



Dear Parents, Old Boys and Friends of Michaelhouse

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Rector's Message

Every day most Michaelhouse boys either pass through the lanterns commemorating the Tatham brothers who were sadly killed in action in July 1916 or walk past the names of those inscribed for posterity on the walls outside the Chapel. On these walls are the names of young men who lost their lives in the Great War, the war that was supposed to end all wars, or the Second World War between 1939-1945 or other wars. Soon the matrics will be bidding farewell to Michaelhouse, inasmuch as it is possible to do so, and walking down Warriors Walk where a tree was planted in memory of each of those boys from our school who lost their lives between 1914 and 1918. There are 43 of them, commemorating 42 Old Boys and Rector Brown, the only Head of an independent school to be killed in action.

For a short time this Sunday, Remembrance Sunday, the tradition is to come together as a school to honour those who died in conflict by reading the Roll of Honour. This will be at our outdoor service this year where, *inter alia*, the Last Post and Reveille will ring out and a period of silence between them will be observed. But why, in 2021, do we have such a service and what are we remembering? Certainly all the Michaelhouse Old Boys in the great brotherhood of men who have walked through Screens and laughed with others in the quads. Boys who worked and played in the carefree abandon of their youth, just like the boys of today. And what do we owe these Old Boys of Michaelhouse? What do we owe the millions who have perished in a succession of wars that should make us interrupt our business and our pleasure to remember them year after year? The answer to that question, I believe, lies in their **sacrifice**. It is easy to enshrine the acts of individuals engaged in war in the quasi-romantic notion of supporting one's country. Much of the poetry of the First World War and the writings of brilliant authors such as Sebastian Faulks debunks that thought. Let us not confuse the act of sacrifice for the reason behind it.

Here is a letter of a 21-year-old on the night before he died at Arnhem which was a daring operation to open a bridgehead north of the Rhine in September 1944. It has been published without an author as the mother who is addressed felt it could have been written by any number of soldiers.



“Dear Mum

Tomorrow we go into action. As yet we do not know exactly what our job will be, but no doubt many lives will be lost; mine may be one. I am not afraid to die. I like this life-yes; for the past two years I have planned a perfect future for myself. I would have liked that future to materialise, but it is not what I want but what God wills and, if by sacrificing all this, I leave the world slightly better than I found it, I am perfectly willing to make that sacrifice.

Don't get me wrong, Mum. I am no flag-waving patriot, nor have I ever professed to be. We have a great country, but I can't honestly say it's worth fighting for, nor can I fancy myself in the role of a gallant crusader fighting for the liberation of Europe.

My little world is centred on you and dad and includes everyone at home and my friends. That is worth fighting for and, if by doing so it strengthens your security and improves your lot, then it is worth dying for too. I want no flowers, no epitaph, no tears. All I want is for you to remember me and feel proud of me; then I shall rest in peace.”

There is no narrow jingoism here, no fanfare for his country, but an indication of sacrifice for family and friends and it is for this reason that it is appropriate to remember that sacrifice over the ages. Sacrifice appears in many forms and in many different eras, but there is a link which takes us to the hill outside Jerusalem over 2000 years ago. We remember and respect what is the best and finest in the human spirit. **“No greater love is there than this that a man lays down his life for his friends.”**

We live in a world where silence is a scarce and undervalued resource. Traffic, the constant ebb and flow of people, social media, industrial endeavour, protests, and much else all serve to create a society in which there is noise. But we will stand in silence to remember the young men of Michaelhouse who endured danger and who committed themselves with complete selflessness to possible death so that others might have life more abundantly.

And from that position, we would hope that we should draw inspiration from them and, through our own sacrifice, make the world a better place. This gives meaning to their sacrifice and our existence. This answers the question of the relevance of all these names and all those tributes, to the importance of Warriors' Walk and the clear tones of the trumpet ringing out over the Balgowan veld. It is this kinship that spans the centuries and inspires us into action.

Parents of Sentso Tlelai (D Block, East)

It is with great sadness that we record the deaths of Mr Thabiso Tlelai and Mrs Ayanda Tlelai, the parents of Sentso, on Sunday night. We understand that they were returning to Johannesburg after the weekend and were killed in a car accident. Our sincere condolences go to Sentso and their extended family.



Muako Maepa's Amazing Achievement: Recipe Book

Muako Maepa (D Block, Ralfe) has just published a beautifully illustrated recipe book entitled "*Tell me what You Eat and I'll tell you who You Are*".

This is a really professionally-produced book with a selection of different recipes ranging from Pasta di Pomodora through to Mini Oreo and Marshmallow Tart.

Muako writes as follows at the beginning of his book:

"I am Muako, your average fifteen-year-old boy. My life is joyful. I attend a senior all boys' school located in the beautiful Midlands. I chose this school because it spoke to me, it's the best decision I've ever made. I love it here, especially playing sports and music. I have formed meaningful relationships with boys from all over the world.

Writing this book was not only about food, but proof that I could achieve what I set out to and grow as a person. The kitchen is not just an area for preparing food, but one of many places for learning, and self-discovery. I can't fully describe who I am, as I am still trying to find out the person I am".

Wow! I was "blown away" by what Muako conceived in lockdown, and you will be too if you can lay your hands on a copy of the book. See the flyer attached.

Congratulations and Individual Achievements

Academic

Congratulations to **Hubo Khumalo** who received Academic Honours at assembly last week.

Canoeing

Last Saturday a number of our canoeists paddled the Lance Park Memorial Race held at Camp's Drift where **Sam Butcher** came 2nd and **Matthew Millward** was 4th overall. The following day, at the Table Mountain Descent in the Umgeni Valley and ending at the Nagle Dam, the following results were recorded: U18 – 1st **Jack Edmonds** 3rd overall, 2nd **Matthew Millward**, 3rd **Chase Leisegang** and 4th **Murray Behn**; U16 – 3rd **Rob Butcher**, 4th **Huntley Earle** and 5th **Connor Leisegang**.

The Inter-House canoeing event took place yesterday and the results were:

1st - East

2nd - Tatham

3rd - MacKenzie

Squash

Michaelhouse held the annual Senior Squash Championships on Wednesday 28 October. The final was played between Number 1 seed **Kameran Jinnah** and defending champion and Number 2 seed **Richard Upfold**.



Both players were hungry to win and there was palpable excitement in the Warin Bushell Squash Complex beforehand. There were a few very long rallies in the first game, with both players wanting to stamp their authority on the match. Richard managed to take an early lead and was able to maintain his lead, winning the first game. Kameran fought back to win the second game but made a few uncharacteristic unforced errors in the third. Richard took advantage of those errors taking a 2-1 lead. During a tense 4th game that could have gone either way, Kameran managed to level the score at 2-2. Both exhausted players gave it everything they had in the 5th, and Kameran was able to fight his way to a 3-2 victory.



Senior Squash Finalists: **Kameran Jinnah**
and **Richard Upfold**

Waterpolo

In the Inter-House waterpolo competition, held last Friday in very wet and misty conditions, the results were as follows:

- 1st - Pascoe
- 2nd - Founders
- 3rd - East



“Soul2Sole” Project

Michaelhouse will, once again, support the Soul2Sole project, which collects, refurbishes and distributes school shoes to needy children. For each pair of shoes donated by Michaelhouse boys, a new pair of shoes will be provided for a child at our partner schools. At the end of each year collection boxes, into which boys can drop their old shoes, are placed in Houses.

We also encourage the departing matrices, as part of their first gesture of compassion as Old Boys, to leave their shoes at the gate at the end of their valedictory stroll down Warriors' Walk. On a similar note, at the end of each year unwanted sports kit and clothing is also collected for distribution in our local community. If your son has grown out of his shoes and sports gear, please allow him to donate these items to someone in need.

Storage of Boys' School Trunks during the holidays

Should you be an out of country parent, or even an out of province one, and would like to store your son's trunk and school clothes in Nottingham Road during the holidays rather than take them home, then you may wish to contact Georgie Carter on 082 822 7202 or Thuli Khanyile on 072 623 9450. Georgie and Thuli have taken over Midlauder from Sue Rawlings who previously offered this service to Michaelhouse parents. Midlauder offers the service of collecting your son's trunk from Michaelhouse, washing, ironing and mending the clothes in it (loose buttons etc.), storing the trunk at their premises during the holidays and returning the trunk to your son's House at school at the beginning of the school year. All dealings in this regard must please be with Georgie and Thuli directly as this will be a private arrangement between Midlauder and you. For all arrangements please contact them directly on sandgcarter@gmail.com or via whatsapp on 073 143 2259.

Please note the following important points:

- Boys' trunks will be collected from the school laundry on break-up day, Friday 27 November, between 08h30-12h00.
- Boys leaving earlier must ensure they leave their trunks at the school laundry before they leave.
- **Trunks that are not left at the school laundry will not be taken by Midlaunde**
- Trunks of prefects returning earlier for the Prefects' Camp will be delivered to their House dayroom on Friday 15 January 2021.
- Trunks for all other boys will be delivered to their House dayroom on Monday 18 January 2021.

End of Term Arrangements

It is important to remember that the Michaelhouse term ends on Friday 27 November at 10h00. In keeping with this, only exceptional allowances will be made for boys wishing to depart before this time. It is also important to note that there are no buses to Johannesburg, Bloemfontein, or



Durban on this day. The only School transport available is to take boys who are flying home to the airport, bearing in mind that all possessions must be removed from the school for the holiday period.

Term Dates: 2021 & 2022

Term Dates: 2021

LENT QUARTER : Tuesday 19 January – Friday 26 March

(New Boys arrive on Sunday 17 January)

Half-Term : Thursday 18 – Monday 22 February

PENTECOST QUARTER : Monday 19 April – Friday 18 June

Half-Term : Thursday 20 – Monday 24 May

MICHAELMAS QUARTER : Monday 12 July – Friday 17 September

Half-Term : Thursday 12 – Monday 16 August

CHRISTMAS QUARTER : Monday 04 October - Wednesday 01 December

Half-Term : Nil

Term Dates: 2022 (Provisional)

LENT QUARTER : Tuesday 18 January – Friday 25 March

(New Boys arrive on Sunday 16 January)

Half-Term : Thursday 17 – Monday 21 February

PENTECOST QUARTER : Tuesday 19 April – Friday 18 June

Half-Term : Thursday 19 – Monday 23 May

MICHAELMAS QUARTER : Monday 18 July – Friday 16 September

Half-Term : Thursday 18 – Monday 22 August

CHRISTMAS QUARTER : Monday 04 October - Wednesday 01 December

Half-Term : Nil

The first date of each term reflected above is the day all boys are expected back for Evening Service.

Please note the following:

1. Should there be changes to dates of the State schools we may reassess our dates.
2. We await the dates of ISASA Three Term schools i.r.o. half-terms and sports festivals. This may also necessitate appropriate changes to the dates.



Leave Outs

As we have previously indicated, in this short 8-week term, the boys are allowed 2 leave outs on a Saturday after the end of school activities, returning on a Sunday night for Chapel. At times, during the term, we have had to be proactive in cancelling proposed leave outs because of our fear that boys on such leave outs had a strong chance of coming into contact with peers and others carrying Covid-19 and that the pandemic would spread rapidly through the school. To date we have had one boy test positive for Covid-19, and that was about a fortnight ago.

There are a number of reasons why parents and boys would like leave outs reinstated, the chief one being that parents, naturally, want to see their sons and *vice versa*. The threat of contracting Covid-19 remains real, but we feel that, at this stage, given all the circumstances and **if parents do not permit their sons to go to parties or other events**, we are happy to reinstate the ruling for the term of 2 overnight leave outs on a Saturday night.

End of year examinations are underway for the B and C Block, while the D and E Block will be beginning theirs very soon. It is time for boys to have their heads down and to be engaging in a thoroughly committed fashion with their academic work, rather than focusing on anything else. On that basis and recognising that circumstances may change, we are happy to revert to the original provision of two leave outs per term to be taken with the permission of Housemasters. We have to put the onus on parents please to ensure that their sons respond to this situation responsibly.

With my best wishes

ANTONY CLARK
RECTOR