

Monthly Newsletter

OLD UNIONITE ASSOCIATION

31 August 2024



A Word from the Chairman

Dear Old Unionites,

What does it truly mean to be an Old Unionite?

Is it the thrill that courses through you at the mere mention of Interschools, transporting you back to a time of spirited rivalry and a sense of belonging to something greater than yourself?

Is it the pride that swells in your heart every time you see Union green, or the dismissive glance you give to anyone who dares to complain about the heat?

Each Old Unionite carries unique memories from their time at school - a teacher who guided their path, a coach who recognized their potential, or a meal that lingers in their taste buds. Whether joyful or challenging, these memories are the threads that weave the rich tapestry of our Union community.

As a proud member of this community, you understand the profound impact our school has had in shaping lives and nurturing dreams. Union has always been more than just an institution; it's a sanctuary where friendships blossom, talents flourish and futures are forged.

Today, we invite you to reflect on your journey and the pivotal role Union played in your life.

We need your support to ensure that future generations of Unionites can experience the same opportunities and guidance that once shaped you.

Schools like Union shine as beacons of hope across South Africa, embodying a success story of integration and diversity. We take immense pride in our motto: One Union, One Heart.

However, we find ourselves in a time when financial struggles are a harsh reality for many.

While school fees cover our operating costs, we require additional support to continue growing and to pave the way for remarkable young Unionites who will carry on our legacy. This is where every Old Unionite can make a difference.

Your contributions will directly enhance our facilities and expand our programmes. Every donation, regardless of size, will significantly impact the preservation of the Union spirit.

Let us unite to honour our shared history and invest in the future of those who will follow in our footsteps.

We invite you to join us in this noble endeavour to keep the spirit of Union alive and flourishing.

We are, therefore, excited to introduce the OUA fundraising platform - an easy way to support the school that made your blood run green.

Follow the links below to stand with us in building a brighter future.

Thank you for being an essential part of our Union family.

Rhett Newton

CLICK HERE

 **Old Unionite Academic Assistance Fund**
Money raised under this banner will be used to assist academic stars who show massive potential... 

 **Old Unionite Discretionary Development Fund**
The money raised under this banner will be used to enhance the 4 pillars that the Union Schools stand... 

 **Old Unionite Sports Assistance Fund**
Money raised under this banner will be used to assist talented young sports men and women who... 

Interschools 2024

In a thrilling chapter of Union's storied history, the school's 1st team hockey girls emerged victorious in their 2024 Interschools encounter against Volkskool, clinching a narrow yet glorious win with a score of 1-0.

This match not only showcased their skill but also their unwavering determination and teamwork, embodying the very spirit of Union.

While Volkskool's 1st XV may have claimed the victory in rugby with a score of 22-12, it was the Union team that truly captured our hearts. Their performance was nothing short of inspiring, demonstrating valiant effort and strength that exceeded all expectations.

We couldn't be more proud of these young Unionites, whose passion and spirit shone brightly on the field. Their hard work and dedication remind us all of the values we hold dear at Union. This encounter was more than just a competition; it was a celebration of camaraderie, sportsmanship and the enduring legacy of our school community.

Here's to our remarkable teams and the unforgettable moments they create!



All is fair in love and war

The passion, intensity and fiercest of competition experienced during the mighty Clash of Interschools, can sometimes take an interesting turn, once the floodlights have been switched off and the balls put away for another year.

Tempers cool, and in their place, small sparks start to smolder. Thoughts of the incredible tackle by that Volkskool No. 6, or the phenomenal goal from that Union striker, take centre stage, and all resistance crumbles.

Barriers are broken, great divides are crossed, and it no longer matters which side you fought on... **LOVE CONQUERS ALL!**

Congrats to our Union & Volkskool couples, who have joined forces, and continue to make the tradition of Interschools spicy!

We trust that during heated debates over who was actually supposed to pick the kids up, you can always rely on the comeback...."Well, at least we won Interschools in 1989!"

Couples that immediately come to mind, include:

- Lou-Anne (UHS) and Rynhardt (HVS) Gerber
- Beaver (UHS) and Daleen (HVS) Hobson
- Lizet (HVS) and John (UHS) Crankshaw
- Steven (UHS) and Helen-Mari Wright (HVS)
- John (HVS) and Megan (UHS) Maritz
- Wilmari (HVS) and Trenly (UHS) Spence
- Johan (HVS) and Jacqui (UHS) Jansen
- Justin (UHS) and Liesl (HVS) Kingwill
- Colleen (UHS) and Pieter (HVS) Gouws
- Sean (UHS) and Tia-Mari (HVS) Jacobs
- Hammie (HVS) and Jackie (UHS) Maritz
- Tank (UHS) and Isabella (HVS) Coetzee
- Soppies (HVS) and Beverly (UHS) du Toit
- Peter (UHS) and Leandra (HVS) Meintjes
- Graeme (UHS) and Wanda (HVS) Kelbrick
- Fanie (HVS) and Leanne (UHS) Bezuidenhout

A speech to remember!

Union had the honour of welcoming back Old Unionite **Miss Nwabisa Mazosiwe**, from the Class of 1999, as guest speaker at this year's Interschools Assembly.

Miss Mazosiwe captivated the audience with her heartfelt speech, which many are already calling the best delivered by an alum in recent years!

CLICK HERE



The traditional **INTERSCHOOLS' HOCKEY MATCH** between Union High School's Old Girls and their Volkskool counterparts was played on Friday, 9 August. Taking to the field for the Old Girls were Donné Marais, Leah Marais, Jenna McNaughton, Jade Edwards, Grace Merifield, Rebecca Langmead, Petra Japhta, Leigh-Ann Beck, Sesethu Kotishini, Bianca Oberholzer, Amy Charles, Christine Harris, Lana Bouwer, Chloe Moos and Liesl Austin. The game was a fiercely competitive one, which saw the Old Girls' giving it their all to obtain a 4-3 victory.



We were truly fortunate to welcome back many reunion groups to the school during this year's Interschools' weekend. Among them was the **CLASS OF 1974** who celebrated their 50th reunion.

The reunion provided a wonderful opportunity for classmates to reminisce about their time at Union, share stories of their lives since and rekindle friendships that stood the test of time.

Seen here in the accompanying photograph, the Class of 1974 stands proudly:

Back row, from left to right: Garner van Heerden, Linda (McNaughton) Hornbuckle, Judy (Kotze) Wepener, Herman Ten Veldhuis, Colleen (Edelman) Retief, Liz (Vorster) Stern, George Alberts, Helen (Wright) van Wyk, Gareth Brummer, Jeremy Kotze, James Loock, Michael Clarke, Ron Knott Craig and Val (Allen) Tomlinson.

In the front row: Annelie (Minnaar) Swart, Terry (Horwitz) Debesh, Rozanne (Hare) Barlow, Helette (Bell) Doubell and Andre Naude.

Spotlight on current projects



Union High School's Primary Department recently launched an exciting **RAFFLE** in collaboration with Union Preparatory School, featuring incredible prizes up for grabs!

Imagine cruising the streets on a brand new Suzuki V-Strom 250! It's just one of the incredible prizes awaiting the lucky winners!

(The main prize can be exchanged for R50 000 in cash if you are unable to claim the motorcycle.)

Second prize offers the ultimate shopping spree with a Pick n Pay trolley dash, while third prize takes you soaring above Graaff-Reinet on a scenic flight!

But that's not all! Accommodation packages and a hampers are also up for grabs!

Grab your ticket for just R50 and be in the running for these incredible prizes.

And remember, the more tickets you buy, the greater your chances of winning!

The draw will take place at this year's Tri The Karoo event on Saturday, October 12th. Don't miss out on this exciting opportunity to win big and support our schools!

PLEASE SUPPORT Union's Grade 1 to 7 learners learners by grabbing your raffle tickets today! Grab your ticket by clicking on the following link:

CLICK HERE



Raffle Tickets

Win A Suzuki V-STROM 250SX with the Union Schools Don't miss your chance to win big at the Union High School and Union Preparatory School...

 Invest in Union Schools / 50.00 ZAR

Old Unionites in the News

We are thrilled to extend heartfelt congratulations to **Grant Naudé**, an Old Unionite from the Class of 1991, on his recent appointment as the president of Merino SA.

This remarkable achievement not only highlights Grant's dedication and leadership but also serves as a source of pride for the entire Union community.

As he takes on this new role, we wish him all the best in his endeavours.

We are confident that his visionary approach and unwavering determination will guide Merino SA towards new heights.



Old Unionite plays for SA Deaf Rugby

The SA Deaf Rugby series was held recently at St Stithians College in Randburg, Gauteng where Old Unionite Laszlo Maya, who held the position of Head Boy at Union in 2012, played for South Africa.

The South African Deaf Rugby Association (SADRA) made history by hosting its first-ever international deaf rugby series.

The tournament featured rugby teams representing Australia, England and Japan. The South African team consisted of players from all over the country who were chosen after SADRA conducted trials which enabled the best players to showcase their skills. The competition had a hearing classification of a 40dB loss in order for players to be eligible.

The Deaf Rugby tournament hosted a 7s and 10s rugby match as part of its August Internationals. The 7's ran from 3 to 4 August and the 10's from 7 to 8 August.

Maya played in the 10s tournament, between South Africa, Australia and England. The trials to represent the SA Deaf rugby team were held in Gauteng, Eastern Cape and Western Cape during the first half of the year. Maya travelled to Strand to take part in the Western Cape trials in May this year, and subsequently made the SA team. It was one of his greatest experiences and he thoroughly enjoyed it.

"Representing your country is always special. I've always played with and against normal-hearing players, so to be surrounded by players with whom

I share a life experience, was something I really looked forward to," says Maya.

"I was curious as to how we will communicate on-field and execute our plays. People with hearing loss do not all fall under one category. There are different degrees of hearing loss, coupled with the different means of communication. So we needed to find common ground. Sign language was the best way to communicate plays and get everyone on the same page.

Those who do not know sign language were taught the simple signs prior to matches," he says. Maya played two matches on Wednesday 7 August, and another two on the Thursday. Maya scored tries on both days.





Down Memory Lane

A CHERISHED SNAPSHOT from Union High School's photographic history, featuring a young Adrian Arnott (Class of 1964), the son of the late Herby Arnott, as a spirited little Unionite alongside the formidable 1952 1st XV captain, Tom Spence.

Dressed in the iconic white jerseys - in the very first year this jersey was introduced - the pair stands proudly before the annual Interschools game at the Botanics Sports Grounds.

In this cherished photo, we see Adrian, the team's mascot, preparing to accompany the captain onto the field, where the Union and Volkskool teams would meet for their customary pre-game handshake.

As we look back on this delightful scene, it's clear that moments like these are what make the Union Schools a special place.

In Memoriam

Old Unionite William Smith, the mathematics teacher that many South Africans grew up with, passed away recently after a long battle with cancer at his home in Perth, Australia, surrounded by family. He was 85 years-old.

Smith matriculated from Union High School in 1956.

Over the years, Smith reached many young people in South Africa and beyond, for whom his televised lessons were the only quality instruction they received in Mathematics and Science.

Thanks to his exceptional teaching skills and compassion, for almost two decades, the Learning Channel became an indispensable platform for young people of our country to receive interactive TV education in Mathematics and Science. In this way, he became the teacher for the entire South African nation.

After matriculating, Smith completed his BSc and his BSc (Hons), both with distinction, at Rhodes University. His parents JLB Smith, who identified the coelacanth, and Margaret Smith, ichthyologist and accomplished fish illustrator, both had deep-rooted ties with the University and Makhanda (then Grahamstown). In 1962, Mr Smith completed his MSc in seven months at the University of Natal. Although his initial journey was into the world of business, working at African Explosives and Chemical Industries and Afrox, he soon realised he would not be content unless he followed his passion for teaching.



In 1990, Smith began producing The Learning Channel's educational television programmes with the financial backing of Hylton Appelbaum, then Executive Director of the Liberty Life Foundation.

Besides his education programmes, Smith appeared along with Jeremy Mansfield in the popular South African television quiz show, *A Word or 2*. He was also a judge for the Miss South Africa Pageant in 1998 and 1999.

Mr Smith was voted 86th in the Top 100 Great South Africans in 2004. In 2019, he was awarded the Order of the Baobab (silver) in recognition of his services to teaching and the "demystification of mathematics and science". The National Orders are the highest awards that South Africans can receive. The president bestows a national order upon a South African citizen or member of the international community who has contributed towards making South Africa a democratic and prosperous country.

Smith is also a renowned conservationist and owned the Featherbed Nature Reserve in Knysna, where he lived until the sale of the land and company in 2004.

A Matter of Trust

We are delighted to announce and warmly welcome Mrs Wilmari Spence as the new chairperson of the **UHS DEVELOPMENT TRUST**.

With a strong commitment to our school community, Mrs Spence is poised to lead the school towards a bright future.

Mrs Spence is a respected member of the Union school community, with her two children, Caerwyn (Class of 2019) and Caitrin (Class of 2023), both having excelled at Union, demonstrating outstanding achievements in academics and sports. **Their contributions have left a lasting impact on our school, reflecting the values instilled by their mother.**

Having served three terms on the school's Governing Body, Mrs Spence has shown unwavering dedication to the development of the Union Schools. *Her insights and leadership have significantly contributed to the school's growth and progress, making her an invaluable asset to our community.*

As Mrs Spence steps into this new role, we look forward to her vision and guidance in further enhancing the UHS Development Trust. Together with the support of our community, we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead.

Let us extend our heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to her in his new endeavour!



ABOVE: MRS WILMARI SPENCE IS SEEN HERE, IN THE ACCOMPANYING PHOTO, WITH HER DAUGHTER CAITRIN, WHO SERVED AS UNION HIGH SCHOOL, CRAAFT-REINET'S HEAD GIRL IN 2023, AND HER HUSBAND, OLD UNIONITE MR TRENLY SPENCE (CLASS OF 1985)..

Thank you for reading!