



15 January 2010

Dear Parents

### **Welcome**

It is a privilege for me, at the start of 2010, to extend a warm welcome to all associated with HeronBridge College. This is the year that had been so keenly anticipated in our country. We shall, doubtless, all have set goals for the months that are ahead of us. I am wont to choose theme words for myself for the years. Quite contextually, I've chosen 'Score!' for this year. Let's trust it's a year of goals – many scored by Bafana Bafana and our own achieved.

2010 sees us celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> year of HeronBridge College. Various events are planned to mark this milestone. I invite all to join in the celebratory spirit as we both joy in what has been achieved and thank the Lord for his goodness to the College over such a period.

It is good to be back at school, anticipating keenly the potential of all that lies ahead of us. We greet particularly warmly those families joining us for the first time. May your experience of HeronBridge College be positive always. I would like to single out and make special mention of those whose children are starting their high school careers in Grade 8 and also those whose children have reached their final year, Grade 12. All our pupils are particularly important to us, but these two Grades are somehow special.

It is our pleasure to welcome staff new to the College:

Mrs Brenda Beukes	Science;
Mrs Annette Liebenberg	Mathematics;
Mr Nicholas Paidas	Geography;
Mrs Adelle Ramsami	Afrikaans;
Miss Mia Russell	Learnership.

These teachers join a staff already committed to the profession, our College and our pupils. May each teacher be fulfilled this year in his or her teaching and happy to be part of the HeronBridge staff.

### **Condolences: Melissa Gordon, Grade 12**

It is with great sadness that I write here to Melissa Gordon's family to express the condolences of all in HeronBridge College on her recent passing. We wish that she had been healed, but that was not so. Melissa was due to study in Grade 12 this year. She had been seriously ill for more than a year and sadly succumbed to her illness on Wednesday 6 January. Her funeral was held last Monday. A large number of our pupils attended and I thought their presence spoke most eloquently of their fondness for Melissa and of her impact on the College.

Melissa meant much to us and there is a pall now over the year's start.

We are grateful for having come to know her. We enjoyed her company and participation in our College. We miss her already.

I thought she bore her illness with great fortitude. There were times when we did not know whether or not she would be able to attend school and she certainly missed more days than she liked. The examination period at the end of last year was particularly difficult for her. She wrote some exams at school and some at home, but she wrote them all. Her results were excellent and they stand now as a tribute to her plucky spirit. I'll remember Melissa for her humour, her sense of fun, her determination and her bravery.

We express our sympathies to her family, especially to Diane, Paul, Brendan and Nicholas. Thank you for placing Melissa in HeronBridge. We continue to pray for the Lord to comfort and strengthen you in these difficult days.

### **Introductions**

I trust everyone knows of our Chaplain, Rev Ingo van der Merwe. He has made his own, unique mark on the College these past few years and has been a pillar of strength for many. Please note that he is available to pupils and parents should any wish to meet with him. Appointments can be made through the College Office.

The College Learning Support Therapist and Counsellor is Mr Douglas Andrews. He leads our counselling department, including overseeing the academic support programme in Grades 8 and 9. Appointments for him can also be made through the College Office.

### **2009 Grade 12 NSC Results**

We are extremely proud of the College's 2009 NSC results. This was only the fourth group of pupils to complete their schooling at HeronBridge. Over the four years a reputation has now been firmly established for excellent academic results and the pattern places the College at the forefront of good schools.

Writing the IEB examinations, all of HeronBridge College's 62 candidates passed, thus achieving a 100% pass rate. The Bachelor Degree pass rate (the number of candidates qualifying for university access) was 92%, or 57 of the total. The other 5 candidates all achieved the Diploma pass, qualifying them also for tertiary education. That's a 100x100 rate: 100% pass and 100% access to tertiary institutions! 7 of our pupils attained overall averages above 75%. The pupils achieved a total of 70 distinctions, followed by 116 B symbols and 118 C symbols. The Dux Scholar was Jordyn Laubscher, with a total of 7 distinctions (English, Mathematics, Mathematics Paper 3, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Information Technology, Life Orientation) and an average of 85%. Particular congratulations go to Jordyn.

We are genuinely very pleased with these results. I congratulate the pupils on what they achieved, acknowledging that their hard work and determination stands behind it all. Equally, the results speak of a most significant input by the teachers. I watched with great gratitude as teachers gave freely of their time and energy throughout the year. I know that, apart from their dedication in the classroom, they were phoned at home by pupils, had pupils in their homes for extra lessons, gave of their holiday time for the Winter School and made every effort to ensure proper preparation. I have seldom seen so much time and effort given by Grade 12 teachers. Our staff went the extra mile to ensure the very best for the pupils and deserve themselves to be congratulated on these fine results.

## **Digital School**

We have now launched the Digital School of which we spoke last year. The members of staff have been trained for what is required of them and pupil training will take place shortly. I confirm the following as the main components:

- pupils are invited, indeed encouraged, to use laptops/notebooks/netbooks in class and for the keeping of notes;
- work will be sent electronically between school and home, in both directions;
- lessons will incorporate electronic material;
- schedules, notices and marks will be available electronically;
- Digidays will be scheduled on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays of the months, emphasising pupil work by computer.

We have stressed that computer security is entirely a pupil matter. Each pupil must take responsibility for looking after his/her computer when bringing it to school. We shall provide safe storage for computers in the afternoons for those involved in the co-curricular programme; in fact, the cabinets for this were delivered this past week.

I must emphasise that no pupil will be disadvantaged by not having a computer. We would obviously prefer all to participate fully but respect what this could entail for parents. Also, the College will continue to be open on Digidays to accommodate those who prefer their children to be present at school then.

## **Parents' Information Evening**

You are cordially invited to attend our annual **PARENTS' INFORMATION EVENING**, scheduled for **Thursday 28 January 2009, 19h00, in the Auditorium**. The evening will provide you with opportunity of meeting the teachers, being briefed on the expectations of each Grade and of meeting the respective Chairs of the PTA and PCF. We look forward to hosting you and to enjoying a pleasant time together. Please make every effort to attend.

## **Co-curricular programme**

The co-curricular activities start immediately. I want to emphasise that we view these as being not only vital to our overall curriculum but also for pupils' health. We expect every pupil to choose activities in every term, both sporting and cultural. We ask parents for their support in this regard and request transport arrangements be made to accommodate the demands of the programme. A notice detailing the various activities of the first term was published this week. We invite parents to watch their children and our teams whenever they can do so.

## **Barnyard Matric Dance Fundraiser**

Fundraisers are usually not much fun, and sometimes seem a duty, but this is one not to miss! Join us for an evening at the Broadacres Barnyard on Wednesday 20 January. The show is 'Let the Good Times Roll.' The Grade 11 Matric Dance Committee members are selling tickets at a price of R120.00 each. Tickets may also be obtained from the Front Office.

## **Regeneration Tour**

A spectacular concert is to be hosted by HeronBridge at the end of this month: the Regeneration Tour by John Ellis of Tree 63. The main performance will be by Reason and the supporting group will be Greg Jordans' new band, Skylight. Friday evening 29 January is for teens only, but all others are invited for the evening of Saturday 30 January. The starting time on each evening is 18:30. Tickets are being sold by the Councillors at R80.00 each. These will be dynamic gospel evenings and we encourage all pupils to be part of the fun.

## **HeronBridge Community Church**

We extend a warm invitation to all to attend the services and activities of HeronBridge Community Church. This is an independent, evangelical church – right on our doorstep! Sunday morning services, incorporating suitably exciting programmes for children and teens, are held weekly at 09:00 in the College auditorium. Please do not hesitate to contact the church (083 452 0096 or [heronbridgechurch@gmail.com](mailto:heronbridgechurch@gmail.com)) if there is ever anything that can be done to serve you.

It is difficult to believe a new school year is upon us and has already started. We'll only too soon be celebrating it's conclusion! I wish all pupils and their families a wonderful year. May 2010 be one in which we all score, Bafana Bafana in particular!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Klein', with a horizontal line underneath.

David Klein  
College Head