

PRINCIPAL'S ASSEMBLY MESSAGE: FRIDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2016

There have been a number of events this past week which have caused me to pause and reflect on this amazing institution, Bishops, in which we are all so privileged to teach and learn.

On Wednesday evening the staff had a farewell function for Mr Bizony and Mr de Villiers who have taught here for 33 and 19 years respectively - a combined 52 years. In the tributes paid to them by their colleagues, and in their responses, we were reminded of the privilege of being involved in this most worthwhile of professions, and in particular of the difference that these two men have made in the lives of countless students who passed through Bishops on their journey from boyhood to manhood.

Yesterday morning we participated in the special Remembrance Day Service at which Tony van Ryneveld reminded us of the sacrifices made by ODs in WW1 and WW2. A total of 112 ODs died in WW1 and 146 in WW2. The ceremony is always a poignant one and the Piper's Lament played by OD Ian Douglass and the Last Post and Reveille, played so well on the trumpet by Arthur Fisher, certainly contributed significantly to the occasion.

Yesterday morning I attended the funeral of Ulick Brown who was a pupil at Bishops from 1933 until 1940. He passed away on Sunday on his 93rd birthday. I mention Mr Brown because he was one of the most passionate ODs I have ever met. He loved Bishops and his sons Niall and Malcolm were also educated here. His grandson Jack Davies is currently in Grade 8. A few years ago through his great generosity, the Ulick Brown Bursary Fund was established which will ensure that his legacy at Bishops lives into perpetuity. Mr Brown has been an avid Bishops rugby supporter and hardly ever missed a home match, even in his latter years.

It is sad then that on the day of Mr Brown's funeral we heard the news that another legend of Bishops, Mr Basil Bey, had passed away. Mr Basil Bey joined the staff at Bishops in 1971 teaching English at the College. He was Housemaster of School House from 1983 to 1994. At College, Mr Bey's extra-mural activities included coaching athletics, cricket and rugby. It was, however, for his rugby coaching that he achieved iconic status, not only in South Africa but also during the 1970s to 1990s in the rugby-playing world. He coached the First XV at Bishops for 26 years, from 1972 to 1998. His significant contribution was the brand of running rugby known as 'Bishops Rugby'. It was a creative and elegant style of play that still today gives as much excitement to the player as to the spectator. Bishops Rugby became famous and admired throughout the length and breadth of South Africa. He returned to Bishops in his retirement to work part-time at the College Museum. He worked there up to the time of his sad passing on the morning of 10th November 2016. To all who knew Basil Bey, he was a source of true light and wisdom. He engaged with those around him, always showing great passion for his and their fields of interest, of which there were so many — the game of rugby, astrology, English poetry, teaching, and philosophy; one can never forget his intense affection for his philosopher-dog Charlie, the most recent of several generations of beautiful border collies that he had. Basil Bey will forever remain one of the truly great sons

of Bishops. He is survived by his son Martin, his daughter Michelle and his grandchildren. Our deepest sympathy goes to them all.

These events all remind us that over the past 167 years Bishops has fundamentally been about the people who have passed through our gates and the contributions, big and small, which each and every one has made. When contemplating the history of Bishops I like to think of the analogy of comparing it to a tapestry, which as you know is made up of many stitches and weaves, all interlinked and made of different colours and designs. So it is with our Bishops history, our tapestry has thousands of stitches depicting every person or event, some are colourful and bright reflecting positive experiences and times; others dark and grey reflecting less positive times and events.

It is a reminder that each one of us will contribute to the rich Bishops tapestry, the question is, what will our stitch or weave look like?

I wish you all the best for the final stretch and good luck for your exams starting next week.