



Established 1897

## RONDEBOSCH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL

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### HEADMASTER'S ADDRESS : SPEECH NIGHT 2008

Governing Body Chairman, Mr and Mrs Lundy, guests, staff, parents and pupils of RBHS. Welcome to the annual Speech Night. Congratulations to the Grade Twelves who will be honoured tonight

The past six weeks have been a period of almost unprecedented volatility and drama internationally, nationally and locally. Financial systems and their stability over the world have been unsettled, almost invalidated. South Africa has experienced the recall of its President, the resignation of half its cabinet and the installation of a fledgling government. The Western Cape has seen political strife and uncertainty in its government, followed by a month, September, with the highest rainfall in fifty years in the province.

The new National Senior Certificate will be written next month by Grade Twelves across the land. William Wordsworth, at the time of the French Revolution in 1789 wrote "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven!" I do not know if we share similar emotions in October 2008, but I believe we should prepare ourselves for the challenges that will beset us as leaders and potential leaders in South Africa.

Crucial attributes, I believe, are these as young people emerge from school to face the current world :

1. A willingness to work hard, very hard, to do all in their power to become the scholastic, then professional, leaders of the future.
2. The determination to achieve financial astuteness, investment sense and balance in decisions. And
3. Unwavering honesty. In one of his novels, Richard North Patterson asked : "Can an honest man become President?" I would like to think that only an honest person could.

The Rondebosch campus has again been enhanced by development. The New Pool was officially opened on Founders' Day in March. Ongoing refurbishment of laboratories has occurred and the new Art Wing is scheduled for construction in 2009. The Carleton Lloyd Rugby Stand is under construction at present and should be in use by next April.

The 2007 Senior Certificate results maintained the level of excellence to which Rondebosch is accustomed : forty-six "A" aggregates ; a 97% Endorsement rate and a 99,3% pass-rate. The Provincial Education Department again awarded our school a prize for the best Senior Certificate results in Physical Science in the Western Cape.

In the course of the year, many pupils excelled in Olympiads and competitions. Some of the highlights include the following : Haroon Moolla was chosen to represent South Africa at both Mathematics and Information Technology, and Robert Ketteringham at Information Technology. They were two of three boys from our school to reach the top fifteen in the National Computer Olympiad, where Robert came second and Haroon fourth.

Also in Mathematics, eleven boys reached the final of the National Olympiad, the second highest number from any school. Our team came second in this year's UCT competition.

There seems to be a growth in Cultural involvement at Rondebosch, in part due possibly to the innovation of using time at one of the assemblies each week for a cultural presentation. Music has had a vibrant year : the Prestige Evening, the choral performance of Rutter's "Requiem" and the Bands' tour of the Southern and the Eastern Cape being notable.

Several Drama festivals took place, with the main production, "One Moment in Time", reaching standards of excellence. Debating remains prominent. The school's Senior team again won the Rotary Trophy and also captured the Provincial title.

In terms of both participation and performance, Sport has been memorable this year. The First Squash team earned the rating of fifth in the country at the "Top Schools" tournament. The Swimming team again produced many provincial representatives and gained a number of medals.

The First Cricket XI has again won through to the final of the Knockout tournament, while the First Waterpolo Team reached the final of the KES Tournament in Johannesburg and the quarter-final of the SACS Tournament last month.

The winter sports season was characterised by record numbers of teams playing for the school in both Hockey and Rugby. In each of these sports one of our players was selected for the SA Schools' Team. In Hockey two of the three "A" sides won through to the knockout finals. The First XV undertook a very successful tour to Argentina, which set it up for a good local season.

The Service and Leadership components of the school have done well this year. Several traditional and new outreaches have materialised, the most impressive being the book-drive which resulted in over six thousand books being donated to two needy schools. Leadership is strong at a number of levels ; we are grateful for initiatives on the part of the Learners' Council and the support role fulfilled by the Prefects, whose diligence has been a feature.

My thanks and those of the school are due to Mr Deon de Kock (Chairman) and the Governing Body, as also to loyal helpers and workers that our multifarious events and occasions pass smoothly. Thanks and compliments also to Mr Ryan and the staff of RBPS for the impressive achievements at the Prep this year.

May 2008 have a satisfactory conclusion for all associated with our great school as we strive to reach ever "higher and wider".

M BARKER  
22 October 2008