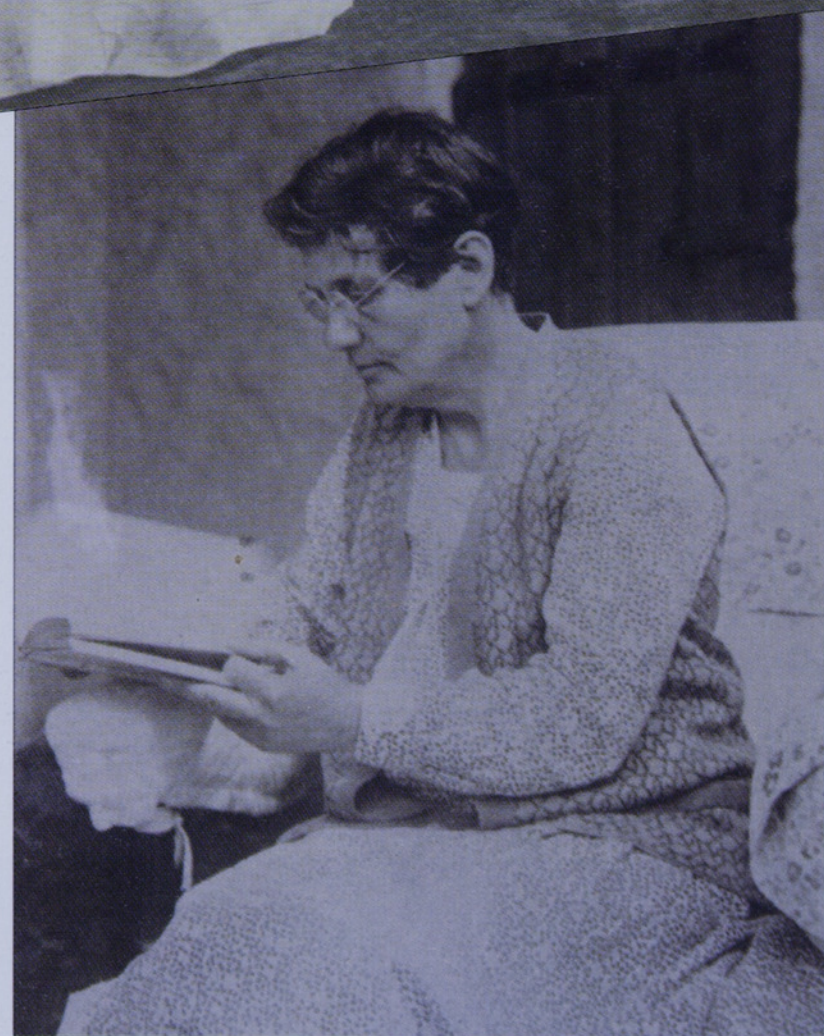
*KME in the garden before supper, dressed in her evening djibbah.*



Rebecca Scott, or 'Scottie' as she was known, was an integral part of Roedean's early history. She joined the school in 1912 as matron-housekeeper and went on to become vice-principal. She was a woman of boundless energy and ability. One Old Girl wrote: '... In any emergency it was to Scottie one turned. No problem of mathematics was beyond her solution; no translation of French or Latin baffled her; difficulties in grammar melted magically under her explanation.'



KME and Scottie in the garden. KME had begun laying out the garden for TL when the latter was away in England, and it remained one of her greatest passions. '... An invitation to take tea with KME was a command,' remembered one Old Girl. 'We sat near the sundial where a bed of blue larkspurs grew.'



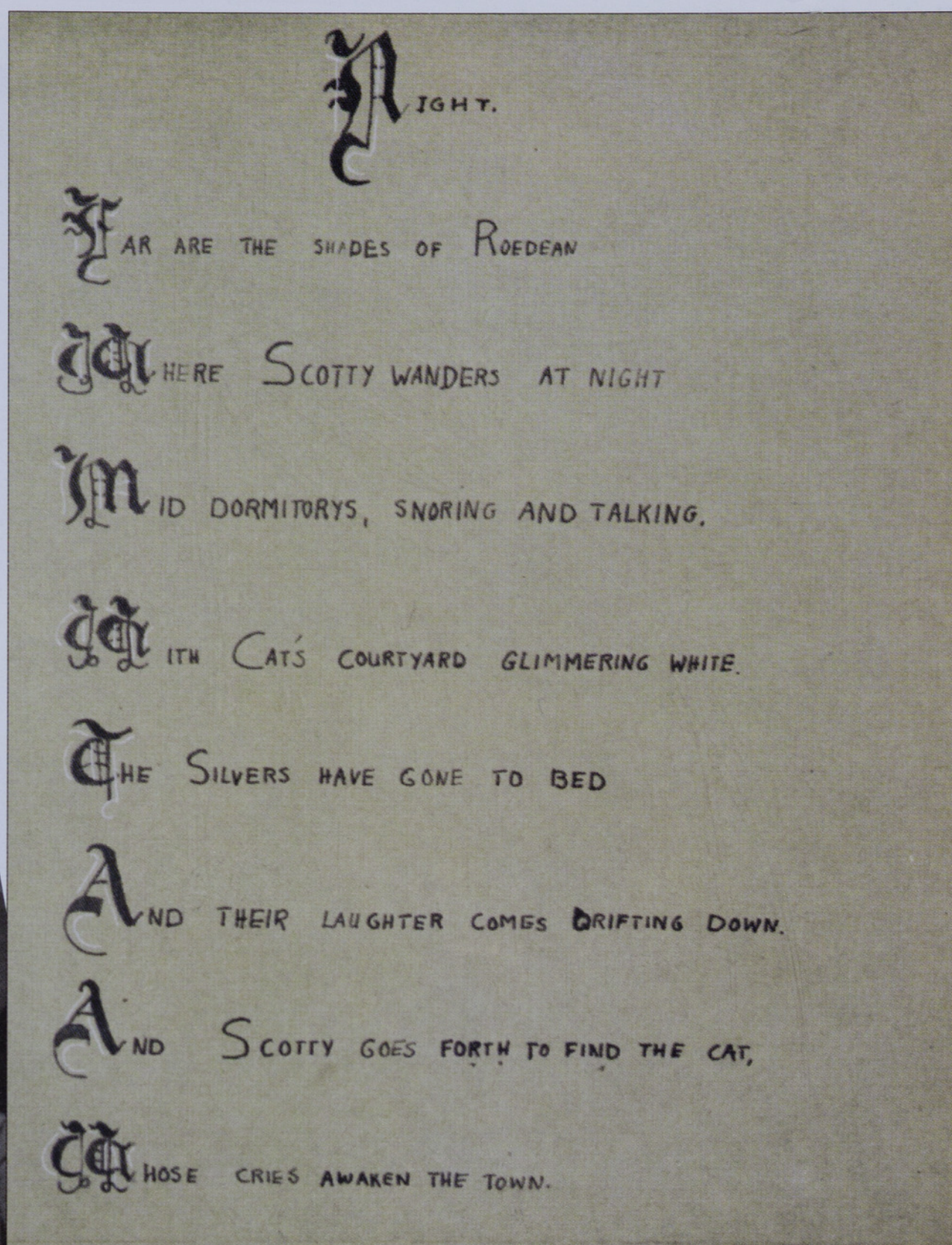
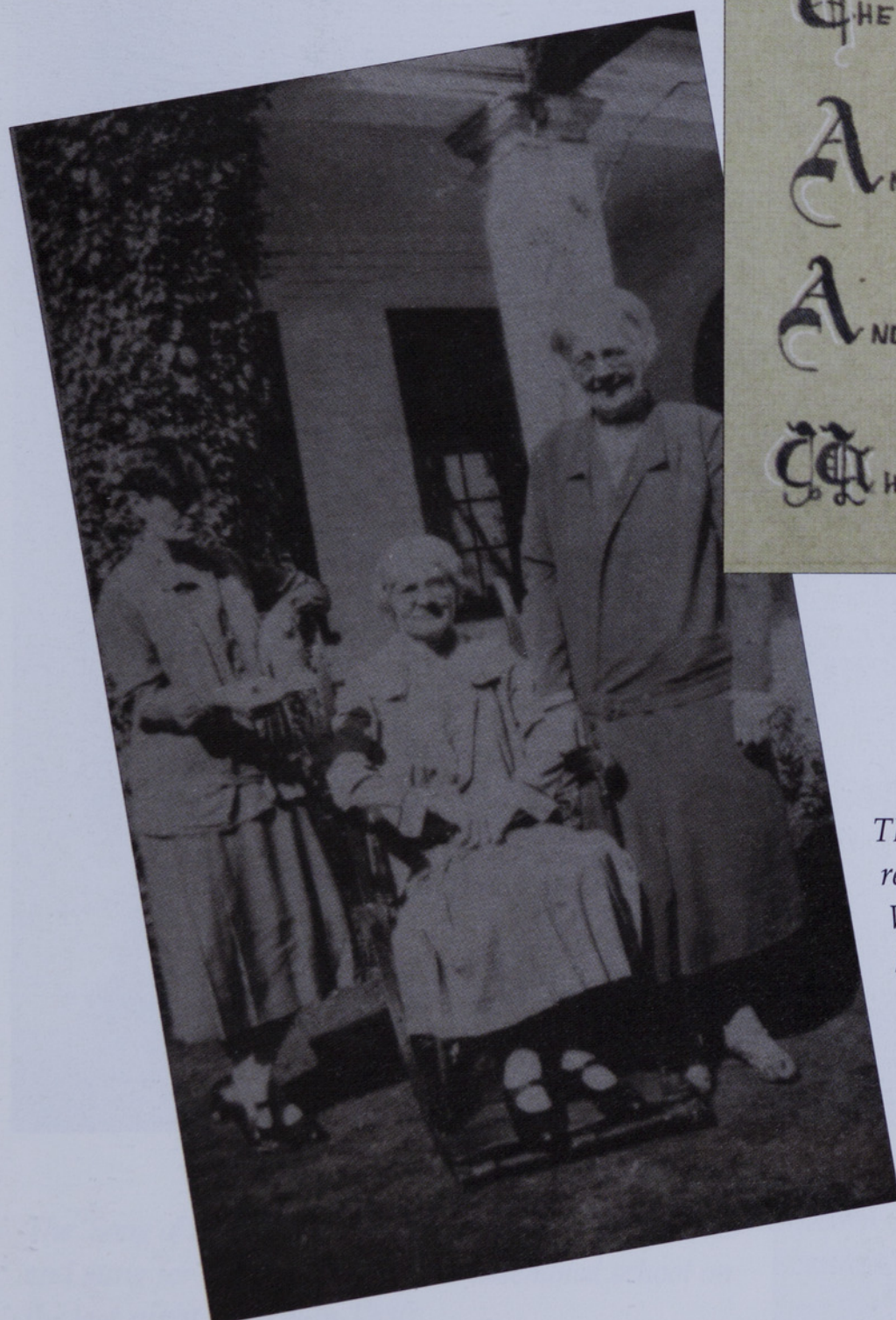
Scottie in later years. In a poem written for her ninetieth birthday, Old Girl Renée Stayt (née Berlein) wrote:

'... So much you gave us far beyond the reach  
Of School and classroom: yours to teach  
The worth of simple things, the value of good talk  
And how to find in common tasks  
The dignity of service.'



'Even at the time that I went to school in 1919 the pioneering spirit prevailed. St Katharine's was built during that period, with its lovely courtyard, and St Agnes' came into being. We all felt we were helping to build up the school to even better things. And we all felt that each of us mattered and that T.L., K.M.E. and Scottie knew us and cared.'

*Iris Botha.*



*This poem was written for Scottie by a pupil during the 1920s.*

*TL, KME and Scottie at the time of their retirement in 1930. The three were living in White River when KME died in the Barberton hospital in 1934. She was buried in the cemetery there. TL and Scottie spent the duration of the war in England, and returned to South Africa in 1947. TL died in White River in 1950 and was buried alongside KME. Scottie died 13 years later at the age of 93.*



*The beautiful mantelpiece in the dining room is carved with the initials of Theresa Lawrence and Katherine Margaret Earle.*



*This photograph was taken on the Founders' last Foundation Day in 1930. This is still one of the most important dates on the Roedean calendar, when past pupils gather to honour these indomitable women and the laying of the foundation stone.*



'... It is difficult among all that we owe them to emphasise any single debts. I should like, however, to speak of two things in particular which they offered to us. The first was an appreciation of beauty. This was stimulated both by the loveliness of the surroundings they made for us ... and by the sheer force of their assumption that the creation and enjoyment of beauty was one of the finest activities of mankind.

The second was the code of conduct they held out to us for our guidance. It demanded of us self-control, public spirit, consideration for others and the development of our faculties for our own happiness and that of others. With a characteristic care for restraint of statement as well as a sober precision of words they told us that they expected us to be "honourable, kind and seemly in conversation". The marks which two such women have left on those who came under their influence and on the institution which they founded were deep and, indeed, ineffaceable.'

Lucy Sutherland, Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

## Song of the Founders.

Now pay we homage to Founders who loved us,  
Loved us, and taught us, and gave us our code,  
Built up our walls at the birth of a city,  
Gathered us in and our banners bestowed.

Where nothing lay but the flint of the kopjes  
Planted they Youth, mid a pleasure of green;  
Vision has conjured us, fostered our spirit,  
Vision foretold the white walls of Roedean.

Thirty odd years laboured they to create us,  
Dreamed for us, schemed for us; all that we mean  
Garnered the Heads for us; wrought in us, sought in  
Sent us their loveliness - gave us Roedean.

Always because of them, shall we not falter,  
Silver, and copper, sub, non-sub, and gold,  
Girls of Roedean, independent and thorough,  
Hold high the torch as we held it of old.

Are you a Bear? <sup>Yes!</sup> } A Lamb? <sup>Yes!</sup> } A junior?  
                  <sup>No!</sup> }                   <sup>No!</sup> }  
Yes! } Then a Cat? <sup>Yes!</sup> } Whatever between  
                  <sup>No!</sup> }                   <sup>No!</sup> }  
Houses in rivalry lights up for battle  
All is for praise, and the might of Roedean.

When we fare hence, and the world tests our <sup>metal</sup>,  
Finding us faithful, courageous, and keen,  
Strangers shall know us for children of Founders,  
Calling a countersign: Pass, Friend, Roedean!

The 'Song of the Founders' was written by MW Spilhaus and sung for the first time by the assembled school on the last night of term in 1930.



# II

## '... A CODE OF RIGHT BEHAVIOUR'

*'We'll honour yet the School we knew,  
The best School of all;  
We'll honour yet the rule we knew  
Till the last bell call.'*



### Roedean Customs

**R**oedean expects  
every girl to be  
Honourable  
Seemly in Conver-  
sation, Kind.

C. Gordon-Smith December 1930



It is a truism that rules and regulations provide a clearer insight into the flavour of an institution – not least an institution like Roedean – than any avowal of intent. Of course, Roedean was a school for girls: its intent was education. Yet if that were all the evidence available, what a poor perception we would have of the particular ethos which began to permeate the white walls and arches of the school.

Luckily, we have the 'Roedean Rules'. Before they retired, the Founders composed a handwritten Book of Rules, aimed at guiding the school into the future. It is a remarkable document, a code of right behaviour, which tells us as much about the Founders' understanding of the eternal verities of human conduct as it does about social norms in the first third of the twentieth century. And they knew the difference between verity and period-based norms. This is abundantly clear by their insistence in the preamble that the 'general principles' enunciated in the rules must always remain, while the details would inevitably change with the passing of the decades.

The Roedean Book of Rules covers everything. It begins with a section on 'the right use of speech', which, it is noted, is important for the efficient functioning of communal life. The voice should be gentle, the enunciation clear; and sometimes silence could be as effective as speaking. Other rules in this section denounce bad language and slang, and list illnesses, accidents and 'other horrors' as undesirable topics of conversation.

All letters should be well written in content, style and calligraphy. But no more than one letter a week should be sent home. As a rationale for this limitation, the Book of Rules states that more time should be spent in putting into the mind (for example, by reading) than in taking out (via letter writing). And, of course, neither a lender nor a borrower be.

Clothing and personal appearance receive special attention. The chief test of good appearance is neatness and suitability. 'Simplicity is the criterion of good taste,' wrote the Founders. On the more practical side, no girl may send more than eight items to the laundry each week. Predictably, the rules forbade powder or cosmetics or bracelets or other adornments. And hair should be plaited at all times.

In spite of substantial folklore to the contrary, the food available at Roedean was 'wholesome'. It was provided for both health and enjoyment. However, girls should ensure that they were free from greediness and inordinate craving. No sweets were allowed.

Rules concerning cleanliness and hygiene are based on this fundamental principle: that the body is the temple of the spirit. Sport is compulsory, but care should be taken to protect the body from injury. For example, gloves and pads must be worn by batters and wicketkeepers when playing cricket.

Needless to say, the rules are very explicit when it comes to kissing. It is absolutely not allowed at Roedean. Neither are visitors allowed upstairs in the dormitories. Whistling is forbidden. As is the 'mauling' of other people, and using too much bath water.

What happened when girls broke the rules? A midnight feast led to disgrace. For talking to boys at the back of the hall, one unfortunate was banished to the sickroom for a week, with a dose of castor oil every morning. But the enforced memorising of passages from the Bible should not be used as a punishment.

Although we live in more relaxed times now, the general principles underlying the rules – encapsulated in the dictum that 'Roedean girls are seemly in conversation, courteous and kind' – have weathered well across the intervening decades and are still easily identifiable in the school at the start of the twenty-first century.



Roedean School,  
21 January, 1931.

Dear Girls,

On leaving Roedean we have prepared for you a book in which we have collected the customs which have grown up in the past twenty-eight years. It has been quite a long business to write them all out, and at first sight it might appear that they would be hard to memorize. The fact is however, that they have been reasonably well kept by most of you, without you having seen them written down at all; and that you have not let them spoil the spirit of joyous freedom which is the keynote of life at Roedean.

How would you explain this?—The truth is that they are not school rules at all, but as we point out in the preamble of our book, just a code of right behaviour, known instinctively by all well disposed persons who mean to live a life of usefulness and faithful work: and to make this clear to you we have, with your help, put into fair script the groundwork on which our customs rest. The details are of little importance and must be altered from time to time, but the general principles remain.

To act upon these at all times would be a counsel of perfection: but perfection should be the aim of all, and is our high ambition for all Roedeanians. We feel sure you will agree with us that the mere thinking them out and setting them down, has been a great satisfaction, and has made us feel perfection nearer to our grasp.

As long as we live we shall watch the careers of you all, from the greatest to the smallest, with undying interest: your successes will be our pride and joy, and your failures our sorrow.

We have said nothing of the higher help that is needed for the scheme of life we have set before you. It is difficult for us, who are but fellow-seekers with you, to put it into words; but it must become clearer and clearer to us, both as we write and as we read, that we cannot achieve perfection in our own strength alone.

So shall we pray for you without ceasing. May God keep you and bless you as long as life shall last—and may each one of you in her own way bring fresh honour to Roedean.

We are, now as always,  
the Old Heads that have cared for you,

T. LAWRENCE,  
K. M. EARLE.

When TL and KME retired in 1930, they left a book of handwritten rules and regulations, of which they said: 'They are not school rules at all ... just a code of right behaviour ... To act upon these at all times would be a counsel of perfection: but perfection should be the aim of all, and is our high ambition for all Roedeanians ...'.

'The Principal's Sitting Room', from an early school brochure. The room, in Bears' House, is now used as a study for Ante-matrices.





1. Every girl is expected to attend Matins on Sunday except those (a) whose parents have conscientious objections (b) whose parents prefer another form of worship + for whom it can be arranged. (c) officers who have attended Holy Communion that day. Nevertheless all officers are asked to attend either morning or evening Service occasionally throughout the term.

N.B. Girls who are confirmed but not yet officers, may attend Holy Communion, but may not miss Matins more than once a month.

- 2 Those who for any reason do not attend Matins must go for a walk, unless they have already walked to Church.

3. At about 11.30 those that are not at Matins + who are not prefects will attend reading. Subprefects will sometimes be allowed to read a good book to themselves.

All are expected to preserve a quiet time, both for themselves + for others, between 10.30 + 12.30. At least one hour of this time should be spent in good reading.

4. Between dinner + tea pupils rest on their beds. During that time good literature may be read. Nevertheless pupils may get up after 3 o'clock in winter, + 3.30 in Summer to receive visitors.

- 5 Every girl must attend reading at six o'clock <sup>PM</sup> in the Summer, + 5.45 P.M. in the winter on Sunday.

6. After tea all non officers are obliged, + subprefects are advised, to take a walk. Every Sunday one prefect + two subprefects are asked to assist the Mistress in charge by going for this walk.

## CUSTOMS OF ROEDEAN



Roedean School is a free community and its customs are such as are observed all the world over by those who are governed by considerations of courtesy and the convenience of others.

They fall under two heads:—

Those that are courteous and convenient all the world over. Those that are courteous and convenient at Roedean. It follows that the first should be observed at all times, and the second from the moment a girl enters the school until the time that she leaves it.

These customs would not require formulating if every girl had a fully trained judgment. As however the judgment of all young persons requires training it is necessary to state at all events those customs the reasons for which are least obvious.

It will at once appear that this statement does not constitute a complete compendium of behaviour, and it is expected that every girl will exercise her judgment in all contingencies for which no custom is formulated.

Officers are selected from girls whose judgment has won respect. It is hoped that every girl who has passed through the school will have a judgment sufficiently developed to avoid actions which involve wrong-doing, discourtesy or inconvenience to others, without any reference to a formulated code. Full prefects are expected to have reached this and are thus left perfectly free. Roedean believes that they will behave honourably, unselfishly, and courteously, and prove themselves useful and agreeable citizens first of the school and later of the world.

The aims of Roedean are to promote sound learning, and to develop God-fearing characters and healthy bodies. Its customs are directed towards achieving these aims. They are not rigid; and from time to time it may be necessary to add to them, or possibly to diminish them. To symbolize this they are written on loose sheets which can be added to, altered or destroyed without marring the whole.



Practise a quiet voice, a good pronunciation + a clear enunciation

1. Unseemly conversation must be avoided

- (a) Conversation concerning operations, illnesses, accidents, crimes or other horrors is 'unseemly'.
- (b) Bad language is not permissible; a slang is not good form.
- (c) Girls should avoid all conversations that they would be ashamed for their parents or mistresses to overhear.

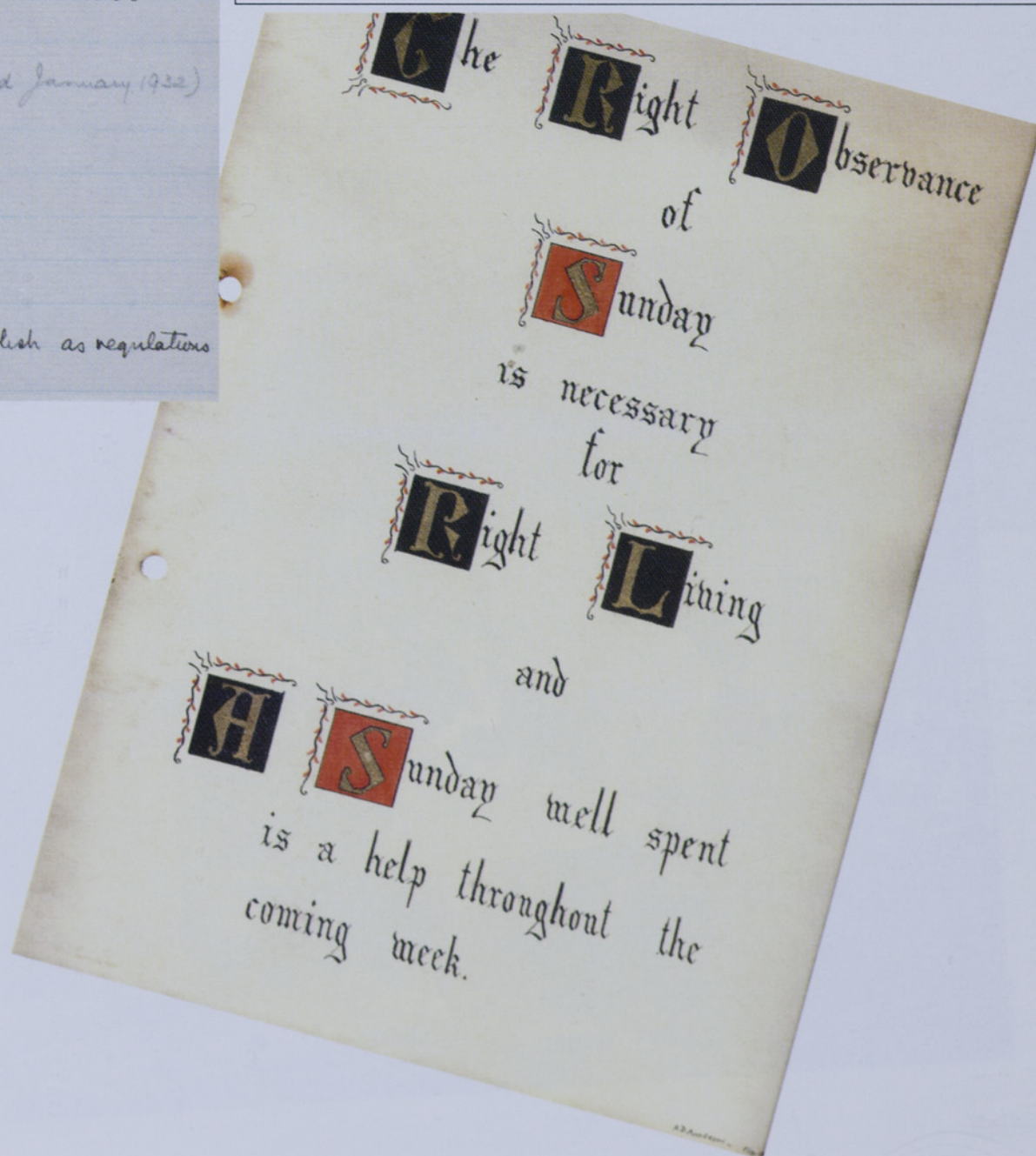
2. Occasions + times for silence.

- (a) No talking in Church, at Prayers or during the five minutes silence at night.
- (b) No talking during lessons or preparation (necessary questions may sometimes be asked during preparation at the half hour bell)
- \* (c) No talking in the Farrar Way, Gymnasium courtyard, or music wing during work hours.
- (d) No talking during any call over.
- (e) No talking before the first Grace or after the last in the dining rooms at meal time.
- (f) No talking during lying down, or in the dormitories after the lights are out.
- \* (g) No talking in the bathrooms (abolished January 1932)

\* NB. The girls of the School should make it possible to abolish as regulations those marked with an asterisk

'We are all as different as we ever were, so it is interesting to speculate on what bonds us together. I think it is a matter of heritage, because Roedean was a heritage rather than a school. What can one expect from a heritage? Not popular culture or market-related skills like competitive edges. What we acquired was a proper sense of perspective, an ability to see beyond the waffle and decoration, and confidence in our own judgement, even when we were about to be crashingly wrong. When you think about it, those are enduring, useful habits. And heritage does not change. I found that when I took my elder daughter to Roedean years later, Kats' sitting room smelt exactly the same, stuffy with an overlay of brown stew. Ordinary people were still not allowed to run down the bank outside Bears', and the tinkler was just as shrill. It was all so reassuring.'

Anthea Bristow (née Paton), who attended Roedean in the 1960s.





## C concerning Letters.

**R**oedean thinks that all letters should be well written, as to matter, calligraphy, and style.

**D**uring term-time it is only possible to write very few such letters. **M**ost of term-time [such as is not spent in exercise, or meals] should be spent putting things into the mind rather than taking them out.

**H**ence the number of letters to be written is limited by the **A**uthorities.

**A**t least one letter home must be written every week.

KME in her beloved  
Kats' Courtyard.



1. Every girl must observe the printed regulations concerning Visitors + Exeats
2. Notice of Sunday Visits or Exeats should be given to the House Mistress not later than 6.30 on Friday Evening.
3. No girl must introduce her visitors to other girls without permission: nor must any girl share the visitors of another without leave expressly given.
4. Girls must say goodbye to the Head or House Mistress on leaving school, + report themselves on returning. Girls who have been out on Sunday, may report themselves at Sunday Evening reading.
5. Girls should inform the Head or House Mistress of visits from parents or friends during the week. Whenever possible permission for such visits should be obtained.
6. On passing the Head or House Mistress with visitors girls should introduce these if not previously known to them. In fact girls should behave as regards their visitors according to the ordinary rules of courtesy.
7. Visitors should never be invited upstairs or into dormitories without express permission of the House Mistress; + no visits are permitted to the Sanatorium without leave of the Head.
8. If a visitor (except those arriving on Sunday in the regular way) asks a girl to announce her arrival to another girl, she should announce the arrival also to the Head or House Mistress + generally speaking before she announces it to the girl.
9. As an occasional concession a parent may take a girl for a short drive on Sunday afternoon provided no house is entered, but this should not often be asked.



1. The Bounds are posted + should be observed at all times.  
(“gymn” trees are no exception to this custom)

- 2 Girls should not use as thoroughfares  
(a) the front door of St Ursula's House  
(b) The Old Hall unless it is raining  
(c) The Kitchen

N.B. Prefects are free of these thoroughfares except the Kitchen

3 No girl may enter another girl's cubicle — no exception is to be made if the occupant is unwell. Prefects, who may use their judgment as regard this custom, are also warned to avoid entering the cubicle of a girl who is unwell

4 Girls may not enter a dormitory not her own except in pursuance of their duties.

5 No girl should be upstairs in any house not her own; + day girls should not be upstairs in any house.

6 No girl may visit the French Cottage or Staff House without permission of the Head Mistress

7. No girl must leave the Preparation room during Preparation except very occasionally, for a very short time at the half hour bell for a very important reason.

8. No girl may visit the Sanatorium for any reason whatever unless sent there for health purposes: + no girl may enter the sickroom unless she is sent there because she is unwell, without permission of the House Mistress.

N.B. It is no excuse for breaking bounds that a girl has been sent by any other than the Head Mistress.



## CONCERNING UNWARRANTED

The customs of Roodean concerning the care of pocket money and other valuables are directed towards the prevention of waste or loss. Girls should realize early in life that carelessness in these matters often presents a stumbling-block to others.





1. Every girl must wear in School the School djibbeh, correct djibbeh blouse + knickerbockers.
2. In the evenings (except Wednesdays, Saturdays + Sundays when ordinary dresses may be worn) every girl must wear an evening djibbeh.
3. Brown stockings must be worn in the day time & black in the evening.
4. No high heeled shoes are allowed.
5. Girls who have long hair must wear it plaited using ribbons of dark blue for non-officers + black for officers. The ribbons should not be too wide.
6. On Sunday in Summer white should be worn, + in winter a coat + skirt of navy blue. A coat + rock will also be allowed in winter (Navy blue).
7. During term time no hat should be worn but a plain one with the School Hat band. (this also applies to arriving at + leaving School.)
8. No girl may send more than eight articles (exclusive of vests, stockings + handkerchiefs) to the laundry a week. If articles in excess of this number are sent, they will be sent to an outside laundry + charged to the girl's pocket money. It will be considered as a breach of a school custom.  
Moderation should also be exercised as regards vests, stockings + handkerchiefs.
9. No girl may use powder or any cosmetics.
10. Every badge holder must wear her badge always in School hours.
11. Every article of clothing as well as any other property must be clearly marked with the pupils name.

Neither a borrower or a lender be,

**I**t is not generous or honest to lend what is not your own. Clothes, School books and other necessities are held by you in trust for your parents and the School.

The criterion of such a necessary is whether the property if lost or destroyed would have to be replaced, and by others than yourself.

Your personal property may be lent, but a generous lender must be prepared to have it lost or destroyed, and must not ask her parents to replace it.

No one should like borrowing, and borrowing without permission deserves another name.







1. Without special permission a girl who is not an officer may only write letters on Sunday.
2. Every girl must write a letter to her parents or nearest relative on Sunday. If a girl has been out with her parents on Sunday she may however write to another near relative instead of her parents. Those that are not yet officers may only write to one relation + one friend besides her parents unless they have special permission.

3. Letters must only be posted in the School + in the appointed way. No day girl may carry a letter for another girl for another girl either to or from School. Nevertheless a girl may bring to a letter from a parent to her daughter if asked, provided she gives it in to the Office & not directly to the girl herself.

4. Sub. Prefects may write on Wednesday after 6pm. Sunday, Thursday evenings, after 6pm as well as on Sunday.

### Concerning Bounds & Thoroughfares

It is absolutely necessary that no girl should leave the school premises except with the knowledge & permission of those to whose care they are committed,

Girls are free of the school premises in proportion as their judgment is trusted: & free of such thoroughfares as do not interfere with the work of the school (domestic or other wise) the privacy of its members, or the convenience of visitors.

All prefects are free of all bounds & must thoroughfares as it is believed that their judgment can be trusted not to violate privacy, or interfere with the work of the school; or visit outlying portions of the grounds except in companies of three or four, and without letting the school authorities know where they are.

Notwithstanding the above it may be necessary to issue special orders at any time, strict obedience to which is expected from all members of the school.



1. Pupils are not allowed to eat sweets during term-time. Badge holders are expected not to indulge too much in sweets during the holidays.
2. Pupils are permitted to receive gifts of fresh fruit at School (which they are expected to share) (abolished May 1931.) They are also allowed to receive one cake on their birthdays. Other eatables must neither be brought to school by pupils, nor sent or given by parents or friends. N.B. All parcels of fruit must be distinctly marked with the pupils' name.

'A midnight feast was treated as a serious crime and the whole school severely reprimanded during prayers. We were told to think of the starving children in Russia before stuffing ourselves with unnecessary food!'

Dolores Fleischer (née de Paiva Rapozo), 1940s.

# Concerning Health

and the body is the temple of the spirit and must be honoured as such.

**C**ertain regulations regarding:-

- cleanliness -
- bodily habits -
- exercise -
- clothing -

are laid down by the School or House Mistresses and must be strictly adhered to by all members of Roedean.

**G**ood habits in these respects are acquired early among educated people, and in the Senior School it should be possible to rely largely on the goodwill and judgement of all girls.

**I**ll health is never interesting or to be admired, and can generally be avoided by all young people of good conduct. Ill health is not a right topic for conversation.

**MENS SANA IN CORPORE SANO**





1. Every girl must play the School game for the term unless forbidden by a doctor.

During Hockey & La Crosse gloves must be worn, & during Hockey pads (& boots?). During cricket gloves & pads must be worn by batter & wicket keeper.

2. A written excuse to be signed by the matron must be handed to the games mistress every month, & no games or drill must be undertaken for three days: important matches create no exception: an extended excuse may be obtained if necessary. A failure to hand in such an excuse must be regarded as a serious offence, & would render a pupil unfit for office.

A record of these dates is kept.

About these matters there should be no speaking except to House Mistress or matron. Such speech must be considered as unseemly conversation.

3. No kissing is allowed in Rodecan.

In order to be clean inside as well as out there is a daily duty which must not be neglected.

## Concerning Visitors & Exeats.

These customs fall under two heads.

1. Such as are observed by all well mannered people.

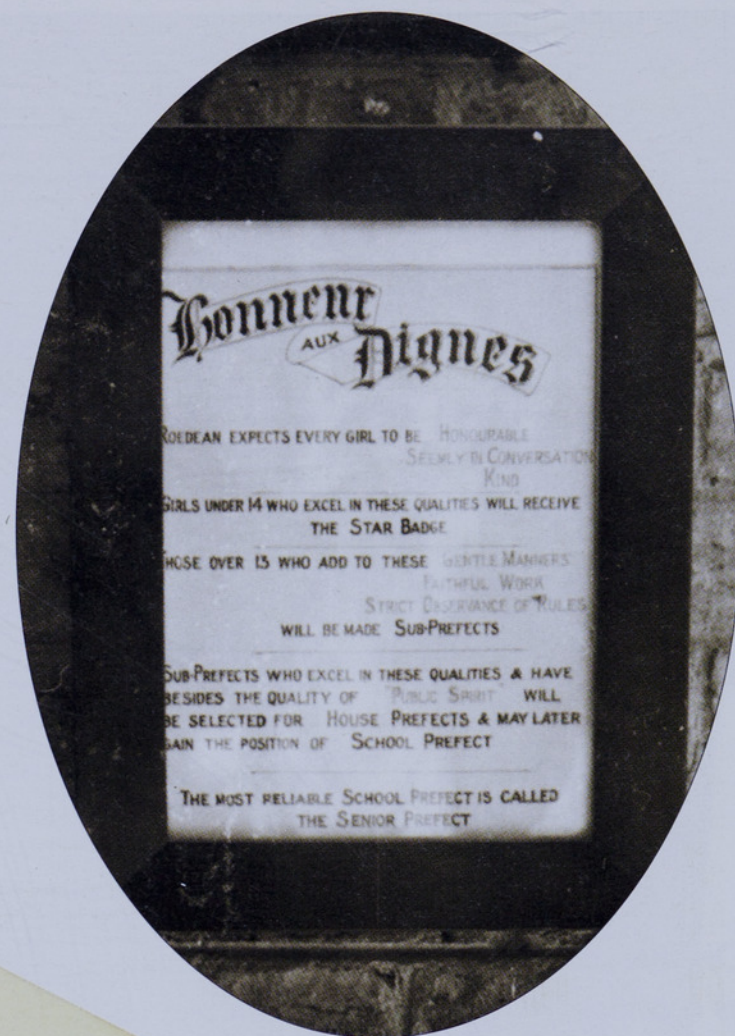
2. Such as promote the aims of the School, in that they help to achieve the best results in work and character-building.

The exact observance of these customs, often at some individual sacrifice, will do much for the happiness of the whole.

'Nearly everyone was a boarder in those days and day-girls were looked down on as a distinctly lower species. Boarders only went home three times in a 13-week term. For most of the year they stayed behind these white walls as if in a nunnery. Girls today would have found it very dull. There were no television sets, no videos, no films to watch, no parties and definitely no boys! Only brothers ever came to the school, and when they did the whole school shook!' Dolores Fleischer (née de Paiva Rapozo).



1. All pocket money brought to School or subsequently received must be immediately banked with the House Mistress. A cheque book will be given to the pupil by means of which she must make all payments. To retain any money in her possession must be considered a grave offence.
2. All valuables (including railway tickets) other than one watch & one brooch, must be handed to the House Mistress immediately for safe keeping by every girl.
3. No jewelry, fancy slides or other ornaments should be brought to school. Bracelets must not be worn.
4. Accounts must be neatly & correctly kept by every girl, & the counterfoils of cheques correctly filled in.



## Concerning Food

1. To provide wholesome food well prepared and in sufficient quantity and variety for health and enjoyment.  
 [It is the aim of Roedean to provide this respect occurs it is expected that the highest school officers should at once report to the Head or Corden]
2. That its members should be free from greediness; and not be slaves of any craving.  
 To achieve this it is as necessary to go into training as it is for an athlete. After such training it has been found that girls can go into the world really free in this important respect. Such freedom is a great step towards happiness.



It has been noticed that a great many people have been talking in passages and class rooms after supper, before the 7 o'clock bell.

Also that very few girls are strict about wearing snoods, it was therefore arranged that all prefects must send anyone without a snood away from breakfast to fetch it. It was also agreed that fining last term was quite successful.

Below: The Prefects' bench, taken during a lunch break in the 1920s, in the days when bloomers were necessary apparel.



Discipline at Roedean was strictly upheld, as is evident in these extracts from the minutes of the Council Meetings held between 1929 and 1931. The 'snood' mentioned here was a wide headband.

8. It has been noticed that there is a great deal of childish talk among the prefect especially.

Below: Outside Bears' in the 1920s, the Council Block behind.

'The best part about Roedean was the friends I made – even if I did lead them into serious trouble with the illicit chocolate cake and the lemon syrup in the Gordon's Gin bottle. It was a terrifying moment when the whole school was evacuated onto the big lawn while the school was searched for the contraband goods. They were found in the day girls' cloakroom – some undesirable day girl had split on us. We were de-subbed and relegated to FR in disgrace. At another equally disastrous midnight feast I cut my finger opening a sardine tin – and fainted in the bathroom at the sight of all the blood. I still have the scar.'

Peggy Helme (née Van der Byl), 1940s.







It was brought up that many people are not aware of the fact that it is a rule of the school, that nobody may maul one another. prefects have noticed a number of girls breaking this rule, so it was suggested that Miss Laurence should be asked to give it out at Prefects.

Above: High spirits – despite the strict rules.

'Mauling' one another was clearly deemed to be unladylike.



Prefects were seated at either end of the table during meals and kept a close watch on manners, deportment and 'unseemly' conversation.

Deportment at meals is very bad. It has been suggested that girls should walk round the lawn with the triangle on their heads, and if this is not successful they are to stand up during prayers.

'When I finally left school Miss Le Maitre wrote to my parents, and amongst other things she said, "In spite of past indiscretions ...". What were those past indiscretions? Climbing up the drainpipe from Kats' balcony to an upstairs bathroom in Bears, and enjoying sardines and condensed milk! Then, very naughty, lobbing balls over the wire at the bottom of the tennis court and meeting St John's boys in the drain. They gave us sweets – and sweets only. What innocence.'

Elizabeth Viljoen (née Lancefield), 1940s.



The Matric picnic, 1954.



Punishment for erring pupils often took the form of learning passages of literature or lists of vocabulary. Anyone who was late for a meal had to eat in silence.

7<sup>th</sup> Meeting

24-3-31.

Miss Thompson does not wish the Bible to be learned as a punishment for those who are late, so it was suggested that they should learn French, Latin or English vocabulary.





Top: Silver prefects, 1927. Today 'Silvers' comprise the Deputy Head Girls and the heads of the three houses.

In 1950, when Lawrence House was officially opened, the whole school sang 'Bless this House'. Old Girl Liz Lane remembers: 'As a M.V., I and friends had found the constant practicing of Bless This House a bore and one afternoon coming up from games had disturbed the peace by bellowing it loudly, raucously and irreverently and spent a number of days thereafter in "Silvers Tea" – a great penance for a hungry M.V. to miss tea and worse to watch the Silvers eating theirs!'

Centre: It seems that the shortage of water in Johannesburg has a long history.

Bottom left: This poem, from the Bears' Log Book of 1956, was probably written as a punishment.

Bottom right: On the way to class in the 1940s, with Blyth Cottage in the background. Girls were required to be silent when moving between classes.

5<sup>th</sup> Meeting 10.7.30

Mr Eale says that the bath water must be reduced and that the prefects are taking too much. If this is not improved there will be either a black line put round the bath or else baths only thrice a week.

Everyone is to have a slice and half of bread at tea and lunch break.

Housemarks  
Kay Hacking (20)

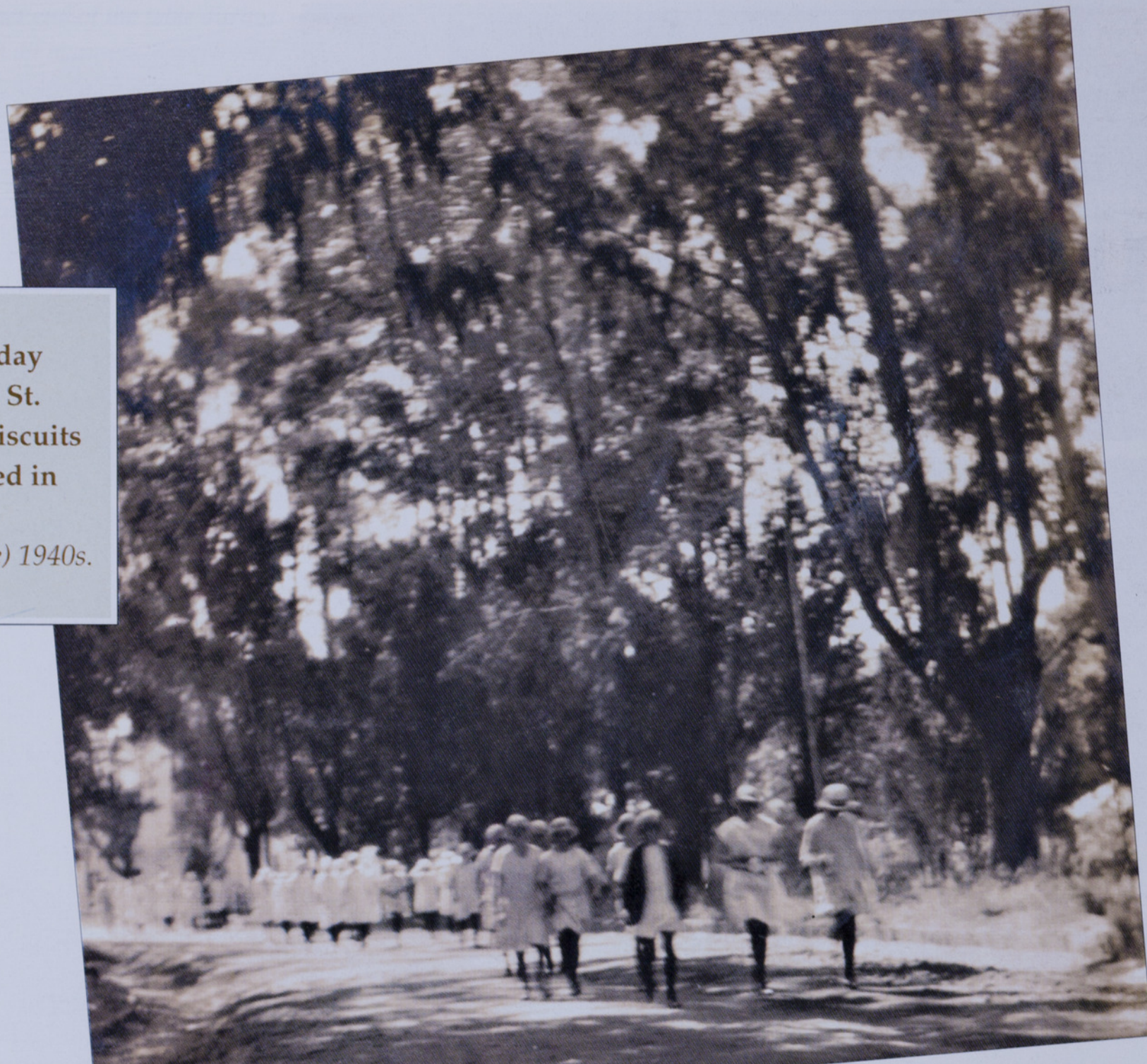
Is it fair that I should be,  
Haunted by a bad fairie?  
One that makes me talk in prayers  
Throws my shoes upon the stairs,  
Pulls my hat from off my head,  
Plays the dickers with my books;  
I myself am good as gold,  
Always do as I am told.  
'Tis just this pesky little sprite  
That plagues my path and casts a blight  
And scatters housemarks left & right  
And makes me loathsome in your sight  
Prefects please when next you rage,  
Remember what is on this page.





'I remember the Sunday morning crocodile to St. George's – tea and biscuits first in case we fainted in Church.'

*Mary Clarke (née Shave) 1940s.*



'Nicole Grasset and I were caught talking to two KES boys at the back of the hall. I was put in the sick room for a week, with a dose of castor oil each morning. Nicole, being a day girl, got off scott free ...'

*Lovell Vickerman (née Thackeray), 1940s.*







'I remember building straw houses on Pleasaunce which we could use during our breaks. I was caught by a teacher dragging a sack of oranges across the back road and into our hut – again the sick room for a week.'

*An unattributed memory, 1940s.*



'At break we gathered in the gym and on the Farrar Way, and the prefects gathered on the terrace. Scottie would appear with a large jug of milk, and fruit. These she handed out to anyone she thought looked thin and undernourished. The more robust had to do with bread and "scrape".'

*From a memoir written by Matty Read, 1920s.*



| Housemarks |   | - Dobby Ellis                              |  |
|------------|---|--------------------------------------------|--|
| 1          | 2 | Confiscations                              |  |
| 2          |   | Being out of bounds                        |  |
| 3          |   | Shoes off during school day                |  |
| 4          |   | Talking or being late for meals            |  |
| 5          |   | Being at the wrong place at the wrong time |  |
| 6          |   | Picking fruit                              |  |
| 7          |   | Writing on blackboards                     |  |
| 8          |   | Going through dining room                  |  |
| 9          |   | Being late for prayers                     |  |
| 10         |   | Talking in prayers                         |  |
| 11         |   | Not singing in prayers                     |  |
| 12         |   | Late for class or prep                     |  |
| 13         |   | Late for register                          |  |
| 14         |   | Eating sweets                              |  |
| 15         |   | Having sweets in desk                      |  |
| 16         |   | Bringing sweets to school                  |  |
| 17         | 3 | Untidy desks                               |  |
| 18         |   | Talking after grace                        |  |

|    |  |                                     |  |
|----|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| 19 |  | Talking in Ref                      |  |
| 20 |  | Eating food during break off meal   |  |
| 21 |  | Sugar on bread                      |  |
| 22 |  | Reading letters at lunch            |  |
| 23 |  | Reading during house meetings       |  |
| 24 |  | Chewing gum                         |  |
| 25 |  | Not ready for class                 |  |
| 26 |  | Trattentive in class                |  |
| 27 |  | Forgetting books                    |  |
| 28 |  | Not doing prep                      |  |
| 29 |  | Not handing in prep                 |  |
| 30 |  | Sitting on desks                    |  |
| 31 |  | Not going to choir practice         |  |
| 32 |  | Going to the bar without permission |  |
| 33 |  | Not going to games                  |  |
| 34 |  | Not going to classes                |  |

These entries in Bears' Log Book in 1969 outline the misdemeanors that could result in marks against the house.

Requirements for Boarders, 1940s.

| <div>A. Carlisle</div> <div>ROEDEAN SCHOOL</div> <div>SENIOR BOARDER'S OUTFIT [Minimum Required]</div> |   |     |                                                                                                                                                                            |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|-----------------|---|---|
| Number Brought                                                                                         |   |     | Shoes                                                                                                                                                                      |  |  |  | Number Returned |   |   |
| 1                                                                                                      | 2 | 3   |                                                                                                                                                                            |  |  |  | 1               | 2 | 3 |
|                                                                                                        |   | 3   | 2 Pairs Brown Outdoor Shoes, Low Heels (1 Laced).                                                                                                                          |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Pair Brown, Strap, Indoor Shoes, Low Heels.                                                                                                                              |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Pair Canvas Shoes, Rubber Soles, Brown.                                                                                                                                  |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Pair Bedroom Slippers.                                                                                                                                                   |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | Underclothing                                                                                                                                                              |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 3   | *6 Pairs Gymnastic Stockings (4 Brown, 2 Fawn).                                                                                                                            |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 6+8 | 6 Pairs Brown Socks, for Summer, and 4 Pairs Coloured Socks for Evenings.                                                                                                  |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 3   | 3 Nightgowns or Pyjamas, Warm for Winter.                                                                                                                                  |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 3   | 3 Warm Black Bloomers, with 6 Linings for Winter.                                                                                                                          |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 3   | 8 Bloomers of Washing Material for Summer (4 Black).                                                                                                                       |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 6   | 6 Vests.                                                                                                                                                                   |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 3   | 3 White Petticoats for Summer, if required.                                                                                                                                |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | 2 Liberty Bodices or Suspender Belts (not Elastic).                                                                                                                        |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | Dresses and Coats                                                                                                                                                          |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | *2 Djibbabs (School Dress). +1 winter                                                                                                                                      |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 8   | 8 White Cotton Djibbah Blouses (Short Sleeves for Summer).                                                                                                                 |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | 2 Washable Frocks.                                                                                                                                                         |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Dressing Gown, Warm for Winter.                                                                                                                                          |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Plain Winter Coat, Navy and Without Fur.                                                                                                                                 |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Raincoat.                                                                                                                                                                |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | *1 School Blazer                                                                                                                                                           |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Cardigan or Pullover in School Colours.                                                                                                                                  |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | Ties or Scarves, if required, must be in School Colours.                                                                                                                   |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | 2 Tailored Green School Frocks, with Short Sleeves and White Pearl Buttons (for Summer).                                                                                   |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | 2 Tailored Green School Frocks (Viyella) with Long Sleeves and White Pearl Buttons (for Winter).                                                                           |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   |                                                                                                                                                                            |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | Hats                                                                                                                                                                       |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | *1 School Hat, White Panama, with School Ribbon.                                                                                                                           |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | 2 White Linen Garden Hats.                                                                                                                                                 |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | *1 Blue Felt Hat for Winter.                                                                                                                                               |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | Bathing Requirements for Summer Terms                                                                                                                                      |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | *1 Plain Black Bathing Dress. + 1 pair eastane                                                                                                                             |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Black Bathing Cap.                                                                                                                                                       |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Bathing Cloak.                                                                                                                                                           |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Pair Bathing Shoes.                                                                                                                                                      |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | Linen                                                                                                                                                                      |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | 2 Pairs Sheets.                                                                                                                                                            |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 3   | 3 Pillow Cases.                                                                                                                                                            |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | 2 Bath Towels and 2 Small Bath Towels for Bathing.                                                                                                                         |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | 2 Face Towels.                                                                                                                                                             |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | 2 Table Napkins and Ring.                                                                                                                                                  |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | 2 Linen Bags.                                                                                                                                                              |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | Sundries                                                                                                                                                                   |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Rug or Eiderdown.                                                                                                                                                        |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Work Box, complete.                                                                                                                                                      |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | Toilet Necessities, including Nail Brush and 2 Tooth Brushes                                                                                                               |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Pot of Larola or Cold Cream.                                                                                                                                             |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | Nail Scissors.                                                                                                                                                             |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 2   | 2 Pairs Gloves (1 White, 1 Navy or Brown).                                                                                                                                 |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 3   | Dozen Handkerchiefs.                                                                                                                                                       |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Week-end Case.                                                                                                                                                           |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | 1 Dozen Spare Name Tapes.                                                                                                                                                  |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   | 1   | Pocket Money.                                                                                                                                                              |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | PLEASE NOTE:—                                                                                                                                                              |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | All the above articles should be sent back every term in good condition and mended.                                                                                        |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | One Pair of Light-weight Shoes and One Pair of Silk Stockings may be brought if desired.                                                                                   |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | No Jewellery is allowed except One Brooch and One Watch.                                                                                                                   |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | No woven Silk Underwear is allowed.                                                                                                                                        |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | ALL ARTICLES MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH NAME, NOT INITIALS.                                                                                                               |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | *Djibbabs, Hats, Hat Bands, Blazers, Green Lystav, Green Viyella, Bathing Dresses and Stockings may be obtained at the School.                                             |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | School outfit, including Viyella for Green Dresses, and ready-made Lystav and Viyella Green Dresses may be obtained from Messrs. John Orr, Pritchard Street, Johannesburg. |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | Cardigans and Pullovers: Machine-knit from Messrs. John Orr; hand-knit from Mrs. Atkinson, 115, Prairie Street, Rosettenville.                                             |  |  |  |                 |   |   |
|                                                                                                        |   |     | Djibbah Blouses may be obtained from Messrs. John Orr.                                                                                                                     |  |  |  |                 |   |   |



## ROEDEAN SCHOOL (SA)



### CODE OF CONDUCT

*Roedeans School with its Sir Herbert Baker buildings, beautiful gardens, sister school links to Roedeans (Brighton), historic traditions and a long record of academic excellence is readying itself for the challenges and demands of this century*

Since the founding of Roedeans School (SA) in 1903, it has been acknowledged that rules of conduct and behaviour are necessary to optimise the relationships between members of the School and standards for the School. The basis of all conduct emanates from self discipline. In order to support the basic and eternal values of 'truth and honour, freedom and courtesy' overlaid with integrity and a love of simplicity and beauty, Roedeans pupils:

- respect femininity and womanhood,
- respect the rights, beliefs and dignity of others,
- value the diversity of the variety of cultures present in the School community,
- appreciate that the School with its English roots operates within a South African context,
- respect the faiths of others, whilst affirming the Anglican Christian base of the School,
- accept the need to be involved fully in the life of the School and make their talents and gifts available in the service of the School.
- accept the need to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times,
- accept responsibility for their actions,
- respect the property and the traditions of the School.

*The Code of Conduct for the new century.*



*Curtains provided privacy in the early dormitories.*



*The Founders with the staff in 1930. Helen Tancred is standing at the far left and next to her is Joan Hardy (later Raikes). Scottie is standing fifth from the left. Seated next to TL is Juicy Edwards.*



# III

## TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS

*'Houses in rivalry light up for battle,  
All is for praise, and the might of Roedean.'*



*For the first time in its history, a school flag flies at Roedean.  
It was designed by Celia Jacobson in 2003.*



If we combine the lengthy influence of the Founders with the strength of the rules that emerged from their regime, we have the perfect medium for the growth of potent and idiosyncratic traditions. This has certainly happened. Although the core values inherent in these traditions were originally based on the Roedean Brighton model, even in the beginning there were variations.

Take the coat of arms. The Brighton original shows a roe (a small graceful woodlands deer whose natural habitat is Europe) standing on the summit of a grassy mound. For the South African school, the roe is replaced by a female springbok and the grassy mound becomes a rocky outcrop. Roedean girls identified these differences and coined the now widely known but perhaps not quite acceptable description of the school emblem: *die bokkie op die koppie*. Yet the description adds an unambiguous robustness and South African flavour to the gentler English original.

The famous djibbahs were modified too. At first, these garments were made in London and exported to Johannesburg. But they were extremely hot, and very soon a lighter version had been designed. Many were handmade. But by the mid-1930s, and probably earlier, off-the-peg djibbahs were available from John Orr's. At one point we find Ella Le Maitre, headmistress from 1934 to 1958, complaining that the patterns are not entirely to her liking.

And the djibbah tradition refuses to die. Periodically, the girls of Roedean are asked whether the old uniform should be allowed to pass into history. But successive waves of pupils support its retention. It has been part of the distinctiveness of Roedean for a century; and it seems destined to last for the next as well.

The school has also retained some quaint customs. Roedean girls call their teachers 'madam'. Roedean girls curtsy. These two traditions are often the subject of speculation by outside observers. How old fashioned, they say. How distinctive, says Roedean. Think back to the school's origins in England. The avowed intention was to establish an educational institution for girls that would rival those long-established institutions for boys. If boys called their masters 'sir', girls should use the female equivalent. It could almost be argued that each time 'madam' is used, there is a tacit acknowledgement of the feminist pedigree of Roedean forged at a time when gender equality was fiercely contested terrain.

The curtsy is still practised, but not as frequently as in earlier times. Roedean girls always curtsy politely when receiving prizes or awards. Very few people wish the tradition away. It remains a charming manifestation of what it means to be 'courteous and kind', graceful and in control.

The tradition of 'House Nights' moves us in a similar direction. The idea of service, and of entertaining others, illumines these annual theatrical programmes. The rivalry between the three houses – St Ursula's, St Katherine's, St Agnes' – is immense, and the House Nights provide an opportunity for each individual to become involved in a communal effort.

Wherever one looks at Roedean, the legacy of the past 100 years shines through. Interestingly, a great deal of this tradition bears the stamp of individuals involved in a communal effort. The frequent plaques, the acknowledged gifts of garden benches or stained-glass windows or fountains, become like hands supporting the common ideal embodied in the school. This is the fabric of the Roedean tradition. Its strength is in direct proportion to the intricacy of its making.





The school motto *Honneur Aulx Dignes* is taken from the old French and is an heraldic pun 'Honour Roedean'. The actual translation is 'Honour to the worthy'. In 1923, Archdeacon Cameron, the Chairman of the School Council, assisted by Mabel Bayley, modified the coat-of-arms of Roedean Brighton, to make a suitable coat-of-arms for Roedean South Africa. He gave an explanation of it:

'... The young springbok ewe, looking with fearless eyes out on to the boundless veld, represents the girls of the school with the great world before them. The principal colours of the shield represent the green veldt and the blue sky. The

springbok is tied to the open book by no harsh fetters, but by the golden chain. The gridiron, the traditional symbol of St Lawrence, and the Earl's coronet connect the school with its two founders. The secretary bird on the crest represents the good citizen, who searches out and ruthlessly destroys all that is vicious and harmful.'

Opposite page:  
Samples of old djibbahs in  
The Ark, the Roedean  
archives, housed in the  
Sumner Block.



*An evening djibbah, 1911. As it was customary to change for dinner and special occasions, a more elegant version of the djibbah was created.*



The djibbah is one of Roedean's earliest and most enduring traditions. Described in the Oxford dictionary as 'a Mohammedan's long cloth coat', TL and KME copied the design from Roedean Brighton and adapted it slightly for South African conditions.

Patricia King, a pupil in the 30s and 40s, writes of the history of the Roedean (SA) uniform: 'The old djibbahs were made in England by Sheba of London in Sloane Street. During the war years (1939–1945), and for some years thereafter, the djibbahs were made in three sizes, small, medium, and large, to fit girls from Grade 1 to Sixth Form. There was no zip and fortunately the style rather lent itself to fitting many different shapes and sizes and was very fashionable when the A-line came in! As you can imagine some very small girls had hems turned up to their armpits and some rather large girls at the top end of the school had hardly any hem at all. The djibbahs were very hard to come by during the war years having to be shipped out by sea, and I don't think the material was of very good quality, or else the girls all squirmed around in their chairs, because the seats of the djibbahs all wore out quite quickly and our mothers were hard pressed to keep them darned and looking smart.

'With the djibbahs we wore white blouses with green and blue embroidery around the neck and the base of the sleeves. You could buy blouses with rather ordinary embroidery from John Orr's but most girls prevailed upon their mothers to dream up some fancier stitching! Lightweight summer tunics in navy blue or floral were introduced during the last years of the war. They were worn over the usual blouses and black bloomers. Until 1977 green dresses were worn by the boarders for travelling to and from school, weekend outings, church at St George's and visits to the dentist. The dresses were worn by everybody on Speech Day, Foundation Day and the last day of term. The boarders had slightly thicker, long sleeved green dresses to wear in winter, made in many different styles, but the day girls had to wear the short-sleeved summer version on the last day of the winter term which was rather chilly at times. The white Panama hats worn in summer were also phased out in 1977 and the navy blue felt hats, previously worn in winter only, were worn all year round. There were also navy blue berets to wear when it rained.

In the evening the boarders used to wear evening djibbahs in the same style as the day djibbahs but made in any material and colour they chose. These were phased out in the late forties or early fifties.'





*Ella Le Maitre was strict about the Roedean djibbah, as evidenced by this correspondence with those who made them.*

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MAIL ORDER DEPARTMENT

REF. DR/2/584/53

WEAR "ORR-CO" PURE SILK FULLY FASHIONED HOSE... UNSURPASSED FOR LONG SERVICE

3rd December, 1935.

The Principal,  
Roedean School,  
PARK TOWN, Johannesburg.

Dear Madam,

In reply to your letter of the 30th ultimo, we would advise that in future Roedean Blouses shall be made according to the instructions given.

Thanking you for your patronage, and assuring you of our desire to render the utmost service at all times, we remain,

Very truly yours,  
p.p. JOHN ORR & CO.

BEAUTY TREATMENT.—If your desire is for comfort, courtesy and consistent efficiency of work, you will appreciate the fully equipped Beauty Salon on our Second Floor... Newest methods and finest Preparations used... Fully qualified attendance. Telephonic messages making appointments for Hairdressing or Beauty Treatment to:—CENTRAL 6923

6th December, 1935.

Mrs. Green,  
58, St. George's Street,  
Bellevue, Local.

Dear Mrs. Green,

I notice that the evening djibbahs of some of the children are being made with puffed sleeves. This has never been done with my permission, and will not, I hope, continue. The old type with the little sleeves is what I like best.

Yours sincerely,

Principal.

30th November, 1935.

Messrs. John Orr,  
P.O. Box 1087,  
Johannesburg.

Dear Sir,

The pattern which you sent me of the summer djibbah blouse is not entirely to my liking. I prefer that, instead of being gathered into a band, the sleeves should be turned back about one inch and the embroidery put on the turn back. The sleeve should come about one inch above the elbow when bent.

As we are discarding tunics for Gymnastics I should like the blouses to be at least four inches longer, buttoned down the back and secured by a tape in the hem.

Yours faithfully,



Another enduring tradition of Roedean is that of calling teachers 'Madam'. An editorial from the 1968 *South African Roedean* magazine states:

'... The fact that all members of staff are addressed by the title of "Madam" probably strikes the newcomer or the visitor as strange. However, in all boys' schools the masters are addressed as "Sir"; therefore, is not the title "Madam" a logical one to be used in a girl's school? Yet, to my knowledge this form of address is not used in any other girls' school in this country. This unique tradition is, therefore, one of which we should feel proud.'

Another explanation was given by Ida Wagner, who had attended Roedean from 1906 to 1914. '... Do you know why we were taught to address the staff as Madam? Well, we South Africans were prone to repeat names too often in one sentence and so Madam came into use.'



Old Prefect's and Dignes badges from The Ark. The Dignes are the prefects of the Junior School.

In the Junior School, girls wishing to visit the bathroom ask to 'go to bridge'. This letter, from Erica Mitchell (née Berry), explains the origin of this tradition.

I remember the lavatories which were where pleasure now is near the junior school - one crossed a wooden bridge over a storm water drain when ran down the back road from the Senior school. To visit this too one asked to "go to bridge please madam."

The staircases of the Houses feature intricate carvings of their symbolic animal and the Tree of Knowledge. Katharine Baker, a teacher in the early decades of the century, explained their significance: 'House feeling is strong: girls compete in work and play, not as individuals, but as House members: there are stirring scenes at hard-fought House matches, and great competition for the Silver Leaf which term by term rewards the House with the best record of work.'



The traditional Roedean curtsey has decreased over the years, but girls still make the gesture when receiving prizes. This editorial from the *South African Roedean* magazine in 1968 defends the custom: '... Another unique tradition of Roedean is the curtsey which, although it has developed into a bob, nevertheless carries with it a certain old world charm. Anyone seeing the "bob" for the first time must at once realise that Roedean must have been founded in the days when girls always showed respect for their elders by this action.'



Of all the traditions that have remained over the last 100 years, that of House Nights still thrives. These celebrations occur on the Saints' Days of the three houses and are a highlight of the school calendar. Pages 62–65 show examples of some of the place cards, menus and programmes produced over the years by the girls.

Eastnight was house night and everything went very well. The theme was "To the cream of society who attempt where sport please meet the jet set at st marys resort." Lynn was in quite a flap but that is usual for the head of house doing the house night. Every thing went according to plan.





Mesdemoiselles de Paris.

Vin Rouge.

potage de champignon

Casino Cabaret.

les peintres et les mannequins.

croissons.

viande à la reine.

chez notre atelier.

fantaisie

gâteau suprême.



AVOCADO  
COCKTAIL  
CURRY & RICE  
À LA HAWAII  
PEACH MELBA  
PUNCH PINEAPPLE

"CO-IMBRA"  
"ALAMO HAWAII"  
HAWAIIAN HOLIDAY  
"SOUTH PACIFIC"

INCIDENTAL MUSIC BY  
"THE CALYPSO KINGS"



# IV

## CELEBRATIONS AND COMMEMORATIONS

*'For working days or holidays,  
And glad and melancholy days,  
They were great days and jolly days,  
At the best school of all.'*



*The Roedean Centenary was launched at a special commemorative service in January 2003.  
Flags from forty-seven nations reflected the wide cultural diversity of the pupils.*



What would any institution be without its characteristic celebrations and commemorations? If the founding ethos and the rules that emerge from that ethos provide the skeleton, and the traditions the flesh, then the celebrations and commemorations show the institutional body in those sorts of actions that grow logically from within. In the case of Roedean, this action is contained not only in the special occasions that punctuate each year. It has sometimes most movingly been expressed in special efforts in a particular direction. Perhaps the best examples of such effort have been the spontaneous responses of the school to the two World Wars that occurred during the first Roedean century.

It was during the World Wars that a particularly determined aspect of the Roedean idea of service to others became apparent. During the first, the entire school community became involved in a relentless fund-raising drive. For several years, regular food parcels were sent to two British prisoners of war, the one incarcerated in Bavaria, the other in Silesia. Money was also raised for animals wounded in action. On Armistice night, the girls of Roedean lit a bonfire on the Houghton Ridge and sang 'Rule, Britannia!', 'La Marseillaise' and 'Auld Lang Syne'.

By the Second World War, Roedean had grown considerably, and its contribution was correspondingly larger. Roedean collected enough money to provide a military ambulance which saw service in Malta throughout the war. The school also adopted a British minesweeper, *HMS Sondra*. Everyone fell to knitting pullovers and thick socks for the crew. In 1944, senior officers from the vessel visited the school; and the link was made permanent when the ship's bell was presented to the school. It hangs in the chapel belfry and is still regularly rung.

These historical realities evoke most powerfully the ethos of the school: the constant emphasis on knightly honour, and the value of courtesy and kindness to others.

But as well as the charitable events that take place at Roedean throughout the year, there are the celebrations that punctuate and enrich the school life.

Foundation Day takes place at Roedean every year in March to commemorate the laying of the foundation stone. It is an event when Old Girls, the South African Old Roedeanian Association, get together to renew their attachment to 'the best school of all' and to each other; and at Foundation Day lunch the current Matrics are invited to share in a tradition which spans the generations.

Speech Day is an annual *tour de force* of Roedean accomplishments. Of course, there's always a VIP guest who delivers an address to the assembly. General Jan Smuts was one; Dr Chris Barnard another; and more latterly Adelaide Tambo. But the real business of Speech Day is to be found in the remainder of the programme. There is a full academic procession with staff wearing their gowns. Then there are the academic prizes, pages of them, as well as recitals of music by serious classical composers. The 'welcome speeches' are also designed to demonstrate the school's versatility. Speeches in English, Afrikaans, Latin and French have more recently been joined by offerings in North Sotho, Portuguese, Mandarin, Zulu and Xhosa. Details of extracurricular activities – a class going overseas, another assisting in some way to establish a clinic – are like the icing on top of an invariably formidable cake.

Other 'days' must also be mentioned: St Margaret's Day, which celebrates the patron Saint of the Junior School, and landmark birthdays such as the silver and golden jubilees, and the Centenary celebrations. Some traditions have fallen away, like the Grandchildren's Party, and other more modern celebrations, like the Matric dance, have taken their place.



'... It gave the Founders, T.L. and K.M.E., great pleasure to see their Old Girls once a year, so it had become a tradition for the school to act as host, on or near March 8th, the date the Foundation Stone of the school had been laid. Old Girls came from far and wide, and spent a week-end at the school, often staying in dormitory cubicles which present girls had kindly given up for them. They dressed up in djibbahs for the occasion, and played cricket against the School XI. A few girls nobly volunteered to stay and help entertain the guests – the rest of the school went off for a picnic. After the day's meetings and matches and tea, the Old Girls went off and changed into evening dress and returned for dinner. During this meal there were speeches and songs, and T.L. and K.M.E. took it in turns to tell the visitors all about themselves when they were very young. This was followed by a play, performed by the Old Girls, then dancing and finally Auld Lang Syne.'

*From a memoir written by Matty Read.*

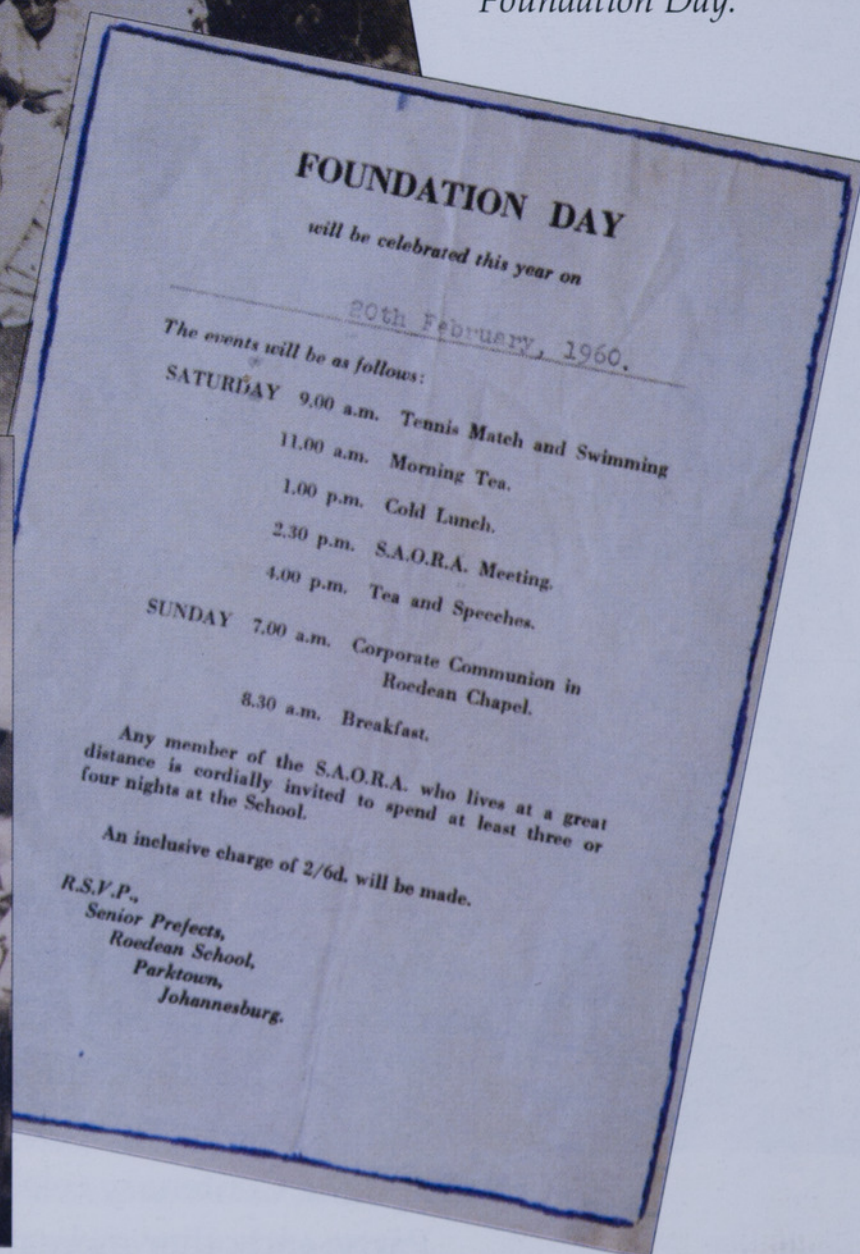
Below: Foundation Day tea in Kats' Courtyard, soon after the opening of the building. KME and TL can be seen behind the table on the left of the picture. The photograph is undated, but was probably taken in 1925.



Left and centre: In front of Bears' on Foundation Day in 1919.

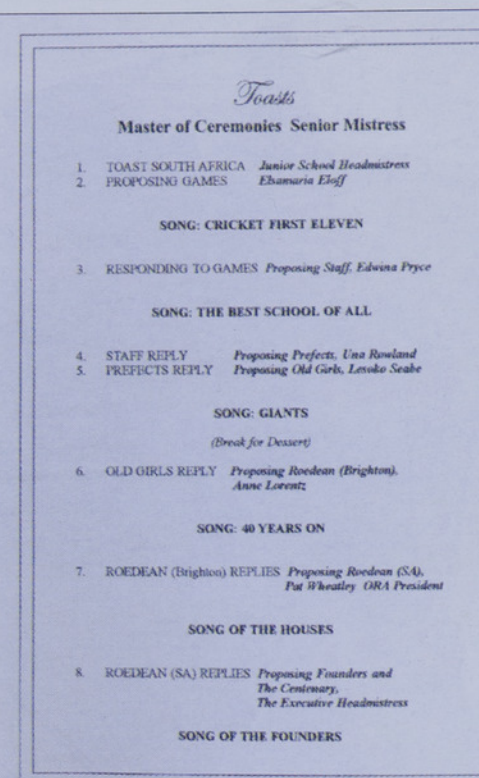
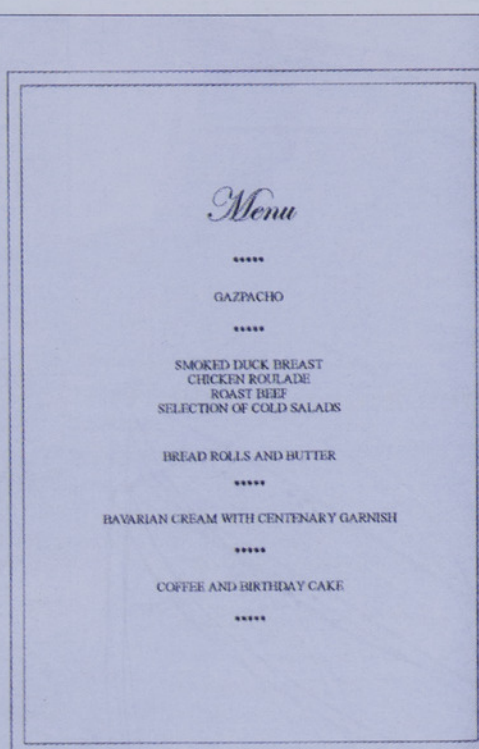


Invitation to Foundation Day 1960. For many years former pupils who travelled from some distance in order to attend the festivities would be accommodated in the boarding houses and celebrations took place over several days. Old Girls who have emigrated to other countries and cannot attend locally make a point of coming together in their new homes to mark Foundation Day.





Foundation Day 2003 was a landmark event, with more than 500 Old Girls gathering to sing the old school songs again.



'I remember one mother of a Matric speaker asking me in awe, "Is this like the Masons or is one allowed to talk about this?" My response was that she could willingly talk about it but that no one would believe a word of it.'

*Janet Saner (née Anderson), 1968.*



'One of the healthiest things about the school is, I believe, the loyalty and affection of its Old Girls,' said Ella Le Maitre in 1957 at her last Speech Day. The South African Old Roedeanian Association (SAORA), founded in 1907, has always been an active and vigorous body involved in all aspects of the school as parents, teachers, and members of the Board, Trust and PTA. Besides keeping Old Girls in touch with the school and with each other, one of the SAORA's main aims is to provide bursaries, thus giving support to its members and to the school itself.

Each year, on Foundation Day, SAORA members return to Roedean to celebrate the school's birthday and renew friendships. Foundation Day traditionally starts with a chapel service followed by the 'Old Girls versus the school' tennis match (nearly always won by the Old Girls) and the AGM of the Association. Sherry with the Headmistress has developed into a noisy gathering for drinks at the water garden before luncheon. The Matric girls join them in Founders' Hall for the meal, after which the school songs are sung with great enthusiasm and laughter between the traditional speeches. The day ends with a formal ceremony as the President of the SAORA and the Headmistress cut the cake. Over 500 people attended the Centenary Foundation Day Gala Luncheon, which was held in a marquee on Bears' Lawn and Terrace.





**GENERAL SMUTS JOINS IN FAREWELL TO ROEDEAN SCHOOL FOUNDERS:** "Speech Day" at Roedeau School on Saturday had its note of regret, since the occasion marked the retirement of the principals and founders, Miss T. Lawrence and Miss K. M. Earle. The picture shows (left to right) Mrs. Smuts, Miss Lawrence (standing), Miss Earle and General Smuts.

General Jan Smuts was the speaker at the 1930 Speech Day, which also marked the retirement of TL and KME. In his speech he remarked on the tremendous 'march forward' of women and paid tribute to the Founders for the education they provided for girls at Roedeau. '... Women all over the Western world and here in South Africa are taking their places side by side with men in the professions, in civic life and in the work of the nation. This most profound social change means that our girls have to be fitted not merely for marriage ... but to occupy positions of usefulness and self-respecting independence ... Miss Lawrence and Miss Earle have not only been great schoolmistresses, but have helped to build up the womanhood of South Africa.'

THE STAR, JOHANNESBURG, TRANSVAAL, TUESDAY, NOV

*Speech Days are an important event in the Roedeau calendar. Prominent speakers, academics, politicians or business leaders are invited to address the audience and prizes are awarded for academic and sporting achievements.*



**GENERAL SMUTS AT ROEDEAN SCHOOL.**

On the occasion of the retirement of the principals of Roedeau School, Miss T. Lawrence and Miss K. M. Earle, a large gathering of parents attended the annual "speech day" ceremony at the school on Saturday. General J. C. Smuts delivered an inspiring address on women's part in national life. General Smuts is seen (inset) with Mr. H. O. Buckle, chairman of the board of directors of the school.



# Speech Day at Roedeau

SPEECH days at Roedeau are occasions for the reunion of old girls and the meeting of the many Johannesburg who are interested in Roedeau. Above all, however, they are festive events for the girls themselves. On Saturday afternoon the Founder's Hall was filled with visitors and Roedeau girls listening to the speeches made by Mr. Patrick Duncan, K.C., C.M.G., Minister of Mines, Mrs. P. Freer, the acting headmistress, Mr. Percival Whiteley and others. Outside were many other guests, accommodated on chairs and benches placed so that they could see and hear the speakers through the windows.

Afterwards tea was served in the beautiful dining room, the walls of which are being panelled through the generosity of the old girls, and on the terrace overlooking the lawns. Meetings and chats were the order of the afternoon, and the guests walked round the gardens, gay with jacaranda and many flowers, until an untimely shower drove them indoors.

Among those present were Miss K. M. Earle, Lady Dalrymple, Lady Lister, Mrs. Patrick Duncan, Mrs. P. M. Anderson and Miss Adrienne Anderson, Dr. and Madame Crinsoz de Cottens, Mr. and Mrs. R. S. G. Stokes, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Rose Macleod, Mrs. D. C. Greig and Miss Elspeth Greig, Mr. and Mrs. T. G. Otley, Mr. and Mrs. W. Somerset Bell, Mrs. F. E. Kanthack, Mr. and Mrs. A. Ussher, Mrs. J. R. Thurlow, Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Rivers, Mrs. Gordon Leith, Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Carter and Miss Betty Carter, Mrs. Sholto Douglas and Miss Mary Douglas, Mrs. French Lloyd and Miss Rita French Lloyd, Mrs. T. Kelly, Mr. H. R. Raikes, Miss A. Raikes, Dr. and Mrs. D. A. Ogilvie, the Rev. H. S. Chignell and Mrs. Chignell, Mrs. P. Holliday, Mrs. Louis Young, Mrs. A. G. N. Burden, Dr. and Mrs. J. G. de Kock, Mrs. G. B. Carlisle, Mr. and Mrs. C. Goodwin, Mrs. H. I. Hodgson, Mrs. E. Hirtzel, Mrs. B. Harris, Mrs. W. Hale, Mrs. H. Lawrence, Mr. and Mrs. J. Cameron Kerr, Mrs. F. Gilham, Mr. and Mrs. J. Harris, Mr. and Mrs. A. Y. Niven, Mrs. P. A. Wagner, Mrs. E. Knight, Mrs. A. Egan, Mrs. H. C. Tanner, Mrs. A. Smith, Mrs. F. L. H. Fleming, Mrs. P. Grant, Mrs. Webb, Mrs. G. E. P. Jones, Mrs. J. M. Trenery, Dr. T. Reunert, Miss Elsie Healey, Mrs. McFadyen, Miss May Bell, Mrs. R. Coulter, Mrs. F. Kemp, Mr. H. H. Muller and many others.



SPEECH DAY AT ROEDEAN SCHOOL. A group taken at Roedeau School on Saturday afternoon, the occasion being Speech Day. Miss K. M. Earle is sitting, and behind her is Mrs. Patrick Duncan, while Mrs. P. Freer, acting-headmistress, is next to Mrs. Duncan. Mr. Patrick Duncan, Minister of Mines, is on the extreme right. The three prefects are Marjorie Gilchrist, Margaret Walker and Thelma Ziman, who welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Duncan in Afrikaans.

Newspapers gave considerable coverage to the school's Speech Days.



Guests at Roedeau, photographed in the garden on Saturday afternoon, which was "Speech Day" at the School.



Senator Clarkson, Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, was the guest speaker at Speech Day in 1936.



The guest speaker in 1977 was heart surgeon Professor Christiaan Barnard. His wife, Barbara (née Zoellner), was an Old Girl. The charismatic professor had performed the world's first heart transplant in 1967.

An invitation to the 1999 Speech Day, and the programme from the 2002 event. Outstanding Roedeian musicians as well as the Senior Choir are asked to perform during the proceedings.

ROEDEAN SCHOOL

PARKTOWN

JOHANNESBURG

THE HEADMISTRESS, STAFF AND SCHOOL

REQUEST THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY AT

SPEECH DAY

ON SATURDAY 9 OCTOBER 1999

ADDRESS BY

Mrs Adelaide Tambo

Masters Degree - University of Keele, UK

Member of Parliament

09:00 Exhibitions Open

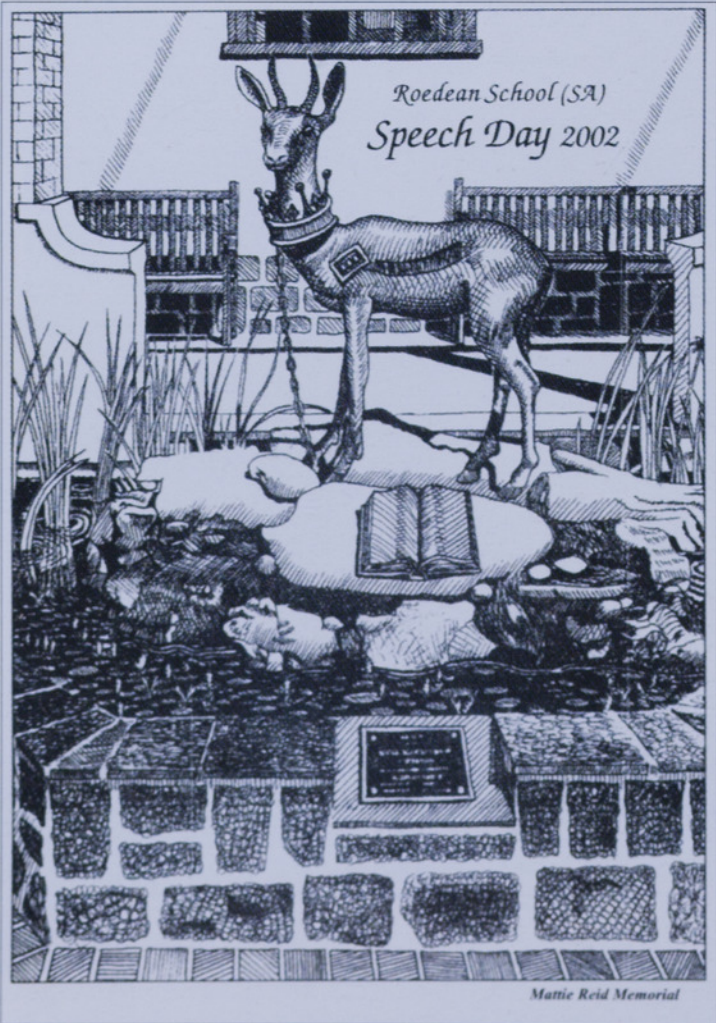
10:15 Tea

11:00 Speeches & Presentations

RSVP

643-8337 / 647-3200

Headmistress' Secretary



Order of Events

Music : Lauren Steyn - Arabesque by Debussy

Kathryn Hendry - Romance by Liszt

PROCESSIONAL

Senior Choir - Gaudeamus Igitur

Senior Choir

Glory be to the Father

Mozart

Louise Boyd

Fire Dance - Watkins

Estée Benadé

Elegy - Rachmaninoff

WELCOME BY THE CHAIRMAN

Mr Bill Cooper

REPORT BY THE HEADMISTRESS

Mrs Mary Williams

SPEECHES OF WELCOME

ENGLISH

AFRIKAANS

FRENCH

LATIN

ZULU

Sithembile Mbete

Colette Marais

Julie Felli

Vanessa Walker

Nthabiseng Baloyi

ADDRESS

Mr David Wylde

VOTE OF THANKS

Headgirl Mmaphuthi Morule

PRESENTATION OF PRIZES

Mrs Ingrid Wylde

NATIONAL ANTHEM

The audience is requested to remain standing until the Academic Procession has left the Hall

Christine Schepens will play Concerto in D by Stamitz





*Ella Le Maitre with a group of prefects at Speech Day 1958.*



*Another tradition of Speech Day is for 'Welcome Speeches' to be made in different languages. In 1956 they were made by (from left to right) Elizabeth du Preez (Afrikaans), Helen Brayshaw (English), Deborah Lavin (Latin) and Jean Archibald (French).*



*In 2002 Welcome Speeches were made by (from left to right) Julie Felli (French), Sithembile Mbete (English), Nthabiseng Baloyi (Zulu), Colette Marais (Afrikaans), and Vanessa Walker (Latin). In recent years the Welcome Speeches have been delivered in Chinese, German, Spanish, and Xhosa.*





## THE GRANDCHILDREN'S PARTY 1955

'... It was disappointing indeed for the Grandchildren to see massive, iron-grey clouds piling up in the sky at about twelve o'clock. Up to that time we had all been certain that it would be a fine day; but the weather did not treat us badly as it might have done and there were even pale shadows as the first grandchildren began to arrive, clutching toys bigger than themselves. By three o'clock all were gleefully splashing themselves and everyone else in the swimming bath. It was at this point that our old and much-loved friend "Juicy" came down, and

she was surrounded by so many people that it was quite a task to come near enough to talk to her; however, her very presence made the afternoon for all of us. After swimming most people flocked to the Gym (by way of the plum trees!) and enjoyed precipitating themselves over the apparatus. The older Grandchildren were thankful when tea was announced – and what a delicious tea! After everyone had eaten their fill came the event of the afternoon – finding the Fairy Godmother. A long and somewhat tiring search revealed her, surrounded by boxes for the toys, in the Ref. When all had presented their gifts and eaten their ice creams the rain poured down in earnest. By that time, however, only the most energetic of us were able to play in the

Gym again, and people began to disperse after a wonderful afternoon.'

*Report from The African Roedean.*

On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October we had the Grandchildren's party and it poured with rain so we had to stay and amuse all those "delightful" little girls and boys. One little boy was awful and 1 of all people got landed with him and had to feed him and keep him amused at tea – the result was a plate of jelly down my back and him falling off the bench and getting stuck between the benches.

Above: Not everyone enjoyed the parties as much as the children, as evidenced by this entry in a Senior's diary in the 1950s!

Top: The annual Grandchildren's Party began in the 1920s when Old Girls would bring their children to meet TL and KME. The Founders considered these children to be their grandchildren, '... each more beautiful than the last'.

Right: Continuing the tradition of dressing up, the Master Brian Law attended the Grandchildren's Party costumed as the Pied Piper. The tradition of the Grandchildren's Party has fallen away in latter years.







*During World War I, convalescing soldiers paid a visit to the school. They were photographed on the playing fields with the bare ridge behind them, Roedeans being situated on what was then the outskirts of the Johannesburg.*

*Right: The 1919 edition of The African Roedeans carried these reports of the Armistice. (The Kloof Road mentioned in the letter is present day Houghton Drive.)*

*In 1918 the Junior School raised £9 for the Blue Cross, the society which took care of the wounded horses and dogs used in the war. The following letter was received from General Rundle:*

**'Dear Miss Peacy,**

**'At the request of my Committee I write to thank the pupils of Roedeans School for the very kind contribution of £9 which they sent us for the Blue Cross Fund, being the proceeds of an entertainment which they kindly gave on our behalf.**

**'Will you please tell them that their kind sum comes at a most opportune moment, as we have now, at the request of the French Government, taken over the care of the War Dogs? These dogs are largely used in the French Army as sentinels, messengers, for seeking out the wounded soldiers, etc., and frequently get wounded in consequence. We have therefore opened hospitals for them in addition to those we already have for the wounded War Horses. The story of their suffering is a most pathetic one.**

**'Lady Smith-Dorrien also wishes me to personally add her very grateful thanks for this kind thought for the wounded animals.**

**'Both she and myself think the effort the pupils have made a splendid one.**

**'Yours sincerely,  
(General) Leslie Rundle.'**

During both World Wars, Roedeans pupils worked tirelessly to raise money for relief efforts. This entry is from *The African Roedeans* of 1917:

**'Instead of collecting as heretofore for various Funds, the School has decided to "adopt" two Prisoners of War now in German Camps. A little under £3 a month keeps a prisoner in parcels of food, clothing and tobacco, so we are sending £6 a month to the 'Gifts and Comforts' Committee. Our men are Corporal Art, at Hammelbury, Bavaria, and Private Armstrong at Sprottan, Silesia, both of the Third S.A.I. We hope that some of the girls will write to them and express our interest in their welfare. It must be terribly dull, if nothing worse, in a prison camp.'**

**'No need for "Please to remember the 11th of November", because nobody will ever forget it. Peace! Peace after four years of war! ... Everybody did something to celebrate the glorious news. On Wednesday night we had a bonfire on the highest peak of the kopje opposite to St John's School. Wednesday was mostly spent in collecting wood for the fire. The St John's boys helped and between us we managed to get quite a large amount of wood. The fire was built in the stone foundation of an old blockhouse.**

**'During the afternoon it looked like rain, but fortunately the night was beautifully fine. The fire was lit by Miss Lawrence, and as the wood broke into flames everybody sang "God Save The King". ... Miss Lawrence called for three cheers for all the Allies, and everybody cheered so heartily it was a wonder they had any voices left for the songs that were sung afterwards. The singing, however, was heard by the rows of people watching the fire from the Kloof Rd.**

**'"The Marseillaise", "Rule Britannia", "The Long Trail", "Tipperary" and "John Brown's Body" were among the many songs sung.**

**'When the fire had burnt down, everybody joined together to make a ring around it and sing first "Auld Lang Syne" and then "God Save The King".**

**'We have called the peak where the fire was made "Peace Beacon" in memory of our glorious victory.'**



'... It was in the late August of 1939 that I went with some others from our Matric and Cambridge Class by train to the Hans Merensky Farm School in the Northern Transvaal. The purpose of the visit was to improve our Afrikaans. In the day we attended classes and in the evening listened to the wireless or played games, or went to tickey-draais organized by the School.

'One of the young lads, Johan, who later became a Springbok rugby player and a well-known doctor, liked my friend Joan Summerly (Donald) and invited her to be his partner at the next tickey-draai, an invitation that Joan accepted happily – we all envied her!

'Then on the night before – September 3rd – we were all sitting around the wireless listening to the grave voice of Neville Chamberlain announce the declaration of war between England and Germany. "God Save The King" was played and the Roedean girls leapt to their feet and stood to attention whilst the Merensky pupils remained seated. We felt anxious – isolated and patriotic.

'Joan wrote a letter to Johan that night to say that she could no longer accept his invitation to the tickey-draai as he had not stood up for "God Save The King". The next day she received a note from him: "Dear Joan, I have learnt to play God Save The King on my mouth organ – please come with me tonight." We all went to the tickey-draai. Joan partnered Johan and we had a wonderful evening.

'... I can still see the big map behind the hall stage where Miss Le Maitre, every day through all those years, would move pins about and keep us abreast of the fluctuating fortunes of the war, which came to an end just before we left school to face the brave new world which all that fighting had been about.'

Sheila Junod (née Patchitt), 1940s.

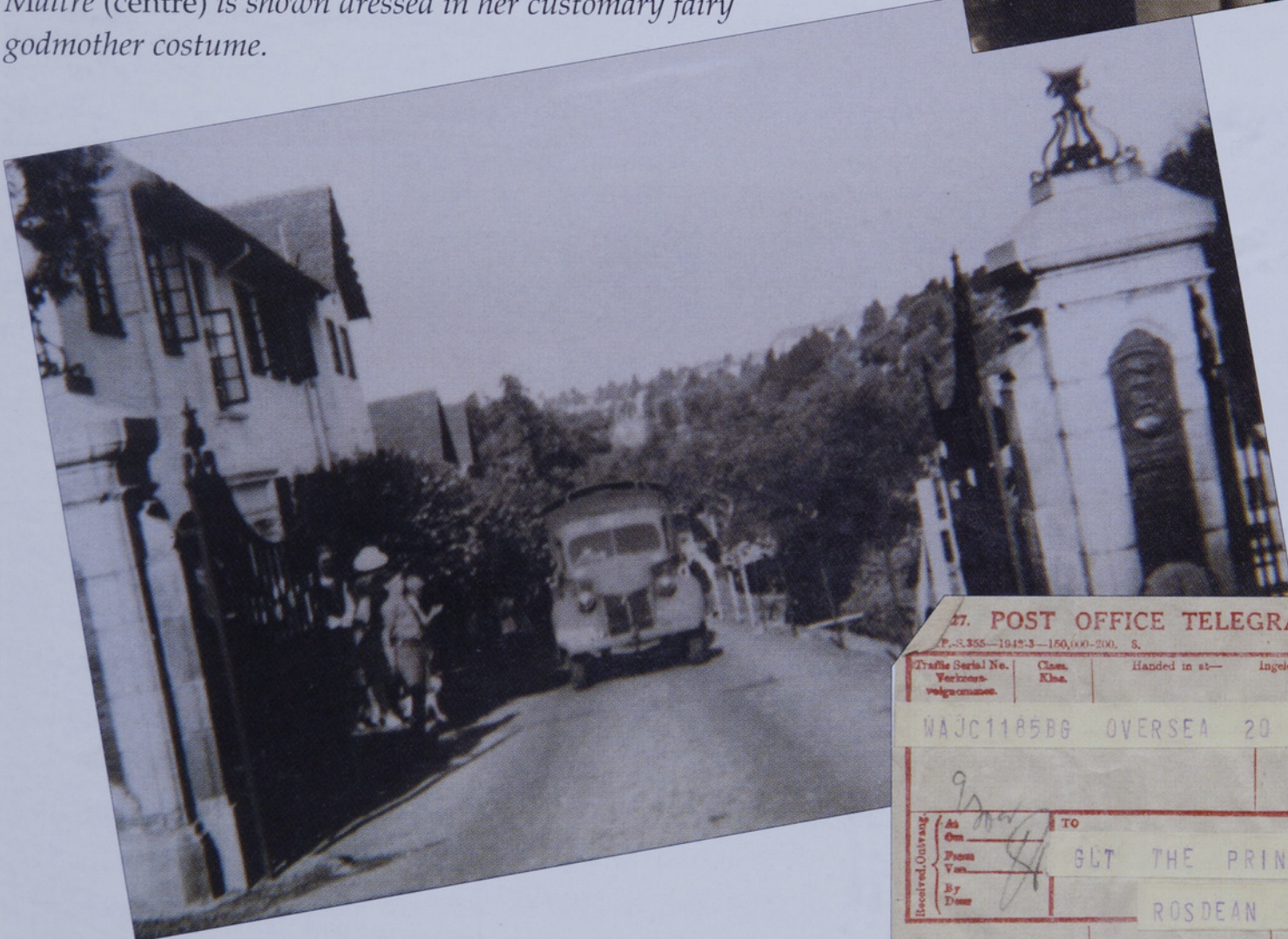
An extract from Ella Le Maitre's notes preserved in the Roedean archives, detailing Roedean's activities during World War II.

Austerity was of necessity the theme of Roedean's building operations during the war, but variety and enterprise marked her many activities directed towards the war-effort. This was launched by the collection of £550 for the Navy League Fund at a Fête organised in 1940 by the SAORA. (The SAORA had undertaken a biennial Fête, part of the proceeds of which was to go to the Building Fund - Miss Le Maitre offered to forgo the School's share in favour of war funds.) This money was sent through the Navy League to endow a bed for two years at the Fulmer Chase Maternity Hospital for the wives of Junior Officers in Buckinghamshire. Further funds were collected during the years that followed, and the bed was maintained from April 1940 until the hospital closed down for a period of six years in fact, at an estimated cost of £250 p.a. By November 15th 1941, the SAORA had also organised the collection of £400, and purchased with it a military ambulance which was presented to the S.A. Medical Corps on that day. When it was sent up North, the School sent parcels to the Medical Unit under Flt. Lieut. Terry Binns, which was in charge of the ambulance in Malta. And when the unit moved to Italy after the Sicilian campaign, without the ambulance, the School accepted the responsibility of supplying comforts both to G.H.Q. Malta, and the squadron originally in charge of it, until it was disbanded. At the end of 1942, the School adopted H.M.S. Soudra, originally based at Durban, and sent the men a variety of comforts from time to time during the next three years, until the crew were paid off at the end of the war. The men expressed





Roedean pupils raised the enormous sum of £400 to buy a military ambulance for the South African Medical Corps. It was presented during the Grandchildren's Party in 1941. Old Girl Joan Pocock presented the ambulance to Colonel Pratt-Johnson of the South African Defence Force. Ella Le Maitre (centre) is shown dressed in her customary fairy godmother costume.



The ambulance is driven through the Buckle Gates on the first leg of its journey to Malta.

27. POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.—POSKANTOORTELEGRAAFDIENS.

P.O. 355—1942:3—150,000—200, S.

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| MEDICAL OFFICER RAF MALTA YOUR AMBULANCE       |                 |                       |               |                   |                 |                                                        |               |
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Doubtful words may be repeated. No Repetition Fee will be collected if an error is disclosed. This form should accompany any inquiry.  
Twyfelagtige woorde kan herhaal word. As 'n fout aan die lig gekom word, sal geen koste vir die herhaling gevorder word nie. Hierdie vorm moet alle  
repeet vergoed.



Front and back of letter to Ella Le Maitre from the commander of one of the units that Roedean supported.

8.3.44. 1435 Squadron R.A.F.  
C.M.F.

Dear Miss Le Maitre,

Many thanks for another of your letters. And for three more parcels which arrived a few days ago. This time they contained a pullover + a pair of socks, lots of toffees + chocolate, combs + toothbrushes etc.

I have given some of the combs + toothbrushes to pilots, and some to airman. I still have a few left. The toffees I gave to the football team because it is representative of the Squadron, the chocolate is going by degrees to chapo on night duties such as the ambulance driver + orderly. I haven't given the socks

+ pullover to anyone yet because I want to find a really worthy case - Some airman perhaps or a pilot fished out of the sea. I believe I mentioned that one of our Flight Commanders who came from Johannesburg had just been given command of the Squadron. I'm very sorry to have to tell you that he was killed yesterday.

When I got your last letter telling us that you were holding Foundation Day on March 11th we sent off a cable to you. That was on 21st February so I hope it arrived in time.

You mentioned too in your last letter that you were at St Leonards. One of my mother's sisters was there too. I wonder if by any chance

you knew her. Her name was Jerselund, an unusual name (it is Danish) so if you'd heard it, you might remember. I've no idea when she was there.

There seems to be no limit to people's generosity. Today a small parcel of razor blades arrived from Tanganyika. I mentioned in one of my letters to Joyce Bithroy that we were a bit pushed for razor blades. Her mother sent me these! Actually the razor blade situation is now in hand.

I don't know what the postie people do with the parcels you send - play baseball or something by the looks of some of them. However they do arrive and we're very grateful for them. Yours sincerely, Terry Burns.

AIR MAIL  
BY AIR MAIL LETTER CARD  
IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED THIS CARD WILL BE SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL

ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

Miss E. K. I. LeMaitre  
RAF Roedean School  
Censor 447  
Park Town  
Johannesburg  
SOUTH AFRICA

WHEN FOLDED THE LETTER CARD MUST CONFORM IN SIZE AND SHAPE WITH THE BLUE BORDER WITHIN WHICH THE ADDRESS ONLY MAY BE WRITTEN

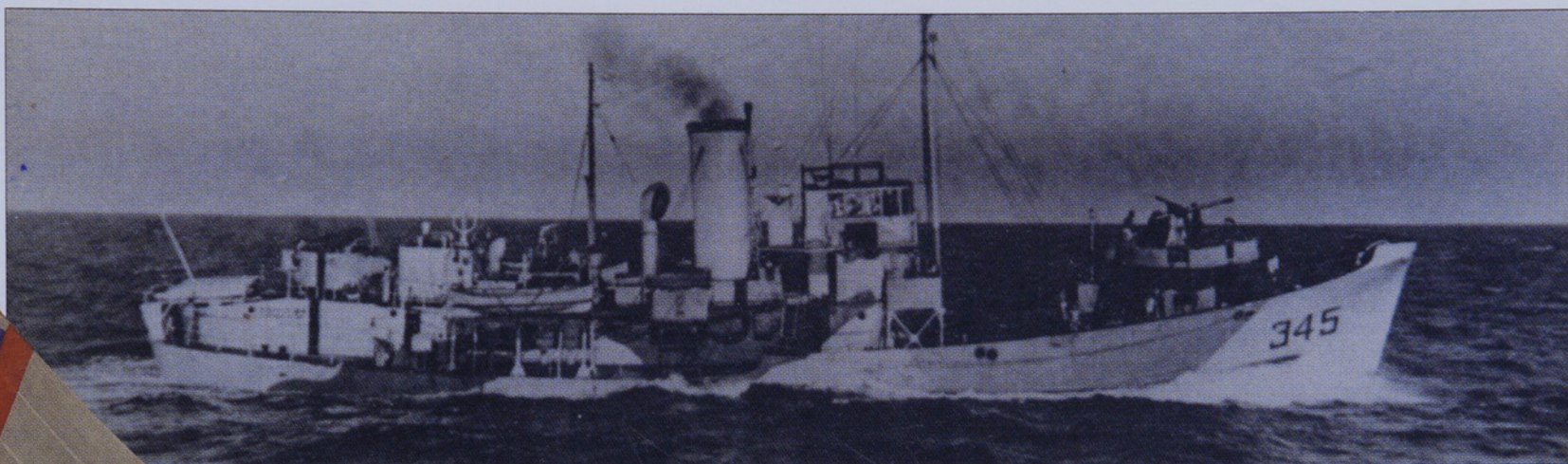
Plat. T.  
R

The memories of girls at Roedean during the second war all mention one thing - knitting. This report from The African Roedean of 1942 illustrates the determined efforts of the Junior School pupils:

'... Several of the Juniors disappeared entirely inside the colossal pullovers they were knitting for our Navy, and were found by Miss Chard rolled up in cocoons like silkworms and still knitting ...'

Old Girl Jeanne Portal-Altham wrote: '... I remember Air Raid practice on the Kopjie in the middle of lessons, and the boarder who took her "potty" with her in case she needed it ...'.





The HMS Sondra was a minesweeper which was adopted by Roedean in 1941. Each crew member had a Roedean correspondent, and the girls collected such items as sweets, cigarettes, books, records and musical instruments for them, as well as knitting items of clothing.

Top left: The HMS Sondra ensign was presented to the school after the war and now hangs in the chapel.

Being the war years, the food left much to be desired, as Angela Lloyd vividly remembers: 'Each day we would queue outside the Junior School Hall, collecting our napkins in their little blue or green envelopes from the Dignes on duty, and then proceed in crocodile up to an orderly lunch, at set table places, each table for 10 presided over by a mistress, who served all helpings with ruthless impartiality, and watched us eat with a beady eye, quick to pounce on bad manners or on any attempt to "pouch" or otherwise conceal unwanted morsels of the robust offerings that reached each plate. There was beef stew and fried fish, and a grey mutton stew redolent of dishcloths; cottage pie was a treat. Vegetables were pumpkin and cabbage, and boiled potatoes; but it was the puddings that caused the problems, those ghastly blancmanges, the ghosts of Caesar, Cleopatra and Chaka; the hideous Spotted Dog in its shiny casing of suet, and worst of all the dread vermicelli, with its knots of little white worms writhing about in the watery gruel of a failed egg custard. An extraordinary treat, in contrast to these concoctions was the rice pudding, at least made with good rice, sugar and milk.'

Crew members of the HMS Sondra who visited the school in September 1944.



Shirley Arnold (née Kneen) remembered the embarrassing day when crew members of the HMS Sondra visited the school:

'... During the last war, Roedean adopted a Royal Navy corvette. The girls wrote letters to the men on board and vigorously applied themselves to knitting strange shaped objects supposedly for their comfort. One day members of the crew arrived at the school. Miss Le Maitre took it upon herself to show them round. Now it happened to be an excessively hot day and the mistress, who shall remain nameless, sympathised sufficiently with her class to allow them to discard their djibbahs and continue the remainder of the class clad only in voluminous black bloomers and white short-sleeved blouses. By today's standards the girls

were more than adequately covered up, but in those days ... well!

'Suddenly the form room door was flung open and Miss Le Maitre, accompanied by several naval officers, advanced into the room. The girls, of course, leaped to their feet and stood to attention – some with blouses neatly tucked in, but some with blouses, dare I say it, hanging out! – but all in what Miss Le Maitre quite obviously thought was a state of undress. In as dignified a manner as possible under the circumstances, she extricated her men and firmly shut the classroom door, and progressed, presumably down the corridor, saying or explaining ... who knows? Need I say that as soon as we thought everyone was safely out of earshot, there were peals of girlish giggles.'



*King George VI, Queen Elizabeth and Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret visited Johannesburg in 1947. Roedean pupils were invited to a Royal Party at Zoo Lake, where Ella Le Maitre was presented to the King and Queen.*



*In 1953 Roedean pupils lined Louis Botha Avenue to watch the celebrations marking the coronation of the young Queen Elizabeth.*



ROEDEAN SCHOOL, (S.A.)  
PARK TOWN,  
JOHANNESBURG.  
26.4.51.

Dear Mrs Willis,

The money we have collected for snails and other odd jobs we have done for our matron, sums up to 6/11. Miss Terryll the gardener, has paid us for collecting snails and she gave us about 4/11 and our matron gave us 2/6 and we also contributed towards it.

Yours faithfully, the snail collectors.

S. Bamford,  
J. Leicester,  
R. Wingfield,  
J. Scott.

N.B. They sent 7/- not 6/11  
D. Willis

Roedean School  
Parktown  
Johannesburg.  
3.6.51.

Dear Mrs. Willis,

I am pleased to contribute my pound to the Jubilee fund and am enclosing it in this note.

I earned it by making cakes, washing bottles for a native dispensary, helping in the garden and looking after my younger sister.

Yours sincerely  
Lillian Latham

ROEDEAN  
PARK TOWN,  
JOHANNESBURG.

Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> 1951

Dear Mrs Willis.

I am enclosing 11/6 - our only contribution this time to the Jubilee Fund. It was made by Anne Kerr in the Kindergarten from the sale of silkworms at 3<sup>rd</sup> a dozen.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,  
Helen Nelson

Roedean School,  
Parktown,  
Johannesburg.  
28.5.51.

The significant birthdays of Roedean are always specially celebrated. In the run up to the Jubilee year pupils were required to raise money for a special fund. These notes illustrate the resourceful efforts of the younger girls.

Dear Mrs. Willis,

I have given Miss Le Maitre a pound for the Jubilee Fund, which I earned in the holidays by doing odd jobs for my parents. I was actually rather expensive, and charged them 6d. a job, but they were quite willing to give it to me.

Yours sincerely,  
Elizabeth Sinclair.



# After 50 Years

FIFTY years ago in Jeppe with 10 pupils, two young English women, Miss Theresa Lawrence and Miss Margaret Earle, founded Roedeas School—a venture inspired by the Lawrence sisters, who had founded Roedeas School in Brighton. Last week-end the South African Roedeas celebrated its golden jubilee with a foundation stone-laying of extensions to the junior school, a garden party and a candle-lit dinner attended by members of the board, the council, staff and girls, past and present. The chief guest of honour was Dame Emmeline Tanner, former headmistress of

Roedeas, Brighton, and her speeches at the laying of the stone and the dinner were both a delight and an inspiration.

"Scottie," Miss R. S. Scott, former assistant vice-principal, Miss Mabel Bayley, former headmistress of the junior school, both came from Natal for the celebrations and had a great reception, and Mrs. Margaret Harris, of White River, an Old Girl of Roedeas, Brighton, a former games mistress of Roedeas, South Africa, and a niece of the Lawrences, was another guest.

The theme, "not buildings, but



Four "Old Girl" friends who adjourned to their favourite school log for tea are MARI-GOLD WILSON, MARGARET DALZIEL, MARY OATES and MARY CLARKE, among the hundreds who attended the Roedeas School Golden Jubilee garden party on Friday, when the foundation stone of the junior school extensions was laid by Dame Emmeline Tanner.

people make a school," was emphasised by both Dame Emmeline and the Mayor of Johannesburg, Mr. H. Miller, the latter saying that women turned out by this school took a great part in fashioning the future life of the country.

Everyone was impressed with the splendid arrangements made for receiving hundreds of people by the headmistress, Miss Ella Le Maitre, the staff and pupils.

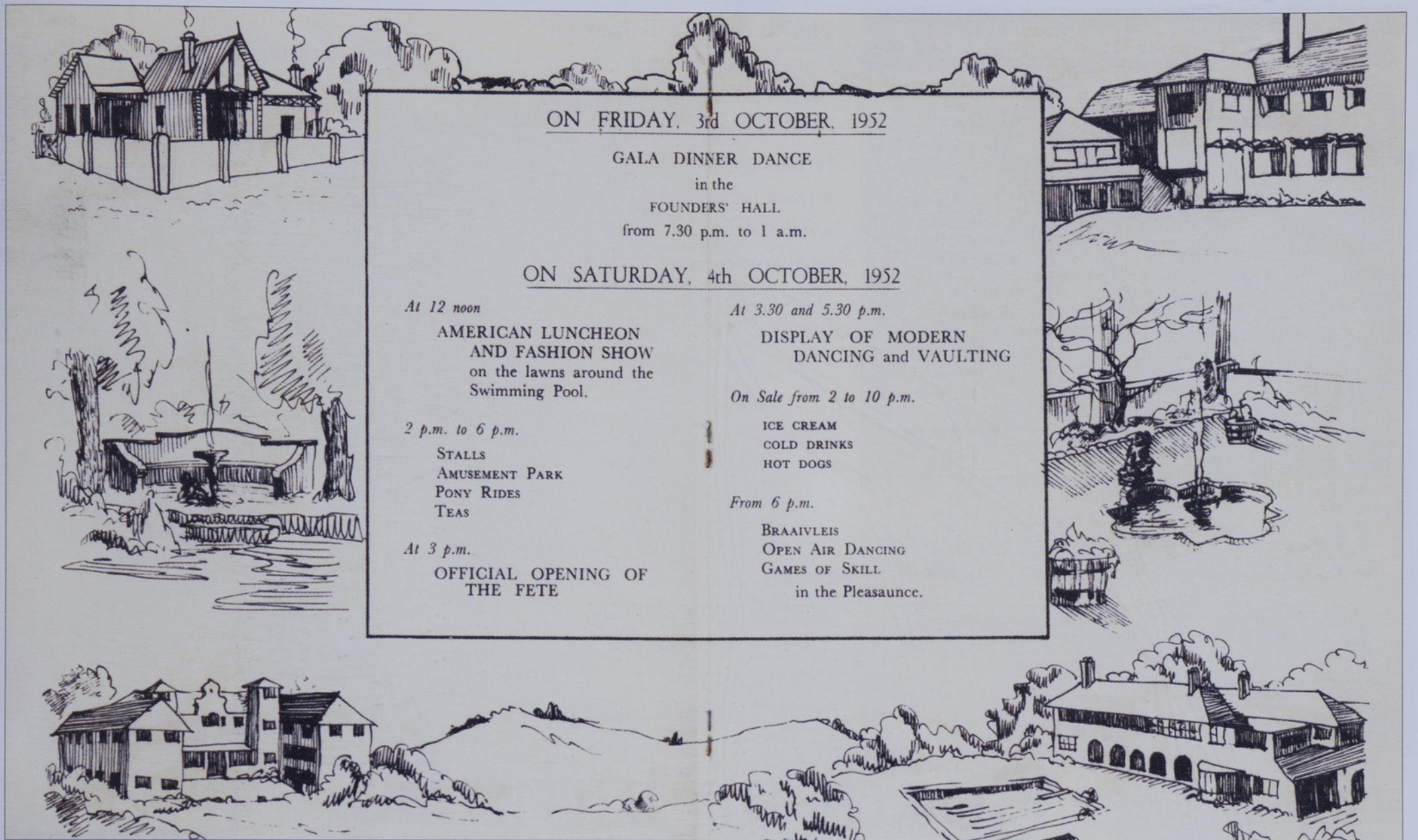
Mrs. Ida Wagner presented a token cheque to the chairman, Mr. Whitmore Richards, for £13,000, collected by the jubilee fund committee—about half the amount required for buildings.

The Old Girls' Association meeting, conducted by Mrs. Eric Marthinusen, voted the annual sum of £250 for the Native nursery schools.



The 50th birthday of the school saw unprecedented celebrations, as reported in the Rand Daily Mail of 24 February 1953.





The delightful drawings in the souvenir programme of the 50th birthday celebrations chart the school's progress.

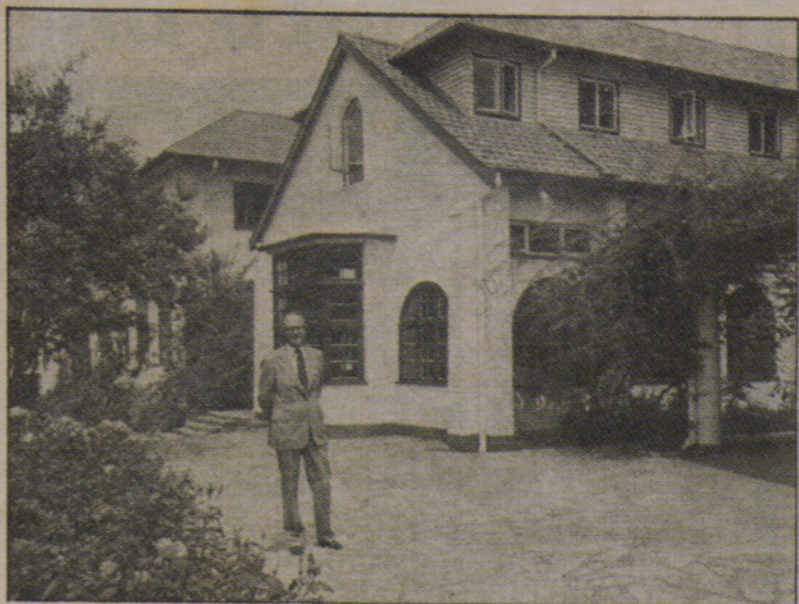


Right: Dame Emmeline Tanner, former Headmistress of Roedean, Brighton, was the guest of honour at the Johannesburg 50th birthday celebrations. In her speech she said, '... We pray that during the next 50 years Roedean will continue to send out into the world women prepared to follow that Good Life that does not change with the times, women with a sense of beauty and a standard of values that will make them worthy citizens of South Africa and of the world.' Dame Emmeline's hopes have certainly been rewarded.





## School celebrates 75 years



Mr. Brian Law, headmaster of Roedeian School, which celebrated the 75th anniversary of its founding this year.

The Rosebank Killarney Gazette interviewed Brian Law on the occasion of the school's 75th birthday. Mr Law, the former rector of Michaelhouse, was the only man to serve as head of the school during its first hundred years.

## Roedeian old girls make their mark

ROEDEAN School, one of the oldest girls' schools in Johannesburg, celebrated its 75th year of existence on March 4. It had its humble beginnings in a four-roomed house in Janie Street, Jeppestown in 1903.

Today, the school still retains a rustic air due to its proximity to The Wilds. It is only a stones throw from the huge new hospital on the Parktown Ridge and is only three kilometres from the centre of the city.

Roedeian was started by the youngest of the three Lawrence sisters, who founded Roedeian in Brighton, England. Theresa Lawrence was persuaded to come out to South Africa and with a friend, Margaret Earle, the school was opened to cater for the daughters of mining executives on the Reef.

In 1904 the school was moved to Parktown to its present site, and the original building stood alone on the koppie, except for Lord Milner's official residence, Sunnyside, and the home of Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, whose wife performed the opening ceremony.

Roedeian started off as a boarding school in the past, but today most of the pupils are day scholars, but some of those who board come from as far afield as Fiji, the Seychelles and Kenya.

"It has been quite a change moving from a boy's boarding school at Michaelhouse, Natal, to a girls' school in Johannesburg," says Mr Brian Law, the ninth principal but first headmaster of Roedeian.

He has introduced quite a few changes in the three years since he has been there, the most notable of which is the sharing with a boys' school, St Johns, of classroom and extra-curricular activities.

"It is one of my policies that where there are clear educational, social or economic benefits from sharing, why not do so?" Mr Law said.

The two schools share French, Latin and chemistry lessons. They also combine for public speaking, ballroom dancing, bridge and the orchestra.

responsible for reviving post matric at the school after this had lapsed about thirty years ago. Until recently Roedeian and St Johns were the only two schools in Johannesburg catering for this.

Several of "old girls" have mark after leaving among whom

Lister, wife of Sir Spencer Lister, Joyce Waring, Maud Sumner, the artist, and Sheena Duncan, chairman of the Black Sash.

Founder's Day was

## Roedeian turns 90

By Annarosa de Waal

WHEN two teachers from Roedeian School in Brighton, England, came to Johannesburg in 1903 to found a local branch of this independent British girls' school, they could not have known that 90 years later it would have grown into one of the most respected private schools in South Africa.

Yet they must have had their hopes, even in the school's early days in dusty, noisy Jeppestown, then a buzzing mining suburb. In fact, it was the dust that finally prompted Misses Theresa Lawrence and Katherine Earle to move into "the country".

And so Roedeian in Parktown was founded. Designed by Sir Herbert Baker, the original building was one of only three in the area, the other two being Lord Milner's Sunnyside residence (today the Sunnyside Park Hotel), and Sir Percy Fitzpatrick's Hohenheim, which was later demolished to make way for the Johannesburg Hospital.

### 90th year

This year celebrating its 90th year, today's Roedeian is built on the best of British tradition, with a strong South African and international flavour.

As its current headmistress, Mrs Lyn Nelson, puts it: "Pupils address teachers as 'Madam', they curtsy when they receive an award and they are taught to acknowledge the school's history."

"The school has a strong work ethic and culture of learning. Our

focus is on excellence — in last year's Joint Matriculation Board exams, for example, we came second, third, fourth and ninth, and our lowest average symbol was a D.

"We have 641 pupils and 90 members of staff, with a strong emphasis on science and mathematics, languages, music and drama.

"As teachers we try our best to achieve that magic combination of high standards and low anxiety. And one hopes that when a pupil leaves she will have acquired a love of learning."

### Survival

However, one needs more than British tradition to survive in South Africa today. And Mrs Nelson agrees: "We don't want to be precious and isolated from the real world; the girls need to know the political and social issues of the day. They also have to know the difference between formal and informal language and occasions and how to conduct themselves in society."

Life skills form an important part of the Roedeian curriculum, and each class has to support a charity for which it has to help raise funds.

"I have lunch with all



Roedeian headmistress, Mrs Lyn Nelson... as teachers we try to achieve that magic combination of high standards and low anxiety.

the form captains once a term. And I remember a little Standard Six form captain telling me once that she had learnt two things from her class fundraising effort: You can't depend on everyone and you can't sell cake from a sloping bench."

Roedeian has a vast number of pupils who come from the international community, and their needs have to be catered for as well.

"Diplomats and captains of industry send

their daughters here for a few years, then leave again for England, the US, Taiwan, Brazil, Germany. Which is why our academic standards absolutely have to be on an international level," Mrs Nelson says.

### Future

Yes, she does believe private schools (parents pay between R7 200 and R12 945 annually to keep their daughters at Roedeian) have a place in a future South Africa. "Education in South

Africa is entering an unpredictable period; there are plans for a unitary system of education and equal opportunities for all children, which is obviously essential.

"But I also believe you have to acknowledge and encourage diversity, and that education needs to span the First and Third World dichotomy.

"As centres of excellence, private schools will play a crucial role in a future South Africa, providing an education

which academically will make us the equal of all the other countries in the world."

She firmly believes in boys and girls being educated separately, and in encouraging a spirit of independence.

### Monastic

"The big complaint about monastic schools is that socially there is no opportunity to mix with the opposite sex, but I find today's youngsters see quite a lot of each other outside school.

"The point is that boys and girls mature at different rates, and that each group's requirements are best met separately."

Independence, on the other hand, allows a school greater opportunity to pursue interests outside the prescribed curriculum.

"We have a very strong emphasis on languages, for example, with English, Afrikaans, French, Latin and Zulu being compulsory subjects in Standard Six and Seven. We also offer German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Polish and South Sotho as matric subjects, with pupils writing the British A-level exams in subjects not tested by the Joint Matriculation Board."

In the cultural field, too, far more than the core curriculum is offered; girls are able, for example, to learn anything from antique furniture restoration and pottery to photography

and French cooking. "We change and adapt as we go along — we're thinking, for example, of adding fencing, scuba diving and karate."

Which all sounds wonderfully interesting and varied, except that without fairly well-off parents this sort of education is out of the question.

Not necessarily, says Mrs Nelson. "Yes, we have wealthy parents, but there are also many parents who work very hard to keep their children here. We try to teach the girls a meaningful, non-materialistic value system. The emphasis is on integrity and independence."

### Not easy

"Getting in" is not easy — Mrs Nelson says the youngest applicant on her waiting list was born last week. Last year Roedeian received 120 applications for 44 places in Grade 0, and 70 applications for "very few" places in Standard Six.

Older applicants write an English and mathematical test, "but we are not just looking for stars; one wants a school community that has diversity and energy."

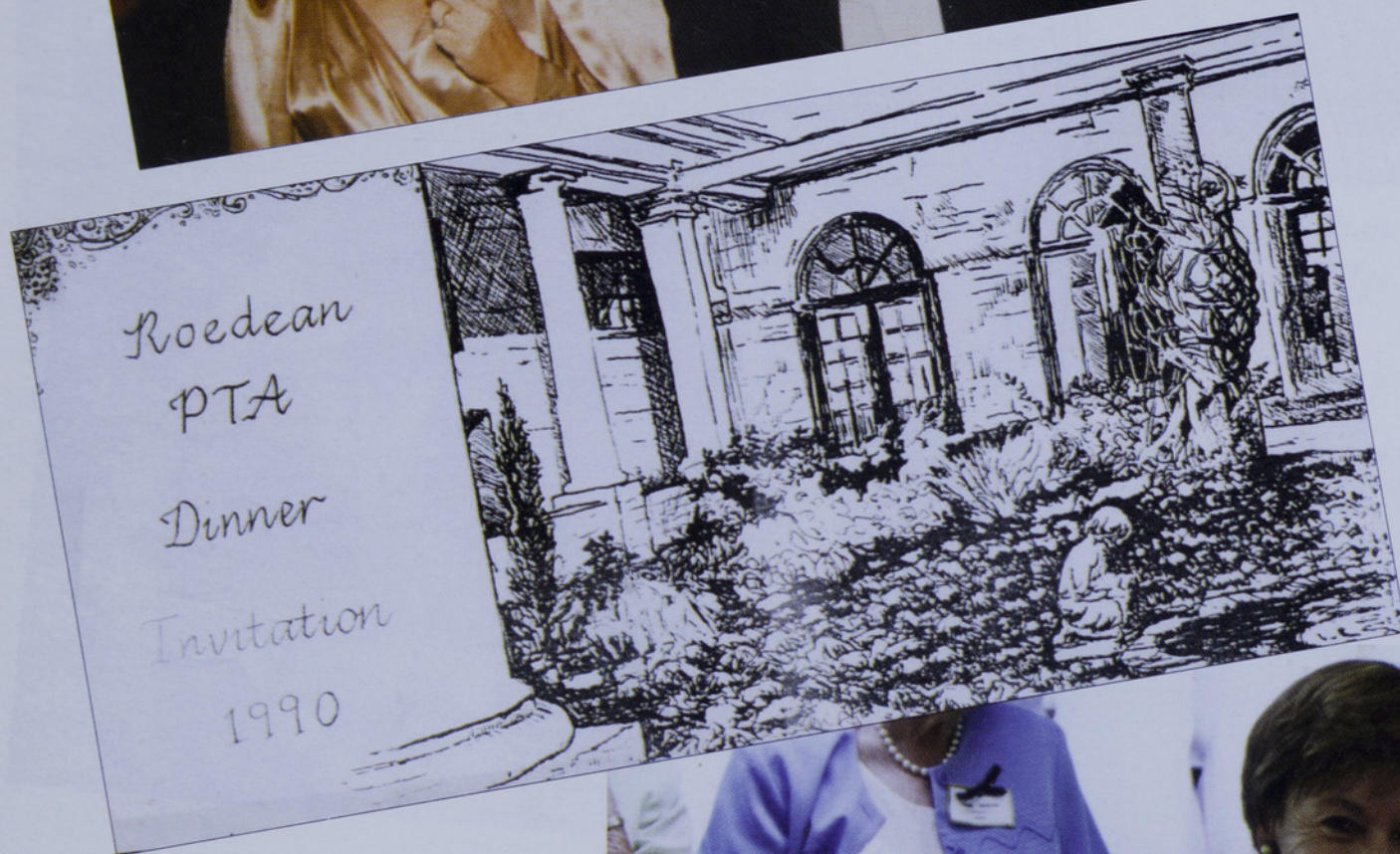
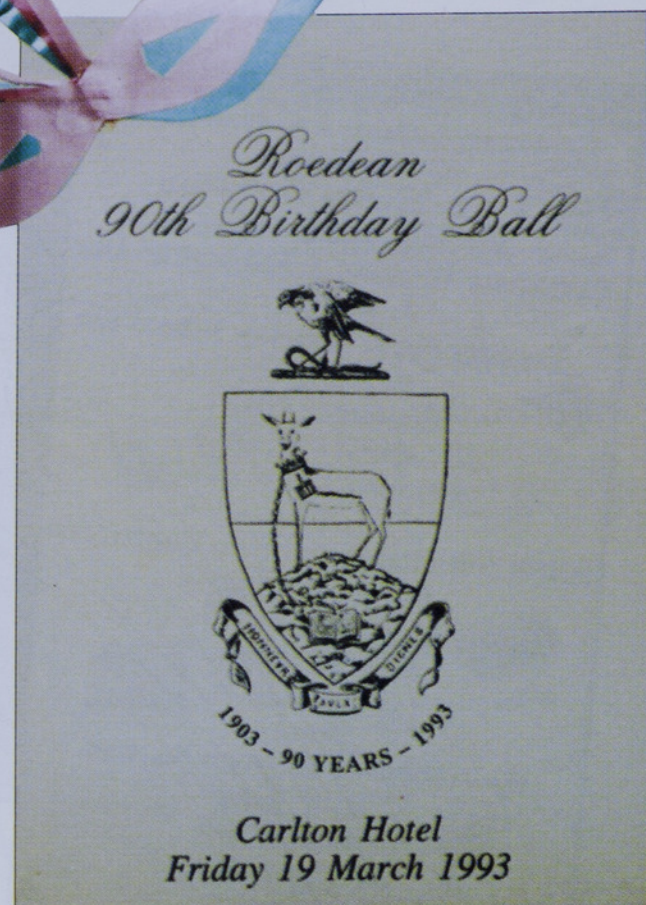
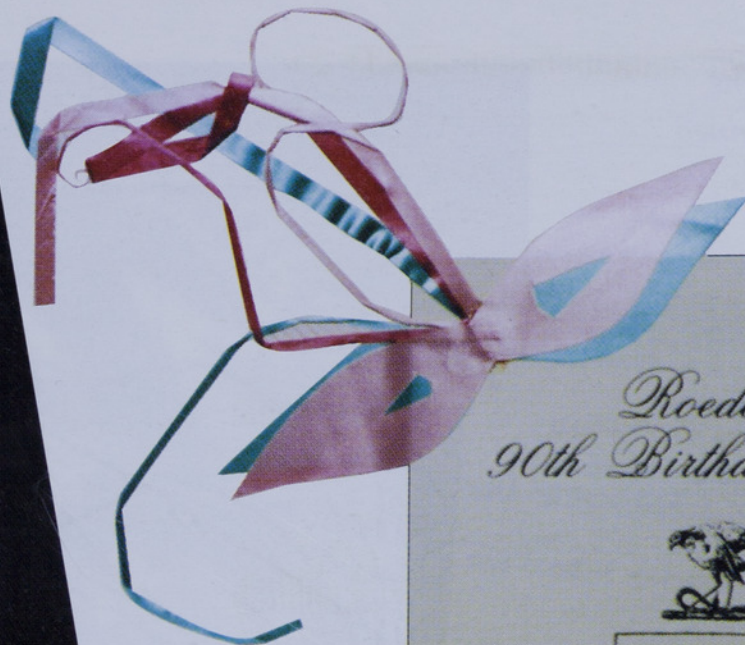
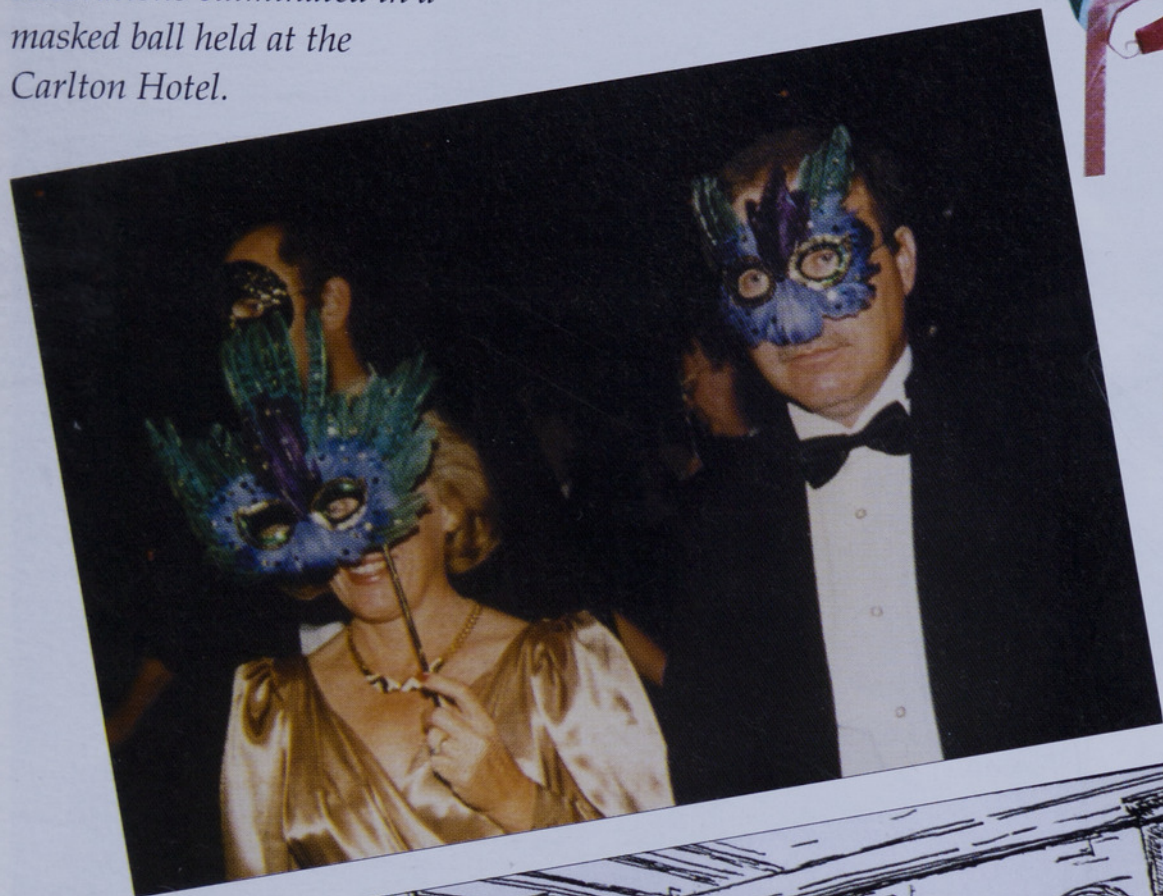
The most important part of the application process is an interview with the headmistress. "I look for pupils who are willing to apply themselves to whatever they are doing, whether it is playing hockey or the violin, doing a Latin translation or smiling sweetly at someone in trouble."

The programme for the 90th birthday fair.





The 90th birthday celebrations culminated in a masked ball held at the Carlton Hotel.



The annual PTA dinners at Roedean are popular events, when parents and staff gather together to dine and dance the night away.

Foundation Day 2003 was a particularly auspicious occasion. Seventy years on, Old Girls Patience Freeland (left) and Rosemary McCulloch returned to sing the old school songs once again. Rosemary is the mother of the Junior School Headmistress Jan Mallen (centre). Patience still remembers a visit to the school by Ouma Smuts who wore a long black dress, black stockings and black shoes.





Events celebrating the Centenary were planned throughout the year.

*Roedean Centenary Events 2003*

Centenary Launch & Cocktail Party  
17 January

Multimedia Production  
28 February - 5 March

Centenary Weekend & Foundation Day  
1 March

Decades Picnic & Junior School Fair  
2 March

Centenary Hike  
30 April - 4 May

Centenary Golf Day  
14 May

ISASA National Curriculum Conference  
22 - 24 May

Cultural Festival  
26 - 30 May

Book Launch  
June

Sports Festival & Sports Banquet  
7 & 8 June

Centenary Ball  
2 August

Flower Festival  
13 September

Carol Service & Nativity  
2 December



The Centenary logo lights up the velvet curtains of the stage in Founders' Hall during the Centenary Launch cocktail party.

Two thousand members of the Roedean community, sporting hats from various eras in the school's history, gathered on the playing fields for the Decades picnic and Junior Entrepreneurship Fair.



'My favourite part of the Centenary Service was the parade of flags. I saw the South African and the Roedean flag. I liked all the colours. I liked my special badge. I loved the prayers in lots of different languages. I sang 'The Best School Of All' all day long! When we went out we had a fairy cake with a golden 100 on top. Yummy! It was a very special day!'

Laurie Harrison, Form II.





A porcelain 'Pioneer Pupil' doll was part of a wide selection of Centenary memorabilia sold during 2003. Its clothes are authentic, down to the ubiquitous black bloomers, and were meticulously sewn and embroidered by Roedean mothers and Old Girls.

Hundreds of roses echoed the myriad colours of the flags at the Commemorative Assembly.



At the commemorative Assembly, all pupils and staff received a centenary badge.



*Roedean Centenary Launch*  
January 17, 2003  
*Commemorative Assembly*

#### ORDER OF SERVICE

Procession - *Song of the Founders* - Senior School Orchestra and Choir.  
School flag, Centenary flag, House flags and flags of many of the nationalities represented at Roedean School (SA)

All Seated

Welcome: Chairman of the Board - Mr W W Cooper

*Glory Be to the Father* Mozart - Senior School Choir

#### Readings:

Mrs Mary Williams - Executive Headmistress  
Mrs Jan Mallen - Junior School Headmistress

*Praise My Soul* - All

Multi-Denominational Prayers

*Child of the Universe* - Junior School Choir

Presentation of Centenary badges to representatives of the Roedean Community

*The Best School of All* - All  
Raising of the Centenary Flag

Blessing: Father Nigel Andrews

The National Anthem

Procession off stage

You are invited to join us for tea in the Water Garden following the service



A multimedia production combined music, theatre and photographic visuals to chart the history of the school.



V

## BRICKS AND MORTAR

*'Vision has conjured us, fostered our spirit,  
Vision foretold the white walls of Roedean.'*



*One of Sydney Carter's sketches of Roedean,  
showing the Bears' entrance in the late 1920s.*



There comes a point in the history of most institutions when the ethos and the physical infrastructure become one. Think of Oxford or the Sorbonne, or the Vatican or the Kaaba at Mecca. The bricks and mortar and the intention they contain enunciate a common message. Although the exact point is not known at which the white arches and terracotta roofs of Roedean began to exude the core ideas of *'Trouthe and Honour, Freedom and Curteisye'*, it is certain that they do now.

The original buildings were designed by Sir Herbert Baker. It is clear that the budget was limited. Unplastered bricks were painted white, and the buildings are significantly unadorned. This reality now seems entirely apt. It speaks more clearly of that fundamental Roedean precept, of simplicity being the criterion of good taste, than it does of financial strictures. Yet even the latter implication has its place in the ethos of the school. There is a sense of spartan restraint, which emanates from this elegantly simple architecture.

Consider this as an example: no glazed windows in the Junior School dormitories until the 1950s. Before that date, imagine rows of small girls mostly invisible under their karosses while the frozen highveld winters stalked freely in and out of the dormitories.

Closer inspection of the Roedean buildings provides further evidence. They are filled with what can best be described as 'add-ons'. Brighton provided some tapestries and a piano. Bequests brought teak doors here, a small chapel there. Individuals left their small marks on the original shell, bringing to the school a caring human dimension which might have been difficult to achieve had the building budgets been larger. Take Founders' Hall, for example. The interior of this special place was built brick by brick, each brick a donation.

Roedean has spent large parts of its century looking for donations – of money for this or that, of bricks, of anything that could add to the richness and relevance of the home of so valuable an ethos. Donations built the Freer Room and P classroom named after Paul Lawrence; and R60 bought a filtration system for the swimming pool where 'you never knew what you'd find in the water' (according to one informant) – including, one memorable morning, a dead horse.

After 50 years, the Jubilee Fund was established to raise money for new buildings to cope with the school's steady growth. The same happened after 75 years, and again after 90 years, and will naturally happen with the Centenary Appeal.

So the original Herbert Baker contribution, those white walls and arches, has been steadily added to and complemented by new buildings which together make the school we know today. The chapel was dedicated in 1934, and enlarged during a spate of building activity in the 1980s and 1990s. The Drama Block and the Gymnasium, the Maud Sumner Arts Block, the Computer Centre and the Technology Centre were all built in that time.

During the early years, every night a street lamp cast the shadow of a cross onto the white Bears' gable of the original Baker building. Some contemporaries saw this as a sign that the school was blessed. In terms of the growth of its infrastructure, and the remarkable retention and complementing of the design of the original building, it is difficult not to concur.



TL's older sister Millicent had visited the school in St Patrick's Avenue and had realised that if the South African branch of her school was to flourish it needed a permanent building. This account from the SAORA archives describes how she achieved this:

'... Upon her return to England, Millicent evolved her scheme. She had interviewed the Braamfontein Company, the manager of which was Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, and had obtained the offer of the upper part of the present site (which she had helped to select) and a building loan on a deposit of £1,500. This money she now collected in loans, at a low rate of interest, from friends and well-wishers of the scheme. Their names are well-known and have been given to the

original classrooms in the Old House, and to the Cottage. P for Sir Paul Ogden Lawrence (T L's brother), F for Frances Martineau, E for Elspeth Brausewetter and C for Charlotte Renou.

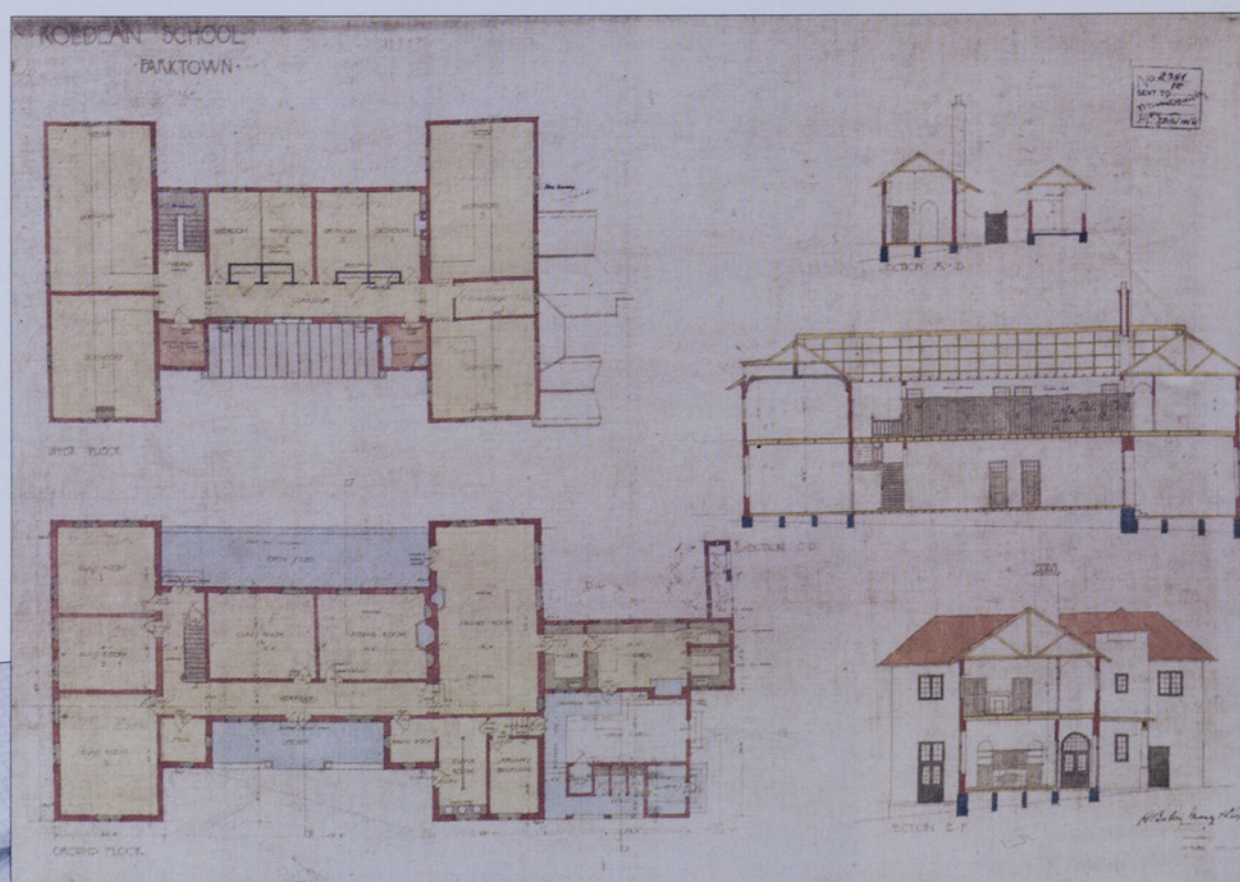
Amongst the introductions given to the Lawrence sisters by Rudyard Kipling was one to Sir Herbert Baker, whose services as architect Roedean was fortunate enough to secure. Sir Herbert drew the plan of the first house, now St Ursula, and his partner, Mr Sloper, superintended its erection. When later Mr Sloper and Sir Herbert left Africa, Mr Fleming became Roedean's official architect; and to him the school owes all the future additions which so wonderfully harmonise with its beginnings.'

Below: The original Sir Herbert Baker building, c1904, photographed from what is now Princess of Wales Terrace. The design combined elements of Dutch and English architecture. It was one of only a handful of buildings on the ridge. Lord Milner was a neighbour at Sunnyside, and a frequent visitor for a game of cribbage.

Sir Percy and Lady Fitzpatrick were also near neighbours and great supporters of the school. Sir Percy is best remembered as the author of the classic story Jock of the Bushveld.



The original foundation stone was laid on 8 March 1904. Lady Fitzpatrick was unable to perform the duty owing to the illness of Sir Percy and it was laid instead by Mr E B Sargant, educational advisor to Lord Milner, in pouring rain. The building was blessed by Dr Carter, the Bishop (and later Archbishop) of Pretoria. The stone has since been replaced by a marble plaque.



The architect's plan for the ground floor.







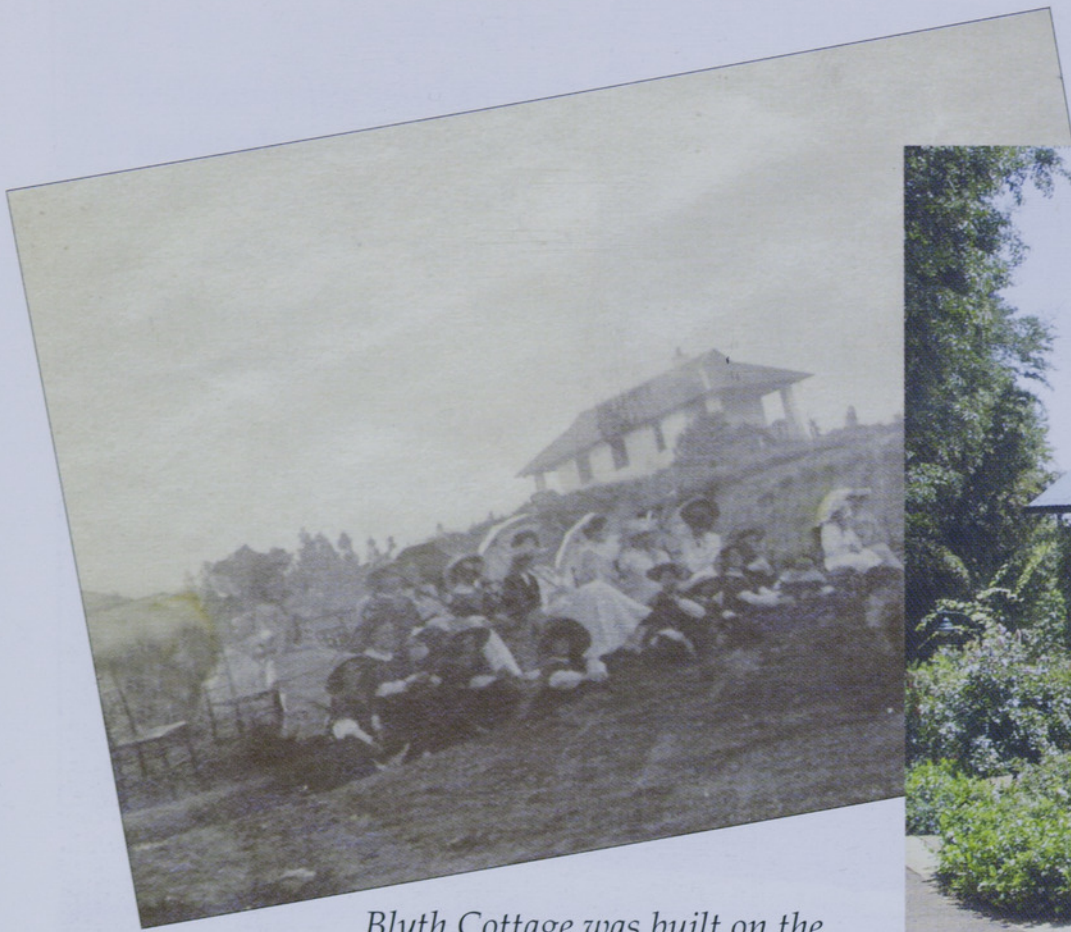
*These pictures were published in a brochure about the school in 1908 and show the beginnings of the garden.*



*Bottom left: E classroom, and (right) a view of the magnificent frieze and tapestries in the hall.*







*Blyth Cottage was built on the site where the biology block now stands and was originally used as a sanatorium. A donation from the Lawrences' aunt Frances Martineau in 1905 enabled the school to build a new sanatorium in the Martineau wing.*



*The old engine house is still in use today by the estate manager. At one time it was the electricity station for the whole of Parktown. It was bought in 1909 and variously used as a sanatorium, a laboratory, TL's bedroom and a laundry.*



*Left: French Cottage was used as both residence for the French teacher and classroom for her pupils until 1931. One Old Girl remembered the French Madame from her day:*

*'... Madame Peckowitz, a Polish aristocrat, taught French. She inhabited the French Cottage, and it was a treat to be asked to dinner there. Madame always wore a very long string of pearls – we were sure she slept with them round her neck.' Madame can be seen in the doorway.*



*Right: French Cottage is today the home of the estate manager.*

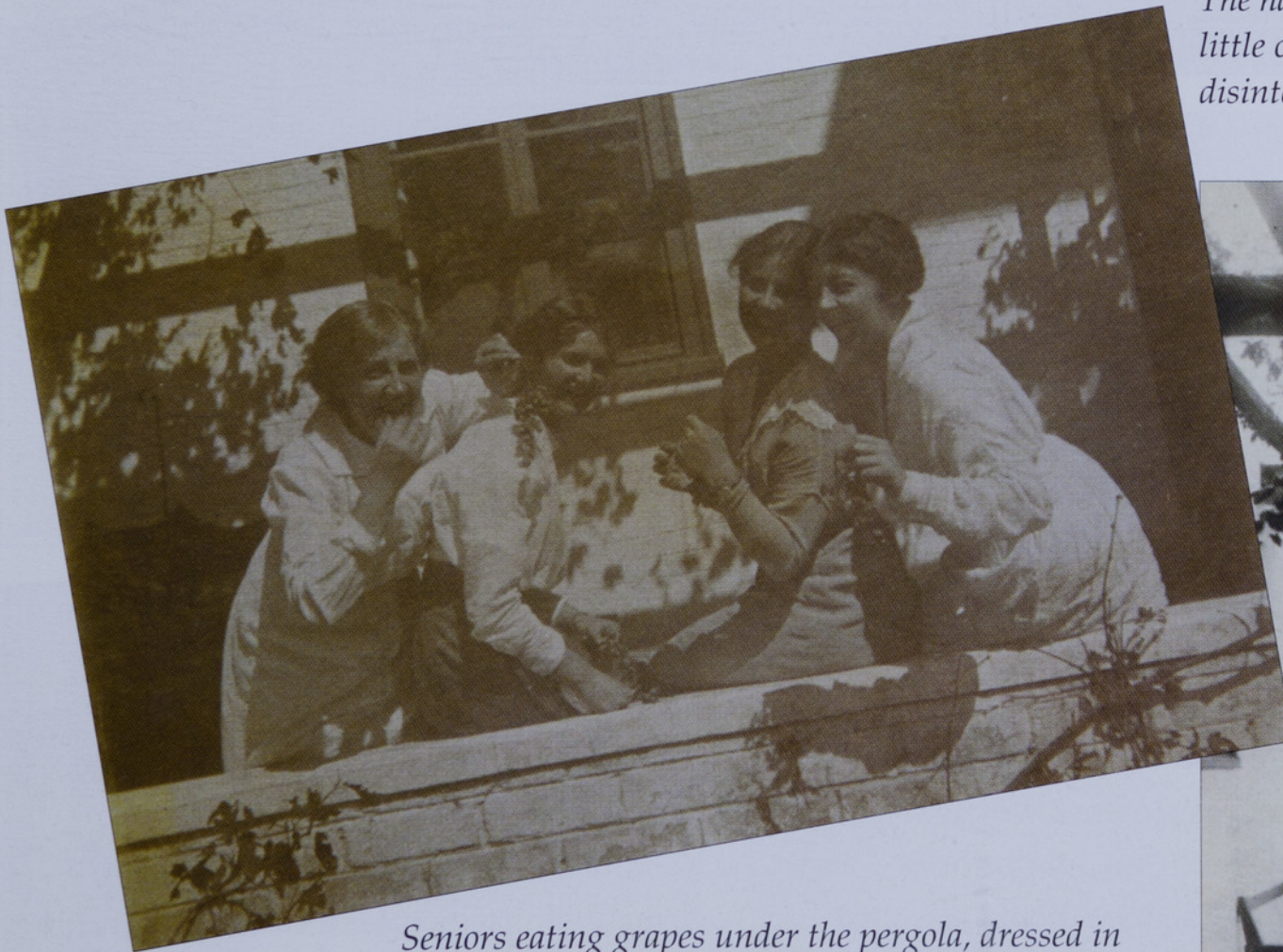




*The frieze, a copy of the one on the Parthenon, the tapestries and the furniture were all gifts from Roedean Brighton to Roedean (SA).*



*The hall came to be used as a dining-room, and is little changed today. Sadly, the fragile tapestries disintegrated and had to be removed.*



*Seniors eating grapes under the pergola, dressed in their Sunday uniform.*

*On hot summer afternoons prep was done in the shade of Uncle Paul's pergola. Uncle Paul was TL's brother and a distinguished barrister. He was a great benefactor of his sisters' schools.*





*In 1910 the north side of the Parktown ridge was still free of buildings. Roedeau was considered to be rather far out of town, but wealthy families began to build their homes on the ridge to escape the dust from the mines in the south. Many years later several of these magnificent houses were demolished to build the present day Johannesburg Hospital, while others disappeared under the cement of the office blocks that now stand in Parktown.*



*In 1915 'The Shelter', as TL called it, was built on the site of what is now the Water Garden. It became known as 'Sheds' and was used first as classrooms for the Junior School and later as games sheds.*



*The Junior School was built in 1918 with an open dormitory upstairs and open classrooms, now called Schollay.*

**'... The Founders believed in Spartan conditions to build the physical, mental and spiritual strength of their pupils (or was it lack of money in the early days when the school was built?). There were two dormitories like large verandahs which each held some 25 girls. There were no windows but large spaces open to the elements and canvas blinds to be let down in winter or on stormy nights while the girls kept themselves warm under karosses made of hyrax or dassie skins. The baths were little tin tubs, and I can't remember if there was hot water or not.'**

*Pat Mackay, 1930-1940.*



*The Council Block was completed in 1913 and opened by Sir Percy Fitzpatrick in his capacity as Chairman of the Witwatersrand Council of Education. It was built with a grant from the council and was later incorporated into the Lambs' building.*



*The swimming pool was added in 1921. (See page 92)*

**'... The swimming bath was small and only six foot deep in the deep end. There was a low spring board, and also two rocks, to dive off. Diving for the tall was difficult, as one reached the bottom before one's feet had disappeared from view. The water was a lovely pea green, which grew thicker as the term went on. Strange things got into the bath – frogs, ducks, and even a horse on one occasion. The pool was emptied once a term, the water being let onto the garden and rhubarb patch below. We always had rhubarb tart for Sunday lunch after this happening. In spite of these drawbacks we produced some very good swimmers and the team entered the first inter-school gala and came home with the cup and medals.'**

*From a memoir written by Matty Read.*



*Above: The teak door of Bears' was installed in 1919 and dedicated to Cicely Bond, a former pupil and teacher who died in the 'flu epidemic that ravaged Johannesburg in the last years of that decade. Her initials are engraved on the handles.*



*Left: An open-air gymnasium was built next to St Ursula's in 1915. It is now the library, where the chairs are engraved with the names of early pupils.*





*St Ursula's in the 1920s showing Bears' Courtyard as it was in those days. The front door was later changed in memory of Old Girl Cicely Bond. This is one of Scottie's photographs.*



*The building of St Agnes' house took place in 1922 and incorporated both the Martineau Wing and the Council Block.*



*The Martineau Wing became a staff room and is now in use as administrative offices.*





*A young pupil, Molly Goodwin, posed for the statue in Kats' Courtyard. It is dedicated to Margery Barry who died at the age of 14 from meningitis. The statue was unveiled by Scottie in 1925. (See page 111)*



*Sydney Carter was a prominent South African artist and illustrator who was commissioned to produce drawings for the 1929 school calendar. This picture shows St Katherine's House which was completed soon after Lambs. '...It is built on what was erstwhile a desolate corner of the grounds of which our well-wishers used to complain as the first to meet the eye of a visitor to Roedean. This corner, popularly known as the wilderness and mainly inhabited by wild cats, is now transformed.' From notes written by TL.*



*Kats' Courtyard in 1924, before the Margery Barry statue was added. The courtyard has always been a favourite place for Roedeanians.*



St Agnes' and St Katherine's were officially opened on 8 December 1923 by Mr Justice Feetham. In his address he commented on the origin of Schollay, which is now the Junior School staff room: 'Schole is the Greek term for leisure ... as the Greeks delighted in learned discussion, the schole came to mean a place where these discussions were carried on. However, the word is now used in the school in its original meaning, and the fact that a schole has been provided means that this is a school where there is at least some leisure.'



6

THE AFRICAN ROEDEAN.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CRIPPLED CHILDRENS WING.

|                         |         |                        |           |
|-------------------------|---------|------------------------|-----------|
| A. Alston               | £1 16 0 | Lawrence               | £10 0 0   |
| Alexander               | 5 5 0   | Mansfield              | 3 3 0     |
| Per Miss Bayley: Anon   |         | Mendelsohn             | 5 5 0     |
| 10/-, 10/6, E. Kanthack |         | Morisse                | 1 0 0     |
| £5, Nettingham £3/3,    |         | Mackintosh             | 10 0 0    |
| Parry £3/3, Carne 10/-, |         | Montgomery             | 1 0 0     |
| Higham £5               | 17 16 6 | Max                    | 2 2 6     |
| Bayley                  | 5 0 0   | Normand                | 3 3 0     |
| Barry, P.               | 2 2 0   | Rough                  | 5 5 0     |
| Brown                   | 1 1 0   | Reeders                | 4 17 0    |
| de Beer                 | 1 1 0   | Payne                  | 35 0 0    |
| Bell                    | 5 5 0   | Sanders                | 3 3 0     |
| Carter                  | 5 5 0   | Sneddon                | 1 0 0     |
| Cooke                   | 3 3 0   | Scott                  | 10 5 0    |
| Dalton                  | 2 2 0   | Sewell                 | 10 10 0   |
| Dunlop                  | 2 2 0   | Tindall                | 1 1 6     |
| Ellis                   | 10 0 0  | Webster                | 2 2 0     |
| Earle                   | 5 5 0   | Wolf                   | 1 1 0     |
| Greathhead              | 10 10 0 | Watt                   | 1 1 0     |
| Houthakker              | 26 5 0  | Whiteley               | 12 0 9    |
| Healey                  | 3 3 0   | Wilson                 | 11 18 6   |
| Hilson                  | 10 3    | St. Agnes House        | 8 4 0     |
| Hawarden                | 2 2 0   | St. Ursula House       | 121 12 0  |
| Hickman                 | 4 4 0   | St. Katherine House    | 28 8 6    |
| Hopkins                 | 5 5 0   | League of Nations Fair | 17 10 6   |
| James                   | 5 5 0   | The Pirates            |           |
| Knight                  | 5 5 0   | Dance                  |           |
| de Kock                 | 5 0 0   |                        |           |
| Lamb                    | 1 0 6   |                        |           |
| Laver                   |         |                        |           |
|                         |         |                        | £454 12 3 |

### Memorabilia.

Many people when they first come to Roedean, think we do not know our Alphabet. The class-room "B" is next to "M," "E" is next to "C" and other rooms seem to be in their wrong places. But there is a definite reason for this apparent bad mistake.

Miss Lawrence and Miss Earle felt that the best way in which they could show their gratitude to the founders and benefactors of the school was to put their names on record; but most people here do not know them, or what they did, and some are under false impressions.

"B" was named after Mr. H. O. Buckle who helped Miss Lawrence and Miss Earle in every way when the school was first founded, and who is the Chairman of the Directors.

"P" was named after Mr. Paul Lawrence, "G" was named

### THE AFRICAN ROEDEAN.

after Archdeacon Cameron, whose Christian name is George; "C" was after Mademoiselle Charlotte Renou, for many years a most successful French teacher at the original Roedean. "F" and "M" are both named after Frances Martineau, a great friend of the family, whose name can be seen on the panels in the Old Hall. These people all gave money to start the school, and should be remembered by every Roedean girl, as without their assistance there would be no South African Roedeanians,—a great loss to the world, as I am sure you will agree.

"C.R." stands for Council Room, and "F.R." for Founders' Room. In "F.R." there are several photographs and portraits of founders and benefactors. There is a photograph of Mr. Somerset Bell, and one of Mr. Percival Whitely, who are Directors, and there is one of Mr. Buckle, who has been our Chairman from the very beginning. Besides those there is a photograph of the three Miss Lawrences who founded Roedean Brighton, and who were all very anxious that there should be a sister school in South Africa. Mr. Robert Niven is also a Director, but we have not yet a photograph of him. We owe a great deal to them, as they are all extremely busy men, who give up long afternoons periodically in order to attend the meetings where the School's affairs are discussed.

I know a number of people who have always thought that the "Farroway" was some weird and foreign word meaning "thorough-fare," but really it is the "Farrar-way," named after Sir George Farrar, because he gave the money to build it.

The wing of St. Ursula's House consisting of the laboratory and the dormitory above it should be known as "The Eckstein Wing," because the firm of Eckstein and Company (which is now Corner House) through Sir Lionel Phillips, gave the money to build it. The corresponding wing across the courtyard is called "The Dickson Wing" because Mrs. Dickson gave the money to build it.

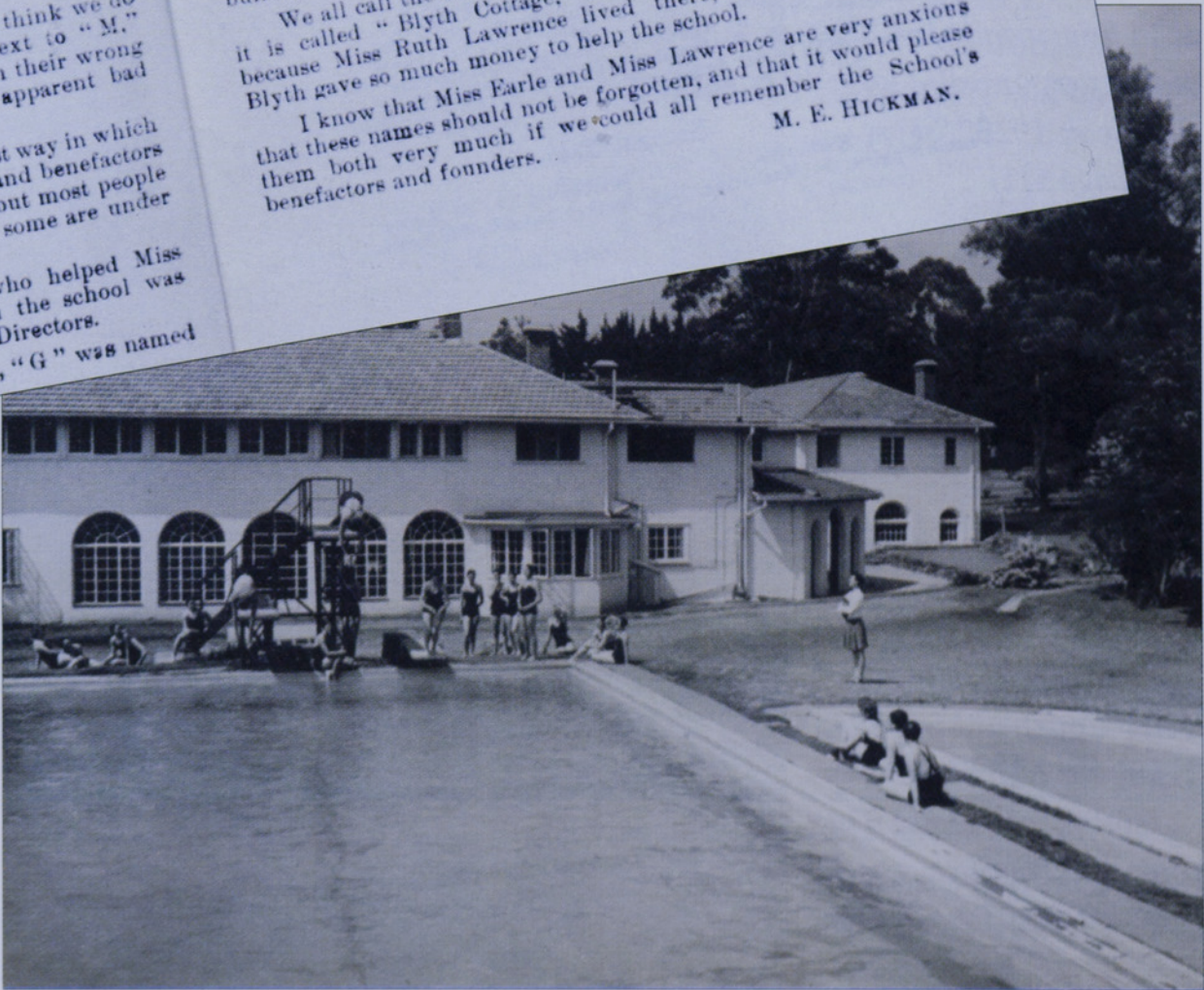
We all call the cottage on the Kopje the "Studio," but really it is called "Blyth Cottage," a much prettier name I think, because Miss Ruth Lawrence lived there, and her sister Mrs. Blyth gave so much money to help the school.

I know that Miss Earle and Miss Lawrence are very anxious that these names should not be forgotten, and that it would please them both very much if we could all remember the School's benefactors and founders.

M. E. HICKMAN.

This speech printed in The African Roedean explains the idiosyncratic naming of Roedean's facilities.

A new swimming pool was built in 1953, and the open dormitories and classrooms of the Junior School were mercifully enclosed.







*Founders' Hall was built on the site of a tennis court. It was built in stages between 1932 and 1937, with money raised from donations and a range of events such as fêtes and bridge drives.*



Lawrence House lay across the road from the main school entrance. It was used as a residence for Ella Le Maitre, the sixth form pupils and several members of staff.

'... It is a very enjoyable privilege to live over at Lawrence House, and I think if it were not for lessons, the Sixth Form would find it very hard to believe they were at school at all. There is a sitting-room and a work-room especially for their use, and no one could ever tire of sitting in the lovely garden, which also has a tennis court. Upstairs each bedroom is furnished in a different colour: one pink, one green and one blue, and the tiled bathrooms have not yet ceased to be a source of admiration to visitors when they are shown over the house.'

*S Morton, 1950.*



*This aerial photograph of Roedean was taken in 1952 to commemorate the school's Silver Jubilee.*



*A concerned letter from Ella Le Maitre to the city engineer concerning troublesome boys in the storm drain which ran down past St Katherine's!*

The City Engineer,  
P.O. Box 1049,  
Johannesburg.

7th Nov.1952.

Dear Sir,

Storm Drain: Stand 310 Houghton.

I have been greatly perturbed to discover that various small boys have been in the habit of entering the storm drains which run under the games fields of Roedean. From time to time they have forced the manhole from below and appeared in our grounds.

As far as I know there is no other egress from the storm drain on this side of the Kloof Road, but presumably there are entrances on the opposite side of Kloof Road.

Now that the rainy season is upon us, I am greatly apprehensive for the safety of these small boys. Should they be trapped in the drain during a heavy spate, they would have little chance of survival. I should be extremely grateful if you would undertake to survey.

Yours faithfully,

Principal.



*The new wing of the Junior School was built in 1953. The magnificent mosaic on the wall was created by Professor Armando Baldinelli. It depicts Lady Margaret gently training the growth of a young plant.*

The Joris Block was built on top of the library as a series of studies for Matric students. It is named after two sisters, Mary and Lulu, who as pupils, teachers and parents had a long association with the school. They were born in Belgium and came to Roedean after World War I. Lulu went on to distinguish herself at Oxford, and Mary to study languages at the University of Grenoble, and both returned to teach at Roedean. Both were said to be energetic, charming and hardworking and as parents served on the committee of the SAORA and PTA. They died within weeks of each other in 1964.



Margaret Freer (née Saise) who came to Roedean from Bristol University in 1920 to teach science and stayed for 32 years. Described as 'motherly but stern' she was Vice-Principal for many years and a strict, inspiring teacher. The Freer classroom is named after her.





*As part of an ongoing series of community initiatives, developed in 2003, Roedean was an integral part of a 'learnership' pilot scheme to train medical sales representatives. Forty-five unemployed young women spent a term at Roedean and were instructed in the D&T Centre in a basic bridging course in biology, which is intended to address past educational inequality.*

*Below: In 1966 Blyth Cottage was demolished to make way for a new state-of-the-art biology block.*



*One of Roedean's most eminent Old Girls was the artist Maud Sumner, and the school is fortunate to own many of her works. When her sister Dorothy died in 1983 she bequeathed a substantial sum to the school to be used to create a centre for the Old Girls. With the help of the Roedean Trust, the Board was able to extend the plan to create a proper art block in tribute to the Sumner sisters. It comprises painting and pottery studios, dark rooms, lecture rooms, a large exhibition room, as well as a sculpture garden outside. A bust of Maud Sumner, by sculptor Wynand Mulder, stands at the top of the stairs.*







Left: The entrance to the St Margaret's Block with its bell tower. The design echoes the arches of the Upper Junior School.



Above: Music is an important part of the Roedean curriculum. The Hersov Music Block was built on the site of the old tennis court and is named after the Hersov family, members of which have been great benefactors of Roedean. It is set in the heart of the school, ensuring there is always music in the air.



Left: In 1988, building began on the new Junior Primary School, known as the St Margaret's Block, which was sited down the hill and looks towards St John's school. It was opened in 1989 by Old Girl Alison Somerville.

## Heritage schools to bridge the gap after 100 years

'45m steel marvel' means making friends will be a whole lot easier

**I**n the old days, the boys negotiated their way through a network of stormwater drains and past a single watchman to meet their girlfriends at the school next door.

But now the new bridge between St John's College and Roedean School – neighbours for a full century – will provide a less roguish and much safer way for the boys and girls to meet.

The bridge that will link the two schools, both part of Johannesburg's heritage, together is going to be a 45m steel marvel, supported by six solid steel suspension cables and two 23m high columns.

The structure has already been constructed at a warehouse in Heriotdale and will be lifted into place sometime next month.

It's an idea a long in the making, as Tim Woolcott, chairperson of the St John's Council building committee and an old boy of the school, pointed out.

*The new bridge between Roedean and St John's College was completed in April 2003, a symbolic link that also opens the way for a greater sharing of facilities between them. The Bridge nursery school, operating as a partnership between the two schools, also opened its doors in the centenary year.*



Bringing neighbours together ... an artist's impression of the bridge linking St John's College and Roedean School. The Star, 26 March 2003





Left: 1994 saw the opening of the new Sports Centre by Julian Ogilvie-Thompson, who was patron of the appeal. He is photographed here (left) with headmistress Lyn Nelson.

Below: The Founders could never have imagined the astounding growth of technology in the last decades of the century. The Technology Centre was built in 1998 to equip Roedean pupils with the skills for this development.



Below: Roedean 2003 has a sophisticated IT infrastructure and pupils from Form III upwards are highly computer literate.



Roedean 2003 has a sophisticated IT infrastructure and pupils from Form III upwards are highly computer literate.





Left: The Chapel is rich in heritage, having been endowed with numerous gifts offered in memory or gratitude by past pupils and their families. The stained glass windows, art works, kneelers and furniture each have a tale to tell. Ella Le Maitre's ashes are enshrined in the wall. The ship's bell high of the HMS Sondra now hangs high on the roof.

Below: The Chapel, pictured here in its original form in 1956, is a central part in the life of Roedean. It was built in 1936 in memory of Nancy Carver, née Niven, a pupil of the school from 1906 to 1913. She was the daughter of Mackie Niven, a prominent figure in early Johannesburg and party to the ill-fated Jameson Raid. Nancy died after giving birth to a son in 1928 in what was then Rhodesia. Her sister Dorothea Campbell had a long association with the school, as a pupil, music teacher, Old Girl and member of the Board of Directors.



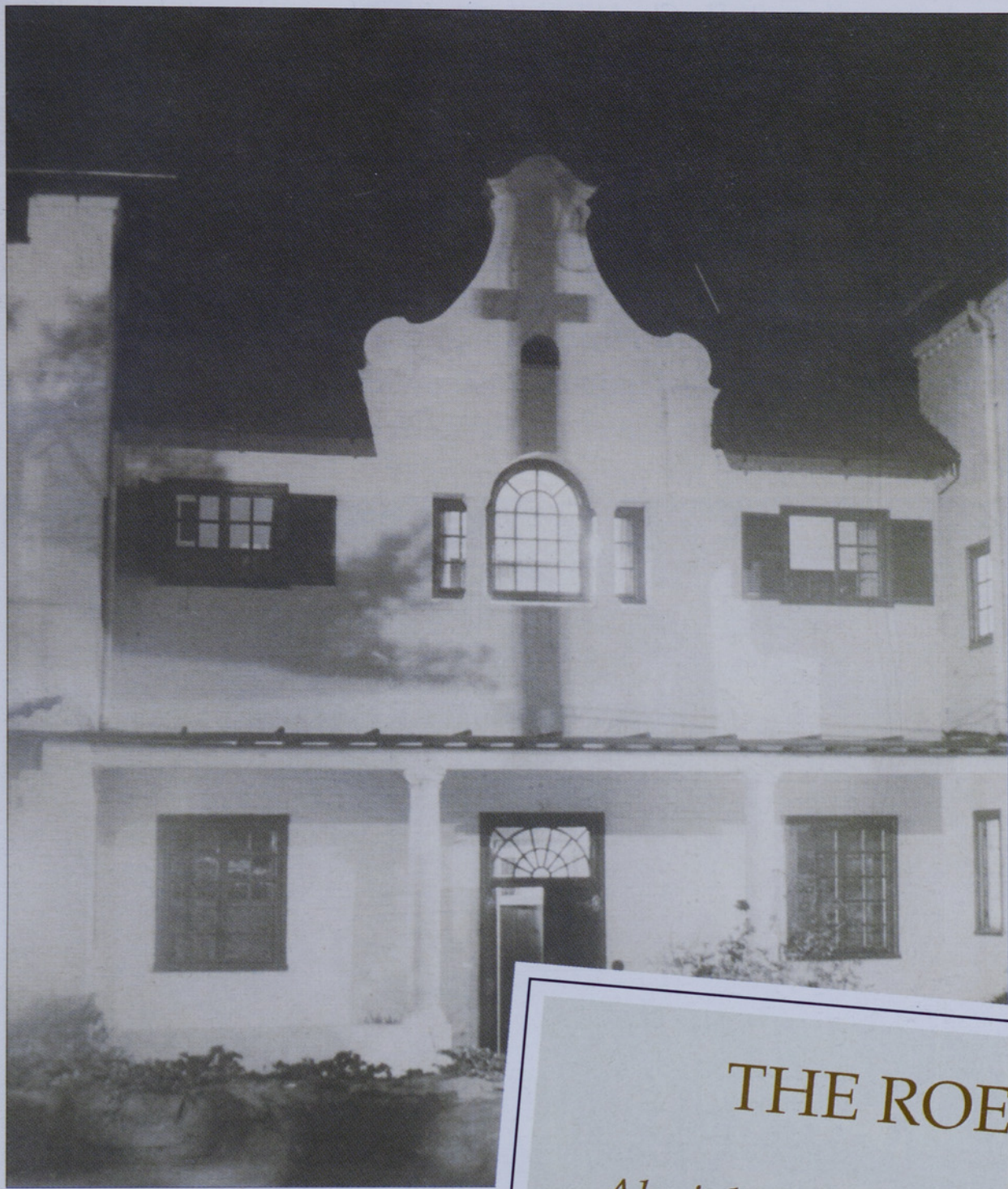
The Lych Gate was erected by Ella Le Maitre in remembrance of her parents.

Right: The chapel was extended in 1958 and a new altar created in the extension to the building. The words above the altar were chosen by the girls: 'I am with you always even unto the end of the world'.

They were wrought in iron and copper by the metal artist Kurt Jobst. He trained in the famed Bauhaus era in Germany, but fled the Third Reich and found sanctuary in South Africa.







Ella Le Maitre, a deeply religious woman, loved the shadow from a street lamp that formed a cross on Bears' gable at night. A senior wrote in *The African Roedean* of 1952: '... Curtains are drawn in all the windows and at night very few lights are on, but still the shadow of the Cross is over the front door, whether there are people to watch it or not.'

School legend has it that at full moon, when the cross was on the gable, the ghost of The Apple Lady roamed St Ursula's. There are several accounts in the archives of sightings, but the legend was fuelled by certain Bears' matrons placing apples in the dormitories! The identity of The Apple Lady and the reason for her 'haunting' are unknown.

## THE ROEDEAN PRAYER

*Almighty Father, we pray for Thy blessing upon this school, and our sister school in England. May whatsoever things are true, pure, lovely and of good report forever flourish and abound in them. Preserve to them an unblemished name, enlarge them with a wider usefulness, exalt them in the love and reverence of all their members, and use them as instruments to Thy glory. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*



# VI

## A VERDANT HERITAGE

*'Where nothing lay but the flint of the kopjes  
Planted they Youth, mid a pleasance of green.'*



*The Water Garden is a cool oasis in the heart of the school.*



Sir Herbert Baker's white walls and elegant arches were set down in the middle of indigenous highveld vegetation punctuated by frequent rock outcrops. Here was the setting for a spectacular garden, and one that exists today as a constant delight for the entire Roedean family. Recent research conducted among Old Girls asked what they treasured most about their time at Roedean. The school gardens were consistently high on respondents' lists.

To the buildings and the basic setting must be added a third ingredient before successful gardens can be expected. This third ingredient is the gardeners, that succession of loving and knowledgeable hands that bring, first, an overall design to the available space, and then paint in the detail season by season.

The task of laying out the full extent of the Roedean gardens was begun in 1907. Theresa Lawrence had returned to England for a spell, no doubt to raise funds or recruit staff for the growing school. In her absence, Katherine Earle started work on the gardens, perhaps to surprise Theresa when she returned, but certainly to fulfil her own desire to create beauty and to teach its appreciation to the girls under her care. How spectacularly has this original mission been fulfilled. It is interesting to note – and of considerable significance – that KME never tried to recreate the English gardens of her own experience. She was immediately sympathetic to her new, thornier environment and over the years she turned the Roedean koppie into a South African botanical paradise. But this did not preclude an English influence. Rose gardens were planted; and even today the whole school waits with some expectancy each spring for the prunus walk to blossom.

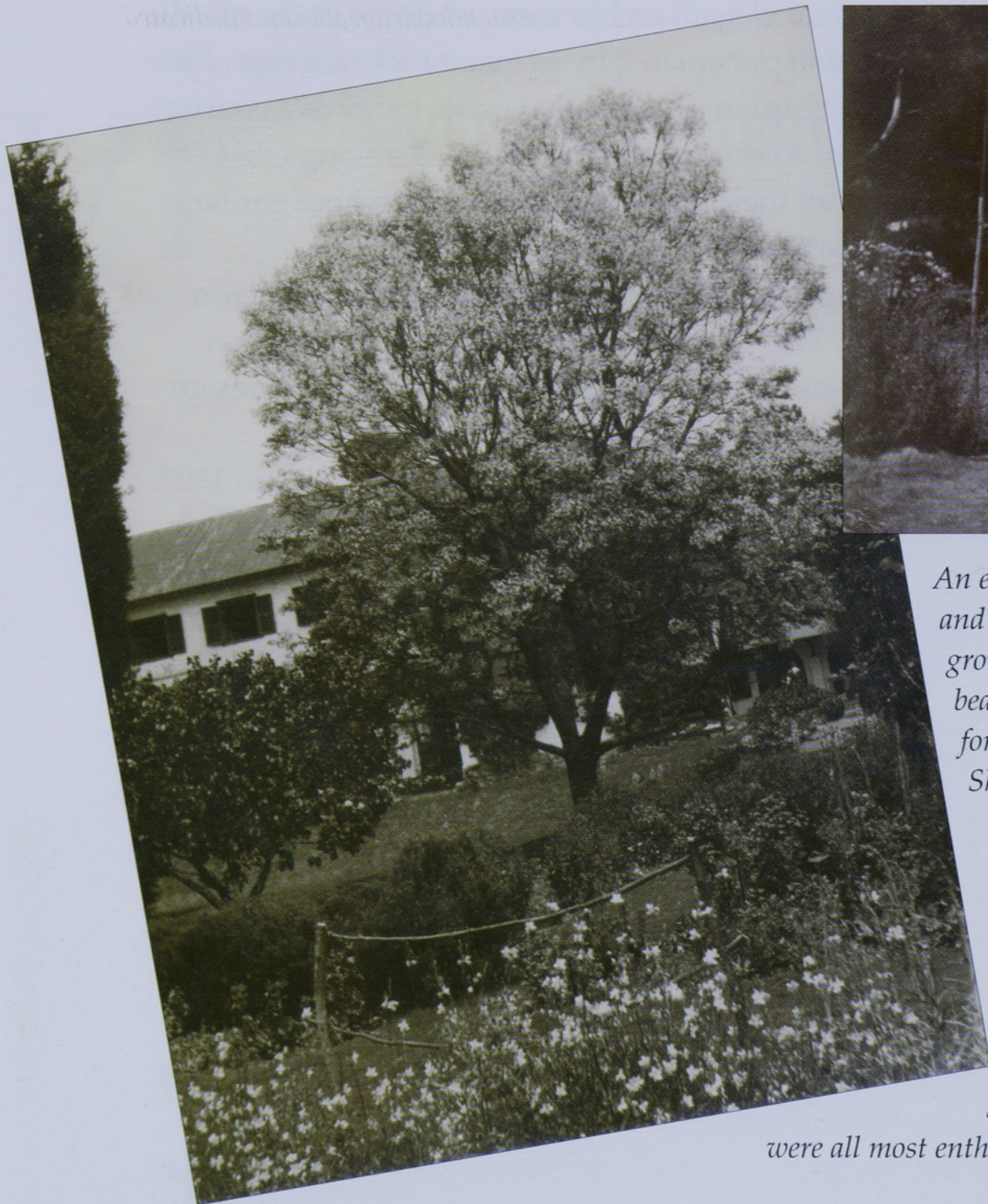
What is remarkable about the gardeners of Roedean is that there have been so few of them. KME continued to oversee its development until her retirement in 1930, and probably even a few years beyond that date. Next came Gwen Edwards, prominent in the annals of the Roedean gardens in the 1930s and 1940s. Gwen was the school's resident botanist and science teacher, and she was known affectionately as 'Juicy', which echoed her South African pronunciation of 'D'you see?' Her deepest interest lay in preserving the integrity of the indigenous parts of the Roedean koppie. It became widely known among botanists both local and international. She also helped to establish Johannesburg's The Wilds, adjacent to Roedean, and after her retirement she became its chief guide.

The third name on this short list of Roedean gardeners is Anne Lorentz, one of South Africa's most prominent horticulturalists. She was a pupil at Roedean, and she never lost her love for the gardens there, particularly the trees. Indeed, the Roedean gardens have been, and still remain, her magnum opus. Building on the foundations laid by KME and Juicy, Anne has developed Roedean into a paradise of peace and green and seasonal colour. Many thousands of girls have found solace in its vistas and in those secluded places specially designed for quietness and reflection.

As the gardens have burgeoned, they have become increasingly part of the ethos of Roedean. The trees of Pleasaunce speak in their monumental ways of truth and honour and the strength to be free.

In the following pages Anne Lorentz guides us through some of her favourite parts of the gardens. No one knows their bold statements and shy secrets better than she.





*An early picture of Bears' Lawn (left). For KME, gardening, and the love of plants, had been a life-long passion. She had grown up in the exquisite city of Wells, then later with the beauty of the ancient gardens of Oxford, so perhaps it was easy for her to visualise the Roedean garden she wished to create. She is pictured above in front of a bank of cosmos.*

*In 1917, Miss Earle and Miss Lawrence visited the fledgling National Botanic Gardens at Kirstenbosch. This so inspired them, that they immediately set aside about three acres of the school kopje, and the Roedean Reserve for Native South African Plants came into being. Girls, staff and parents were all most enthusiastic, and brought seeds, bulbs and other treasures from all over the country to the Roedean sanctuary.*







A reserve of this nature needed a very knowledgeable and dedicated person to care for it, and the ideal person to fill the position was botanist Gwen Edwards. She was affectionately known as 'Juicy' because of her habit of saying 'D'you see, girls?' Here she is pictured with a class in the late 1940s.

## A Nature Preserve At Roedean VALUABLE WORK OVER THIRTY YEARS

WHEN botanists overseas talk about the nature preserves of South Africa they include one small section of Johannesburg whose value perhaps is not fully estimated by the people to whom it is familiar.

It is the koppie in the grounds of Roedean School.

In the midst of sophisticated Parktown, and flanked by well-kept lawns and a modern swimming bath, this piece of grassveld and its outcrop of sienna-coloured rocks and clumps of indigenous trees stands as a memorial to the foresight and perseverance of two women. They are Miss K. M. Earle, one of the founders of the school, whose idea it was to keep unspoiled this characteristic piece of veld, and Miss Gwen Edwards, who has made its actual preservation a part of her work over 31 years at Roedean.

### WIDE CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Miss Edwards, "Juicy," as she is affectionately known to more than one generation of Roedean scholars and to a wide circle of friends among Roedean Old Girls scattered about the world, retired this year-end. The school will not be the same place without her, but she is not breaking all her old ties, and after she returns from a holiday which will be spent with Miss Theresa Lawrence, that other founder of the South African Roedean, who is now retired and living at Simonstown, she will most probably return to Johannesburg. She will continue to act as honorary secretary of the Old Girls' Association.

Miss Edwards came originally from the Cape. She lived as a child at Wynberg, and the Cape with its beautiful wild flowers, combined with a father, Major J. P. Edwards, who had the "seeing eye"—he was the first president of the Cape Town Photographic Society—gave her an early appreciation of the beauty and value and interest of the plants and trees, indigenous to South Africa, that have excited botanists all over the world.

At the age of 12 she was an impassioned "protectionist" as far as wild flowers were concerned, and it is a passion that has lasted right through her life.

She took botany as her main subject when she took her science degree at the old South African College in Cape Town, under Dr. Pearson, founder of Kirstenbosch Gardens. She later took a supplementary degree at Witwatersrand University, where she was a demonstrator for a time, working under Dr. C. E. Moss.

### CARE OF THE GARDENS

It was as science mistress that she joined the Roedean staff in 1917. She was house-mistress of St. Agnes House for 10 years, and then, when the science side was reorganised, devoted her whole time to the care of the gardens at Roedean. The gardens are extensive and rightly the pride of the school, and, in all, from the delightful courtyard in St. Katherine's House with its white pillars and cool lily pond, to the pleasure with its carefully chosen trees, the Chapel Garden with its gay flower-beds, to the koppie itself where she has kept out wild life intruders, watched for soil erosion, encouraged the existing flowering grasses, introduced a few natural denizens of the Johannesburg veld, there is evidence of whole-hearted care and enthusiasm, based on sound scientific knowledge.

This koppie is a lovely spot, a sanctuary in the busy life of the Golden City, where at midday the sun throws squat shadows from clumps of Cape peach, and dark-branched proteas and "sambroel-boom," where clumps of flowering grasses bend their tasselled heads over small pink flowering aloes, and beside hot rocks grow luxurious clusters of pink and yellow orchids, a nostalgic spot for the young people who go there; to be remembered in later years when their lives are cast in far places.

Miss Edwards has spent her vacation time wandering about South Africa. She has collected for various herbariums; she has contributed a number of plants to the famous Kirstenbosch Gardens. She is a foundation member of the National Botanical Society at the Cape, a member of the Johannesburg Bird Club and of the Society of Tree Lovers.

She has been a protagonist for the preservation of natural beauty

in all its forms, and had not a little to do with the ultimate establishment of "The Wilds" that abut on the koppie on Roedean grounds, though work was started to preserve the koppie 25 years



Miss Gwen Edwards rests a minute to survey the work she has done on The Koppie, where a piece of Johannesburg's original veld has been preserved in Roedean grounds.

before "The Wilds" came into being. Incidentally she discovered a hybrid clematis growing there that has created a great deal of interest both in this country and overseas.

Johannesburg as well as the school itself owes Miss Edwards a debt of gratitude for the unremitting care she has exercised in preserving for posterity a living memorial to the days that are gone in the midst of a city where brick and concrete are rapidly overlaying Nature.

This cutting from The Star newspaper at the time of Juicy's retirement pays tribute to a remarkable woman and her work at Roedean.

'As a somewhat scruffy schoolgirl in the '40s, I clearly remember being far more interested in watching Juicy tend the garden, than listening to our History teacher going on about the Battle of Waterloo. Particularly fascinating were her very short blue or green tunics, worn over very long knee-length blue or green bloomers. Little did I know that one day I would be tending the same gardens – without the bloomers!'

Anne Lorentz, Roedean's longstanding horticulturalist.

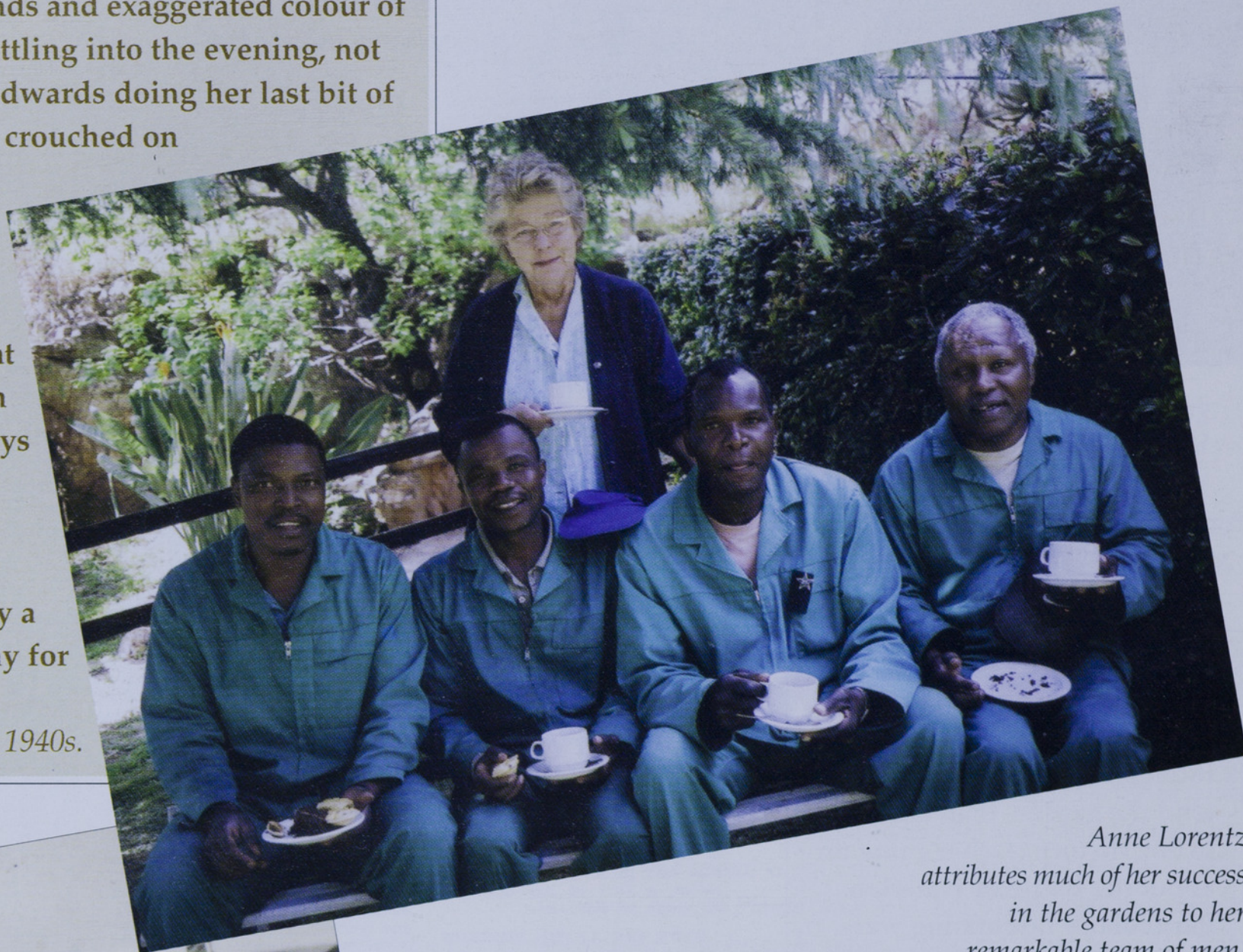


Anne photographed in the Rose Garden in 1946.

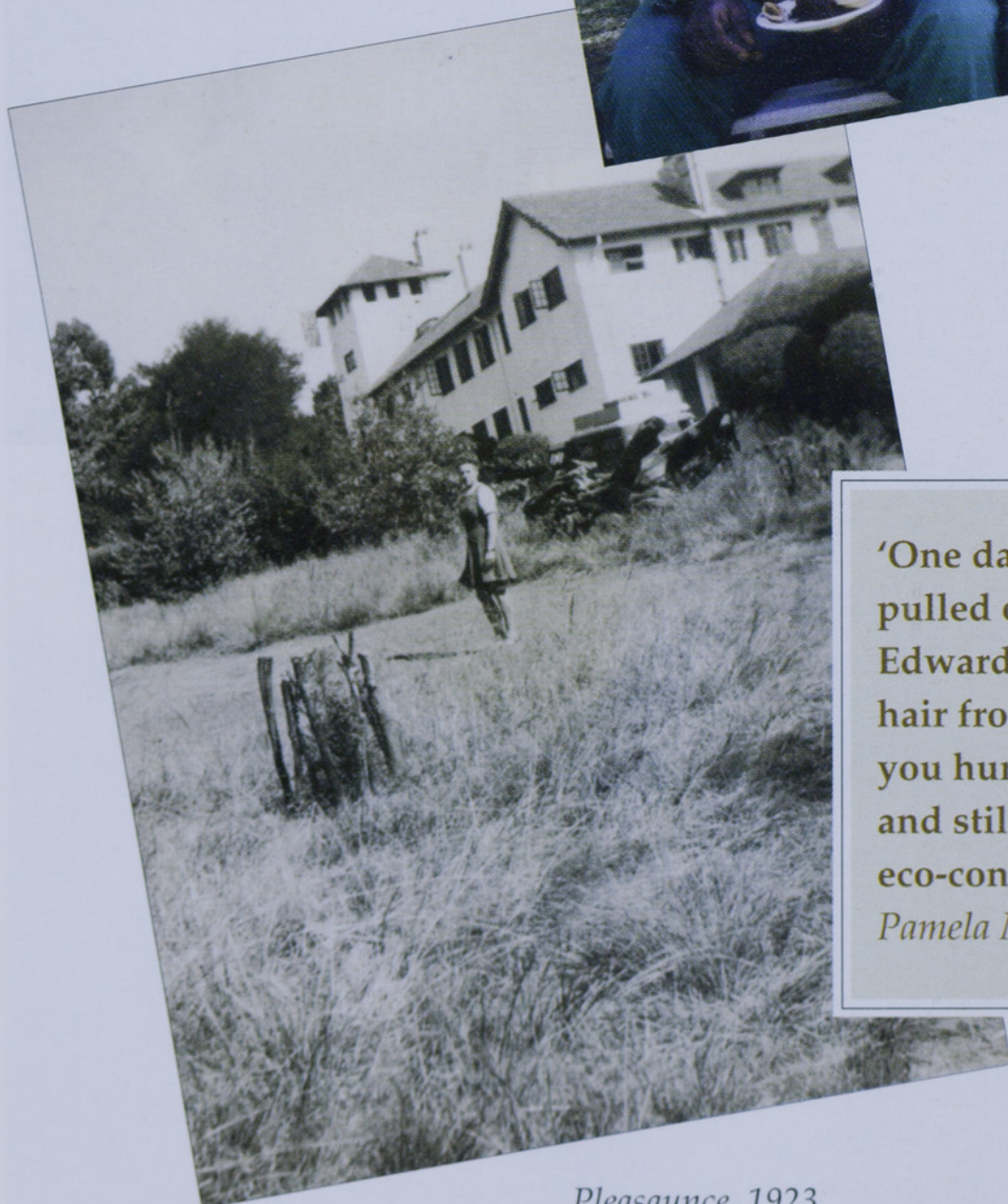


'I remember the blissful private walk in the garden at the end of the day after bathtime and before prep; the sights, smells, sounds and exaggerated colour of a garden peacefully settling into the evening, not forgetting dear Miss Edwards doing her last bit of gardening for the day, crouched on her stool in charming apparel – cornflower blue Tobalcro cotton smock and baggy drawers to the knee, hat still on head, trowel in gloved hand, and always ready to answer your horticultural queries whilst digging in the ground. That was truly a magical time of the day for me.'

*Mary Clarke (née Shave), 1940s.*



Anne Lorentz attributes much of her success in the gardens to her remarkable team of men. 'Much of the credit goes to them for their hard work and dedication,' she says.



'One day walking on the lawn I jumped up and pulled off the Jacaranda leaf. Passing by was Miss Edwards (Juicy) who called me over and plucked a hair from my head. "Ouch", said I. "This is how you hurt the tree," said she. In later years I thought and still think, this is a salutary lesson in eco-consciousness.'

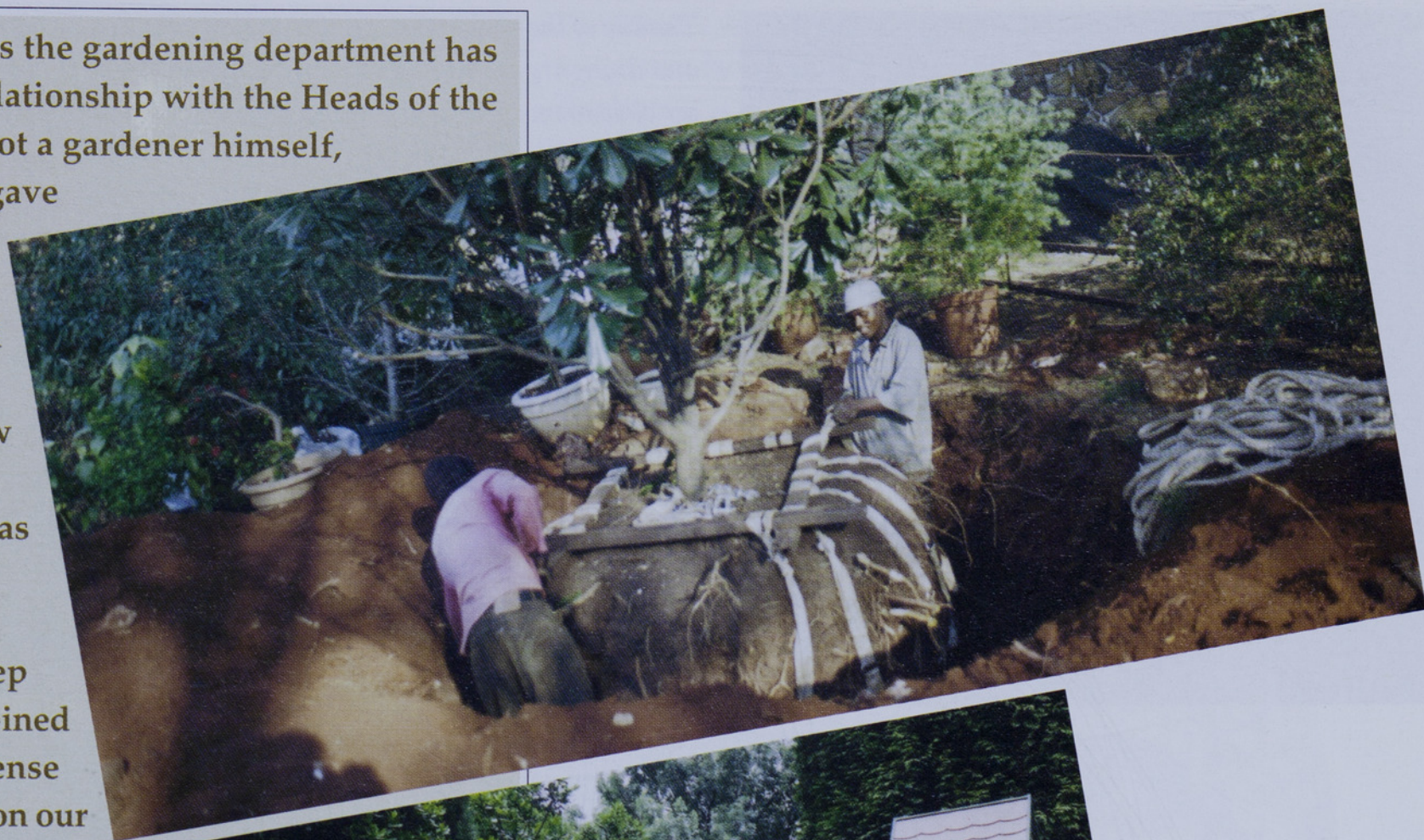
*Pamela Monro (née Rothschild), 1926.*

*Pleasaunce, 1923*



'For the last 27 years the gardening department has had a wonderful relationship with the Heads of the school. Although not a gardener himself, Brian Law always gave his unfailing support and encouragement, and a free rein to implement any new projects. Working with Lyn Nelson was sheer pleasure and great fun. Her knowledge and deep love of plants, combined with a delightful sense of humour, kept us on our toes in more ways than one. Now Mary Williams is Head, and even in this short time, she has endeared herself to all of us. Her concern for the wellbeing of all trees affected by the new road in Pleasaunce meant so very much.'

Anne Lorentz



Top: The careful transplanting of the trees that had to be moved to accommodate the new road.

Middle: The addition of the St Margaret's Block in 1989 gave Anne Lorentz the opportunity to create delightful surroundings for the youngest pupils. 'It's hard to say who most enjoyed the creation of the Fairy Garden,' she says, 'the children or the gardeners!'



Anne has planted the area surrounding the Sinclair Block with special indigenous plants. It links up with Juicy's Memorial Garden.





*The site of the Water Garden was previously occupied by rather damp and draughty change rooms originally constructed in 1915 as open-air classrooms for the Junior School, and commonly referred to as 'The Sheds'. '... It's thanks to Master Pond Maker, Selwyn Jansen, that the Water Garden gives so much pleasure to so many people every day,' says Anne. The peaceful sound of falling water can be heard around the school.*



*The Rose Garden, a gift from the SAORA, still flourishes on the site chosen by the Founders. Periodically over the years it has been replanted thanks to donations from Old Girls.*







*The school's own rose, Rosa Roedean, was grown by the renowned Ludwig Taschner. It is an American-bred hybrid tea rose that fittingly marries old and new strains. It was chosen because the variations of each and every flower are different, just as each and every Roedean girl is an individual.*



*The wisteria in Kats' Courtyard in spring is a joy to behold.*



*Scattered throughout the grounds of Roedean are many memorials to its pupils:*

LOOK AT THIS FOUNTAIN  
LOVELY AND SHINING CLEAR  
AND CALL TO MIND MARGERY BARRY  
GREATLY LOVED BY THIS SCHOOL  
JULY 1919-SEPTEMBER 1933

*Generations of Roedeanians remember this inscription in Kats' Courtyard to Margery Barry, who died when she was just 14.*





*On the corner of the old Rose Garden, just next to the Lavender Walk, we find a profusely flowering pink rosebush, and think fondly of Modiegi Ramogayane, who died in a motor accident in 1999.*

*In spring, the Prunus Walk is a froth of pale pink blossom. A special garden has been planted here to remember Georgina and Samantha Smith, pupils who died tragically in the 1990s. Their birdbath has been moved from the walk and placed under Mary Williams's window.*

*The gentle sound of tinkling water fills Lambs' Courtyard and is a reminder of Michele Mullinos. The fountain dedicated to her is a favourite place for the Roedean cats to sun themselves.*



*Florence Raine was one of the first pupils in Janie Street and became Head Girl. Sadly, she died a few years after leaving school. The sundial was unveiled in memory of her on Foundation Day in 1914.*





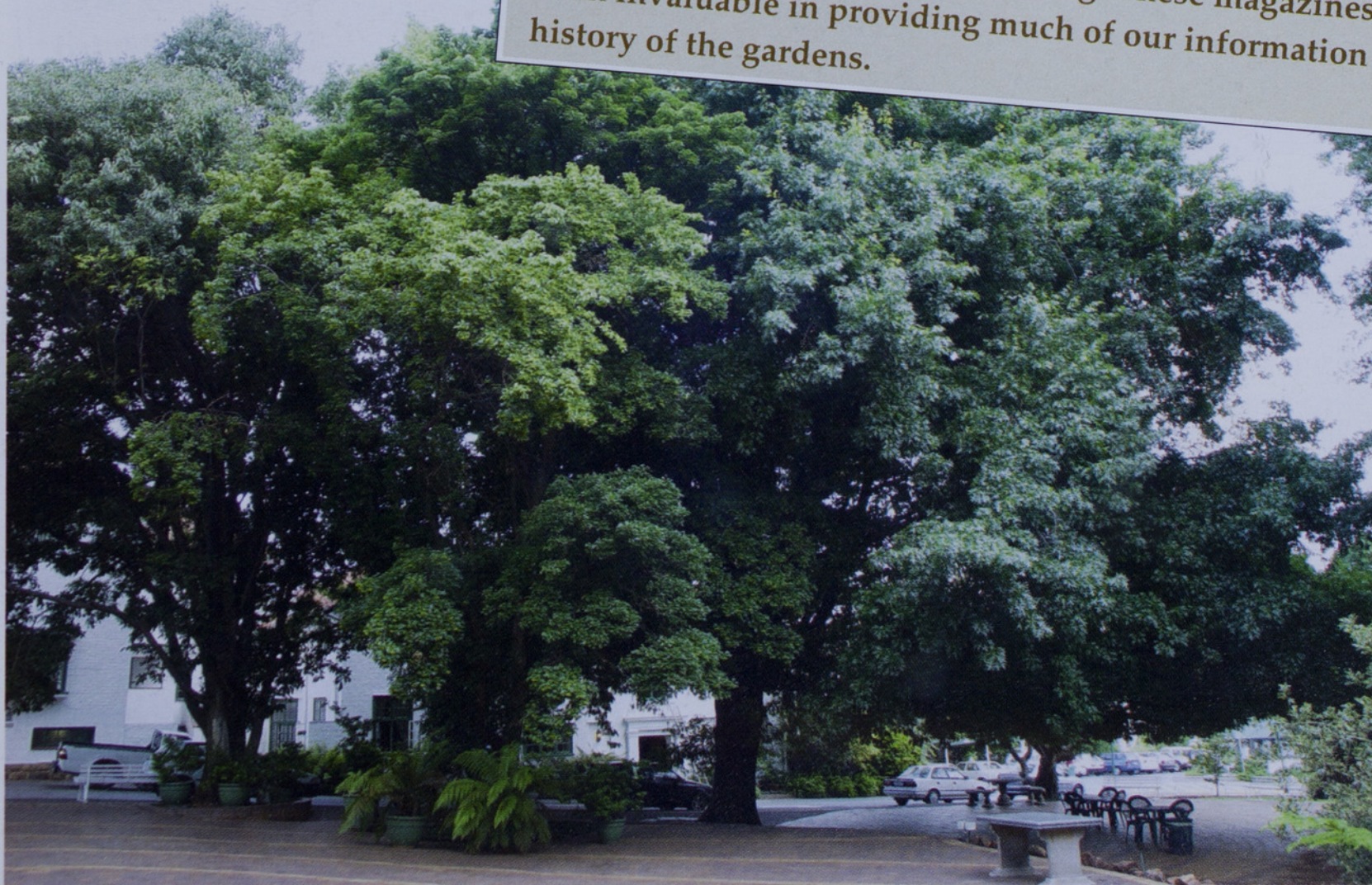


Martha Read (or Matty as she was known to all) devoted her entire life to the school. The memorial to this great personality is the superb bronze statue of a buck, complete with Roedean insignia, standing on rocks, with gently flowing water round the base. 'I think it would amuse her to know that instead of remembering her with a "Roe on a Dean", we do so with a "Bokkie on a Kopje"!' says Anne Lorentz. The bronze was created by the sculptor Maureen Quin in 1993.

Matty (below) was Head Girl in 1928 and went on to become senior mistress to four successive Headmistresses.



Roedean has been blessed with a rich heritage of both exotic and indigenous trees – planted from the earliest days onwards. The first school magazine was produced in 1906 and from then on Garden News became a regular feature, making the most fascinating reading. These magazines have been invaluable in providing much of our information on the history of the gardens.



What could be more spectacular than our two magnificent pin oaks (*Quercus palustris*) in all their autumn glory!





The school magazine of 1925 reported, '... The pepper-tree, though severely lopped and "ringed" is still persevering in sending out little shoots, but its power will gradually give out ... the roots will ultimately die of starvation, and the whole tree will succumb. By the time this happens, the stump will be covered over by a yellow jasmine!' Seventy-nine years later, the pepper-tree (*Schinus molle*) is alive and growing very well, where she has always been, on the eastern corner of the Technology Centre and the parking area.



'One of my greatest annual joys is looking up the Water Garden to the golden elm (*Ulmus procera* 'Louis Van Houtte') with the old jacaranda in bloom beside her. Jacarandas are now frowned upon, but dozens were planted in the grounds in the early days. Several still remain, like this one, which was probably planted by KME herself.' Anne Lorentz.



An avenue of cypresses was planted below the lawn, but for some reason, in 1930, it was decided that they had to go. KME substituted an avenue of flowering plums (*Prunus cerasifera*). Apart from one, which was replaced, they are still standing – their gnarled and twisted old branches a testimony to the passing years. They are as magical as ever in spring, covered in pale pink blossom, and in summer, the girls still love 'to pinch the plums'. The only difference is that today, there is no dose of nasty castor oil as punishment!





*The wild peach (Kiggelaria africana) must have been an immensely popular indigenous tree in the 1920s, '30s and '40s. The kopje was literally peppered with them, and even though several have gradually died, there are still a fair number. In October, hundreds of little orange butterflies flit through the garden, lay their eggs on the Kiggelarias, and then in November, thousands and thousands of small black caterpillars hatch out and devour the leaves. The Grade 0 children keep them as pets!*



*Grade 0 is also home to an old and very beautifully shaped Tipu tree (Tipuana speciosa). This must have been planted many years ago, together with several gum trees (Eucalyptus sp.) in the days when the ground where St Margaret's now stands was a municipal dumping site. The gums were felled, but the Tipuana was left in situ. In November it sheds a beautiful carpet of golden yellow flowers.*

*'Trees should always be planted for posterity – never for oneself. Looking round our gardens, I believe that this is exactly what the Founders and previous school gardeners did – and we are privileged to enjoy their foresight and wisdom.'*

*Anne Lorentz*



# VII

## CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

*'Then, Oh! We gaze on you  
With glowing pride.'*



*A Madonna by Maud Sumner, a past pupil of  
Roedean, hangs in the chapel.*



The 'arts and culture' component of any school is invariably a good barometer of its intellectual and spiritual health. 'The arts' denote the pursuit and product of human creativity, usually in the spheres of music, drama, literature and the visual arts. A glance at the history of Roedean tells us immediately that the stimulation of this human creativity, as a source for vigorous thinking in any field, has been high on the school's agenda from the start.

The first Roedean excursion into drama was a production of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1903, hardly a year after the school was established. Numerous theatrical productions followed as the decades multiplied, and by the end of the school's first century, major biennial productions had become established practice. One needs only to glance into the Drama Block to see how seriously the stage and related activities are taken at Roedean.

The same must be said of music. Facilities at the impressive Hersov Music Centre are irrefutable evidence of this: the multiplicity of practice halls, the 17 teachers, and a central hall for performance are all in great demand. More important than the excellence of the facilities, however, is the fact that music is revered at Roedean. Playing Mozart, Liszt or Bach at Speech Day is a high honour; and don't be surprised if in some corner of the Roedean gardens you come across a flute ensemble or similar enterprise in rehearsal.

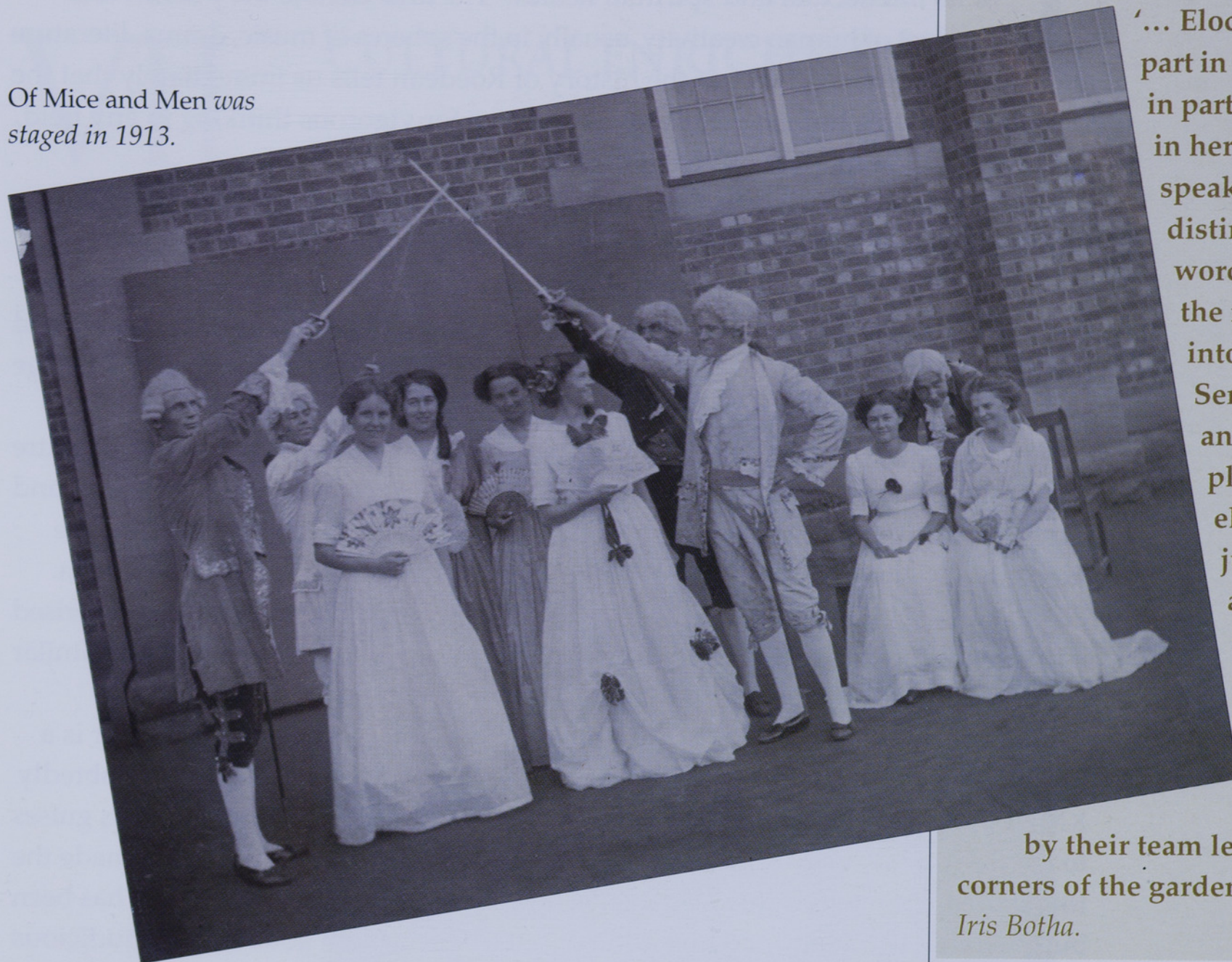
Maud Sumner was an Old Girl of Roedean, and the Block named after her is a hive of activity surrounding the visual arts. And that's not all. It was undoubtedly KME's appreciation of beauty, and her determination to bring beauty in all its guises to the fore on the rocky hillside behind the rumbustious mining town that made the foundation upon which Roedean's collection of South African art treasures has been built. Thanks to a unique combination of gifts, benefaction, goodwill and judicious purchase, walls all over the school are adorned with original paintings not only by Maud Sumner, but also by Sidney Carter, Gregoire Boonzaier, JH Pierneef, Allerley Glossop, WH Coetzer, William Timlin and others, such as Old Girls Catherine Paynter and Arabella Caccia.

Culture can be a perplexing term. It is often used too narrowly, usually to denote the arts, and often to differentiate between the more popular pursuits and those sometimes termed highbrow – such as opera, ballet and symphony concerts. No such notions of exclusivity have ever seemed to obscure the Roedean perception of culture, which has always tended towards inclusiveness.

The breadth of Roedean's idea of culture has always been reflected in the great tradition of Sunday night. The reasoning was logical enough. There was to be no isolation from the world, not even up there on the koppie in Africa. In the old days, Sunday nights were used for cultural enrichment. One week a concert could be heard, and the next the girls were lectured by almost anyone who had interesting things to say. Some names spring to mind which provide a view of the breadth of the cultural view that has always pertained at Roedean: South African novelist Nadine Gordimer; Sheena Duncan, leader of the Black Sash protest movement and herself an Old Girl; Sir Edmund Hillary, the man who conquered Mount Everest; Dame Sybil Thorndike, British actress supreme; and a scientist, once in the first half of the century, who seemed to think that people would be going up into space in rockets quite soon.



Of Mice and Men *was*  
staged in 1913.



'... Elocution played a big part in our lives and K.M.E. in particular was relentless in her aim to make us speak clearly and distinctly. "Finish one word before beginning the next", was dinned into us and in the Senior school the annual Shakespeare play was aimed at elocution training just as much as acting. An elocution cup was presented at some time during my time and little groups would be coached

by their team leader in various corners of the garden.'

*Iris Botha.*

*Eurythmics, the art of rhythmic body movement correlated to poetry and music, was popular at Roedean in the early years.*

*This picture was taken in Lambs' Courtyard in 1925.*





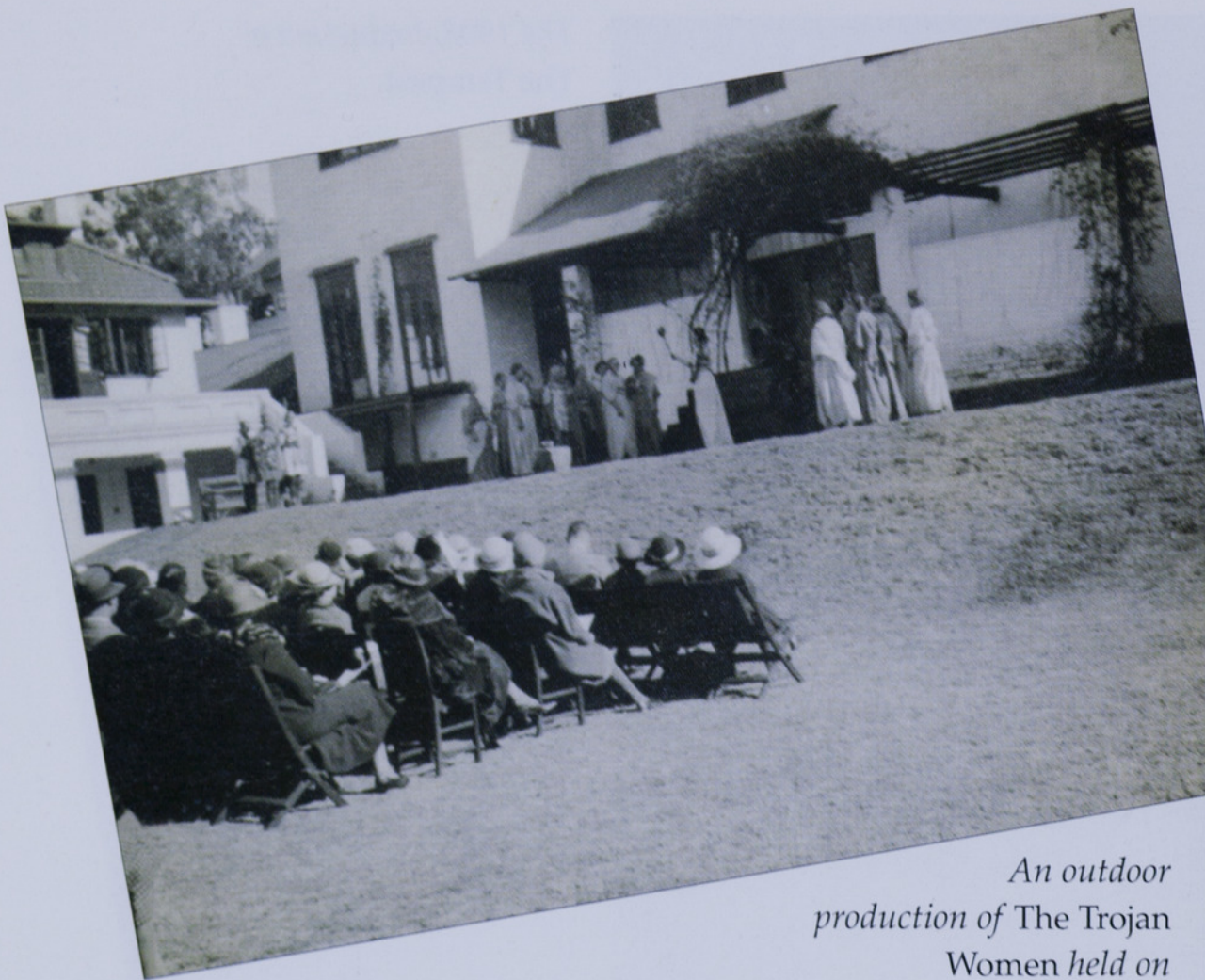


*The 1908 production of  
The Tempest.*

*The cast of A Midsummer  
Night's Dream, 1927.*







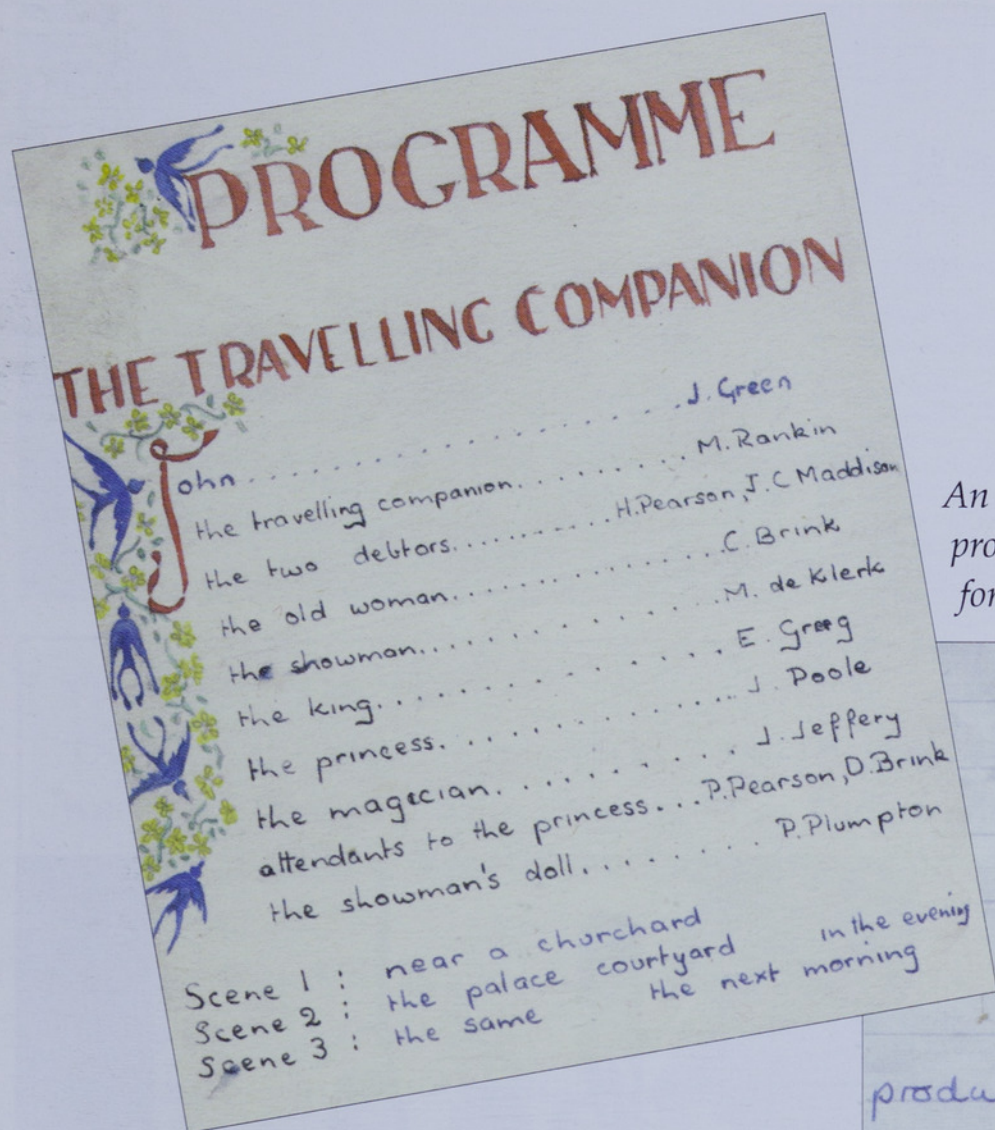
*An outdoor  
production of The Trojan  
Women held on  
Bears' Lawn.*



*In 1945 the Ante-matric  
class staged JM Barrie's  
Quality Street in memory  
of Katherine Baker. Miss  
Baker was an inspired  
English teacher from the  
time of the Founders until  
her death in 1945.*







An enterprising group of Juniors  
produced their own play to raise money  
for the Jubilee Fund.

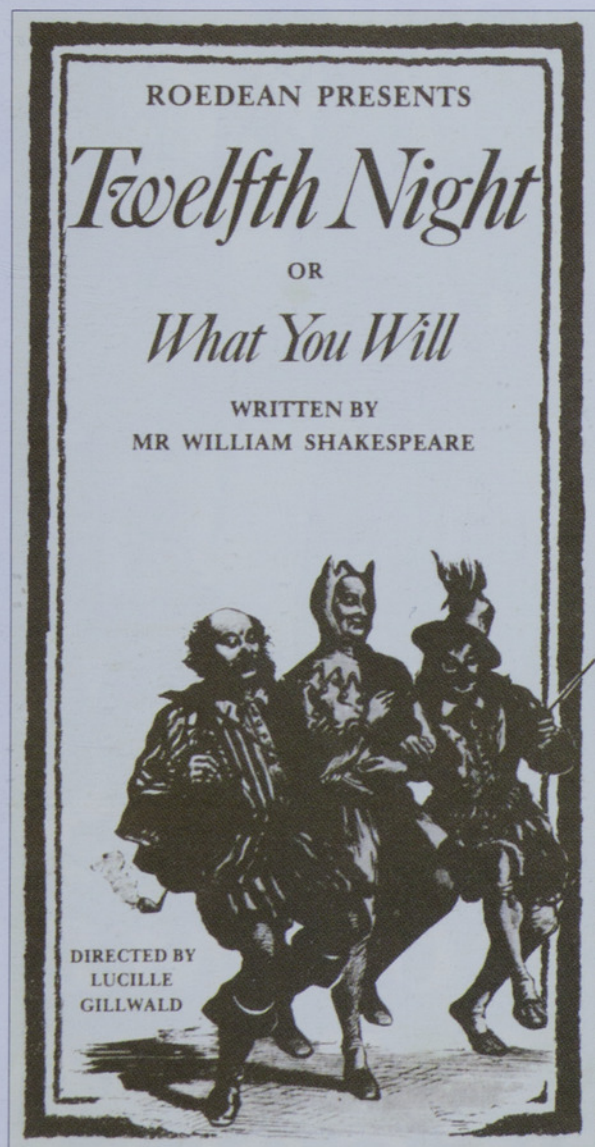
72 Third Street,  
Lower Houghton,  
Johannesburg.

20.5.52

Miss Le Maite,

During the past holidays Janet Green and I  
produced a play with some Roedeau friends whose  
names are on the programme enclosed. We raised  
£16-4-0<sup>d</sup>, and would be glad if you would  
accept it for the Jubilee Fund Committee.

Mary Rankin.



The cast and programme  
of Twelfth Night, 1971.





*An extract from The Star newspaper, October 1975.*

## Strange goings on at Roedean

**Vic Crossland**

It's all coming out in the open at Roedean today.

Not only is the school staging what the director Lucille Gillwald calls an "adult play," not only is it being staged outside as a change from the school hall, but ... BOYS are taking part.

What's more the play has love scenes.

It is an experiment that Mrs Gillwald — resident director with PACOFS — hopes will set a useful precedent. She was allowed time off to travel up from the Free State to see what gives at Roedean. The first thing she saw was ideal outdoor settings in the grassy lawns and terraces for an historical production such as "The Young Elizabeth" by Jeanette Darling.

Then ... "We decided actual, strong men about the place instead of girls trying to be masculine. So we contacted St Johns College and the boys accepted with alacrity."

So the traditionally cloistered stronghold of womanhood has come in for something of a shake-up. But the girls have taken it in their stride. "And if there's any reaction from the parents," says Mrs Gillwald, "I have yet to hear of it."



*Several plays have been performed in conjunction with St John's pupils.*



Tuesday

Last night we went to St John's to see a most excellent and very professional performance of Romeo and Juliet. We were warned beforehand not to laugh at serious moments, being informed that the silly Kingsmead girls had giggled every time 'bosom' was mentioned.

An amusing extract from 1967 Bears' logbook detailing unseemly behaviour on the part of Kingsmead pupils.

## THE BANTU OCTET

'Owing to the growing interest in Bantu Studies, we were very glad of the opportunity Miss Thompson gave us of hearing a programme of Bantu music on July 26th.

'Mark Rhadebe is a graduate of Fort Hare and a trained musician. He is conscious of the beauty of the Bantu music, and is chiefly concerned in the preservation and development of it.

'His octet of singers brought out fully the beauty of each item. First we had "Vuka Debora", a part-song written by the Rev. John Bokwe to celebrate the birth of his daughter. After that they sang us a song written in memory of many Bantu killed in the Great War, but especially in honour

of those drowned in the transport ship *Mendi*, entitled "Sekepi sa Mendi" ...The programme ended with the singing of the Bantu National Anthem "Nkosi Sikelela i Afrika" (God Bless Africa) and with "God Save The King" ...'

*Extracted from The African Roedean, 1931.*

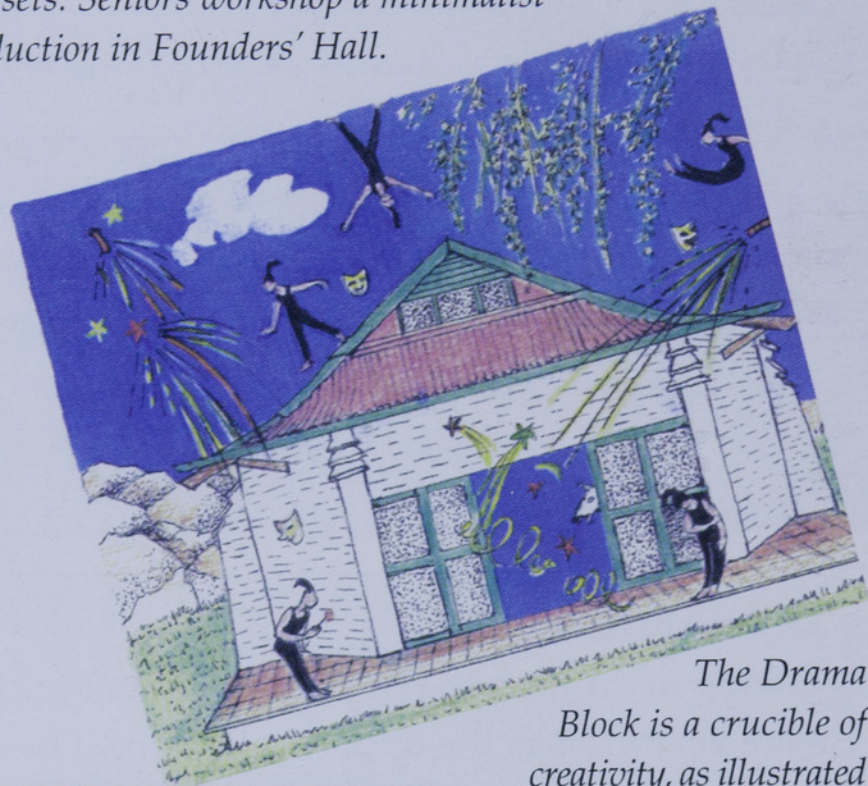


Two of the marvellous musicals which have been staged by the school.





*Of course, not all drama needs extravagant costumes and sets. Seniors workshop a minimalist production in Founders' Hall.*



*The Drama Block is a crucible of creativity, as illustrated here in a graphic by Gill Nicolayson.*



*In 2000 the school staged 1789 – The French Revolution, a powerful experimental production.*



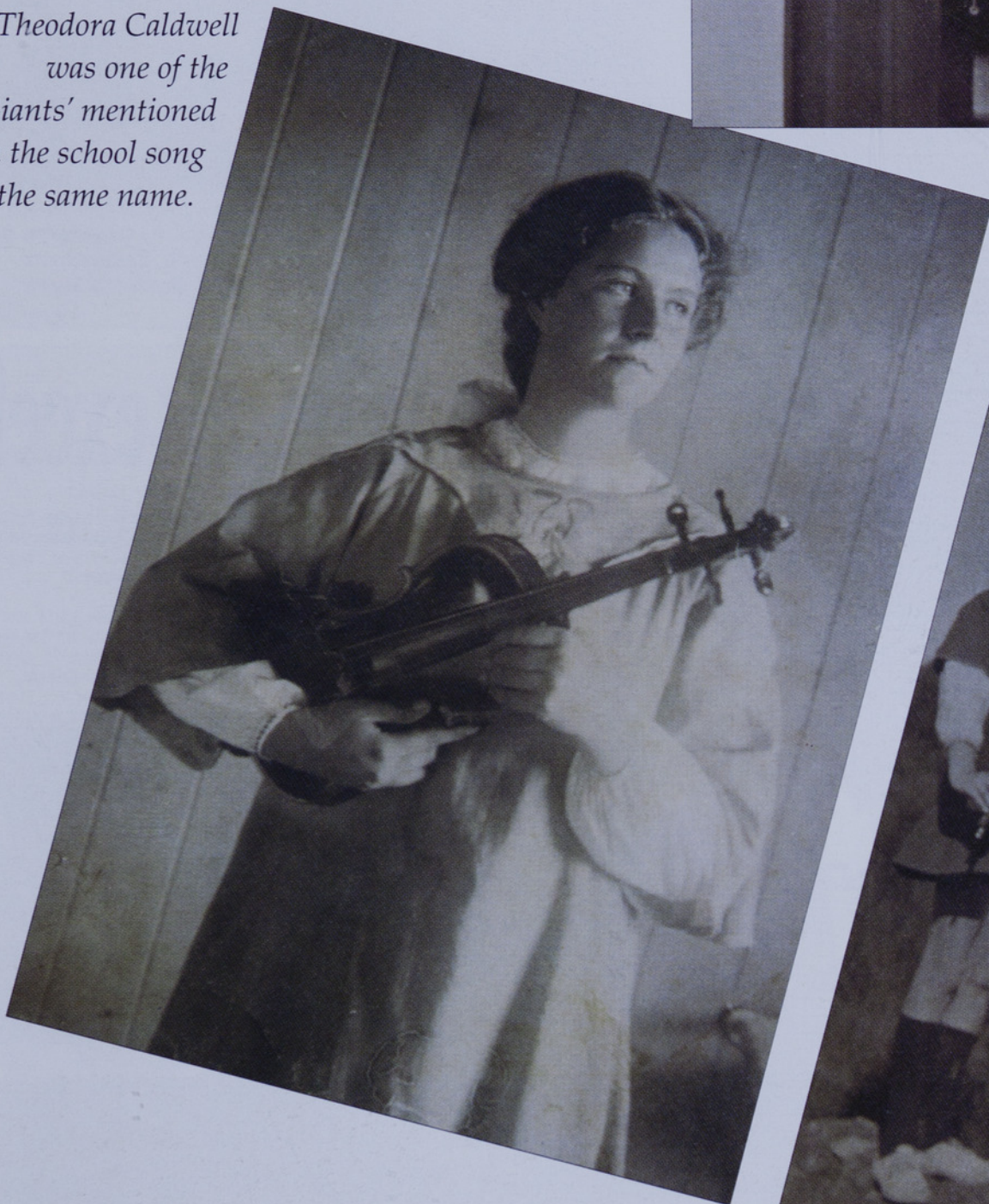
*In the early years music was taught in Blyth Cottage by TL's sister Ruth Lawrence. She is pictured here (right) with two other teachers, Misses Geisenberg and Johnson, in 1916.*



One of the early music students  
was Aileen Johnstone-Scott who  
subsequently also taught  
music at Roedean.



Theodora Caldwell  
was one of the  
'Giants' mentioned  
in the school song  
of the same name.



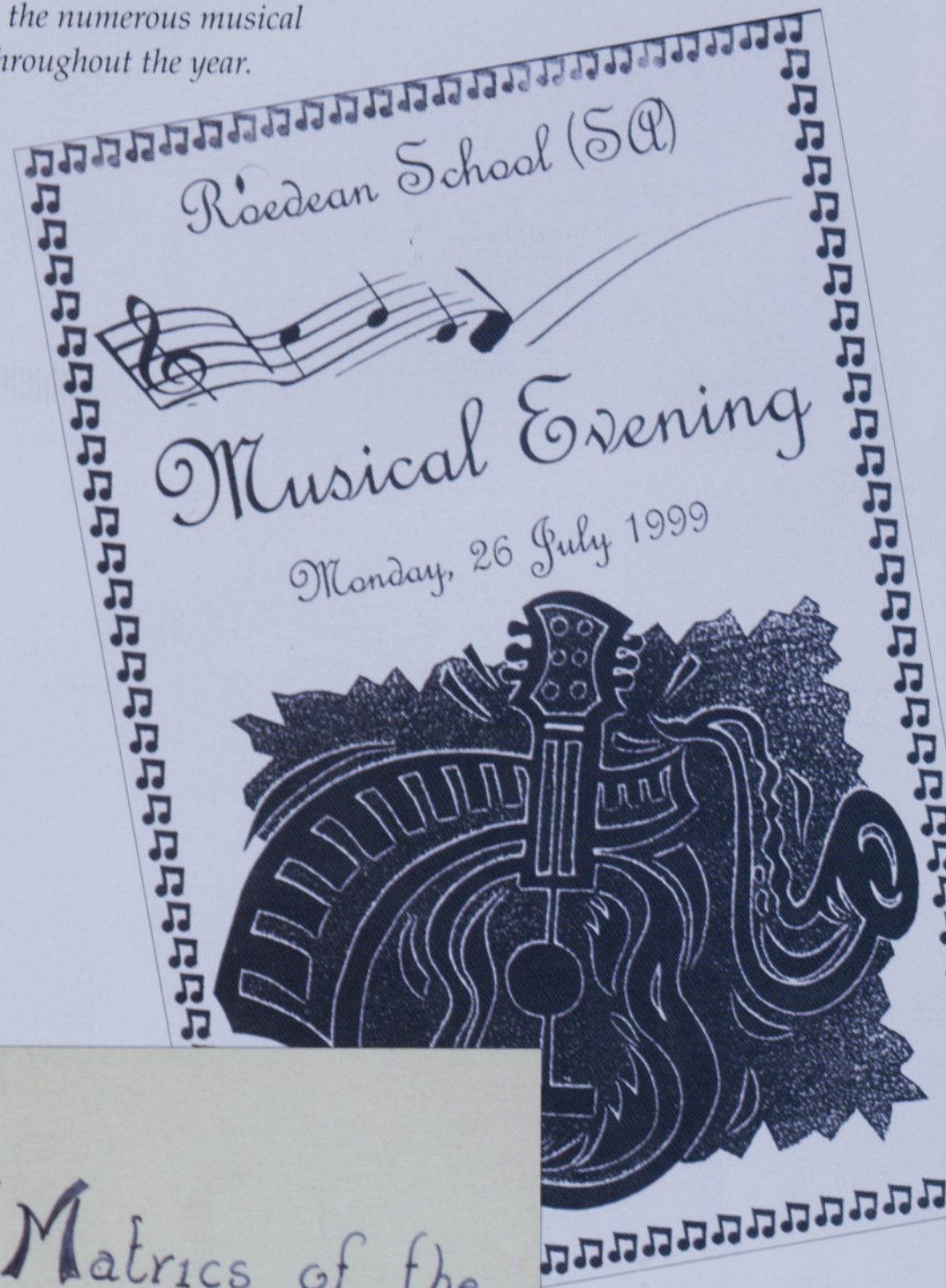
Two young violinists  
photographed in 1915.

Today was the visiting Sunday. In the evening  
Betty Park brought some people to play Chamber  
Music. There were eight ~~people~~ pieces, with different  
people playing in each, including Mr. Nabarro and  
Margaret Stephenson. In the middle Miss Park's  
dress caught on fire from the heater, but luckily  
one of the players threw a coat on it and put it  
out. It was a very nice concert.

An extract from the 1956 Head Girl's diary.



Roedean has produced some outstanding musicians whose talents are regularly showcased in the numerous musical events held throughout the year.

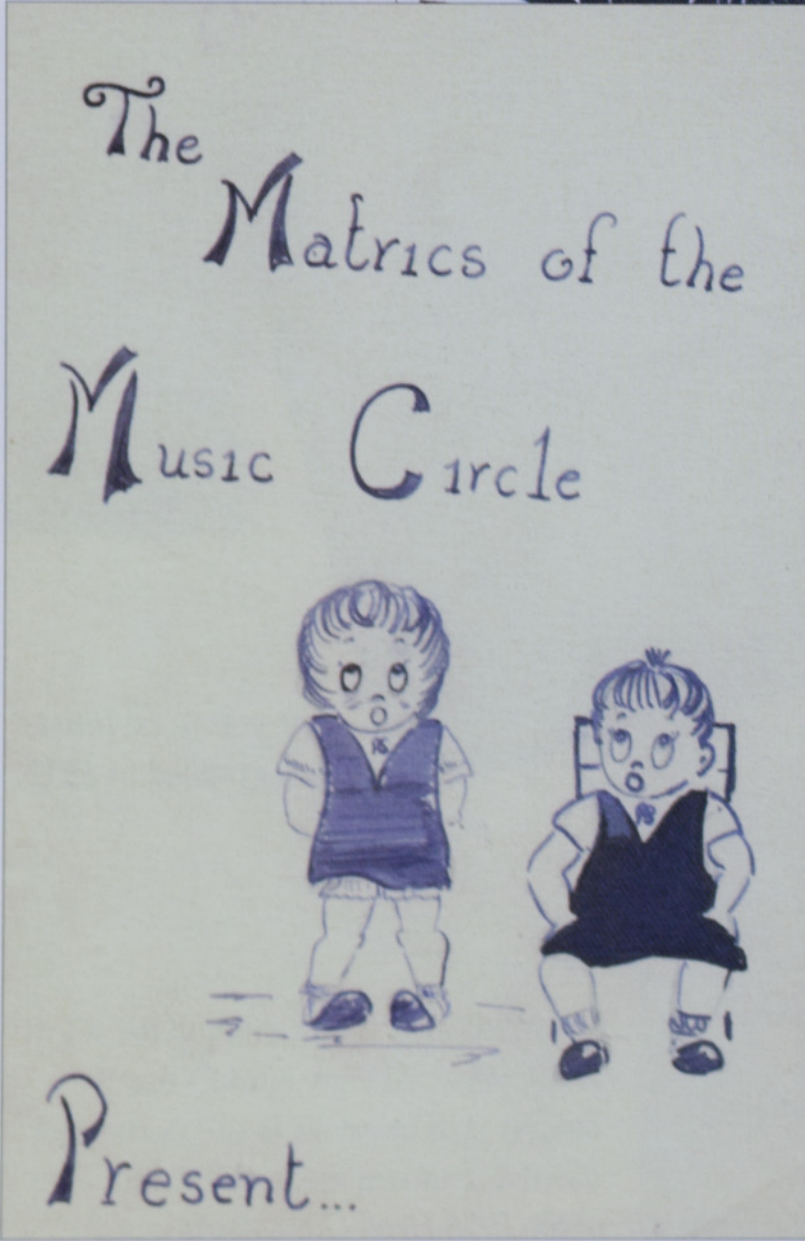


Kasia McNaught of Roedean School will play at the Youth Concerto as a soloist with the Randburg City Orchestra on Sunday 27 August 4pm at the NG Kerk Hall, Blairgowrie. Kasia will play two movements from the Mozart G Major Flute Concerto. August 2000

# Roedean pupils excel

ROEDEAN School pupils excelled in the recent Pretoria Music Festival. Mari Hayashida won the Senior Concerto Bursary, the Quick Study Bursary and the Technique Bursary. Chien-Jung Chen won the Best Overall Bursary 12-13 years, the Best Overall Trophy 13-17 years and the Best Concerto Trophy 12-20 years. Nanae Hayashida won the Junior Quick Study Bursary. The three girls each won the trophy for the Best Recitals in their respective age groups.

1992





Mozart recital. The setting was very picturesque, and fitted in very well with the music. Suddenly a frog, just behind my chair, carried away by the music, burst forth into a flood of song in a deep rich contralto ending in a bubble as it sunk beneath the water. I must confess it was very difficult to keep a straight face.

Music students were often taken to public recitals. This extract from a 1953 logbook describes an open air Mozart evening with an unexpected accompanist.

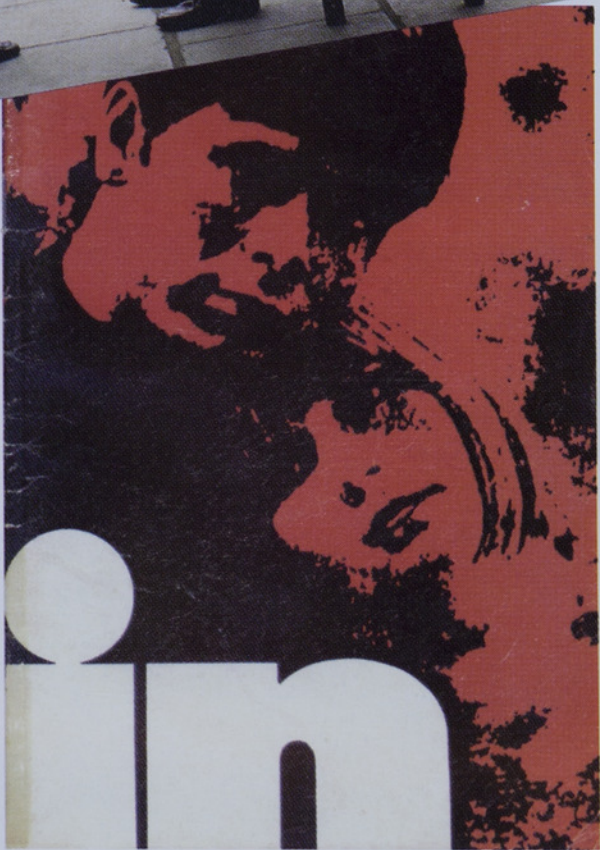


At any time of the day there is music being played at Roedean. Pupils receive tuition in a wide range of instruments, from piano and flute to marimbas and saxophone.



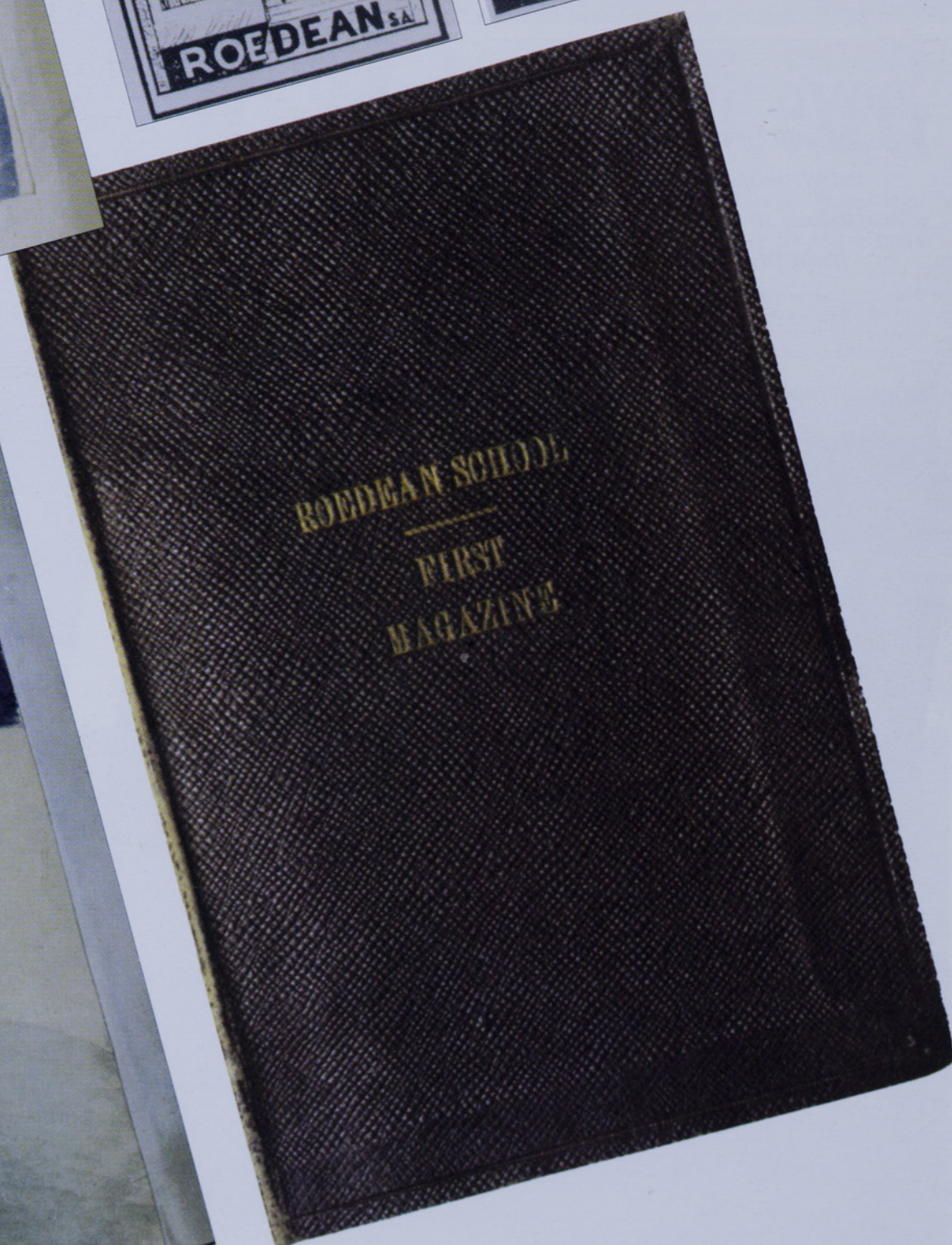
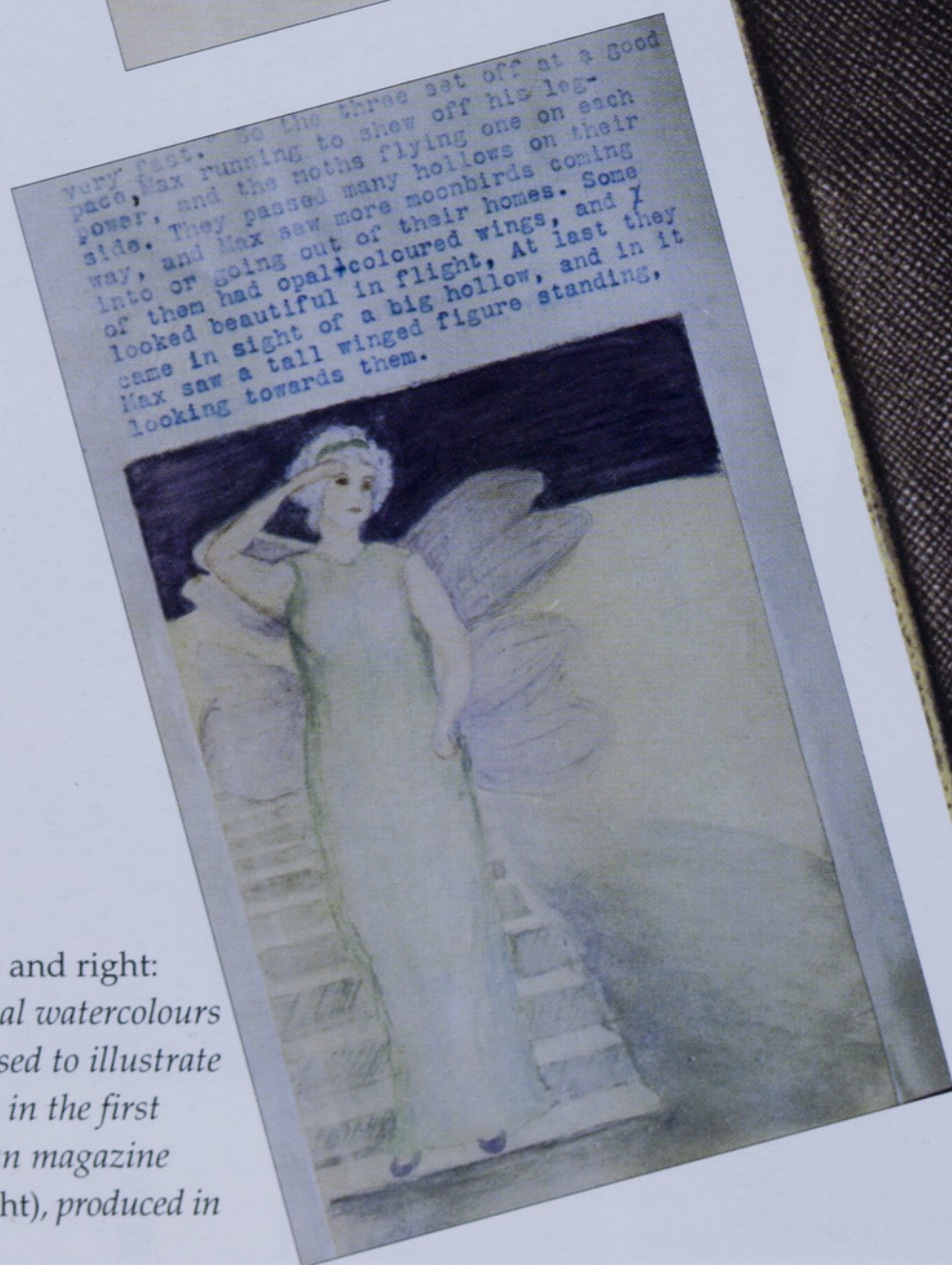
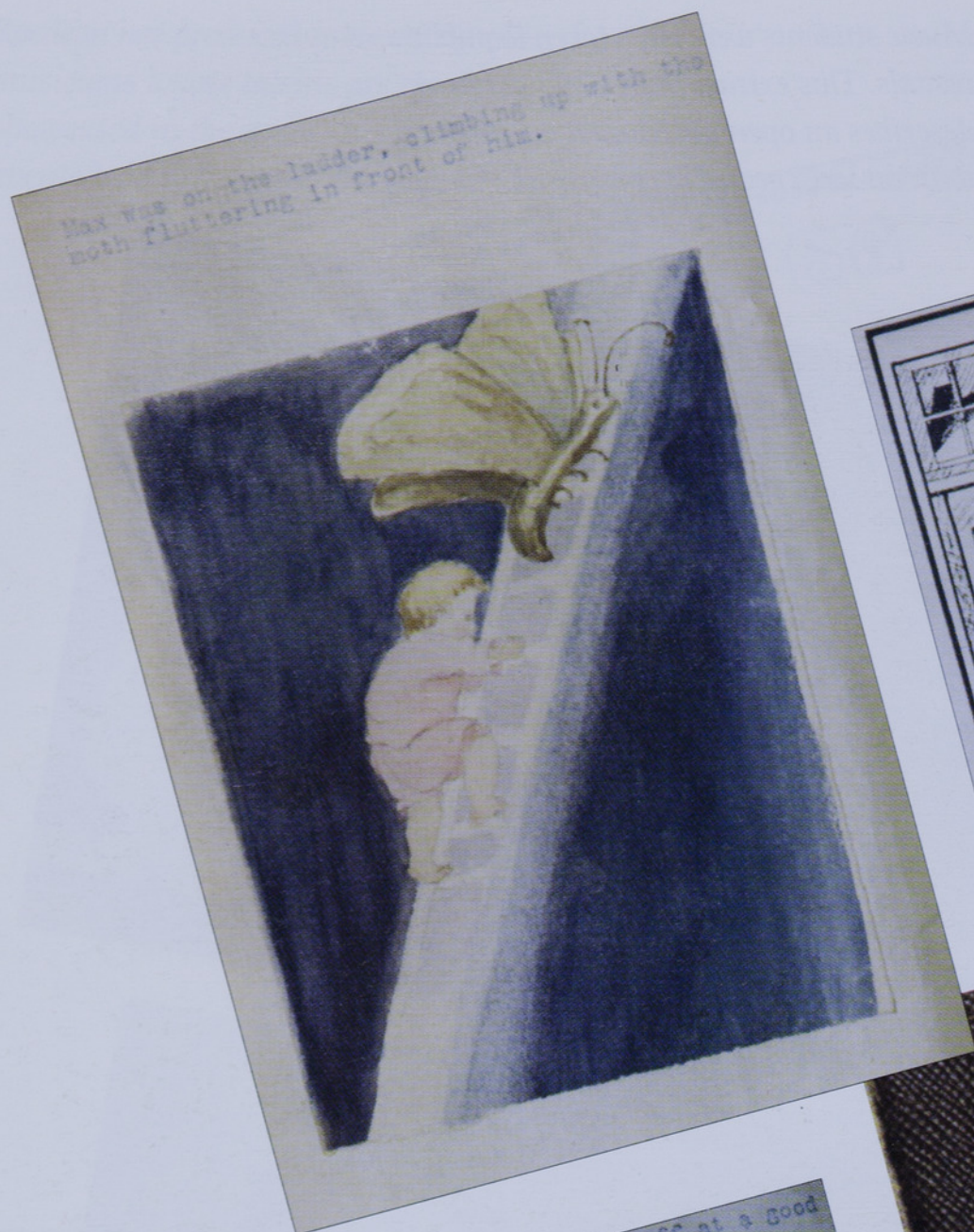
Saturday 7th Jan 11<sup>th</sup>.  
 Half term !!! Yipee.  
 Gee Whizzlers, I think we all need it. It seems as though half Roedean is going to Cliff this aft. In case you don't know - Cliff Richards, British <sup>English</sup> American Rock and Roll star.

A Roedean musical education is nothing if not well-rounded – Cliff Richard, it seems, had myriad fans and the 1960s pop group 'Four Jacks and a Jill' performed in Founders' Hall to raise money for the Leprosy Mission.





These book plates were created in 1951 and were given to the winners of the Chairman's Prize.



Above and right: Original watercolours were used to illustrate a story in the first Roedean magazine (far right), produced in 1906.





*Undated photograph of the art room sometime during the 1960s.*

*The study of pottery and ceramics is a popular pursuit at Roedean. Photograph taken in the late 1960s.*



*A life drawing class, 1970s.*



*The bright studio of the Sumner Art Block.*





Roedean is fortunate to own a number of outstanding South African artworks. Pictured here are: (top left) A Pierneef watercolour which hangs in the Headmistress's office along with (left) a Maud Sumner study of trees, a massive work by Old Girl Catherine Paynter commissioned by the SAORA (above), and a William Timlin painting (bottom).







The eminent British actress Dame Sybil Thorndike visited the school in 1955.

Miss Dixon and Miss Reed were kindly took us to hear a talk given by Sir Edmund Hillary and George Lowe on their ascent of Mount Everest. We had seats four rows from the front, costing 25/- but we only paid 4/10<sup>0</sup>. (By the way "we"

Wednesday - 14<sup>th</sup> March  
This afternoon, Nadine Gordimer came & gave a speech on "African Writing" which was most interesting, & to see Nadine Gordimer in person was in itself, an experience to remember.

Friday - 16<sup>th</sup> March  
This evening, the youth christian group from Kensington came to talk & sing to

'Seemly in conversation' could well be interpreted as choosing one's words well and using them appropriately. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Roedean's strong debating teams. Dignified, informed debate is something of which the Founders would be proud. The photograph shows the 2002 team for the Gauteng Provincial Championships.

The Founders were determined that Roedean pupils be exposed to the outside world and began a tradition of inviting experts and prominent personalities, who over the years have included Dr Arthur Bleksley, Nadine Gordimer and Sir Edmund Hillary, to address the school. These extracts from House Captain's diaries illustrate the range of speakers who were invited.

Seven Roedean girls achieved seven distinctions each and three of them: Alexandra Cockburn, Masingitaa Makhubela and Davina Mendelsohn were placed in the top 50 IEB candidates.

The school was founded a hundred years and is in Parktown, Johannesburg. It caters to 700 girls from Grade 00 to Matric and boarding facilities are available from Grade 4. A nursery school for three- and four-year-olds operates in partnership with St John's College.

Headmistress, May Williams says: "Roedean girls are encouraged to make the most of their gifts and talents, to be independent and morally autonomous and to have a sense of understanding and concern for others."

The school offers 14 languages and has an international and multicultural standing that attracts pupils from the entire continent and beyond.

## SEVEN GIRLS GET 7 DISTINCTIONS



Kristi Hansen



Alexandra Cockburn



Masingitaa Makhubela



Davina Mendelsohn



Tenille Blignaut



Laura Pereira



Estée Benadé

Roedean's academic record has been and remains a constant source of pride.

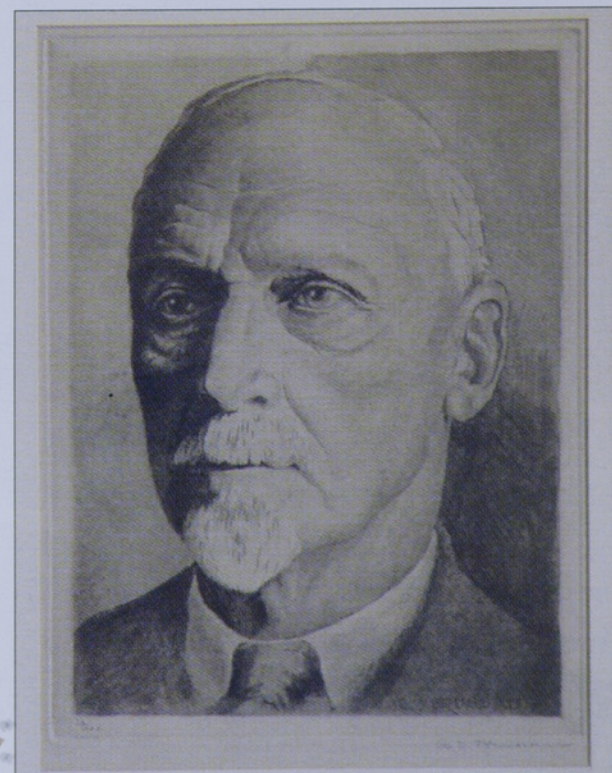
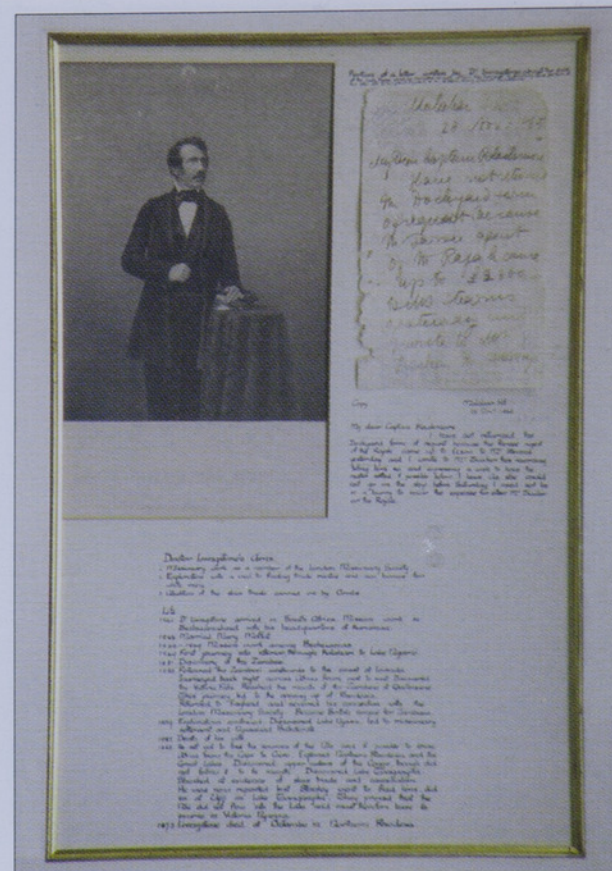




## MEMORIALS AND GIFTS

Roedean has been built as much by the generosity of its pupils and friends as by bank loans for bricks and mortar. The list of gifts to the school stretches to 20 pages, ranging from packets of seeds and a 'Collection of Insects from Kenya Colony' to entire wings of the school, such as the Dixon Wing. Hundreds of books have been donated to the library; stained glass windows are dedicated to past pupils in the chapel. Mr A Moreton gave an 'Unlimited Quantity of Manure' from his stables, which must have pleased Juicy Edwards. She herself donated countless plants and bulbs for the gardens. Below is a selection of gifts and memorials that give unending pleasure to the Roedean community.

Right: In 1929 Mr J Gubbins donated this portrait of David Livingstone with a signed letter. It now hangs in the library.



A signed portrait of Jan Smuts, donated by himself.



The silver trowel which Lady Fitzpatrick used to lay the Foundation Stone was donated by Cicely Niven.

Jill Henn was a Biology teacher, who on her retirement commissioned this mosaic bowl, titled 'When Life Began'.

The magnificent carved lectern in Founders' was a gift from Elsa Shillito in 1915.





*The beautiful Celtic art bowl was a gift from SAORA.*



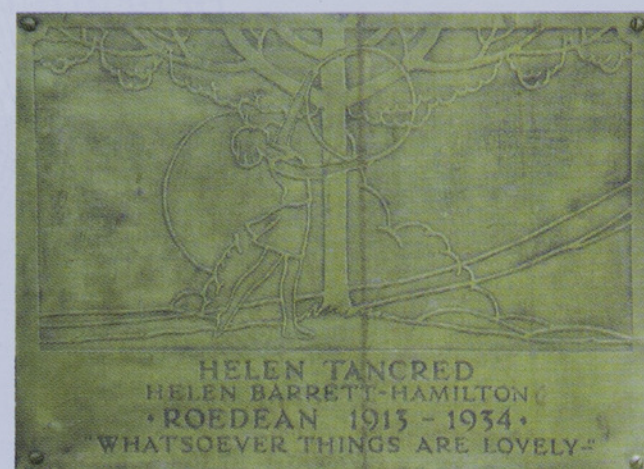
*A selection of trophies in Kats' sitting room.*



*The St Agnes tree panel was a gift from Lambs in memory of Margery Barry, 1924.*



*Irene Kanthack was a pupil who died tragically in 1927. Her memory is kept alive by this fountain which now stands next to the Biology Block.*



*The Helen Tancred bench overlooks the swimming pool. Helen was a pupil and later games mistress at Roedean.*



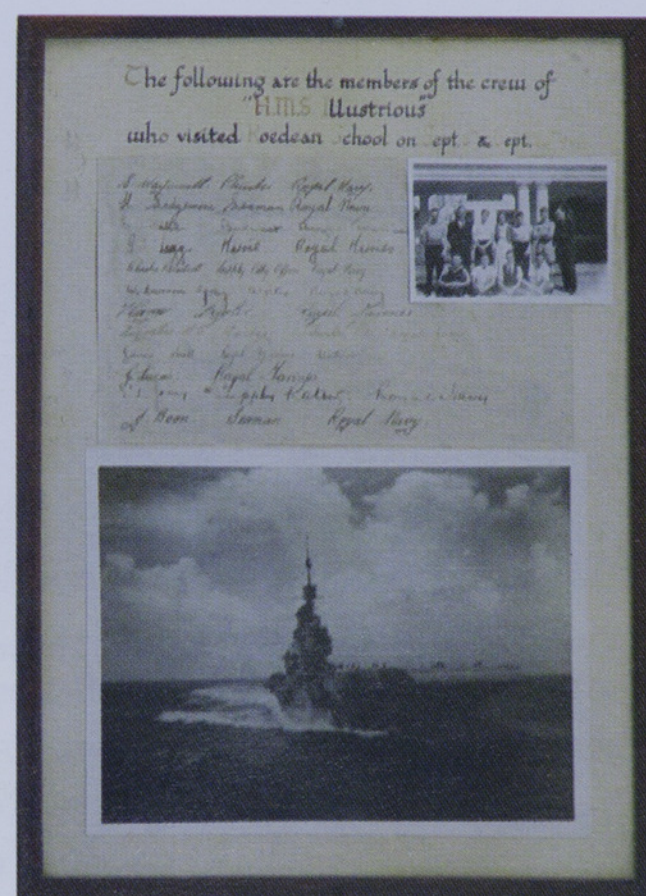
*The Secretary bird features in the Roedean emblem. This bronze was a gift from Gillian John who taught History for many years.*



*Jill Nicolayson was an art teacher, who donated several of her works to the school.*



*The Matric Class of 2000 presented this bronze kingfisher, which stands sentry over the Water Garden, as their farewell gift.*



*The HMS Illustrious was one of the navy vessels that Roedean supported in World War II.*



# VIII THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME

*'And where's the wealth, I'm wondering,  
Could buy the cheers that roll  
When the last charge goes thundering  
Beneath the twilight goal?'*



*The First Hockey Team pictured in 1913, after finishing top of the School League.*



What would South African schools be without their sports? Roedean is no exception. Over the school's first century, a wide variety of sporting activities have been engaged in. Look at the list. Athletics, badminton, cricket, diving, fencing, gymnastics, hockey, horse riding, lacrosse, netball, scuba diving, shooting, squash, swimming, tennis, wall climbing. The diversity is as impressive as some of the individual sports are surprising. Cricket and shooting, for example – at a girl's school?

Delving into the school's history, and into the early sporting activities of Roedean Brighton as well, one discovers a remarkable determination and competitiveness. The emphasis was on physical fitness, on being tough and unpampered. The intention was plain enough: not so much to win the individual game, whoever the opponent, but to show the world that girls were as good as boys. Games were played for enjoyment, even though the underlying purpose (on the part of the school as a whole) was the recognition of equality. Now that this recognition has been achieved and gender equality more than proved, some of the sports – among them cricket and shooting – have fallen away. (Interesting to note that cricket was dropped in 1938, less than a decade after the franchise was extended to women.) Other games, like lacrosse, have simply gone out of fashion. And perhaps winning the individual game became more important as the years have passed.

'Attitudes towards games have changed over the years,' wrote Joan Raikes in 1978. 'In the early days they were played essentially for fun, although a victory was always celebrated cheerfully. Today, with such increased competition and even higher standards, some of the fun is perhaps lost in the desperate effort to achieve good results.'

Current attitudes have matured even further. Winning is certainly not everything, but sport remains compulsory because Roedean believes that 'physical education and ... extra-curricular sport ... should be concerned with the child as she is and as she may become. It must exercise her faculties in the physical, cognitive and emotional realms. It is our aim to do more than just feed her capacity for growth and development – we ultimately aim to direct that growth and development in accordance with what are believed to be the best long-term interests of the child and of society.'

Lofty ideals, to be sure. The quotation is from Roedean's sports mission statement, a document that sets out in detail the character-building benefits of engaging in competitive games. The sheer physical enjoyment of sport finds its way back onto the list. Then there are such concepts as fair play, team work, personal best, coping with failure, and so on, which are all given special attention.

But the importance of the contest, that essential rationale for all sport, can never be ignored. There'll always be that rush of exhilaration, in players and spectators alike, 'when the last charge goes thundering beneath the twilight goal'. And so it should be. Sport will always be a combination of therapy and the chance of glory. And there is undoubted glory in winning. Roedean girls will describe with great pride the fact that the school has consistently triumphed in all the Gauteng squash leagues for the past ten years. And when the contest has been won, and the cheers subsided, that's when those words carved onto the mantelpiece in Founders' Hall come into play. Particularly the '*honour ... and curteisye*'.



Cricket finally disappeared from the sports curriculum in 1938 but was briefly revived in the 1960s for several years. As Joan Raikes dryly commented in 1964: 'This term, after an interval of many years, the School is again playing cricket, and I understand, I must say with some misgivings, that a team is to start playing league matches next term. Cricketers, perhaps, are born and not made. At any rate the introduction of this sport seems to amuse the members of the School, and nothing but good can surely come from acquiring the ability to distinguish between a googly and a yorker, and to recognise and appreciate a late cut. We may yet see an Old Roedeanian included in a cricket team playing the Australians.'



*A team of games mistresses prepare for a lacrosse game in 1928.*

*Above: Lacrosse was a fast, skilful game played almost entirely in the air. It was part of the Roedean curriculum for several decades, but faded away owing to a lack of competition from other schools, who preferred playing hockey in the winter months. Matches were played against the Old Girls, teams of games mistresses from other schools and occasionally against Kingsmead. The First Lacrosse team, photographed in 1916.*





Old lacrosse sticks  
kept in the Ark.



The last lacrosse match  
was played in the 1960s.

raised. As regards the playing  
of lacrosse by the school, although  
no other school in South Africa  
now played it, she considered it  
an excellent thing to have one  
non-competitive game - quite  
apart from the benefit to the  
girls of the graceful movements  
involved in the playing of lacrosse.

A report of a staff  
meeting in 1952 in  
which Ella Le Maitre  
justifies the continued  
playing of lacrosse.



Hockey is the one sport which has  
survived from the first days of the school.  
TL remembered that, '... at St Andrew's  
Road we played hockey in the red desert  
in front of the school, and lacrosse was  
begun on a rough plot of ground next  
door.' Roedean joined the hockey league  
in 1907 and has played with varying  
success ever since. The 1916 First Hockey  
team won all their matches and brought  
home the shield.



The old school bus in 1923. A victorious team would sail home singing 'Forty Years On', to be greeted at school by cheering and flag waving.



For many years a cricket match was played every Foundation Day against the Old Girls, but was often rained out. Another annual cricket fixture was the Fathers' match in which the fathers usually allowed themselves to be beaten. This report is from *The African Roedean*, 1931.

'... Although it rained the night before, the pitch was quite dry enough for the Fathers' Cricket Match on December 6th. We batted first and got the large score of 94 all out. No one made a duck. Of course the Fathers did their best to drop all the catches we hit up! Then the Fathers batted. Every daughter did her best to get her father out, and when one father hit too hard there was a voice from the bank, "Stop it, Daddy!" At four the teams went to tea, and then came back and finished the match. The Fathers made 92 all out.'



Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July

The inter-house hockey-matches were finished this afternoon. <sup>Lambs</sup> Bears won the open, and Kats the Under XV. There were a number of casualties - a Morris twin fainted, Patricia Fleming fractured her nose and Heather Farquharson broke her toe!

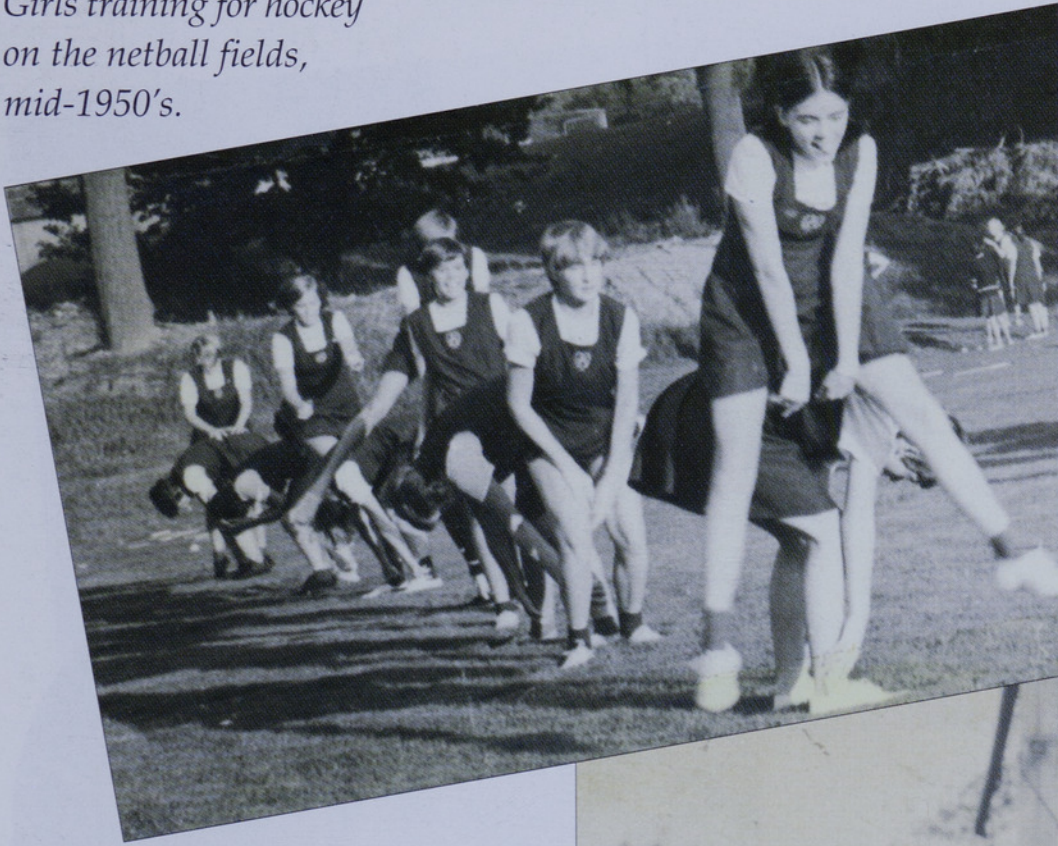
In the evening the house plays for the Dramatic competition were presented. Lambs performed "The Man who Wouldn't go to Heaven", Kats "The Rising of the Moon", and Bears "The Dear Departed". We all enjoyed these thoroughly. Mr Richard Daneel judged them; we all appreciated his constructive criticism, and agreed with his verdict in favour of Kats. The points he awarded were; Lambs 18; Bears 21, and Kats 24.

Centre right: The fathers also regularly competed against the girls in a hockey match.

Bottom: An extract from a senior's logbook, 1960 describing an inter-house hockey match.



Girls training for hockey  
on the netball fields,  
mid-1950's.



*'The goal upon her knees with guarding stick,  
Awaits the coming shot,  
Watches the coming shot,  
As well as eye can see;  
So trembling waits she in her netted grot,  
Wishing to turn and flee...'*  
*An extract from 'The Hockey Match against Jeppestown  
High School', a humorous poem in the 1911 edition of the  
school magazine.*

The modern Roedean  
goalie is a different girl  
from the one who '...  
trembled in her grot,'...



At the end of the century  
an Astroturf pitch was  
laid, the latest in sporting  
technology.



Indoor hockey in the new Sports Centre.



It would be almost 20 years before Roedean could afford to build a swimming pool. In keeping with the Founders' belief in fresh air and vigorous exercise, however, the girls would walk across what was open veld to Orange Grove to use the public baths there.

A description of the swimming expeditions from the 1907 school magazine:

'Every Saturday in the two summer terms we all go to Orange Grove, which is about a mile and a half from Roedean, and lies at the foot of a range of hills. There is a very large garden with numerous fruit trees, and little summer houses, and, what we chiefly enjoy, a swimming bath.

'We set out from Roedean at about half-past twelve, carrying our lunch with us, and arrive outside the baths, very hot and dusty, about half-an-hour later. However, we are soon in the water swimming, or trying to, and yelling lustily to each other. The baths are open at the top, and it is very delightful to float on one's back and look up at the clear sky and the willows drooping over the water – for those who can float without swallowing too much water.

'At about two o'clock we all emerge into the gardens looking rather damp about the hair, but feeling deliciously cool, and very hungry. We have our dinner in one of the little summer-houses, and then the more lazy ones of the party troop to a shady spot, under some quince and rose bushes, to read or to go to sleep; while the more energetic set off to explore, for the garden is large and the possibilities endless.

'When the sun is nearly setting, a troop of girls may be seen walking slowly over the veld, towards that white building with the red roof which is Roedean.'



Above and top: Roedean girls on a Saturday visit to Orange Grove in 1905.



*The first swimming bath in 1925, built from the proceeds of swimming and diving demonstrations at Orange Grove, as well as donations. At first the girls dived off two boulders, '... much more picturesque than a diving board, if less efficient.' A filter was finally installed in 1936, and when some parents commented on a little green algae in the water one Old Girl remarked, 'They should have seen us disappearing into the thick green slime in the old days.'*





*The swimming team of 1948.*

Having its own swimming pool paid off in the improvement of the standard of swimming. In 1928 Roedean won the Inter-School's Gala for the first time. It was a far cry from the swimming mistress's withering report in 1913: 'The School swimming has this term reached a higher standard than last year. Eighty-five per cent of the boarders can now swim, and the majority



of these have very keenly been practising hard on Saturdays and learning to dive. A small section still show a lack of public spirit in thinking that as they do not care for swimming, they should not bathe; or if they do, they waste their time by playing a bit in the bath instead of trying to improve themselves. But I am glad to say that these are very few, and I hope that next year they will not exist.

'The team, all things considered, did very well in their first match against Jeppes; they were only beaten by 17 marks, 9 of these being due to the team race. A few marks were lost quite unnecessarily by one or two girls who very feebly gave up in the middle of the race because they were beaten, instead of swimming to the end.'

*In 1954 the swimming team brought home a wealth of trophies, including the Inter-Schools shield.*





This entry from a senior's logbook captures the excitement of the Inter-Schools gala in that year.

14<sup>th</sup> A never to be forgotten day — the Gala, and what a Gala it was! Race after race we watched the black cap creeping up on the others and passing them, to come first! Our score was mounting and as it neared the end of the events, our only serious rival was Parktown. After all the events, before the final results were announced we watched a display of synchronised swimming which was fascinating; and then the moment

had come. The announcer asked that there might be no applause until he had finished. He then read out the winner which was ROEDEAN!!! We just couldn't retain ourselves and the applause was deafening. We have not won it since 1928! Holly June, as captain, made a very nice speech, saying that this was a jubilee present for our Headmistress. We then cheered the other schools. The continual removal and frantic rubbing of Miss de Vries's glasses throughout the Gala showed how excited ~~she~~ <sup>she</sup> was.



The Roedean swimmer of 2002 — sleek, determined and spirited.



Swimming team 2002.



Girls practise diving in the 1970s.



Roedean is proficient in diving, and the number of girls partaking in this elegant sport has grown significantly since this picture of the team in 1966.



Tuesday 26th.  
In the Tennis match against Redhill,  
the 3rds won. Sally June and I would possibly  
have won a few more games if we hadn't been  
distracted in the last set by two ST chaps in the  
gutter (on Roedean property). To crawl down the  
storm drain for  $\frac{3}{4}$  hr each way; they must need  
their heads read!

Extract from a senior's log book in 1967 detailing a possibly not unwelcome distraction on the tennis court.

The tennis and lacrosse captains pose in 1935.







Tennis court 'A' photographed in 1920 with The Sheds in the background. This is where the Hersov Music Block now stands. The Water Garden was created where The Sheds once stood.

*In 1916 the tennis captain reported on the annual tennis match against the Roedean mothers:*

**'We have had our revenge on the mothers at tennis during the first winter term, inflicting upon them a thorough beating, which we believe, however, was partly due to the idiosyncracies of one of our courts – the visitors not being as familiar as we are with its hills and hollows.'**

*The Roedean tennis team reached the top of the league for the first time in 1925.*



*Not long after the move to Parktown the Founders began raising money for a tennis court.*

**'On Wednesday, 7th April, Roedean gave a drilling and dancing display at the German School. All parents and friends were cordially invited, but a shilling entrance fee was charged, for the purpose of raising funds for a tennis court.'** – 1908.

**'Tennis was played throughout the year. There were three courts, and the one nearest the Junior School was not popular, as it was next to the laundry, and invariably as one went to play they would stoke up the fire for the hot water, producing a good thick smoke screen, which was embarrassing when we had visiting teams there.'**

*From a memoir written by Matty Read, 1920s.*



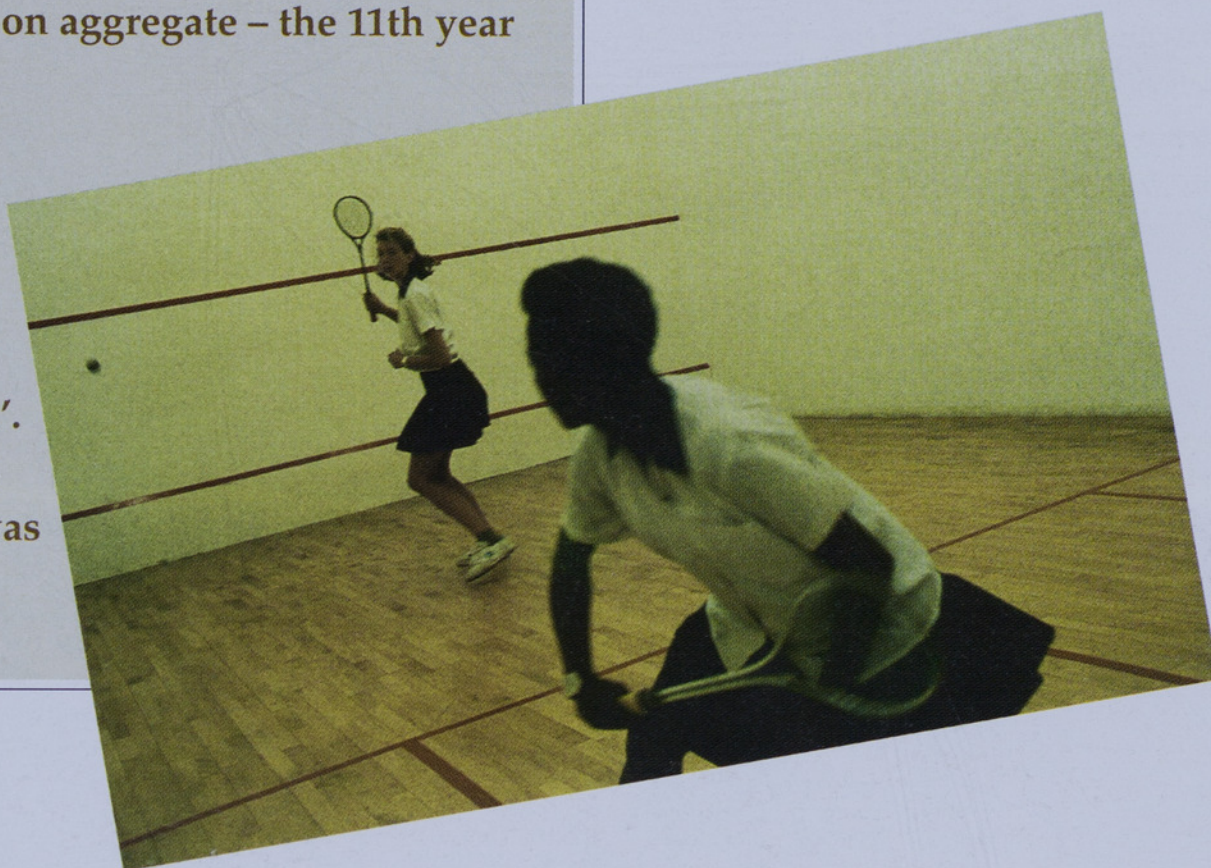
*The First Tennis Team in 2002.*



Squash became the pride of Roedean in the last decade of the century, beating other Gauteng schools for 11 years running and producing numerous provincial and national players. In 2002 it was hailed in *The Star* newspaper: 'Roedean School confirmed its position as the undisputed top girls' squash school by winning 10 out of 11 south Gauteng leagues on offer and was again awarded the trophy for the top school on aggregate – the 11th year they have achieved this honour.'

Its success showed a rapid rise from modest beginnings in the late 1970s when interested girls walked over to St John's to learn the game. Their first match was against the St John's Under 13 team. 'We lost rather hopelessly yet it did not dampen our spirits...'. Just a year later the team won the 'A' league. In 1983 the first courts were built for what was becoming a popular sport.

*Cutting from The Citizen, 28 June 2001.*



*The captain of the Roedean Netball Team in 2002, and (right), the first team.*





*In the early days of Roedean gymnastics was referred to as 'Drill' and was an essential part of the school day. Here a pupil demonstrates her prowess on the horse in 1909.*



*Below: There have been many successes scored by Roedean gymnasts over the years. Girls begin their training in the pre-school, and many continue participating in senior school.*



*Riding has always been a popular pursuit of Roedean girls.*







Top left and right and centre: *Kats', Bears' and Lambs' prepare for battle in the Centenary Inter-House Gala, 2003.*



Bottom left: *We've got the spirit! Roedean cheerleaders 1998.*

Bottom right: *Roedean sports captains, 2002.*





# IX

## THE JOURNEY BEGINS

*'It's good to see the School we knew –  
The land of youth and dream ...'*



*The Upper IV girls of 2000 were each asked to embroider a square depicting what they most loved about Roodean. This magnificent wall hanging was the result.*



Roedean is a school that produces accomplished young women who are ready to face the opportunities and uncertainties of the world. But where does the process begin? It does so in the Junior School, which provides small girls with the basis for all that comes after.

The Junior School has always been there, and it has always been integral to Roedean. Although new buildings have been erected from time to time – St Margaret's is a fair walk down the hill, for example – all manner of traditions and practices tie the various Roedean elements into an organic whole.

Think of the dressing-up days celebrated each year by the Junior School. The Easter Bonnet Parade sees everyone from St Margaret's parading in lavish headgear through the rest of the school, cheered on by the older girls. Similar connections are made when the juniors dress up for Book Character Day. The whole Junior School is invited to witness the cutting of a huge cake to celebrate St Margaret's birthday; and on Junior Day there's an elaborate musical production where every junior dresses up to sing and dance. In fact, the juniors are forever, in the parlance of the old days, 'getting up' plays (they used to do this in Latin and French sometimes) to entertain the seniors.

In Grade One, when the great challenge is literacy, individual girls are assigned a 'reading buddy' from the Upper Junior School. This arrangement helps to build confidence, and some valuable relationships are formed at the same time.

Recalling her experiences as a Roedean junior, one Old Girl quoted in this chapter remembers falling ill and being confined to the sickroom. The best part of this depressing period was when each day a senior prefect visited her, sitting on the edge of the bed 'like an angel'.

Despite these deliberate continuities, however, the Junior School has its own distinctive style of operation. The current Headmistress, Jan Mallen, uses the word 'nurturing' as a recurring Junior School theme. The girls are given a sense of belonging and a sense of purpose. The days of sleeping in freezing dormitories and washing in icy water each winter morning are over. The intent of these rigours was to assist in the sharpening of young minds. The intent of the Junior School is still the same – although the methods are somewhat more sophisticated.



'I used to ride my pony to school and then the gardener would take him back home. This pony was forever running away and needed to be rescued from all sorts of places. We used to have picnics, which included a great treat of lemon cream biscuits, at a spruit where arums grew at the corner of Carse o'Gowrie and Houghton Drive.'

*Patience Freeland, 1919.*



*Junior School pupils, 1914.*



*Juniors photographed outside their new home in 1918. The Junior School was divided into 'Gnats' and 'Midges'.*

'The conditions at Roedean, and Johannesburg too, were primitive. There was no water-borne sanitation in those days, but the bucket system with ox-drawn carts to collect the buckets. The carts went all around the town at night lit by hurricane lamps to collect the buckets. All water had to be boiled to kill any germs and filtered to remove the dust. Mosquitoes were an absolute plague and everyone slept under mosquito nets in the summer.'

*Dora Graham, (née Eland), 1912.*

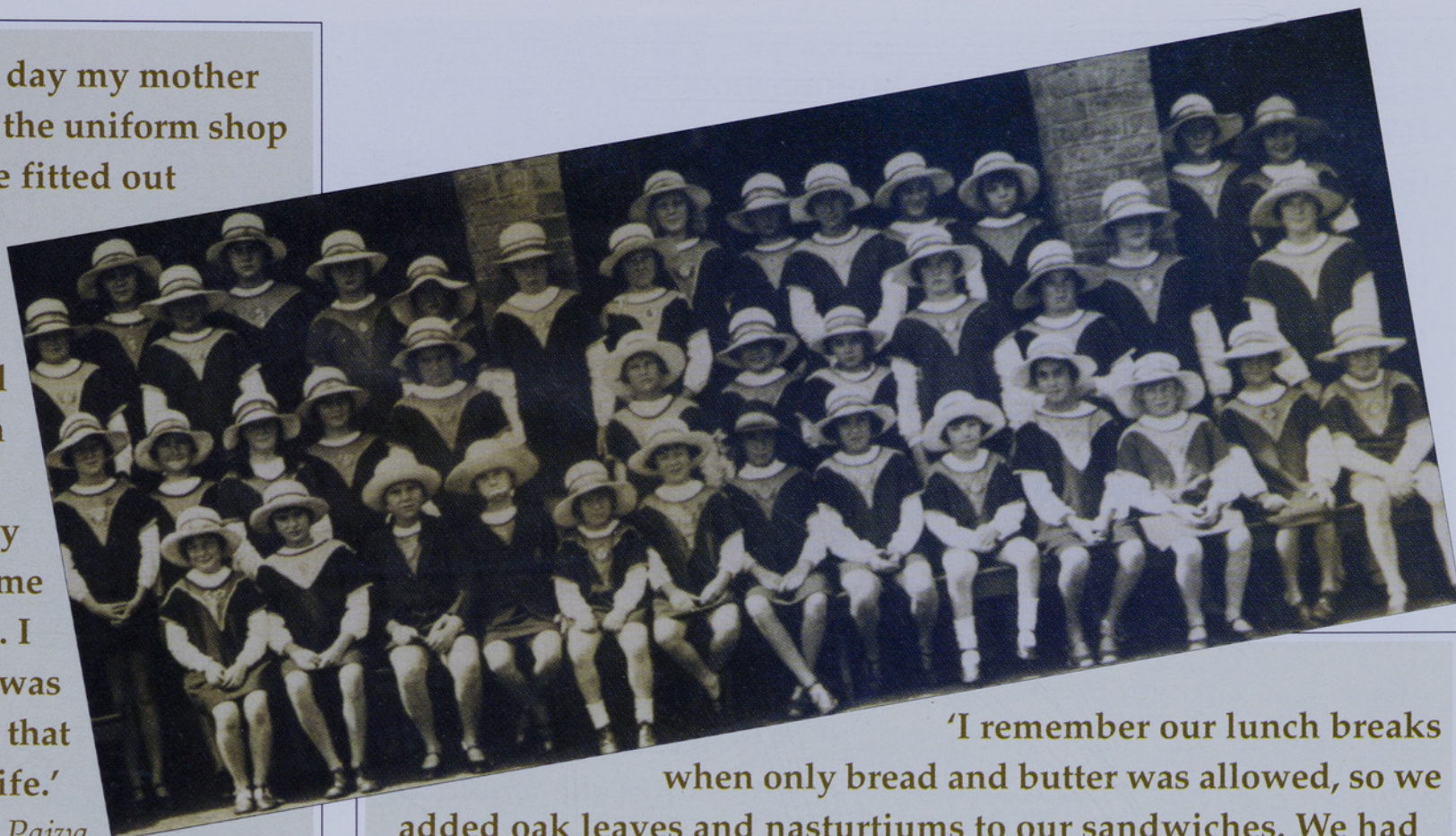
'We were in the Junior School, still comparatively new, where T.L. was the presiding deity. The policy in those days was to bring us up as tough and hardy, so the juniors slept in a dormitory whose sides were open to the elements, and had their lessons in an open air shed, or in the dining-room, which was virtually a deep verandah, though there were canvas blinds which could be pulled down to keep out the rain if necessary. Our baths were wooden troughs partitioned off, and every morning we had to stand in one, shivering in the winter, while T.L. poured a bucket of cold water over us. Our daily douche. Regrettably, it took years to reconcile me to a cold shower.'

*Iris Botha, 1920.*



**'Life began for me the day my mother took me to Roedean to the uniform shop near the old gym, to be fitted out for school. The smallest blazer was too large and the sleeves entirely covered my hands; the djibbah had to have a hem turned up almost to my armpits, and the hat came down to my eyebrows. I was just five, and this was the most exciting thing that had happened in my life.'**

*Dolores Fleischer, (née de Paiva Rapozo) who entered Kindergarten in 1936.*



**'I remember our lunch breaks when only bread and butter was allowed, so we added oak leaves and nasturtiums to our sandwiches. We had a lovely fire in winter in the "hall" where we toasted bread on our rulers. Being read to was a large and lovely part of our junior lives – sometimes in the garden where we sat – I specially remember "Les Malheures de Sophie", a book I adored.'**

*Erica Mitchell, (née Berry), who began her schooling in 1923 and went on to teach art at Roedean. This picture is c1928.*



*Below: The staff and pupils, 1930. The Headmistress, Mabel Bayley, is in the middle of the second row with grey hair. 'Miss Mabel Bayley was Headmistress when I first arrived, a most kind and loving woman; she taught us to chew each mouthful of food 10 times before swallowing, rather than guzzling our food which hungry children are liable to do.'*

*From a memoir written by Pat Penwill, née Mackay.*

*Above: In 1930 a new wing was added to the Junior School. 'The main Junior cloakroom was dark and dank, with tiny windows high up in the outside walls, letting in little light. The washbasins were supplied with Lifebuoy soap, and the lavatories with scratchy Bronco paper, and the floors were red grano.'*

*Angela Lloyd, who attended Roedean in the 1940s.*





'... There were no houses in the Junior School, but the different forms competed in excellence. At the top end of the Hall there was a small wooden ladder which hung on the wall, silhouetted against the whitewashed bricks. Positioned on the ladder were five little schoolgirls made of wood, each representing a form. Thus, First Form was a dear little tiny girl with a blonde bob, Second Form a bit larger, Third Form had pigtails, and so on. They were lovingly and realistically painted, and all wore djibbahs. Their names were Prima, Secunda, Tertia, Quarter Minor and Quarter Major – in the best tradition of the Latin-dominated boy's prep school from which Ella came. Each little figure had a hook on the back, which could attach it to a rung of the ladder. Once a week Ella in her black gown and mortar board would take prayers in the Junior School, and after the usual hymns, lessons and blessings she would read out the marks each form had attained for good work – and the little girls on the ladder would move up or down accordingly. We all had to work very hard for our own little girl to reach and keep a good position – and at the end of the term, one form would be a winner. There were no prizes, of course, just honour – for which we strove.'

*Angela Lloyd.*

'... If we ever felt ill, or had a nose bleed, we would be sent to the sick room. Here, Matron would put us to bed, and summon Miss MacKinnon if necessary. A bleeding nose was given shock treatment with a saucer of heavily salted water which had to be sniffed up until one choked. "That'll stop it up," said Matron. One memorable aspect of the sick-room was that it was visited each day by a Prefect from the Senior School, who would breeze in, grown-up and awesomely grand, sit on the bed and hold a little patient's hand and talk kindly, and linger forever in the memory like a visiting guardian angel.'

*Angela Lloyd.*



Senior Dignes, 1947.

'... At the top of the Junior School were the dignes who were appointed with great ceremony like accoladed knights, having their badges of office put over their heads and round their necks by Ella. Dignes' badges were a metal star, silver for the Seniors and copper for the Juniors, hung on a silken cord of blue, white and green. The metal was real – a digne had to keep her badge beautifully polished.'

*Angela Lloyd.*



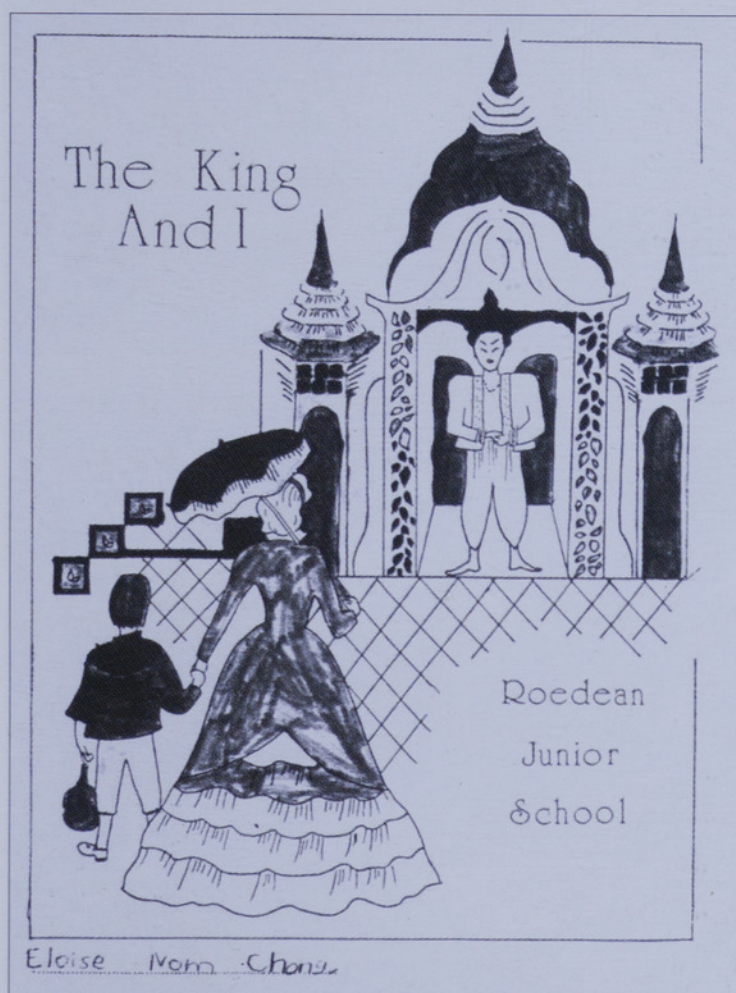
Brownies meeting in 1925. 'On November 3rd we had a "Brownie afternoon". The first item on the programme was a song by the Lower IVs, in French. The first and second forms acted Little Red Riding Hood (that was in French, too). Erica Berry was Red Riding Hood, dressed in pale blue and a little red cape, and altogether she did very well. Hope Martin was the wolf, and growled and knew her part splendidly.'

*From The African Roedean, 1923.*





Top and centre right: *Plays have been performed regularly in the Junior School since the earliest days. This description of one production comes from the 1906 edition of The African Roedean: 'One day in the Summer term the Lower School acted The Pied Piper of Hamelin. The play was charming, moving the audience to tears, and the dancing (especially that of the four rats) most attractive. The dresses were excellent, especially the mice; there were brown mice and black mice with beautiful rope tails, both long and curling and fine. After the play was over all the actors went down on to the hockey pitch and had their photographs taken in their costumes.'*



*The King and I was one of the most outstanding productions of the Junior School, staged in 1992 by the much-loved Val Lord.*



**As in the Senior School, music plays a crucial part in the life of the juniors, many of whom study individual instruments as well as participating in class music. This dry comment in the 1966 edition of the school magazine hails the advent of the recorder: 'Talking of recorders, one Form in the Junior School is now having a weekly lesson on this instrument. All can, I believe, now play four notes, but do not all yet manage to play the same note at the same time.'**



# Roedean Junior School Music Festival



Wednesday  
31 March 1993  
6.30 p.m.

Roedean Junior School has produced many outstanding young musicians, dancers and singers. Festivals, concerts and carol services are part of the annual calendar.



Girls have the choice of taking ballet classes from Grade 0 and many continue with it into the Senior School.







*St Margaret's Day 1919. In the early days, in the true tradition of Roedean, a play was 'got up' to celebrate the day. A report in the 1919 African Roedean states: 'St Margaret's birthday this year was one of the most enjoyable functions ever had at Roedean. On this occasion the guests were invited to come as war workers. "The Return Of Persephone" as acted by the Midges fully justified our expectations of an enjoyable afternoon. Bacchus and his revellers danced with true Bacchanalian frenzy in the halls of Olympus ...'.*



*In later years the play was replaced by games, but the early tradition of cutting a vast birthday cake remains. Each child and teacher in the Junior School called Margaret (or a derivative thereof) is presented with a marguerite as the cake is cut.*



*St Margaret's Day, 1948*



**The two main events on the Junior School calendar are St Margaret's Day and Junior Day. St Margaret, the gentle, religious Queen of Scotland through her marriage to Malcom Conmore who became king in 1057, was adopted as the patron saint of the Junior School. Her birthday is celebrated every year in the winter term. According to Lorna Thomas, Maxie Kuhn used to love telling the enraptured juniors: 'St Margaret came to Scotland by being wrecked off the Fife coast, where she was confronted by a band of wild and hairy Scots.' Here Maxie would steal a meaningful glance at her two Scottish teachers.**





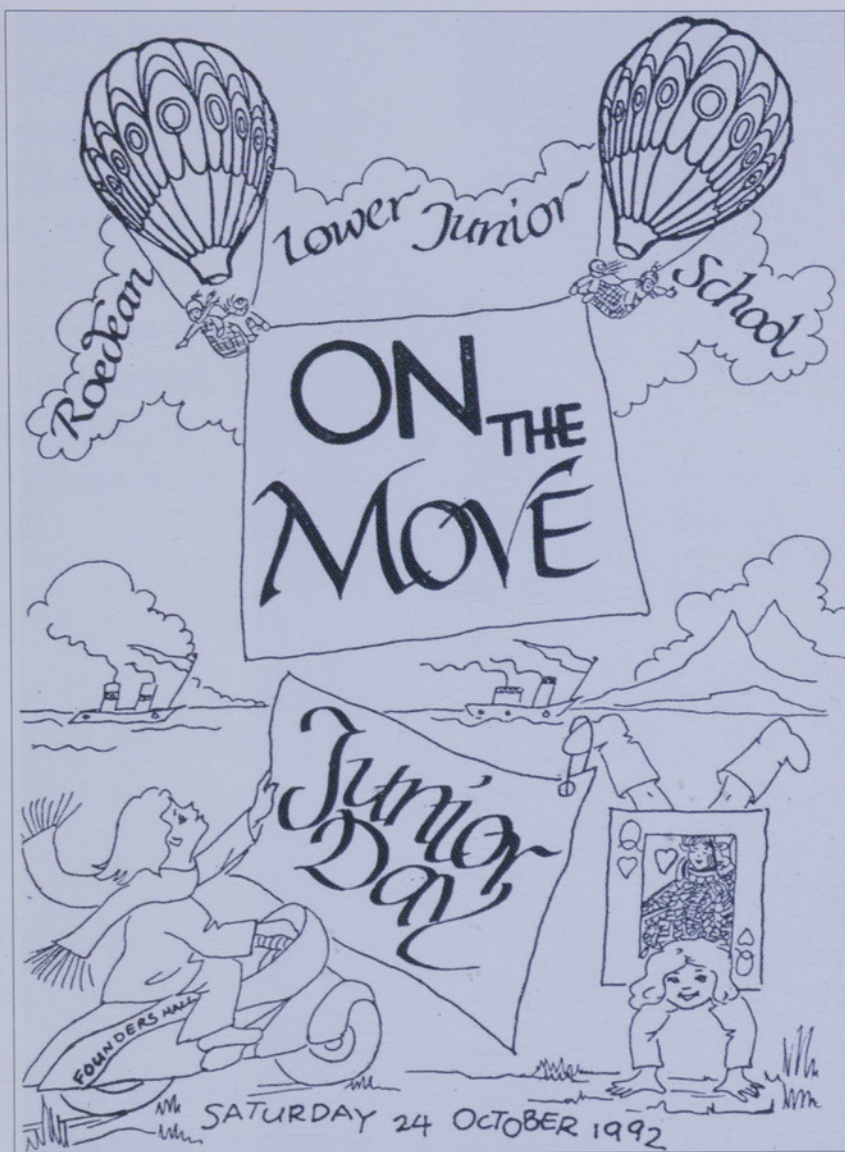
*St Margaret's Day always seems to fall on the coldest day of winter, but it is one of the most enjoyable days in the school year.*



*The traditional cake. In past years, the cake was decorated with marguerites made from icing sugar. Any girl fortunate enough to have a name derived from 'Margaret' was given one of the sugar flowers. Nowadays, they are given a fabric flower.*

*A curtsy from a winning captain.*

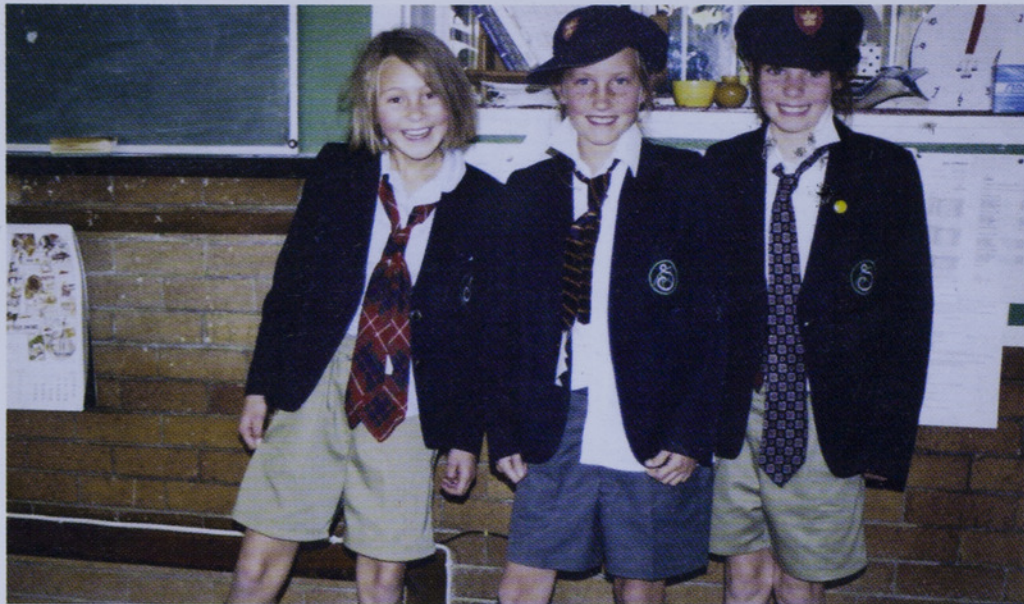




*Junior Day was originally known as Parents' Day and was held on a weekday afternoon when mothers were entertained with a play, and were then shown their daughters' handwork. This is still the procedure of Junior Day, which now takes place on a Saturday. The girls raise the rafters of Founders' Hall with song and dance, and then take their parents to see their art and handwork in their classrooms.*







*Book Character Day, the Easter Bonnet Parade and Spring Day are welcome opportunities to dress up.*





Rosie Montgomery, later McCullough, at the crease in 1922. She went on to play county cricket for Sussex in the late 1930s. Rosie's ties to Roedean would last longer than she could ever have imagined, as it is her daughter, Jan Mallen, who is head of the Junior School!



Below: St Ursula's Junior XI, 1911



Games Mistress, c1913.

Junior Hockey Captain, 1922.



Drill and Games Class, 1921.

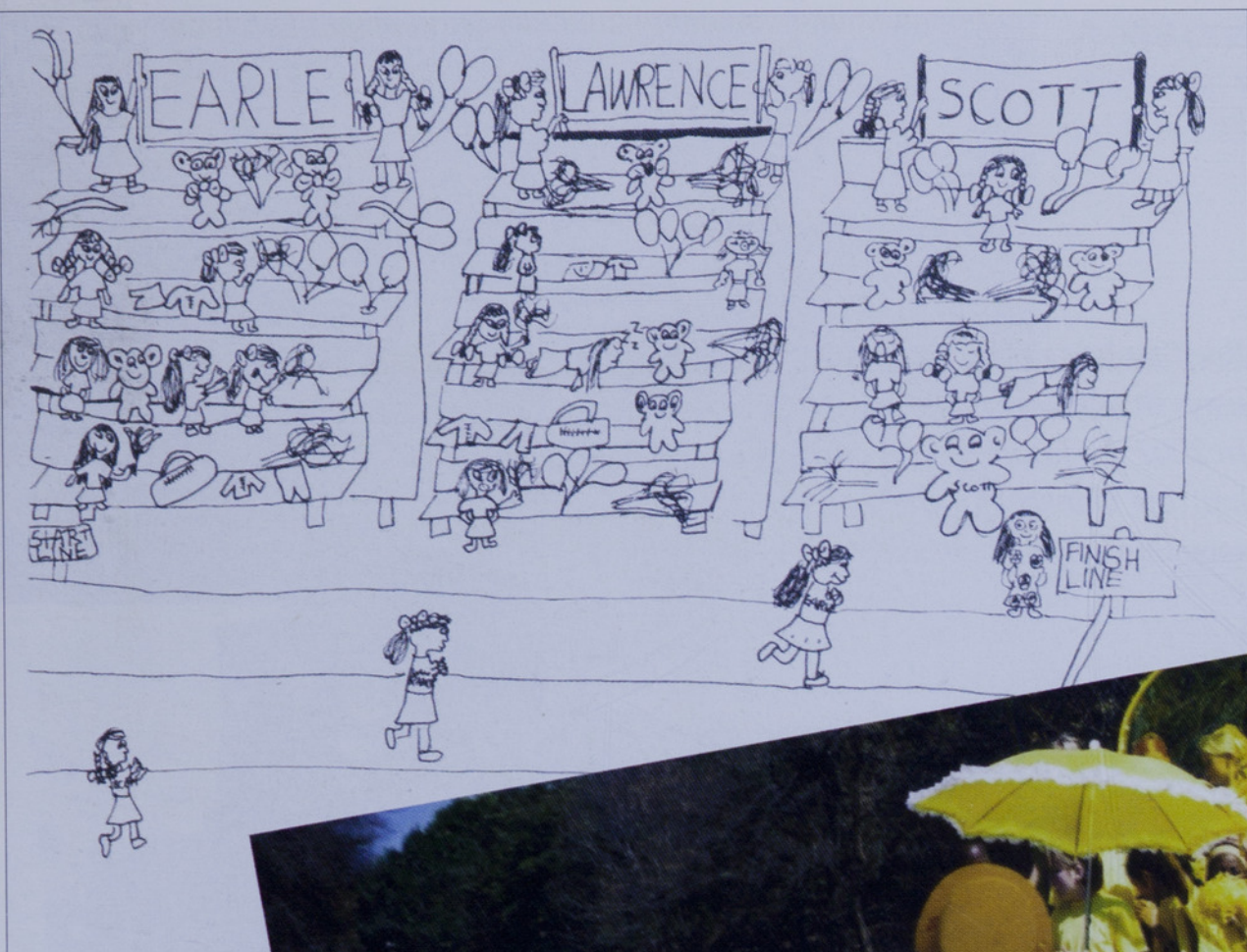


*The joy of swimming  
continues down the years.  
Right: The pool in the  
1920s. Centre: Diving  
practice in the 1940s.*



*Junior School galas are enthusiastic,  
spirited affairs.*





*The three Junior School houses, Earle, Lawrence and Scotts were instituted in 1973 and have become the source of immense competitive pride.*





## Schoolgirls knit 50 blankets

Staff Reporter

The girls of Roedean Junior School in Houghton have donated 50 blankets to Operation Snowball for distribution — all hand-knitted by the pupils themselves.

Twice a week, the girls stayed behind after school to participate in the "knitathon".

The school has also donated a large amount of old clothing.

Helping Operation Snowball does not mean you have to knit a blanket yourself — all you need to do is send us a small donation.

So far, we have received R196 158,29 in



The Star  
Operation  
Snowball

contributions from members of the public, but we need more than R100 000 to make our target of R300 000 by the end of winter.

Please send your donation to Operation Snowball, Box 1014, Johannesburg 2000.

*Roedean has always been interested in finding ways in which to assist the wider community. In 2002 the Junior School once again set about knitting blankets for the underprivileged, something it has done often over the years.*



*In 1950 pupils collected dolls for a children's charity, and in 1991 supported The Star newspaper's 'Operation Snowball'.*



## Children are doing their bit

By Janine Simon

Chunks of chocolate cake, buttered crumpets and cookies sold like proverbial hotcakes when Roedean Junior School's Std 3 classes yesterday held their second cake sale to raise funds for Operation Snowball.

The Std 3 campaign began last year with the aid of teacher Mrs Trish Conradie. It was continued in 1986 and the first cake sale — at 50 c a hefty slice — raised the tidy sum of R206.

"We will raise as much this time," Mrs Conradie said yesterday. The school hopes to include all its classes and hold a monthly sale for Operation Snowball.

Many pupils have also knitted and crocheted squares for a blanket for Operation Snowball. And, of her own volition, a Grade One pupil has donated R2 to her school's fund for the project.



Roedene Junior school pupils thronged to the cake sale held by the Std 3 classes in aid of Operation Snowball yesterday. Pupils could buy themselves a hefty slice of break-time delight — and help a needy person.





*A class in progress in the new wing, which was built in 1954.*



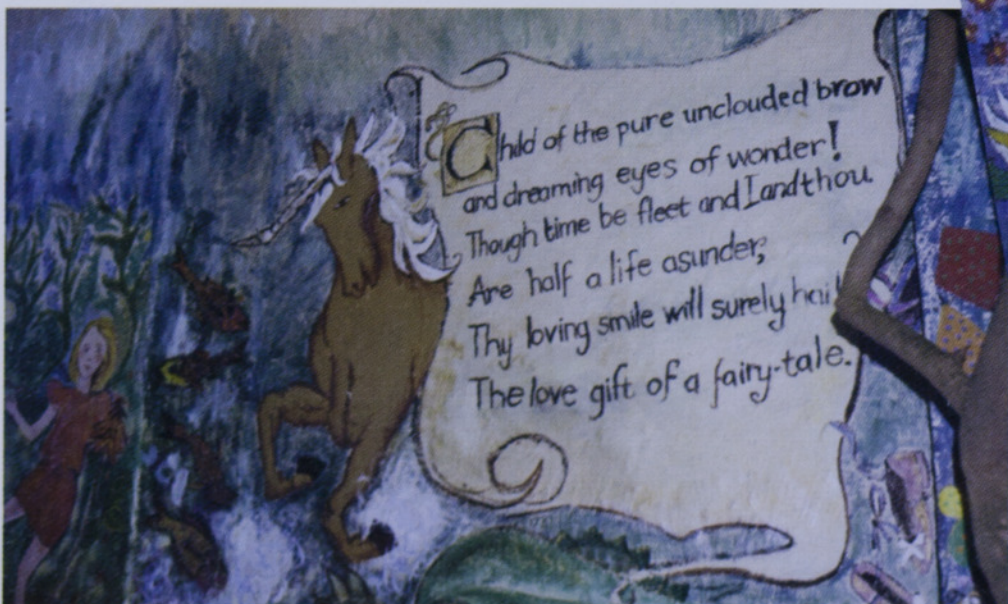
*Junior School days are bright and busy, the emphasis by the start of the new century having moved from straightforward imparting of information to an environment where girls are encouraged to experiment and develop skills, learning through interaction and co-operation. They participate in such initiatives as Eco Week, learning about creating a 'sustainable future', and Economic Management Sciences in which entrepreneurial skills are developed.*







Headmistress Jan Mallen insists that St Margaret's girls enjoy physical play. Girls play old-fashioned games such as Sevens on the wall and climb on one of several jungle gyms. The St Margaret's Block also boasts a charming Fairy Garden, a place to play and stimulate the imagination.

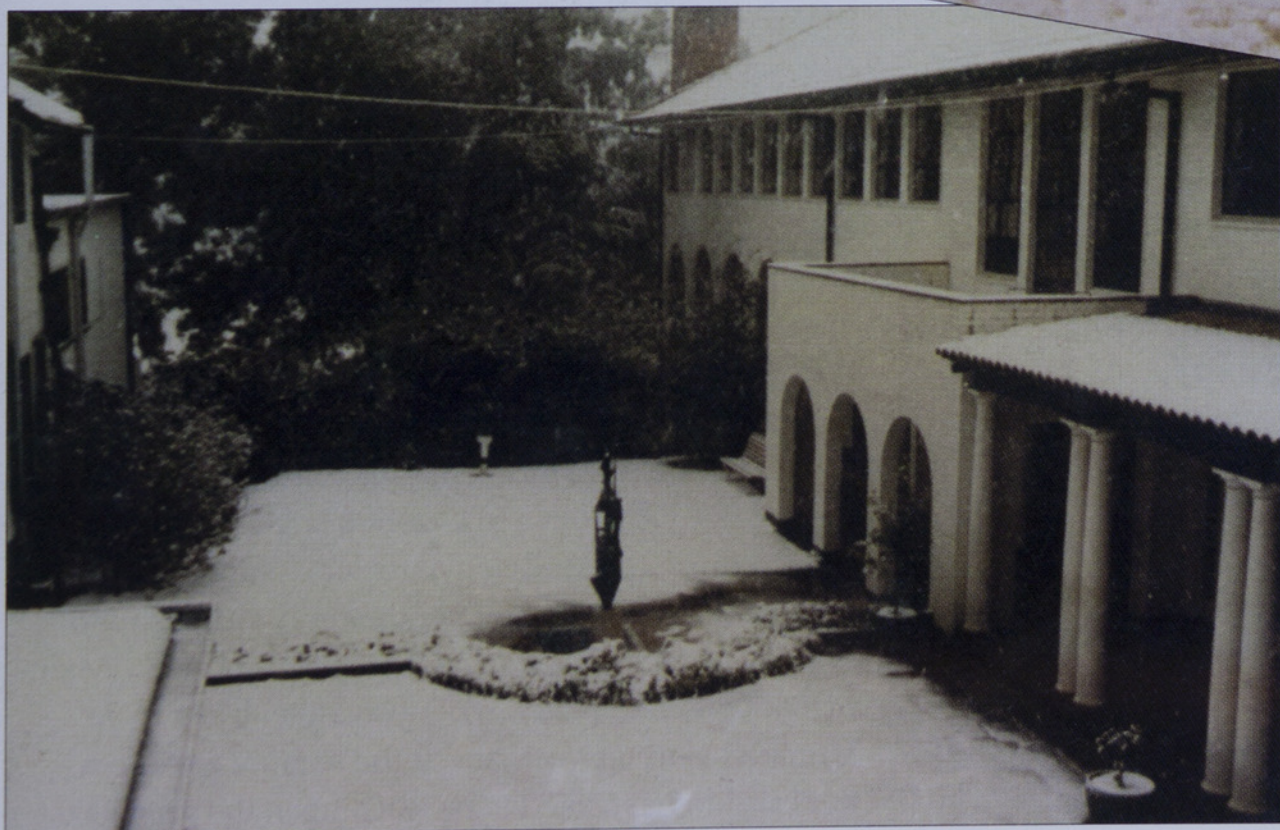




The original Junior School building has changed little since it was built. For a time it featured a bronze sculpture by Eduardo Villa in the courtyard (below), obtained after Sir Henry Strakosch bequeathed money to the school. The bronze now stands near the Hersov Block.



In 1981 the school was transformed by a heavy fall of snow. Fiona Macaulay, who was in Matric at the time, remembers the scene: 'Chaos ensued. Class was dismissed, we rushed outside and attempted to catch snowflakes in our hands and on our faces. All fears of looming exams forgotten, we played – the girls we were – lost in a temporary enchantment.'





# JUNIOR SCHOOL HEADMISTRESSES



## Mabel Bayley

When Jan Mallen took over the reins of the Junior School in 1999, there had been ten other Heads before her. Several had a long and influential tenure, beginning in 1922 with Mabel Bayley. Miss Bayley was said to have had '... the rich qualities of graciousness, sympathy and kindness and an unusual understanding of

children.' Her obituary stated that '... Many heedless little girls must have been lifted to a greater consciousness of life's rich purpose by her tender, deep concern.' She was a woman of wide-ranging interests. She was a keen horticulturalist who collected plants for the school gardens, and a tireless charity worker. She supported clinics in Sophiatown and the Hope Home in Westcliff. On her retirement in 1931, *The African Roedean* noted: 'She stood for courtesy, public spirit, culture, and a sense of leisure which is too often crowded out of the education of to-day.'



## Rena Mackinnon

'Kinny', as she was affectionately known, served as Head from 1936 to 1950. Old Girl Angela Lloyd remembers: 'Miss Mackinnon was much

taller than Ella Le Maitre, and there were many parents who were far more frightened of her than they were of Ella. Rena Mackinnon had presence. Her hair was grey, and her clothes were often grey, too. She dressed with great elegance in the fashion of the 1930s and had large feet encased in those shoes that typified the era: small heels like Louis XIV's court, and a strap over the instep. She had a sausage dog which followed her about, and ruled the roost in her office.' Miss Mackinnon had entered Roedean as a schoolgirl in 1911 and went on to become a Maths teacher before moving to the Junior School. The school magazine said of her: 'She was never hurried and preserved a quiet dignity, which, as much as any spoken word, restrained the sometimes noisy juniors. This dignity was relieved by a humorous and understanding smile.'



## Rosemary Snow

Rosemary Snow came to Roedean in 1956 and remained at the helm until 1971 when she left to be married to Roger Green. Rosemary was awarded a Master of Arts degree from Edinburgh University and had taught in both Edinburgh and London. She was devoted to her

work and was always willing to embrace new teaching methods. *Honneur Aulx Dignes* describes Rosemary as having '... a lively sense of humour and an enthusiastic interest in all aspects of the life of the juniors. Forthright in her handling of children, she gave them confidence; completely just in her dealings with them, her approach to any child in trouble was one of sympathy, and any "lame dog" was sure of her compassionate interest.'



## Maxie Kuhn

Maxie Kuhn took over from Rosemary Snow in 1972, and when she retired ten years later had spent 37 years on the staff of Roedean. Old Girl Angela Lloyd remembers: 'In First Form Afrikaans was added to the school curriculum and Mrs Kuhn arrived.

She was young and pretty and athletic, and we learnt Afrikaans through song and dance. Someone played the piano for our classes – was it Mevrouw herself? She taught us all the songs we would never forget, like 'Daar kom die Alibama' and 'Jan Pierewiet'. She made it all fun.' Maxie was a forward-thinking principal. On her retirement she told *The Star* newspaper that she was a disciplinarian, and that '... We do not spoonfeed. We believe in encouraging the children to read, acquire the knowledge to cope with the world around them and be independent individuals who can contribute to society.' In the same interview: 'Man will still have to relate to other people, learn to be humane. I am nervous about the technological era, but I would have liked to be teaching in the year 2000.'





### **Lorna Park**

Lorna Park, later Thomas, was born and brought up in rural Scotland, the second of four daughters of Reverend Andrew Herron who later became Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. After qualifying in Glasgow, she taught in Scotland and then Rhodesia before being offered a teaching post at

Roedean. She remembers renting a flat in Berea and walking to school every morning, when Carse o'Gowrie was '... something of a quiet lane'.

A warm, firm person, and an admirable administrator, like Maxie Kuhn she described herself as a disciplinarian, '... because I do believe that this is a very important ingredient in one's life. But I also believe that school should be fun and that pupils and staff must be able to laugh and enjoy themselves.'

Lorna witnessed and played an important part in great expansion of the school, including the building of the St Margaret's Block. While planning its construction she met the vice-chairman of the Roedean Board, George Thomas. They were married in the Roedean chapel by her father. In 1993 she retired, saying: 'It has indeed been my good fortune to have played a role in "The Best School of All".'



### **Lorraine Livingstone**

Lorraine Livingstone had been Deputy Head of Auckland Park Preparatory School for 10 years when she came to Roedean in 1994. Petite and energetic, she had enormous reserves of stamina and determination, working long hours into the evening. She had a great affection for her pupils as well as showing

great kindness to her staff. Trish Klosser, a longstanding and dedicated member of the Junior School staff, remembers: 'In addition to her school tasks she managed to read widely and had a vast general knowledge. She had a quiet sense of humour and her mimicking caused much laughter in the staff room.'



### **Jan Mallen**

Jan Mallen is taking Roedean Junior School into the new century. After her appointment in 1999 she wasted no time in making her mark on the school. Focused

and energetic, she was the 1979 Ladies' winner of the Comrades Marathon, a race she ran again in 2000. It is not surprising that she sets great store by sport in the curriculum. 'I believe sport is critical in the development of self esteem. We play sport for the joy of it, not simply to win.' One of her mottoes is 'Dare to do'. 'Children are frightened to take risks these days. We provide a protective environment for them to do so, to dare to take risks. We need to build resilience in children.' Jan wholeheartedly embraces the technological age, but tempers it with a strong adherence to traditional values such as respect and courtesy, and creative thinking and learning skills. 'Nurturing' is a word she uses frequently. As one Grade 1 girl recently wrote: 'I love all the madums. Evry signal one even Madum Malum. She is ver kind and nice.'



*Five Headmistresses of the Junior School photographed at Foundation Day 2000. Standing from left: Lorraine Livingstone, Lorna Thomas, Maxie Kuhn. Seated: Jan Mallen, Rosemary Green.*



# X

## STEERING THE SHIP

*'The Staff that worked and tried at us,  
Our daily foes and friends,  
They shall not lose their pride in us  
Howe'er the journey ends.'*



*Headmistress Mary Williams with 2002 Head Girl Mmaphuthi Morule,  
and 2003 Head Girl Lesoko Seabe behind.*



**T**he Heads of Roedean (SA) are nine in number; eight if we include the Founders as one. The list is as follows:

1903 – 1933: Theresa Lawrence

Katherine Margaret Earle

1934 – 1958: Ella Le Maitre

1959 – 1960: Mariel Mills

1960 – 1966: Joan Raikes

1967 – 1969: Barbara McCormick

1969 – 1974: Anne de Frisching

1975 – 1987: Brian Law

1988 – 2001: Lyn Nelson

2002 – Mary Williams.

These names provide the framework for one hundred years of pre-eminent education for girls in South Africa, beginning in 1903 on the outskirts of a turbulent mining town and ending the century in the middle of the economic powerhouse of an entire subcontinent. Placed in its socio-political context, Roedean (SA) began life just after a bitter war and not too many years before Union, and has witnessed (not too many years before its own centenary) South Africa's momentous transformation to full democracy. Through all this, the Heads listed here have steered the Roedean ship, for the most part steadily, and kept alive the great traditions of truth, honour, freedom and courtesy.

The analogy of steering a ship is apt. Mary Williams puts it best when she says that Heads are like caretakers of traditions not of their making. They need to nurture as well as steer. They need to realise that the school (the ship) is bigger than the Head (the captain), and that their prime responsibility is to safeguard the underlying structure. Its ethos and its traditions are bigger than any Head; yet without competent Heads, the ship itself could easily have foundered.

There can be no doubt that the success and durability of Roedean rests on the long initial continuity – more than fifty years – provided by the Founders and Ella Le Maitre. By the mid-1950s, the die was well and truly cast. The ship was built and already sailing on the open sea. Now the tiller could be passed to the succession of hands that have steered it since then.

This is not to say that the Heads during the second half of the century were mere caretakers. On the contrary, each has brought a distinctive style to the task in hand. Each has enriched the school in particular ways, and not least through their qualifications and experience as teachers. Yet it will be as teachers, and not only as administrators and strategists, that the Heads will be remembered. Indeed, their contribution goes even deeper. In an atmosphere like the one prevailing at Roedean, their greatest gifts have lain in their qualities of leadership and the ability to inspire, combined with wisdom and humanity, and as exemplars of the Roedean style.

Perhaps that is why the school song quoted at the start of this chapter ends with so stirring an affirmation of the value of personal example.

*'Their voice to us, who sing of it,  
No more its message bears.  
But the round world shall ring of it,  
And all we are be theirs.'*





### ELLA LE MAITRE

In 1953 on her retirement, the *Rand Daily Mail* called Ella Le Maitre the 'Miss Chips of Roedean'. It highlights the deep commitment she had to the school and the love, affection and respect she was held in by the hundreds of girls who passed through her hands.

The Founders had appointed Miss Doris Thompson to take over from them on their retirement, but she left soon afterwards.

Ella Le Maitre then stepped in to guide the destiny of Roedean for nearly a quarter of a century. She came out from England to tackle the daunting task of replacing the two founders as Headmistress, a task which was probably made more difficult by having TL and KME still living on the premises.

A former pupil of Roedean Brighton, Ella had an impressive academic record. She had been awarded a scholarship to Newnam College, Cambridge in 1915, where she took honours in the Classical Tripos, and the experience she then gained as head of the Classics department at Roedean Brighton was to stand her in good stead. With enthusiasm, vitality and a passion for scholarship she re-established the high academic standards of Roedean, which had been going through some difficult years. The quality of her teaching inspired her staff, who saw her as mentor, counsellor and friend. It was said that though she taught Latin with passion, she attained the right balance between science and the humanities.

Ella, as she was affectionately known to the girls, was a versatile and accomplished sportswoman who

played lacrosse, cricket and fives, and had represented Sussex in hockey for several years. Under her aegis, sport assumed its role in the development of the girls at Roedean. Nevertheless, she was equally keen on music and drama. She adored Greek drama and was largely responsible for raising the standard of acting at Roedean, even on occasion taking a role in the school plays, where she made full use of her deep-toned voice. It was in her time that the large stage in Founders' Hall was built. Her sense of the dramatic was never more apparent than at Foundation Day when she established the intense quiet as she went through the final ritual of cutting the birthday cake at the top of the colonnade before telling everyone to go 'Quickly and quietly to bed'. Taught by the renowned Ina Sutherland, she played the viola in the school orchestra, and her interest in music and art ensured that these subjects became integral to the Roedean curriculum.

Ella could be positively terrifying at times. She had a will of iron and a passion for discipline but these were mitigated by her innate sense of humour, her independent outlook and a sharp wit, and she inspired in the girls tremendous admiration, respect and affection. She had an inborn sense of justice and a strong dislike of pretension and snobbery. She demanded the best from her girls and said in 1948, when describing why public exams should not be a terrifying ordeal, that girls should be taught the art of self-control, a sense of proportion, an ability to face crisis or emergencies, and should '... be trained in a quiet steadiness that goes with a lively faith'.

Ella wholeheartedly enjoyed House Nights and could be both the life and soul of a party, or if she was off-duty relax into an endearing vagueness. Old Girls remember taking tea with her on Sunday mornings at Lawrence House, from where she guided the path of Roedean for so many years, and others remember how she would play endless games of Patience, the tool she used to relieve tension and untangle some thorny administrative problems.

One of the outstanding features of Ella's years at Roedean was the impressive building activity. She was responsible for the new sanatorium situated at the top of Pleasaunce, the library, the dormitories and classrooms of the Junior School, the kitchen and bathroom block and the Ella Le Maitre classroom block, but of all these achievements she was most proud of the extension to the chapel, and the lych-gate which was erected in memory of her parents.

She was a deeply committed Christian and the centre of her life at school was the chapel, which she made a focal point of Roedean life. Girls remember her inspiring and practical sermons, and she took



especial interest in helping to train communicants to act as servers. She retired from Roedean in 1958 but her retirement was cut short by her untimely death in 1960. She bequeathed money to the school for a scholarship, but her true legacy lies in her solid building on a foundation already laid, on the high ideals of the Founders which embodied those of her own.



### MARIEL MILLS

Mariel Mills's tenure at Roedean was brief. She succeeded Ella Le Maitre in January 1959, full of confidence and enthusiasm, and the staff and girls looked forward to a new and interesting period in the life of the school. But in December of that year she left to get married and the Board asked Joan Raikes to become Headmistress.

Mariel Mills had taught history at Roedean before spending several years teaching in England. She was a graduate of the University of Cape Town and continued her studies at Oxford. For the year she was at Roedean the school continued to prosper and it was under her headship that the Ella Le Maitre Block was completed.



### JOAN RAIKES

In her farewell speech, Joan Raikes said, 'It is said that the first seven years of marriage are the worst. If this is true also of headships, it seems that I am leaving at the wrong moment.' She went on to explain that she suspected that the meaning of the saying was that after that [those first seven years] one falls into a routine and thus this was certainly the right moment to leave, '... for schools are living entities and cannot remain stationary. They must grow and progress.' This epitomised Joan's vision for Roedean and this speech marked the end of a long and productive association with the school.

As Joan Hardy she came to teach history at Roedean in 1929 after obtaining a Master of Arts (Oxon) and a Diploma of Education. Her passion for history made it a compelling subject and the girls thrived in her lessons. Her original three-year contract was extended and she stayed at Roedean for seven years, leaving to marry Dr HR Raikes, Principal of the University of the Witwatersrand.

During the war years she lectured in the history department of the university and taught at St Mary's, was a member of the National Council of Women, served on the boards of Entolozweni and the Alexandra Health Centre and on the Committee for Child Welfare. She was also Provincial Commissioner of the Transvaal Girl Guides before rejoining Roedean as its head in 1960.

The staff immediately felt the effect of her vigorous personality and her rich and varied experience. They respected her and her trenchant judgments, her insistence on high academic standards, her wicked sense of humour and her crisply expressed opinions which were reminiscent of KME. It was said that with her return to Roedean, the staff room became a livelier



place and sparks often flew. But she was supportive and understanding and once encouraged a young music teacher to go back to university to study medicine. She deeply appreciated her staff and in her farewell speech she praised them saying: 'It is a great joy to work with women of real intellectual gifts and see these riches of mind being given generously to the children.' Joan was determined as Head of Roedean to carry on the traditions that Ella Le Maitre had left behind and honoured academic excellence, integrity, compassion and personal courage.

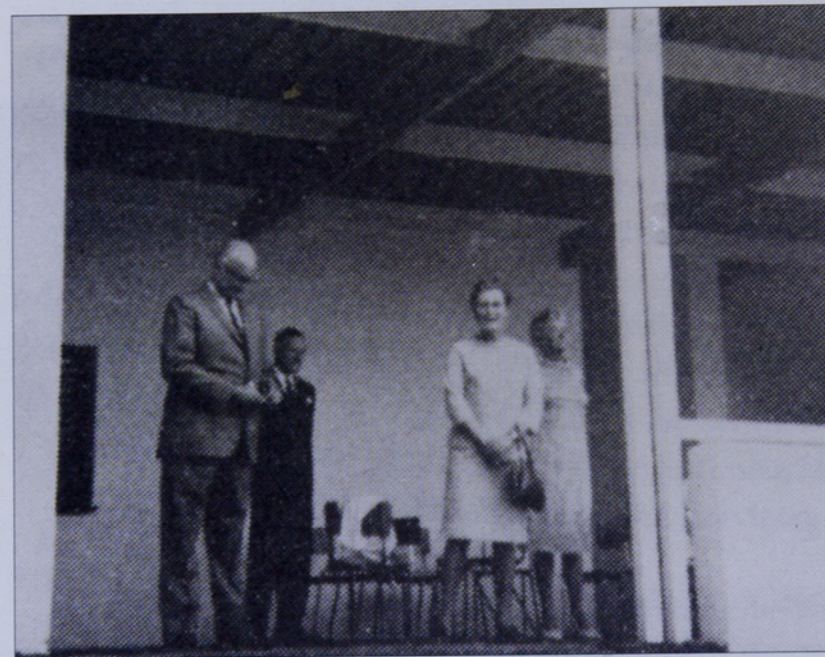
Joan did not suffer fools gladly and although her acerbic comments were somewhat daunting at times, the girls discerned the kindness and compassion that were part of her make-up, and her strong Christian convictions were apparent in her actions, notably the work she did with the Black Sash. However, she enjoyed life to the full, was a keen bridge player and enjoyed dabbling in the stock exchange, taking the advice of the 'financial parents' at Roedean.

She knew and understood each girl and one of the prefects wrote of her: 'Mrs. Raikes really is a super person and I am going to miss her terribly when she leaves. I don't think I will be the only one ... She makes molehills out of our mountains.' She stole the show during one House Night when she did a skit of Cliff Richard's songs. The only time she objected to a midnight feast by the boarders lucky enough to be at Lawrence House was when the spilt condensed milk ran through the floorboards onto her sitting room carpet. She deeply admired the prefects and said that they were dignified, authoritative, loyal, and gave of their best. In *Honneur Aulx Dignes*, the book that was her legacy to Roedean in its 75th year, she paid tribute to a Silver prefect who asked for help in a tricky situation: 'Competent and confident to deal with all her routine duties: intelligent and humble enough to know when she must seek help. It has always seemed to me typical of Roedean prefects.'

It was under Joan that the complete re-wiring of the school was carried out in 1960 and 1962 and on completion of the project the chief electrician assured her that the system would last for a hundred years. She mentored the first Roedean girls who were chosen as American Field Service scholars and in 1963 welcomed the first scholar from America to Roedean. Joan's period as Head saw the first PTA cocktail party where new parents could meet the staff and she also encouraged several clubs and societies, including the Bridge Club, the Photographic Society and the International Affairs Club, to flourish.

When she retired in 1966 she could look back on her tenure with pride and satisfaction: 'In the seven years I have often thought about the work of the

Founders, ... both of whom I was privileged to know, who dedicated their lives to the girls of this country, and I leave the school with the certain knowledge that in the future as in the past, it will remain true that "Their work continueth".'



### BARBARA MCCORMICK

Barbara McCormick succeeded Joan Raikes in 1967 and was Head of Roedean for two years. She had come to Johannesburg from England with an honours degree from the University of London to teach at Kingsmead, before moving to Cape Town where she taught at Herschel as head of the French department.

During her time at Roedean, she arranged for electric geysers to be installed in the outlying bathrooms but said that she would practise caution as an architect's wife and made no more physical changes to the school during her first year. In spite of resolving to change very little at Roedean during her first year there, she made several changes to the running of the school including a relaxation on visitors, slightly longer study hours for Matric boarders, re-introducing the Speech competition that had been so dear to KME and introducing a Sewing Club.

However, in her first speech at Speech Day she said that she had changed little enough at Roedean not to merit the title 'Head Mischief' that had been inadvertently bestowed on her by a kindergarten girl.

She was a strong advocate of the boarding school system and believed that girls who had boarded were better prepared to integrate their personalities into what she saw was an 'increasingly communal world.' She felt that the youth of that time, the swinging sixties, was in great need of the security of discipline provided by a good boarding school, where the enforced consideration for others which was a necessity of boarding school life would enable them to become good citizens. Teenagers, she believed, would view their parents in a much rosier light given the rigours



of boarding school. She felt that the telephone and the radio were the enemies of homework and that girls who were boarders would do better academically.

Barbara McCormick left Roedean after a short tenure as Headmistress and returned to Cape Town in 1969 for family reasons.



#### ANNE DE FRISCHING

Anne de Frisching was Headmistress of Roedean from 1969 to 1974 and came to Roedean from England with a reputation as a distinguished academic. She was an Old Girl of Roedean Brighton and took a First Class Honours degree in French and German. She then took a degree in Political Science and Economics from the University of London. Before she came to Roedean she was Headmistress of both St Georges's School, Switzerland and Compton Park in England.

Anne came to Roedean at a time when even in the conservative South Africa of the apartheid years, the young were beginning to challenge what they saw as outmoded traditions and conventions – and Roedean pupils were no exception. Like Barbara McCormick, she was an advocate of boarding school life and at the end of 1969 expressed her pleasure in the rising number of boarders, saying that she felt that the older girls would do better in boarding school since their social lives all too often encroached on their school work and regretted that there were not more junior boarders. In order to encourage boarding she introduced a system of weekly boarders.

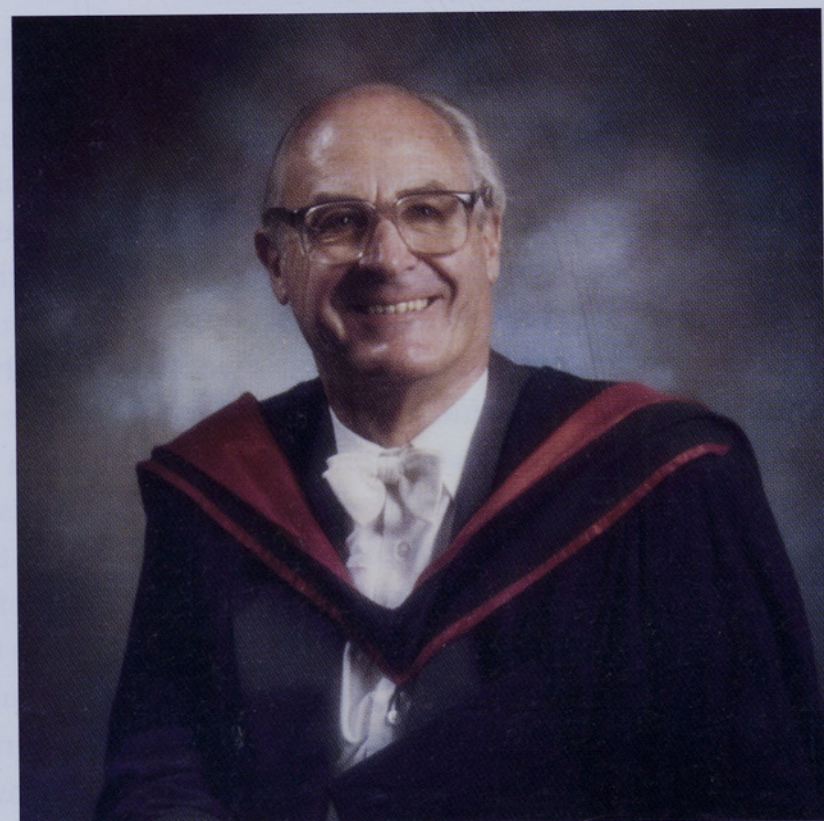
She addressed challenges of the time by trying out some innovations at Roedean, such as dispensing with the Copper prefects for a year, a change which did not survive. She introduced a School Council to provide a channel of communication between the head and

the girls, but this also fell away.

It was during the time of Anne de Frisching that the wrought iron fencing that runs from Bears' gates to the Ella Le Maitre Block was erected, and new lighting was installed in the chapel. She was also the first head to live in the new house between the chapel and the sanatorium.

She was very keen on sports and during the time she was at Roedean sports tours to Lesotho and Swaziland took place, and she introduced fencing. She was a familiar figure at the sports fields, accompanied by her beloved bulldog Juno. She was intuitively understanding of the more rebellious girls since she herself was shy and was deeply sympathetic to those who suffered from shyness.

She retired to England in 1974 where she completed a Master of Arts degree in Comparative French and German Literature.



#### BRIAN LAW

When Brian Law became Master of Roedean in 1975, he was only the third man in South Africa to have accepted an appointment as head of a girls' school. He came with an impressive record; he had a Master of Arts degree from Oxford, a successful career as a London barrister and had been actively involved in the Liberal Party before moving to South Africa. He then taught for nearly twenty years at Michaelhouse, where he had been a housemaster.

Brian took up the reins at Roedean at a low point in the school's history. Numbers had dropped, Matric results were only moderately good and there was a general feeling of malaise. There was also the extremely trying effect of the blasting and construction of the Johannesburg Hospital right at the front door of the



school which caused untenable noise, dirt and disruption. In addition, he realised that the role of the girls' private school had substantially changed. He believed that Roedean's function was to produce girls who were not necessarily militant feminists but intelligent women who because of their privileged positions would acquire the resourcefulness and independence of outlook that would enable them to stand on their own feet in the lives they chose to lead.

With this in mind and while honouring the legacy of his predecessors, he began to introduce some changes, which he felt would help Roedean to take its place in a rapidly changing world. He rejected the cloistered atmosphere that still existed in most girls' schools, and negotiated with St John's College to share certain classes and to explore the possibility of joint activity periods in drama, choral and orchestral work. Under his aegis, chapel services (followed by breakfast) were shared, and school plays were performed together at one or the other school.

Under his benevolent dictatorship girls found that communication in the school had become better with the establishment of the 'daily routine' list, which was obligatory reading for all girls. Relationships with the staff were more relaxed and problems were dealt with in a sympathetic manner. He followed the credo that rigid discipline without explanation was unacceptable, but when necessary girls would be punished. His most salutary method of punishment was the 'Dawn Chorus', where offenders would learn a poem, such as a Shakespearian sonnet or some Wordsworth verse, and then recite this to him first thing in the morning.

Brian was a perfectionist and an indefatigable worker, who thought nothing of rising at four to finish some paperwork, and his enthusiasm rubbed off on both girls and staff. He would stride round the school with a minute tape recorder detailing items that needed attention. He leavened his strict high standards with a love of entertaining when his wit, conversation and legendary knowledge of wine shone through.

He was deeply committed to the spiritual side of Roedean, which was never more apparent than when he conducted services in the chapel, after his appointment as a lay minister. Confirmations during his time were conducted by the now Archbishop Desmond Tutu. He also recognised the changes that were coming to South Africa and he admitted the first girls of other races to Roedean.

Brian instituted tours for both girls, parents and members of the Board to explore areas of interest throughout South Africa, and many friendships were formed during these excursions. In 1979 he arranged the first tour of girls to France and thereafter he organised an overseas tour almost every year,

expanding it to include girls from St Andrew's, Kingsmead, DSG and St Mary's. He encouraged gap students from public schools in England, particularly Rugby, to come to Roedean as junior members of staff for a year and firm friendships were forged from these contacts.

Brian also added physical improvements to the school. When Lawrence House was sold the proceeds were used to enhance the school. During his time at Roedean the biology laboratories, the squash courts (which he liked to call the Law courts), and additions to the staff quarters were built. He worked closely with Maud Sumner and her sister to conceive and build the Sumner Block. This was a particular source of pride to him, because it linked the past with the present and highlighted the importance of tradition at Roedean.

By the time Brian Law retired in 1987 he had celebrated Roedean's 75th Jubilee. He left, having encouraged a strong and vibrant Roedean community and having set aside the cloistered atmosphere of Roedean, without destroying the ethos and traditions of the school, which he so admired.



**LYN NELSON**

Lyn Nelson came to Roedean in 1988 with an extremely strong academic reputation. She had been awarded the top student award for her Graduate Certificate in Education at the University of Zimbabwe and she won the Stanley Jackson Gold Medal for best honours student of the year. Her special love was geography, which she taught with passion, and which she incorporated in much of what she did. For instance, she would often refer to the changing climatic conditions in her morning assembly addresses.



She came to Roedean after teaching at eight different educational institutions in Zimbabwe, the United States of America and South Africa, and spent fourteen enthusiastic and productive years at its helm. Under her aegis, the school thrived and the physical improvements were impressive; the Technology Centre, the Drama Centre, the Sports Centre, St Margaret's Block and the Astroturf were all completed during her tenure. Matric results were excellent, and she embraced the difficult years of transition in South Africa and increased the numbers of girls of different races and cultures exponentially. She herself played first team tennis at university and had a special interest in the Roedean squash teams, having the satisfaction before she retired of seeing Roedean win all eleven leagues. She was a great advocate of a holistic education and often referred to the school as a 'microcosm of society'.

The school prospered during her years as headmistress and during her tenure, expanding from approximately five hundred girls to more than seven hundred by the millennium. Lyn was an avid gardener and knew the Latin names of many of the plants. She participated with enthusiasm in the planning of new areas of the gardens, such as the Water Garden, and one of her greatest delights was the rose, *Rosa Roedean*, which was created to celebrate Roedean's 90th birthday. Because of somatic mutations, no two blooms on a bush are alike, and she liked to compare it to the girls at Roedean, saying that each one was special in her particular way.

Lyn had a great sense of humour and during her years as headmistress she greatly enjoyed the celebrations that were part of the fabric of Roedean life. She entered with gusto into the spirit of many of the PTA dinners, and participated with tremendous pleasure in the events that led up to the school's 90th birthday, which included a masked ball, an Edwardian picnic and the 90th birthday fair. The school cats had a special place in her heart, especially a large grey cat called Billy Bunter, who tended to take over the chair in her office, and force her to perch on the edge so as not to disturb him.

In her retirement, Lyn continues her long association with the Independent Schools Association of South Africa (ISASA), for which she served as regional chairperson, and as chairman of the South African Heads of Independent Schools Association (SAHISA) 1996 Heads Conference Committee. She is still extremely active in ISASA and now serves as the regional director for the North East Region.



### MARY WILLIAMS

Mary Williams took over the leadership of Roedean in 2002 at one of the most exciting times in the school's history. Strongly aware of the importance of Roedean's centenary in 2003, she entered into all the plans for the Roedean community's celebrations with her customary attention to detail, enthusiasm and energy.

Mary came to Roedean with an impressive teaching career behind her. She had taught at St Andrew's Bedfordview for ten years, and was Deputy Head of that school from 1998 to 2001. During that time she was also a housemistress, and head of the English department. In the first year of her tenure as Headmistress at Roedean, she wasted no time in tackling the vexatious problem of parking, and succeeded in transforming Pleasaunce without losing its elegance and beauty. Under her aegis the first Roedean flags are flying at both the senior and junior schools.

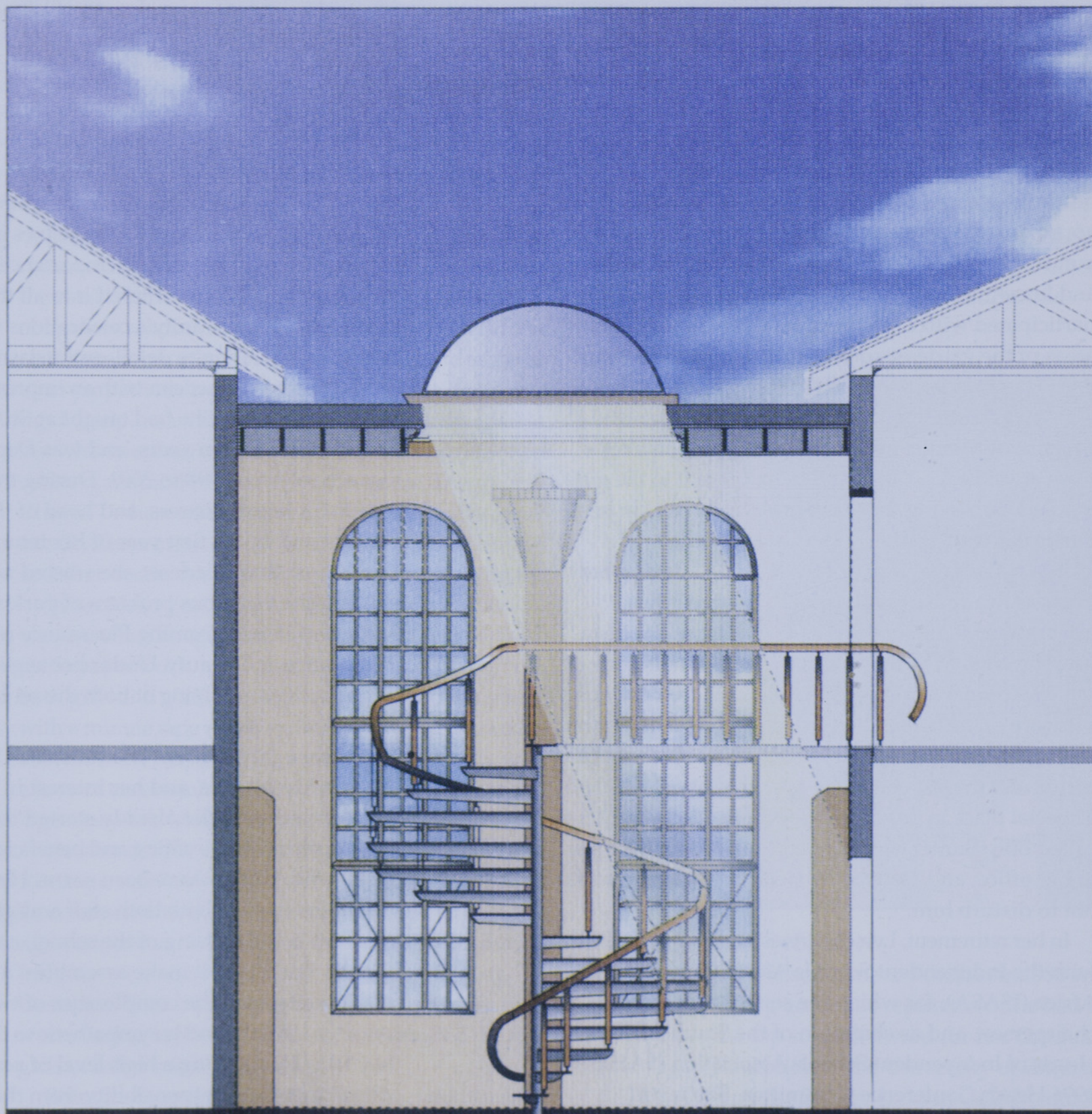
A thoroughly modern headmistress, Mary's deep concern for the girls, and her interest in the pastoral life of the school have already started to bear fruit, and the seeds of an exciting and beneficial community partnership project have been sown. Her interactive management style with both staff and girls is already apparent in the running of the school, and her caustic humour and dry wit make assemblies a delight. She fully understands the complexities of twenty-first century teenagers and is sympathetic to the difficulties they face. Demanding a high level of academic commitment and responsibility from the girls, she is readying herself and her charges to embrace the dynamic years ahead.



# XI

## THE FUTURE

*'Honour to the worthy  
Though the times bring change  
Honour to the worthy  
Our credo will remain.'*



*The century-old development of Roedean continues apace, with all eyes firmly on the future.  
The Centenary Appeal is collecting funds for a number of projects, including a  
state-of-the-art Media Centre in the Senior School.*



For how long can *Rosa Roedeana* be expected to bloom? It's an imponderable question, of course. Roedean has survived – indeed, it has flowered – through a tempestuous century, and now it looks forward into a century that promises to be even more so. The shock of the new – new threats, new opportunities – will never be far away. How will Roedean cope? Inevitably, we must look to the roots to decide. We must look to the school's tradition.

It is interesting to conjecture on tradition, a quality so rooted in time, and ask that most fundamental of questions. Is tradition reinforced in a linear fashion, or does a process approximating the principle of compound interest apply? Is 100 years of tradition, in other words, exactly double that accumulated in 50? Probably not. But the exact answer must lie in a combination of the raw material originally at hand coupled with its relevance now.

For Roedean, the raw material was stirring stuff. It was transported from England in the heads of the two founding pioneers. It spoke of an English tradition that had been 800 years in the making. Added to these basic ingredients were the late nineteenth century preoccupations concerning the position of women in relation to knowledge, opportunity and the vote. This brought about a fine mix of conservatism and radicalism that still exists in the school today. In fact, we can paraphrase a great deal of what is – and has for a century been – said and done in Roedean as a simultaneous respect for others, for oneself and determination to speak out and stand one's ground.

The relevance of such a tradition is obvious. Since it stems from a respect for human life and liberty, and for individual variation, there is at once something gentle and resilient at its core. There is no place for pomposity, but rather a constant readiness to adapt from a profoundly secure base. Conservatism alone is often grounded on fear and a rigidity of approach. Radicalism is based on impatience with the old and is often unstable. The Roedean mix provides both roots and the ability to adapt that will stand the school in good stead in the decades that stretch ahead.

Who would have thought in 1903 that the world stood on the brink of its most tempestuous century? The power of the British Empire seemed secure enough, and Roedean (SA) existed within it. Two World Wars and a rising nationalism in most British colonies put paid to that, however, and in 1961 South Africa left the Commonwealth. Increasing state control of education in South Africa followed. We could be forgiven for assuming that the so-called English tradition would begin to wilt. And perhaps in its most cantankerous guises it did. But the essence of Roedean, the essentially humane elements of its tradition, grew stronger, adapting to the new challenges of integrated education in the 1980s and a new education policy in the 1990s as if the old traditions had been specifically designed to equip the school to cope with such challenges. The miracle of Roedean – although many would see the process more as inevitable than miraculous – is that these adaptations strengthened the old traditions of respect and tolerance, gentleness and strength, while at the same time the academic rigour and the academic excellence never faltered.

What will be the challenges for Roedean's second century? Almost certainly, they will be a continuation of many of the old challenges, but in somewhat different guises. For example, if the position of women in the developed world has improved over the first Roedean century – and few would argue that it has not – the plight of women in the



developing world has hardly done so. Such disparities will become increasingly unavoidable as the twenty-first century divides us not so much into ideological or ethnic camps, as before, but simply into rich and poor in one small cosmic neighbourhood.

There is an instinctive knowledge of this element of the future already evident in the responses of Roedean girls themselves. 'Being African is something I acknowledge,' said one of them. 'I'm proud of it. But in this environment, here at school, you tend to forget what colour you are. There's far more tension between two black people living in different circumstances than there is racial tension at Roedean.'

The 'different circumstances' mentioned here refer clearly enough to the economic differences between rich and poor. In addition, there's a consciousness of which side of this divide Roedean stands, and thoughts are already beginning to turn to the responsibilities that must accompany privilege.

'We were shocked at the loss of our outreach programme a few years ago,' a group of Ante-matrices girls told me. 'There used to be a perception that Roedean was quite insular. But today's environment demands greater community awareness from the girls. Now we're looking forward to a revived and much bigger community development programme in our new century.' Headmistress Mary Williams agrees. 'There can be little argument that our school needs to be more community aware.'

When Mary Williams was appointed at the beginning of 2002, her challenge was to create a more nurturing environment without compromising the rigorous academic standards or the traditions of the school, and to place Roedean in a modern and relevant context. She explained that there were various ways of achieving this, and one of the most important was to develop a spirit of community service. 'We're looking at various options and possibilities, including partnering with other schools, sharing our resources, teacher exchanges, peer tutoring. Specifically we're looking at our local community. The Roedean community cannot ignore some of the daunting social and educational problems of the inner-city areas. I'm convinced that if we place community service seriously in our day-to-day curriculum the sense of self-worth and fulfilment of our entire school population will be enhanced.'

Mary Williams seems perfectly equipped to carry Roedean into the challenges of the twenty-first century. She's a highly qualified teacher with wide experience of independent schools in South Africa. Apart from the importance of community service, she isolates further areas of focus in the opening decade of Roedean's second century. The first, she explains, is developing a relevant curriculum, with attention being paid to the increasing demands of information technology. And the second is to secure a complement of world-class teachers, at a time when both nationally and internationally, teaching as a profession is under dire threat. 'We have to make the content of the curriculum modern and relevant to the demands of today. We also have to respond to the realisation that the *way* we teach is as important as *what* we teach. Roedean should be one of the forerunners of educational development in South Africa; we have to keep Roedean at the cutting edge of educational trends. We have to acknowledge and capitalise on our value as a considerable educational resource.'

'Teacher development is of primary importance. We need to be realistic about this,' Mary Williams says: 'Very few young people are entering the profession and good teachers are increasingly hard to find. In addition, there's been a universal trend in the



second half of the twentieth century to downgrade the status of teachers, to allow their work to go unacknowledged and inadequately rewarded. But a school lives or dies on the quality of its staff. They should be adventurers of the mind, teaching not so much the dead weight of facts but the thrill of enquiry and understanding. At Roedean we try to balance teaching enthusiasm with teacher responsibility. That's the essence of teacher empowerment, and I believe it is best achieved through a participatory and collaborative managing style.'

Underlying all these considerations, though, lies the basic reality of Roedean. It exists because for nearly 100 years the school has played a vital role. It is often said that greater Johannesburg is over-subscribed when it comes to private schools for girls. Why, in this context, should parents choose Roedean? Mary Williams has a passionate belief in the value of monastic (single-sex) education; research has shown that the inherent intellectual capacity and potential of girls is most fully developed in such an environment. 'If you're going to educate girls and to empower them to become twenty-first century women they must be equipped to make informed choices about career options and this only comes with exposure to academic challenge,' she explains.

Roedean has a powerful academic reputation: 'Roedean's core value, the very heart of its endeavour, is academic excellence,' says Mary Williams. 'It emerges out of the roots and branches of our tradition like a flower. But underlying them all,' she concludes, 'a single question persists. What is the essence of Roedean? How should we be enhancing or modifying that for the century that lies ahead?'

\* \* \*

I conjectured, as I strolled among the nooks and quiet corners of the Roedean grounds, whether it might not be true that the people who came into contact with Roedean (the staff, the girls, the parents) had not influenced the school quite as much as the school had laid its mark on them. It was in fact this constant interaction that has made the 'essence' about which Mary Williams had spoken. There is therefore no rigid adherence to tradition. One could almost say that this interaction is the tradition, and therefore its preservation can only be achieved by the encouragement of fresh interaction. So, it was easy to stand in Founders' Hall once again and read above the fireplaces those words that came to one at first glance as eternal truths, and to know how Roedean's second century would leave its varying marks upon them. '*Trouthe and Honour, Freedom and Curteisye ... Their work continueth.*' Perhaps the essence of Roedean, in other words, is not so much its traditions as the perpetual willingness (itself a tradition) to expose the values of the past to the restless gaze of younger eyes and changing contexts. Only that which was strong and human could survive such scrutiny.

I went next door to the library. The librarian showed me around the richly panelled space, the shelves of books, the computerised indexing, the wooden window seats. I remembered the pupil who had told me: 'You know the things I most looked forward to when I knew I was coming to Roedean? The library, the books ...'

In these ways I began to get an inkling of what would most essentially survive the vicissitudes of the century ahead. It had to do simultaneously with a sense of worth and a sense of renewal. 'Independent thought and enquiry is in the grass and ground here; it grows like identifiable vegetation in the courtyards and gardens,' Mary Williams had



told me. The pieces fell into place. Then the librarian directed my attention to some girls reading in one of the window seats. 'They always look so lovely when the sun pours through the windows in the morning,' she said. 'The light is behind them, but they are unconscious of it, of course, intent as they are upon their reading.'

Would the great-grandchildren of those girls also grace the seats built below the north-facing windows of the Roedean library? Would they, too, those citizens of the twenty-first century, be intent upon their reading, yet illumined by all that was strong and human from the past shining in their hair? The words of one of the old Roedean school songs drifted through my mind:

*To speak of fame a venture is,  
There's little here can bide;  
But we may face the centuries  
And dare the deepening tide;  
For though the dust that's part of us  
To dust again be gone,  
Yet here shall beat the heart of us –  
The school we handed on!*

The image becomes evocative and powerful: young women facing the future and daring the deepening tide of the twenty-first century with an understanding that tradition is mere custom without its constant reinvention. This is what came to me in the sunlit library. That the Roedean tradition, as articulated above the fireplaces and as manifested in the grass and earth of the place, had within it the basic equipment necessary for sustaining itself. So the answer to that question concerning the great-grandchildren of those lovely reading girls was: almost certainly. It is therefore inevitable to believe that the profoundly human heart of the Roedean tradition can be handed on and on and on.

For that long, and longer still, can *Rosa Roedean* be expected to bloom.

*By the end of the century there were a number of fourth-generation pupils at Roedean. In 2003 Gina Fitzpatrick Niven began in Grade 0. Gina is the great-great-granddaughter Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, best known for his well-loved tale Jock of the Bushveld. Gina's great aunts were Nancy Carver, to whom the school chapel is dedicated, and Dorothea Campbell, who was an important figure in the school's history and after whom the Dorothea Campbell block is named.*

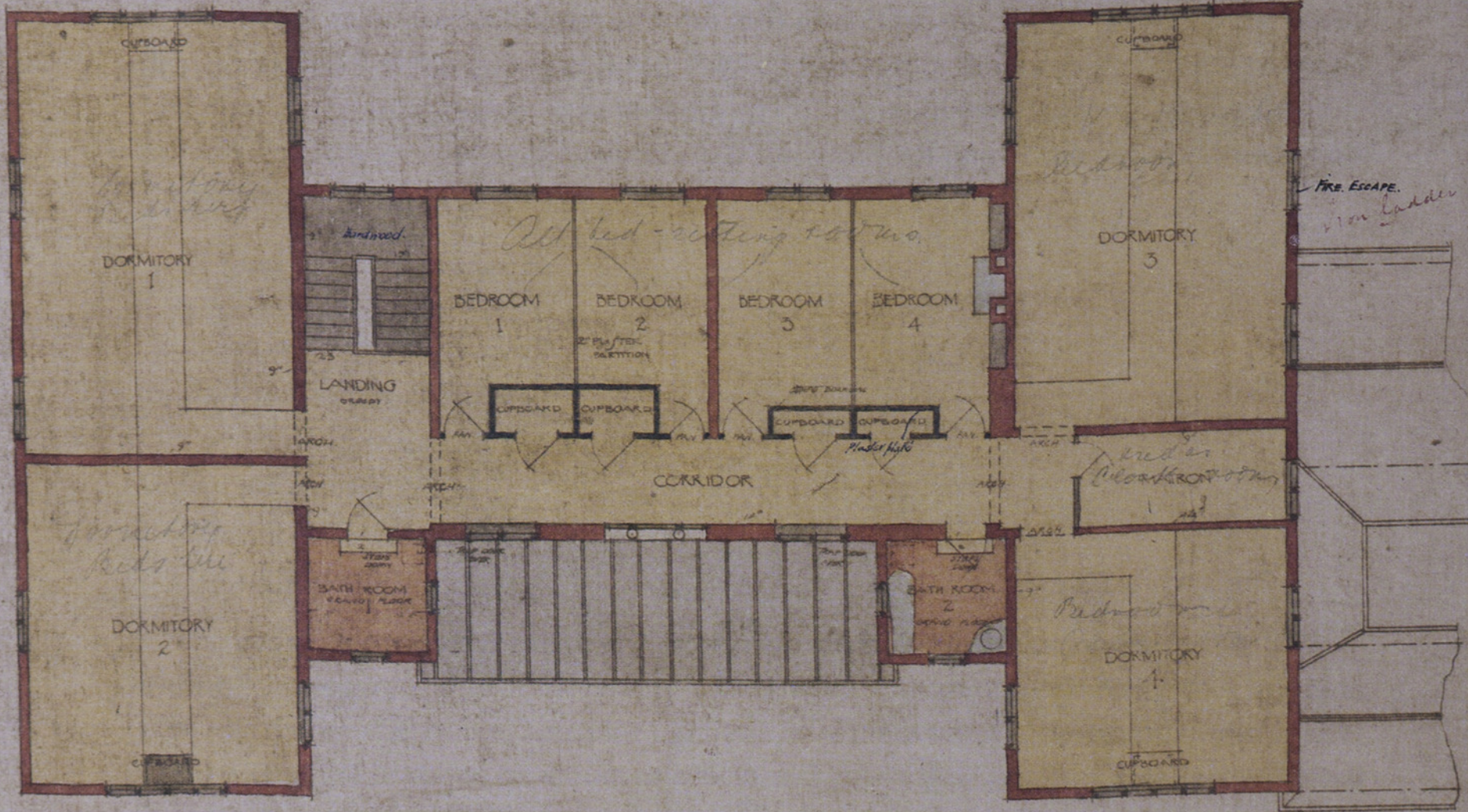




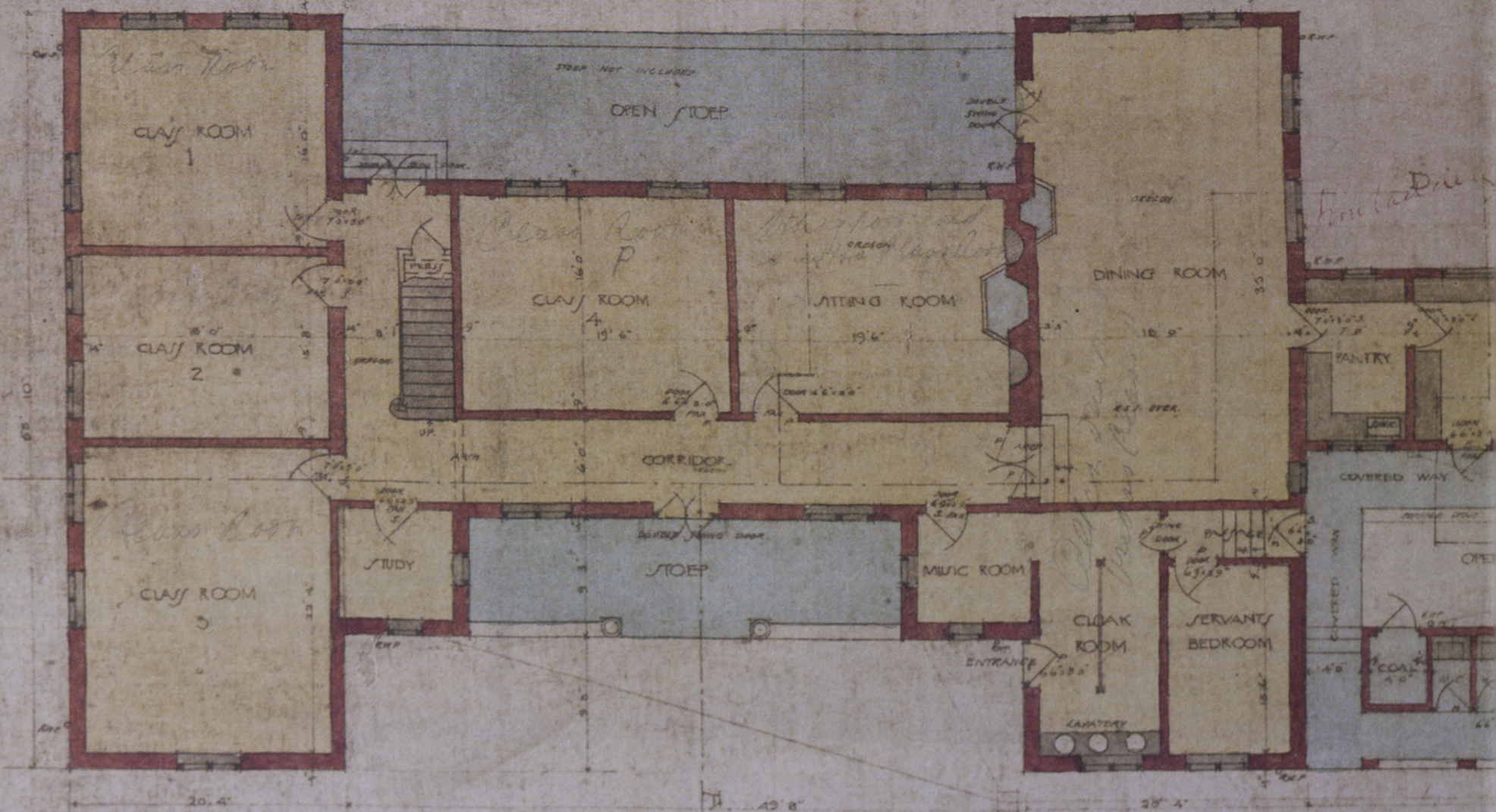
# RODEAN SCHOOL

## PARKTOWN

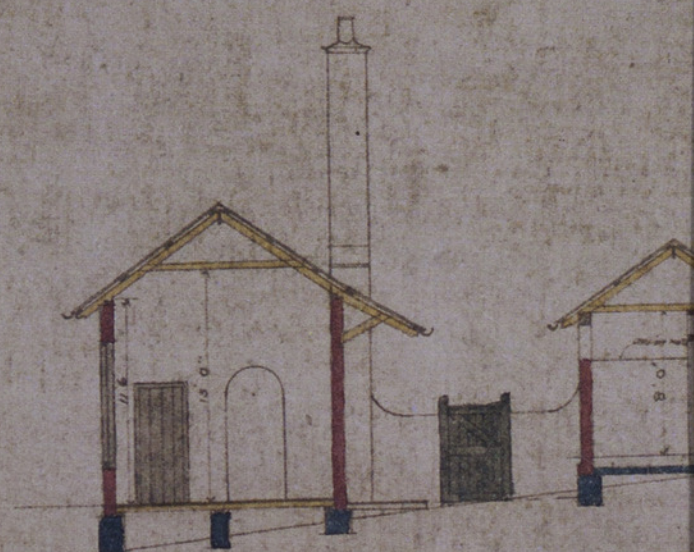
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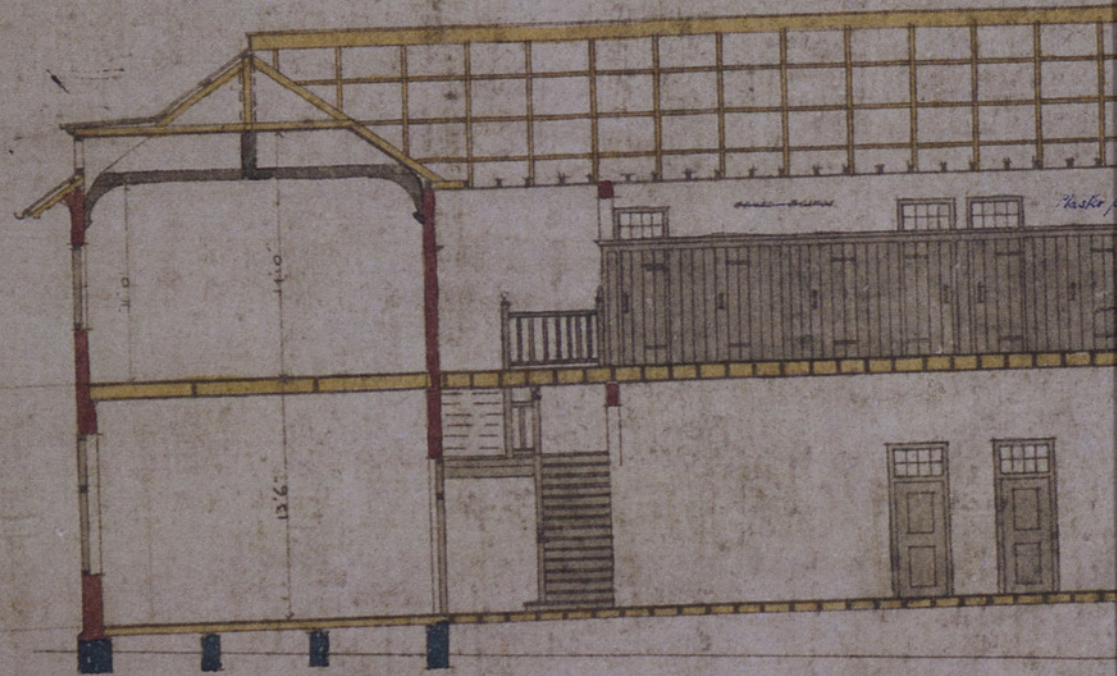
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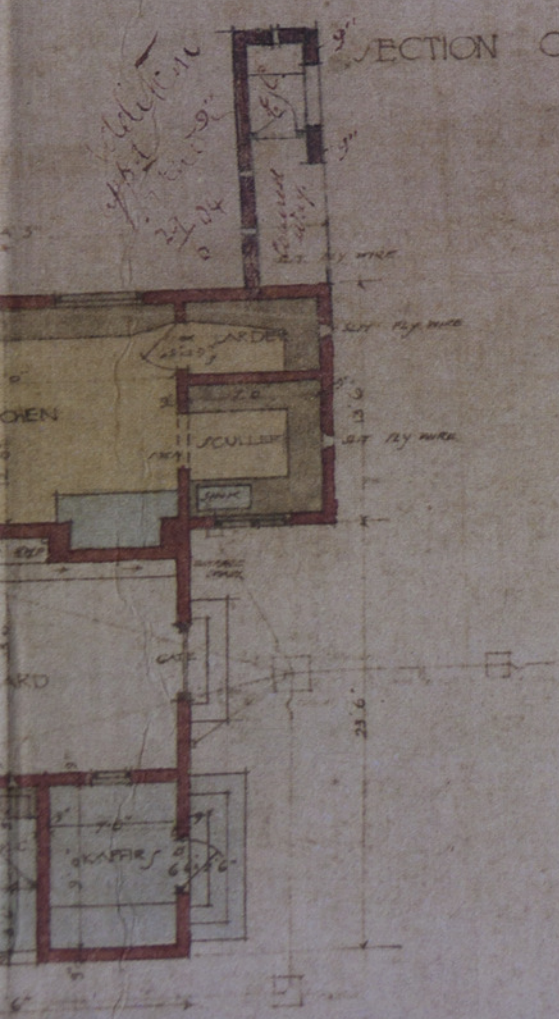




SECTION A-B



SECTION C-D



SECTION E-F





*'Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisye.'*

The dream on which Roedean was founded – of enabling women to play an equal part in the affairs of their time, of fostering a spirit of individuality, of responsibility – is as relevant today as in the time of the Founders. When Theresa Lawrence and Katherine Margaret Earle arrived in South Africa to found their 'modern type of school', modelled on Roedean in Brighton, the Anglo-Boer War was not long over and the women's suffrage movement was at its height. Since then the girls of Roedean (SA) have made their mark in all facets of South Africa's life, and the great traditions of truth, honour, freedom and courtesy have been nurtured through the generations.

This century of remarkable education for girls is celebrated in a joyful book of memorabilia, reflecting the growth of the school in parallel with the dusty mining town in which its roots lay. It is a remarkable scrapbook of photographs, letters, memories and other records of 100 years in the life of a school in the words of the girls and their teachers, capturing Roedean's rich traditions and heritage and affirming its continuing growth.

*'Their work continueth.'*

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