

From the desk of **Graham Whitty**



## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE OLD ALBANIAN CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 9 NOVEMBER 2021

### Introduction:

It has once again been a year characterised by disruptions to normal life as a result of COVID. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all those in our community who have lost loved ones to COVID.

Despite these challenges and setbacks, 2021 has been a better year for the OAC and I believe we have continued to make good progress towards creating the leading alumni club in South Africa.

### Our Mission:

Simply put, it is the mission of the OAC to create the leading alumni club and network in the country. Being a member of the OAC should be a valuable inheritance when you leave the College. It should be of use throughout your life as a place to meet and make new lifelong friends, and advance both the social and professional aspirations of its members.

There is absolutely no reason why we cannot attain the mission. While we are not the biggest alumni in numbers, we are big enough with over 3500 Albanians who have matriculated over 6 decades. There are Old Albanians spread out across the country and the world in every imaginable profession and career. Mostly there is a very strong bond between Old Albanians, and what remains for us to do is to enhance this sense of brotherhood into a cohesive organisation that delivers a worthwhile experience for our members.

How to achieve this is on one level is very easy, simply, get our alumni into the same room regularly. COVID has prevented much of this over the past 20 months, but progress is now being made and you can expect numerous events to be held in South Africa and abroad as we emerge from the pandemic.

Secondly, we have to drastically improve our communication and engagement with our alumni. This is a work in progress and I therefore encourage you all to take every opportunity to engage online with the College and ensure that the Alumni Office has your current contact number and email address.

### 2021 Events

During the course of the year we were able to successfully host the following events:

- **Old Albanian Golf Day in September.** This was our best ever event, with a full field, amazing event sponsors, and a fantastic prize giving and social event after the golf. This event gets better and better every year and raises a significant amount of money for the Old Albanian bursary fund.
- **Brothers of the Sword Reception:** This event was first hosted in 2020 and has already become a massively powerful rite of passage for the matriculating group to enter into the OAC. This year we built on the success of 2020 and welcomed 107 new members to the OAC in an event that coincides with the matric final assembly in early October. The Class of 2017 turned up in numbers to present Old Albanian ties to their rookies. The Class of 2017 then enjoyed an informal reunion.
- **Cape Town and Stellenbosch Events:** We successfully hosted drinks evenings in Cape Town and Stellenbosch in September. The events were a massive success despite not being hosted at the ideal time of year. We will look to improve the timing in 2022 on the assumption that COVID will not affect our options.

Sadly, due to COVID our reunions for 2021 had to be cancelled. This is the second year running that we have had to cancel the reunions. These are critical events in the life of the College and for our alumni. We are planning to host the 2020, 2021, and 2022 reunions in early June 2022 in one event that will coincide with a derby day weekend.



## Alumni Office

This year we welcomed Donn e Roebert as the new Alumni Manager. She has made an immediate and very valuable contribution. Along with Linda van Wyk (Head of Advancement) the Alumni Office made great strides in our organisational ability as well as enhancements to our communication ability.

There remains a lot to do, but I believe that the decision of the College to capacitate this office has been crucial. The growth of the OAC would not be possible without this investment and the commitment and passion of Donn e and Linda.

## Financial Report

The financial position of the OAC can be summarised as follows:

- Total Cash on hand R453,000
- Income from membership fees in 2021: R79,500.
- Net profit from golf day: R136,000

The Accounting of OAC finances needs to be professionalized and proper income statements prepared annually. This will be undertaken by the new incoming committee.

We anticipate membership income of approx. R300,000 for the 2022 year. We hope to repeat the success of the golf day with a further 130,000 net income from the event. Our total budgeted income is therefore R430,000.

Our budgeted expenses are as follows:

- Events and travel: 130,000
- Old Albanian Ties for Matrics: 30,000
- Other: 30,000

Total expenses are therefore budgeted at R190,000.

Budgeted Surplus for 2022: R240,000

## OAC Bursary Fund & Endowment:

Over the years the OAC has made funds available to the Foundation/College to support a partial bursary to the college. Our preference is to support parents who are Old Boys, but we evaluate the candidates for the funding each year and try to make the award to the most deserving recipient.

The challenge for the OAC has always been to commit to the funding over a 5 year period as we have been very reliant on the income from our golf day to support the bursary. This income is erratic and in the case of 2020 non-existent due to the cancellation of the event.

The OAC is now in negotiations with the Foundation to achieve the following:

- Establish an endowment fund, managed by the Foundation on behalf of the OAC. The OAC will use some of its accumulated surplus to provide the initial funding, and add 50% of its annual surplus to the fund each year. The OAC will work hard to attract further funding for the endowment from its members either as lump sum contributions or ongoing regular contributions. The fund will be invested and only above inflation returns on the investment will be released to fund bursaries.



- Annual Bursary award: This will be made out of the proceeds of the endowment investment, as well as 50% of its annual surplus (estimated at 120,000 in 2022).

It is noteworthy that the improved revenue of the OAC now makes it possible to commit to an annual bursary award.

### OAC Participation at Council & Other College Structures

As the chairman of the OAC, I represent the OAC at Council. This involves 4 Council meetings a year as well as involvement in strategic reviews and direction for the College. This involvement is essential in aligning the OAC and the College and to ensure that the interests of the alumni are reasonably represented at Council level.

I also participate in an Advancement Committee that has been formed to combine the efforts of the College executive, Council, Foundation and OAC with regards to building our endowment and fund raising. This is in its infancy, but already a much more co-ordinated and professional approach has developed.

Tyrone Carrol serves on both the OAC committee and the Foundation committee, and thereby ensures that there is co-ordination between the Foundation and the OAC.

It is very significant that over the past few years the level of cohesion between the various governing structures of the College and the OAC has improved significantly. Credit must go to both Shane Kidwell (Headmaster) and Warwick van Breda (Chair of Council) for the leadership they have shown to bring about this alignment.

### Final Words

The OAC has again taken some meaningful steps this year towards attaining our mission of becoming the leading alumni network in the country. This could not have been achieved without the dedication of the committee members and the Alumni Office. 2021 will have been a challenging year for all of us, but I am so very pleased with the results we have achieved and the growth of the OAC despite the challenges.

My sincere thanks to Donné and Linda in the Alumni Office as well as my fellow committee members for their incredible effort and dedication. I look forward to make bigger and bolder steps with you in 2022.

**Graham Whitty (Class of '90)**  
**Chairman of the OAC**