

2011 LOG Newsletter

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30 August, 2011

Dear Loreto Old Girls,

Another year is speeding past and it is almost time for our Annual Reunion. We are hoping to remind everyone that the first Saturday of October is always Reunion Day- please join us ladies! It will be fun to see you all again. PLEASE REMEMBER- the FIRST SATURDAY OF OCTOBER IS ALWAYS THE REUNION DATE, AND IS UNCHANGED FROM YEAR TO YEAR. (This year the date is 01 October, 2011). The Reunion will start with Mass in the School Chapel at 1pm, followed by tea in the School Hall. (Registration will take place at 12.30pm). The entrance to the School grounds will be in Visagie Street, where sufficient parking will be available. There will be Security on duty.

This year, Frances Olver and Margaret Collins have kindly offered to help me with updating the data base and trying to contact everyone. The School's Deputy Principal, Mrs. Suzette Truter, has been “meeting” many of the more recent Old Girls on Facebook, inviting them to the Primary School’s Concert, which will take place at the end of August. (This concert will not take the place of the Annual Reunion- it is just an additional event, in which we thought that the LOGS would be interested). The Social Networking phenomenon is very worthwhile in this way, as the word spreads quickly among those who have a profile on Facebook – many friendships are reinforced and restarted.

In May this year, Loreto International invited representatives from all Loreto Convent and Schools worldwide to attend a conference on the life of Mary Ward, our Foundress. Sister Linda Prest (the Provincial) led the South African delegation, which consisted of Mrs. Sherilyn Haupt (Skinner Street) Mrs. Tessa Westwood (Loreto Queenswood) and Mrs. Vanessa Oertle (Loreto Strand). It was a wonderful and important ten days, as ideas and information was shared by all attendees, which will be filtered throughout the various affiliated institutions during the coming months. Of course, it was not all work, and there was an opportunity to visit the gorgeous Niagara Falls one day- fabulous. (Sister Linda is writing more on this event, elsewhere in the newsletter).

I am sure you are all interested in news of Sister Shirley. She is well and happy, having recently celebrated her 92nd birthday (on 01 July) and sends her love to you all. She would welcome letters and emails (Sister Immacula's email address is annette_bolgerATyahoo.co.uk -please do keep in touch with her and give her all your news. (Her letter to you all is attached).

SCHOOL NEWS:

Loreto Convent School, Skinner Street, achieved 100% Matric pass rate in 2010 (18 years in a row!!) and there were 93% University Exemptions, which was an excellent result in World Cup Year, as it put a good finishing touch on an exciting twelve months. Naturally, we all participated in Football Friday and the learners joined in enthusiastically. Camaraderie and National Pride were very much in evidence all the time.

VISITORS:

How many of you remember the signatures of British soldiers, garrisoned in the Convent Redoubt during the Boer War? Well, a team of British Historians visited South Africa earlier this year, and our Convent was on their itinerary. They were thrilled to see the signatures and to learn some of the

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history of the School and we were delighted to welcome them.

The School sees many visitors during the course of a year, incidentally, as many past pupils or members of their families come to catch a glimpse of remembered classrooms, and places that hold happy childhood memories. They usually have several giggles as they recall mischievous escapades and the reactions of their teachers.

CONGRATULATIONS:

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mrs. Catherine Sluyter (mother of Irma and Cecile) who celebrated her 100th birthday recently. What a wonderful occasion and the School sends its warm message of congratulations to her as well.

Other messages of congratulation: Mrs. Antionette Darlington, a past pupil and a member of the Loreto Convent School staff, recently became a mother-in-law, as her son Clayton married in Richards Bay. Mrs. Lee Anne Goosen (Soley) became an Integrated Learning Therapy Practitioner. Mrs. Maria Pinto (Alves) has been appointed Head of Department at our School.

All past pupils who are celebrating either 50 (Golden Girls) or 60 years (Diamond Girls) since leaving school, will be acknowledged at the Reunion.

OBITUARIES:

There are some Obituaries as well this year. Mrs. Lupke, and Mrs. Docherty, much loved teachers and very inspiring ladies, passed away this year. Their warmth and kindness will be remembered by all their former pupils. Dr. Brian Addis, husband of Mrs. Helene Addis, the First Lay Principal of Loreto Convent School, passed away at the end of June, as did Mrs. Magdalen Shillinglaw, mother of our present Principal, Mr. Stuart Shillinglaw. We extend sincere messages of sympathy to their families and pray that time will bring comfort and healing.

We note with sadness and sincere condolences the passing of the following: Jackie (Warden) Van Kan on 17 February 2011, Dorothy (Du Plessis) O'Grady on 25 June 2011, Agnes (Reister) Stut on 14 June 2011, Evelyn (Donaldson) Webb and Yvonne (Karras) Sinovich in February 2011, Val Roberts, husband of Rosemary (Henkel) Roberts on 26 May 2011 (his father was Austin Roberts, famous for compiling the encyclopaedic Bird Book), in February 2011 at the age of 100 years and 11 months, Thomas Alfred Bower, husband of Dicky Bower (d. 2006 at the age of 93 years) and father of Ann (Bower) Gray, Maxie (Swacina) Fouche on 18 June 2008, Amorie (Denoon) Swacina on 17 April 2008, Ann (White) Williams on 3 October 2008, Deloryse O'Connor on 6 June 2004, John, husband of Pam (Brown) Edwards on 2 October 2001, Quinton, husband of Frances (Swacina) Olver on 16 January 2009, the husband of Brenda (Savage) Human in 2006 and the husband of Barbara (Savage) Sand in June 2010, Anne Egan, Alice Mitchell and her brother, Tony, Carol (Hill)

Davenport, Rose Silva, Joan (Botha) McIntyre, Annette Lipschitz, Antoinette/Toinette Heydenrych and finally in 2010 Polly (Dermatis) Tassopoulos and Shirley (Rolandi) Acquadro.

Note: Should there be any omissions or mistakes, please let Kathy know. The LOG Deceased Register will be used when the name of a deceased LOG is taken off the Database. Please inform Kathy in this regard.

Some thoughts from Margaret Collins (Wickham)

Hi! From two of the “older” Old Girls:

Frances Olver (Swacina) and I hail from way-back in 1951, and have tried to keep up our contact with Loreto- Frances through being involved with the school throughout the years (with her children at Loreto) and myself by being on the Skinner Street Old Girls’ Committee for 11 years

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after I left school, then keeping in touch.

The very first thing that we would like to say is that, although we both spent all our school years at Skinner Street, we feel very strongly about ALL Loreto Old Girls who may have ended up here in Pretoria over the years, or those able to reach here for the Annual Reunion, being able to get together at a central point and meet with others who were with them during their school years. Never would we wish any Loreto Old Girls to lose their separate identity as ex-pupils of their own Convents, whether Hillcrest, Strand, Sea Point, Lydenburg, Kenya or Mombasa.

It depends on each one of you to try and contact the girls who were at school with you and so make sure that there is a good group of your own school friends who can meet and reminisce together here, although you may not be able to get back to your own alma mater. Loreto Skinner Street will welcome you with open arms and hope that you and your own friends will feel at home here with us.

We have been hearing about various reunions which have been held, or are planned, in other cities such as Durban and Cape Town, and even in London, by Old Girls of the various Convents. This is a wonderful idea- let’s keep the Loreto memories and connections going, no matter where we started out from or where we end up.

We are working closely with Kathy Wisselo, the School Secretary at Skinner Street, who has been co-ordinating the LOG affairs since Sister Shirley left. She has been doing a sterling job, but we have realised what a major operation it is trying to trace all the LOGS over the many, many years. Please everybody, you can help by sending to Kathy at the school (email: kathy@Tlorskin.co.za) any changes in contact details (either your own or your friends contact details) the Convent, and year, of Old Girls who may presently not be on our database, so that this can be kept current and circulars can reach as many of us as possible. Her fax number is: 012 – 3242780.

In speaking to many of the LOGS over the last month or so, Frances has picked up various points of interest:

Over the last year or two, many LOGS have asked: What has happened to the October Reunion? Why do we not receive the notification or news any more? The reason has been that so many envelopes were returned: “UNKNOWN” over the years, that postal

notifications were discontinued and the annual circulars were sent out by email. This was not very successful, as many Old Girls do not have email or Loreto did not have the email addresses. This is what we are trying to correct so that ALL Our Old Girls receive the annual circulars. If you do not have an email facility, they will in future be posted, if we have a confirmed postal address. Once again, please help. Many of the girls who have passed their Golden Girls (50th) reunion, feel that it would be great to also acknowledge those who reach their 60th year reunion. So many LOGS miss seeing their teachers, both the Sisters and the lay teachers. We are going to invite all teachers, past and present, to the Reunion. There is a need for a support base between all of us. We have happy times in our lives and many of us know the difficulties when things just don't go right or we lose loved ones. Very often continued contact with persons who go a long way back with us can make a big difference, which is a very good reason to keep in contact with our special school friends of long ago or even after all these years, to renew those friendships. Help us to re-contact as many Old Girls as we can. Lastly, my personal appeal to all the younger Old Girls- please, please keep coming back and return the Loreto Old Girls Association to the large, vibrant body that I knew so many years ago.

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MESSAGE FROM SR. SHIRLEY:

My dear Loreto Old Girls,

I welcome each one of you who have taken the trouble to be present this afternoon. I welcome very specially those I taught at Loreto Skinner Street off and on between the years 1944 and 1998, and I also welcome those who attended the school either before or after these dates.

My own memories are of eager young people – eager to learn in order to get on in life.

I am now quite adapted to Ireland and its climate. As Loreto is the same all over the world, the change was easy for me. Today I met a past pupil of Loreto Skinner Street, right here in Balbriggan. She was at school in early 1970s and her name is Mrs. Mary Anne Connol. Some of you may remember her.

I had the good fortune of visiting England recently where I stayed with my grand-nephew and his mother, who is my niece. She was visiting him.

As you know, I am 92 and keeping very well, although my eye sight is not very good. Sr. Ignatius Jackman belongs to the Kilkenny Community, but has been in a nursing home for the last year. I saw her a couple of months ago and I am afraid she was very weak, and has to have everything done for her. She will be 98 this year.

Sr. Clare is also in a home and keeps going, but is not very well either. Sr. Immacula is with me at Loreto Balbriggan and is in very good health.

Sr. Peter Claver now lives in the Kilkenny Community. She is 96 and although she has failed somewhat, she is holding her own. She visited us in Balbriggan in July and while she was here, organised a visit to the St. James Hospital for her to meet Una French, Sr. Joseph Anne Hart's sister.

Una is heading for the age of 102 in December.

When we have meetings, Kathleen MacLennan lives in one of the apartments attached to Abbey House. She visits Immacula and we meet often and she is doing great work, running Mary Ward International. This takes her on trips all over the world, and she is definitely the right person for that job. Recently, she took a contingent of Loreto pupils to Spain for the International Youth Day. Pope Benedict XVI was there. I feel sure that some South Africans were also there.

My special love to each and every one of you.

God Bless, Shirley.

MESSAGE FROM SR. LINDA

TORONTO

Coming together from all parts of the world as one Loreto family-this was one of the highlights for me/us. We shared, played and worked together in various groups and got to know the face of Loreto in different countries.

The film and input on Cosmology stressed the connectedness of us all. No one can say "I do not need the other". We are all made from the star dust, and being "stars" we are an important part of the universe, which is ever spreading out further and further. We are in fact ONE with all. This just confirms what the gospels say that 'we are one' and we are responsible for every other creature, plant or inanimate substance on Earth and in the universe.

The input on migration showed us the why and the how of migration. Mostly people, our sisters

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and brothers, are in desperate situations (political, starvation, drought etc.) and need to get themselves or their families to a better place where they are safe and can find food. This fitted into the theme of our interconnectedness and our responsibility for the world.

Between the working sessions, we enjoyed the outing to the Niagara Falls- majestic and ever flowing. We, clad with special rain coats, boarded small boats and went as close to the falls as possible. Of course we were splashed by the spray of the falls, but this was part of the tour. After this, we enjoyed a meal near the Loreto Convent there.

Before the grand final Mass, the Indian members anointed us with their "muti" and gave the Mass an Indian flavour. This was followed by a finger supper, dancing and singing.

It was just a great experience and we thank God that it was possible for all there.

Loreto S.A. News:

We have just completed a big move into flats at the Nazareth House complex and are settling in well.

Sister Oliver and Sister Margaret Mary are “not so well”, but are happy at the Holy Cross Home in Suiderburg. Sister Therese and Sister Rosaleen are likewise being cared for in Nazareth House in Cape Town.

The rest of the sisters are still well and engaged in their apostolic work of school chaplaincy, counselling, spiritual accompaniment, reflexology, prison work, retreat giving, facilitation, teaching in schools and whatever else is asked of them.

With love to you all, and hope to see you on 01 October, 2011.
