



ST GEORGE'S COLLEGE

One of the World's Leading Independent Schools



HEADS-UP! February 2024 Newsletter Volume 11 Issue 2

SGC @127 YEARS

FROM THE HEAD'S DESK



On the 31st of January, we welcomed 131 students on their return to the Lower Sixth.

This number included 31 new students to the College. This was following completion of their Service Projects that are pivotal to the formation of all students at the College. Our Lenten Campaigns have now started in support of these Service Project Agencies. May I ask that our entire school community gets involved with these campaigns.

Thank you to all L6 parents who attended the "Welcome evening" on the 6th February.



Lower Six Parents Welcome Evening.

We now have our full student complement and now have over sixty clubs operating in our 2-3pm slot each afternoon.



Club Sign Up Fair

As I have said before, all our students are expected to be signed up to at least one of these clubs. Universities and colleges are now not simply looking for academically competent young people but interesting young men and women.

Members in these clubs are active and interesting members of our school community.

Students are now preparing for the NIAA competitions and the annual Eisteddfod competitions. We wish all our competitors and musicians/choirs all the very best in these events.

Congratulations to Samuel Dauti, who recently came runner up in the recent NAAZ annual awards for best Junior Athlete in 2023.

Our U17 basketball team travelled to South Africa over the extended weekend break. They did very well, coming third in a very competitive tournament in Johannesburg. Our First XI Cricket Team were on tour in South Africa, as were our senior Basketball Team.



U17 Basketball team during their tour to South Africa.



Rukudzo Mayida made the All Stars Team during the Basketball Tour.

The second half of term has a very full Athletics programme that includes our own Inter-House competition and the Saint George's Invitational event, which is the Inter School event of the season. May I extend an invitation to all our parents/guardians. Come and support your son's and daughter's and have a great day out with the family."

The Head Boy Tradition – St. George's College

With the induction of Gabriel Mandiwona as Head Student on 9 January 2024, together with his team of Deputies and Prefects, I think it appropriate to examine briefly the Headship tradition through the College's long history.

When St. George's relocated from Bulawayo in January 1927, one of the earliest official announcements concerned the appointment of Felix Jackson as Captain of the School.

He had started.....(Story continues on Page 2)

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Scenes from our 2024 Club Sign Up Fair



The Head Boy Tradition – St. George’s College

With the induction of Gabriel Mandiwona as *Head Student* on 9 January 2024, together with his team of Deputies and Prefects, I think it appropriate to examine briefly the Headship tradition through the College’s long history.

When St. George’s relocated from Bulawayo in January 1927, one of the earliest official announcements concerned the appointment of Felix Jackson as *Captain of the School*. He had started at what used to be called St. George’s Boy’s Public School in Bulawayo in 1918, aged nine, and had then moved with the school to Hartmann Hill. However, when Felix left school half way into the year to train for the priesthood, he was replaced by Lancelot Edwards, and since then the College has been served by a succession of 98 *Head Students*, most of whom were formally announced at the start of each year. Incidentally, Felix Jackson went on to become the second Old Georgian Jesuit.



Rear l. to r. Edwards, V. Crossley; seated S. Ra F. Jackson, D. Jacobson; front M. Clarke

Until recently I used to believe that the *Head Student* tradition only started in 1927, but I’ve since discovered in old school logs (a sort of school diary kept by one of the priests) that there was a designated *Senior Boy* as early as 1907, when the school population numbered around 100. By 1912 the title had changed to that of *Captain of the School*, and the position was held for two years by a particularly outstanding all-round student, Vere Elliott. Two years later Elliott was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship and, whilst at Oxford University, joined the Royal Artillery to fight in World War 1, along with two other Old Georgian Rhodes Scholars, Stewart Ricketts and Wilfrid Walsh. Very sadly, having reached the rank of Captain, he was killed in the trenches in France in March 1918.



Vere Elliott, Cadet Officer, 1913

Two other instances of a pupil being *Head Student* two years in a row occurred in 1940 and again in 1959. In the first case, the Rector, Fr. Ben Weaver, initially offered the position to Mark Partridge, but then backtracked when the previous Head, James Storey, was allowed to return to the College, having “plucked” his Matric. In fairness to his memory, Storey had been a very good Head and had also been a member of the first ever Nuffield Schools cricket side. Whilst there is no doubt that Partridge felt snubbed at the time, since he referred to it many years later in conversation with a later



Mark Partridge, Cadet Officer, 1940



James Storey, Captain of the School, 1939

Rector, Fr. Paul Edwards, in addition to sending his own son to the



College, Mark Partridge, graciously presided over the opening of the new College swimming bath in 1969 when he was Minister of Local Government.

In the second instance, Sean Cunningham took over as *Head of the School* from Tony Bradshaw at the end of the first term, 1958, when the latter left to go to Trinity College, Dublin. Cunningham was still in Lower 6 at the time and continued on as Head through 1959. After leaving College, he proceeded to Oxford University and, in the course of time became a heart surgeon, while, in later life, Bradshaw owned an art gallery in London. Incidentally, it was fairly common practice in the 1930s, '40s and '50s for some of the more outstanding pupils to be appointed Prefects while still in their second last year at the College, the idea being perhaps that it allowed for greater continuity and experience building.



Sean Cunningham, Head of School, 1958, with the Rector Fr. D. Ford

As regards which was the most common title used for the *Head Student* through the years, until WW2 it was invariably *Captain of the School* – occasionally *School Captain*. Then the term *Head of School* became common and remained until 1969 when the term *Head Boy* was first used in the Chronicle. Thereafter the latter title remained until the appointment of 2024's *Head Student*, together with, for the first time, three Deputies. The earlier practice of appointing two deputies would appear to have started in 1986, both to cater for the rapidly increasing number of students, but also to allow for there to be one responsible particularly for the boarders. The new 3-Deputy dispensation has done away with that distinction and, instead, they will each focus on their appointed segment of the College – Lower, Middle and Upper school.



Head Student, 2024, Gabriel Mandiwona, with his three Deputies, Ethan Chaponda, Simba Muchatukwa, and Brian Zijenah

Turning to the neutral nature of the title – *Head Student*, it is of course

appropriate, given that we have had girls in the 6th Form since 2020, with more having been introduced in Grade Zero at Hartmann House this year. In this age of equal opportunity, one is tempted to wonder when the College will see the first female *Deputy Head Student*, and, perhaps, the first female *Head Student*. She'll have to have a loud voice to lead the school war-cries!

Still on the theme of *Head Students* at the College, prior to 1949, as far as can be ascertained, they wore no particular badge of rank, and in fact it wasn't until that year that the white Prefect's tie was first introduced. In similar vein, and given that it wasn't until 1980 that Colours were first awarded for non-sporting achievements like Studies, the practice of automatically awarding leadership Colours to the Head Student was adopted much later still!

As a final comment, I would remark that in doing the research for this article, I have discovered three errors on the 'Head Boy' Honours Boards in the Beit Hall. The first is that Felix Jackson's name is missing in 1927. Then, in 1930 the Captain of the School was Wilford Blankenberg (incidentally the first non-Catholic to hold the position), and not Aubrey Coker. Finally, as already alluded to, it was James Storey in 1939, and not Sidney Olver!