



EXECUTIVE HEADMASTER **ANDRE OOSTHUYSEN**

BA Hons HDE (University of the Witwatersrand)

QUALIFICATIONS & CAREER SUMMARY

I suppose I would be indulging in self-flattery if I described myself as a "man of letters" but my university degree was almost entirely literature-based: English III, Afrikaans and Nederlands III, African Literature II, Classical Civilization II and Film and Drama I. I am a Gen X'er with the professional characteristics of a Baby Boomer. I place a high regard on a strong work ethic and self-discipline. Professional loyalty runs deep and - like my father - I have only ever had two employers: for the first 16 years of my professional career I was an English teacher at Sir John Adamson High School in Winchester Hills. During my tenure at the school I was promoted first to Head of Department for Extramural Activities and then went on to be appointed Deputy Headmaster.

I was also Head of Drama and in addition to staging

the biennial major production, worked with pupils on staging the annual entry into the RAPS One-Act Play Festival. The school won the festival three times during this period. My intense focus on drama was diluted on Friday afternoons when I assisted with the administration and management of the school's soccer teams.

I joined St Benedict's as a Deputy Headmaster in 2005. My portfolio was initially Head of Cultural Activities but I was asked to assume the academic leadership of the high school within a few months of commencing duty. In 2007, I was promoted to Head of the College and in 2011 was appointed as Executive Headmaster.

My passion for the arts and cultural activities has remained strong and when I was still involved

with the annual one-act production, St Benedict's regularly featured as a semi-finalist and finalist at the RAPS Festival. We won the Festival in 2009. I have also continued to be involved in the biennial major productions.

Tony Dobson introduced me to rowing when I joined the school and despite my initial reluctance, it was the passion and relentless commitment that the sport fostered in St Benedict's boys that increasingly drew my attention and fostered an interest in the sport. I have been head of South African Schools Rowing since 2014.

St Benedict's has fundamentally transformed my life over the last 15 years. I now consider it an intricate part of my DNA - it is so much more than just a place of employment.

BRIEF FAMILY BACKGROUND

I am the son of a carpenter who grew up in the south of Johannesburg and then found my way to the east. I met my wife in 1990 and we married in 1992. Our children - Cara and Aidan - are both in their mid-twenties and are still at home. My mother and father - both in their mid seventies - also reside with us. We have two yorkies, a poodle, a cocker spaniel and a wannabe dachshund; 2 African greys, 3 ringnecks, two dozen love birds and a freshwater aquarium filled with tropical fish. The house is seldom quiet.

ROLE AT ST BENEDICT'S

My areas of responsibility at Bennies include providing strategic leadership and direction for the school; vision casting and institutional alignment, leading and managing staff across all three sections of the school; fostering academic, educational, pastoral, sporting and cultural excellence, safeguarding and promoting the school's Catholic ethos; financial management and promoting external engagements. I am in education because I love teaching and I still draw tremendous personal and professional satisfaction from my weekly interaction with the Grade 10's in our English poetry lessons. The Grade 10's may not all share my joy.

VIEWS ON DIVERSITY

If I may, I do believe it is the great South African poet, Spho Sepamla, who summed it up best:

"For sure now dis heart go-go da same
Dats for meaning to say
One man no diflent to anader...
An' da one t'ing for sure is red blood.
Dats for sure da same, da same for avarybody"

We are all created in the image of God and need to be the reflection of God in one another's lives.

ONE WORD THAT SUMMARISES MY EXPERIENCE AT BENNIES

Metamorphic.

MY FAVOURITE QUOTE

"Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well."
Philip Stanhope

MY FAVOURITE PILLAR

*It is my duty and responsibility
to have no favourite.*

