

50 Brescia Broadsheet

Brescia House School opens its doors

January 26th, 1966, Brescia House School opened its doors for the very first time. With just over 100 pupils on the roll, classes ranged from Grade 0 to Form 1 – with Grade II and Std 1, Std II and Std III as combined classes. By the end of the year, numbers had increased to 190.

February 1966 brought the first PTA meeting and the launching of the Grounds Committee, Catering Committee and Language Lab. Committee.

April 16th was the official opening of the school with Bishop Boyle presiding. In attendance was our Foundress: Sister Xavier Rowntree.

In August a special tree planting ceremony was held. A child from each class was chosen by lot to plant a tree.

As a special move to build up the Library, a library drive was held in October.

Each book presented to the Library was signed by the child as a foundation member. During this year the netball fields, tennis courts and hockey field took shape.

In 1967, the Grounds Committee were busy with grassing the front lawn and laying out the parking areas and flower beds. By 1968, numbers had grown such that they warranted a separate Grades Block to house Grade 0 to Std II. The swimming pool was built in 1969. Since 1966 swimming practices had taken place in pools kindly put at our disposal by parents.

Sister Xavier saw the school as a centre of learning, of education, where opportunities for enterprise, initiative and personal and social responsibility would be provided, and where true Christian principles would be inculcated. These are the objectives all who have taught at Brescia House School have since cherished.



Turning of the sod by Fr. G. O'Callaghan OMI 1965



Above: The Beginning

16th April 1966 Bishop Boyle flanked by Sister Xavier Rowntree, foundress, on his right, and the Inspector on his left.

Below left: Sister Xavier Rowntree

Below right: Sister Gemma Lawlor



The importance of community

The school is 'a society which can provide children with a sense of belonging, without which sense there can be no community. And, if there is no feeling of community there can be no interest in serving it. One of the first things a school must do is to provide a sense of community. Pupils must be trained to a sense of responsibility to themselves, to their school, and to the wider community to which one day they will belong.'

Sister Rowntree 1967

A special message from Sister Gemma Lawlor*

'Now, girls of Brescia House, both past and present, the school exists for you; you are its sole concern. Is it necessary to remind Brescians who have already passed through its doors that we follow with interest and concern your way through life.

Of those still within its walls the school asks of you loyalty, an enthusiastic school spirit and an earnest devotion to duty. With these we will continue to build on the foundation laid by our predecessors and in the style laid down in our cherished master-plan.'

**This message comes from Sister Lawlor's Principal's Report in 1973, but is just as relevant today as we celebrate 50 years of Brescia House School.*



Left: Original wing of the school

Right: The 'Ring Games' photographed from the balcony





1970 - 1979

Our first Matric group

December 1970

For the first time, Brescia House School experiences the mingle of joy and regret of seeing a group of Matriculation students graduate from our school: we are sad to say goodbye to them, but we rejoice with them and their parents in the accomplishment of their formative years at school.

We hope that the variety of courses of further study and training which they plan to undertake will bring to further fruition in their lives, what they learned - and what they have become - while they have been with us.

The first Matric group consisted of 9 girls, with the first Head Girl, Ingrid Frankenberg (pictured below).



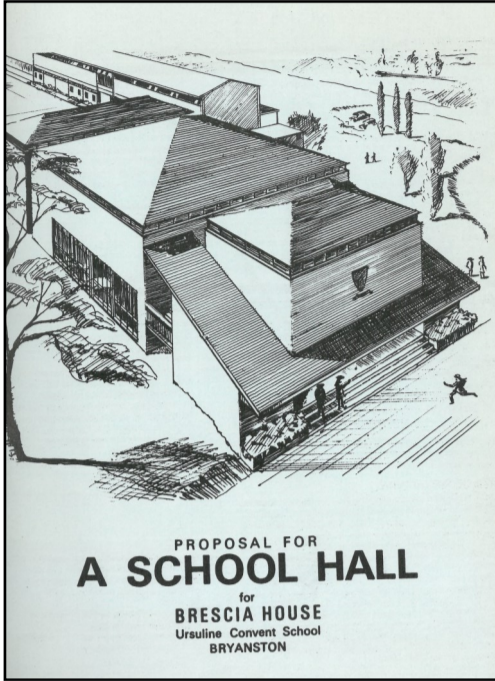
The Supra-house Rosette

The Supra-house Rosette reflects all three houses. The houses, with their mottos, are as follows:

Brescia (Red) - Loyalty Binds

Laurus (Yellow) - Ever Willing

Merici (Blue) - Service Before Self



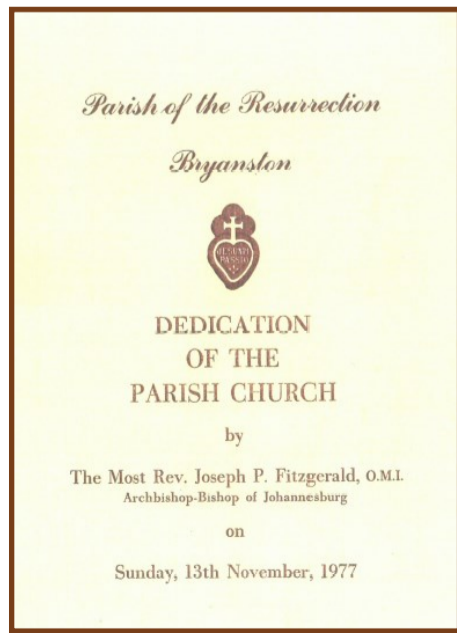
Above: The brochure proposing the new school hall. At the AGM of the Parent Teachers Association held on 12 February 1973, each family received a copy of this brochure for discussion and suggestions.

Dedication of the Bryanston Catholic Church

From the Headmistress's log, dated 13 November 1977:

'It was a bitter sweet day for the Ursulines. The 7:30 Mass this Sunday was the last Mass to be said in our school chapel. The dedication of the new church of the Parish of the Resurrection took place at 9:30 am. The chief celebrant was Archbishop Fitzgerald. Tea was served in the school grounds.'

On November 15th, Mass for the entire school was, for the first time, celebrated in the new church.



A new hall for Brescia

When preparing this report I thought back on the growth of Brescia over the past nine years with a sense of wonder and gratitude - gratitude to you, parents, especially those who in 1966 started out with us with high ideals, hopes, a handful of children and the way ahead strewn with hurdles.

We finished that first scholastic year with 190 children, and opened the following year with 350, and were then reprimanded by one of you for having converted our intimate little school into a stock market.

However, greater numbers led of necessity to a multiplication of

facilities that you were ever ready to provide at great cost of effort, time and money.

This year you crowned your efforts by presenting the school with what is without doubt its most treasured acquisition - the school hall that has changed the face of things at Brescia.

Sister Gemma; Headmistress Report 1974



After 26 unsuccessful attempts at spaghetti bolognese, there's only one thing for it.



"When you've been teaching girls cookery for a few years," says domestic science mistress, Mrs. Ann Shone, "you really learn the value of an efficient scouring powder."

Not that everything they try turns out as badly as this, but with a class of 26 beginners, well, one's bound to have problems, isn't one?

Here at the school we always use Vim, and I must say I find it most satisfactory. I can't imagine anything else making such short work of that burnt bolognese.

Of course, I'm an absolute stickler for hygiene, and what I like most about Vim is that it gets the dirtiest utensils spotlessly clean.

I've also noticed that with Vim one needs to

use remarkably little effort." And with a smile she adds, "That's what the girls seem to like most about it."



Vim. Scourge of the toughest dirt.

The above advertisement, depicting the Brescia House School Domestic Science class, appeared in the Fair Lady magazine, on 26 June 1974.



1980 - 1989

Swiss Mission bell will be ringing at Brescia House Convent

23 January 1988

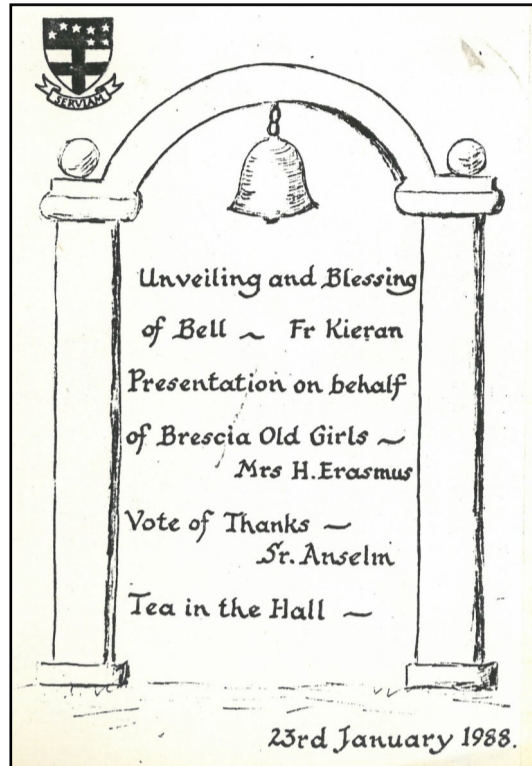
Old girls of Brescia House Convent, Bryanston, have donated a bell and arch to the school to mark its 21st birthday.

Jane Badham and some fellow ex-pupils felt it would be appropriate for the 'old pupils' to donate something to the school; Jane came across an old-world concrete arch and found a Swiss Mission bell dated 1901 which was previously at the Mission Church in Kensington.

She then tried to contact former pupils to ask for donations, but found this difficult as Brescia House had not maintained records.

Buried in the foundations of the arch are the names of all the people who contributed to it.* Mrs. Heather Erasmus, former Deputy Head and herself an Old Girl, presented the bell to the Sisters.

Father Kieran graciously consented to baptise the bell and give it the name Angela, after St Angela, founder of the Ursuline Order.



*Also buried in the foundations is the original newspaper article.

The Blessing of the Peace Block

This year has seen a major new beginning; having endured cramped conditions with admirable patience for the duration of the building operations, the High School and Primary School finally separated and settled themselves into their mutual complexes with much joy and appreciation.

The Peace Block, fittingly named after Sister Anselm, was officially opened and blessed by Bishop Reginald Orsmond on 25th May and since 26th May has housed the Stds 3, 4 and 5 classes, and is also providing a spacious multi-purpose room, gargantuan store-room, an extra change room and sports room. All our primary school pupils are now happily and spaciouly housed in a well-designed, well-constructed, miraculously integrated new structure.

While the plaque of St Francis accompanied by his beloved birds (*below*), overlooks the little quadrangle, exhorting all to put love where there is hatred and light where there is darkness, a precept so marvellously fulfilled by our foundress St Angela Merici, and fitting the concept of our school so well, we continuously wonder at the integration of the new building with the old; was it really not there a year ago?

How fortunate we are to have a primary school on the same campus; it is a source of refreshment and enchantment to the sometime weary adult and adolescent, while the High School is a source of security and challenge for the 'little' community.

Sister Jeanette, Headmistress's Report December 1989

On the above event, Sister Anselm Peace commented:

Although I was conversant with the outline of the Dedication service of the Peace Block, the high standard of performance and polish achieved by the Primary School girls in their singing, choral verse of selected Scriptural passages and the dialogue before the Rose presentation, moved me intensely and I was extremely proud of the girls. The architect, Mr Romanowicz, came to me and said: 'Sister, why didn't we think of a video, that was the most beautiful service I have ever attended.' I couldn't agree with him more.



Celebrating 450 years of the Ursuline Order

The Feast of St Ursula, 21 October 1985, was a very special day in the Ursuline School calendar as it was the day chosen for the celebration of the 450th anniversary of the foundation of the Ursuline Order by St Angela Merici. A total of 1500 pupils and teachers representing Ursuline schools and missions in Southern Africa, gathered at the Cathedral of Christ the King.

A special feature of the Mass was the Offertory. The customary offering of the

bread and wine was preceded by a procession of representatives bearing symbols that depicted, in a variety of colourful ways, the meaning of the jubilee to each of the seven participating schools.

Brescia House Girls presented a basket of red, yellow and white roses, symbolising Angela's love of God, her caring compassionate concern for the illiterate youth of her day, her purity and spirit of prayer.

After the Mass a reception was held in Cathedral Place, where the girls enjoyed meeting other Ursuline pupils and the staff exchanged greetings while sharing a token meal. It was a day no one connected with the Ursuline order will ever forget.





1990 – 1999

Celebrating the 25th Jubilee on 31st January 1991

January 31st dawned bright and clear with a cool breeze blowing. The day was perfect as was the atmosphere for the celebration of our School's 25th Birthday. Approximately 1000 hearts, minds and voices were raised in song and prayer to celebrate this great occasion.

The Mass on this occasion set the tone for the year – in that we acknowledged God as the source, foundation and continuation of our School. He has blessed and guided each successive generation in their life here at Brescia House and as we look around and see what exists today, where once open veld was all that could be seen, we know that through each individual involved in the establishment and life at Brescia House, God has blessed us abundantly.

I take this opportunity of thanking all parents, pupils, teachers, associates and benefactors, past and present,

for their contribution in making the School what it is today and for contributing much of which we are so proud today.

Sister Jeanette Essey (pictured below)



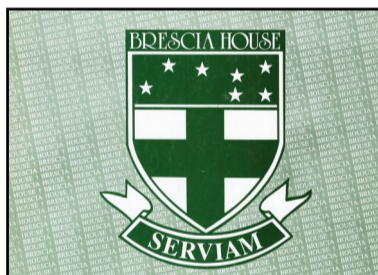
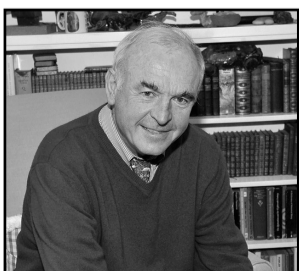
Mr Clem Sunter addresses the school

Mr Clem Sunter was the guest speaker at the Annual Prize Giving in December 1991. At the time, he was the Head of Anglo American's Scenario Planning Team.

Mr Sunter is South Africa's most highly regarded scenario planner and strategist, and an icon and model of mental litnessness as he has been adeptly styled as the Foxy Futurist.

He has gone from discussing strategy in the 1980s with the then future president Nelson Mandela, to becoming the renowned author of several best-selling books entrenched in bringing his new methodology to the people.

Dually known for his book, *The Mind of a Fox*, which indicated the terrorist attacks on US soil on September 11 (2001), he has given presentations globally and has become an ambassador of expert knowledge for South Africa.



The Pillars of Brescia House

Extract from the Log Book dated 1996

These are the values that we, at Brescia, believe in and strive towards. Together these four pillars incorporate all the values which we would like to uphold. All the pillars can be related to every aspect of our lives. Aristotle said, 'The soul never thinks without a picture,' so we have related these four pillars to a symbol of Brescia, the Serviam badge.

Spirit

This is the foundation of our school. We believe that with spirit, everything is possible. Spirit involves zest, youth, unity and enthusiasm. An interest and love for your school is developed through attending school functions, and participating in all areas of school life. The 'serviam' scroll on our badge represents our spirit.

Growing our school

1992: The opening of St Cecilia's Music Centre

The Music Centre was opened by Sister Jeanette and proved a joyous occasion of music and choral verse. Sister Jeanette paid tribute to St Cecilia, Patroness of Musicians, and to Mr Romanowicz, the architect, ARS & Son, the builders, the Board of Governors, the PTA and everyone who had contributed to the realisation of a beautiful dream. Music is an increasingly important aspect of the education of our pupils and may all our endeavours be Soli Deo Gloria – To God Alone the Glory.

1993: Blessing of the new Junior Primary Block.

On 26th February Bishop Patrick Mvemve officiated at the blessing of our new St Angela's block. It was a memorable occasion attended by the whole Primary School, their parents

and various guests. The service, which was held in the school garden, consisted of choral readings, choir items and gifts presentations. The Primary School presented their fellow pupils with the pottery image of St Angela that was hung in the Peace Block.

The High School presented a young laurel tree that has been growing in the High School garden for a number of years. Bishop Patrick then blessed each classroom of the new school, and Sister Jeanette unveiled a plaque at the entrance.

1993: Official opening of the Swimming Pool Complex

1994: Opening of the new Computer Centre / Multi-Media Centre and construction of two new hockey fields

Below right: The new computer centre, 11 September 1993



Above left: The Blessing of the new Junior Primary Block, 26 February



Perseverance is the backbone of the school structure, and is the inspiration which enables us to reach for the stars. Because of what it leads us to, this pillar is represented by the seven stars on our Serviam badge.

Excellence

Last but not least, through these pillars, it is excellence we seek. We are determined to reach our goals of a united and spirited school. This is our highest ideal, and can only be achieved when all pillars are incorporated. This is represented by the whole badge, which also shows unity.

Unity and a belief in love are two major themes which support all the pillars. It is unity which holds our school together. Our vision for our school is built on four cornerstone values and is summarised as follows: **To Bond. To Build. To Be Brescia.**

Honour

Pupils should feel honoured and proud to belong to the Brescia family. It is a school to be proud of, and all pupils should recognise this. Honour includes pride in your school, upholding morals and traditions, as well as respect. This respect is for the thoughts and beliefs of the individual, for the school, for staff, and seniors. Christianity is a vital part of this pillar, as Brescia strives to maintain the beliefs and teachings of our church. Honour is represented by the cross on the Serviam badge.

Perseverance

Doris Henning said, 'This thing we call failure is not the falling down, but the staying down.' We believe that only through perseverance can success be achieved. By human nature we can't always win, but by never giving up or losing faith, we turn our failures into successes.



2000 – 2009

Brescia House School is about the people

'But the school is not simply bricks and mortar. The spirit of the School grew with the buildings.

Today we are focusing on one aspect of that spirit: gratitude, thanksgiving. Gratitude is a virtue by which we acknowledge those who have been good to us. With joyful and loving hearts, we acknowledge God's goodness and faithfulness over 40 years.

As our gospel today indicates, Brescia House School is about people, especially children: 'whoever welcomes in my name one such child as this, welcomes me,' (Matt. 18:15).

It is also about those who nurture these children: their parents and families, their teachers and friends,

their Pastors and our Ursuline Sisters. This is the human element of Brescia House: responsible for the growth of the school and its spirit.'

From the Mass of Thanksgiving for the 40th Anniversary, Sister Jeanette Essey



Bless them all.....

All creatures great and small....even wriggly, squirmy, slithery and hairy, were blessed at the recent Feast of St Francis of Assisi at Brescia House School.

Wise teachers decided larger, more boisterous animals should be blessed in absentia through photographs. Whether a celluloid version or boxed, bagged, caged or lovingly clutched – all pets received generous blessings from Father Michael Fitzpatrick.

Budgies, canaries, parrots, lovebirds, cockatiels, mice, hamsters, rats, snakes, rabbits and even silkworms seemed to enjoy their unusual outing.

Pupils at the school, in turn, blessed the SPCA. One group of girls washed cars and raised R995. A raffle and the sale of 'doggy treats' raised a further R1 300.

In addition, an overjoyed Estelle Swanepoel, education officer at the Sandton SPCA, was able to take a car load of pet food collected by pupils, back to the Sandton SPCA. 'St Francis must have been very proud of their efforts,' she said.

(October 2002)



Proudly South African



Brescia House School featured on the Proudly South African website on 23 September 2002. The girls held a civvies day and dressed up in colours of the South African flag. Money raised was donated to Acres of Love. The whole school gathered on the field and formed the word 'South Africa'. On the same day, they also honoured Arbour Day by planting an indigenous tree on the school grounds.

The meaning behind the diptych

The diptych of St Angela Merici and St Ursula, was donated to Brescia House School on the occasion of the bicentenary of the canonisation of St Angela Merici, who founded the Ursuline Order.

The right hand panel, depicts St Ursula, a Virgin Martyr of circa the 4th century. What is said of Ursula is that she was a British princess, who went on a pilgrimage to Rome with her retinue. On their return, the group were sailing up the Rhine River and stopped at Cologne, where they were confronted by the Huns, who tried to make them renounce their faith and live with them. When they refused they were martyred.

In the panel, Ursula wears a crown of royalty and is dressed in red, the symbolic colour of martyrs. In front of her there is a bunch of palm branches, which are also symbolic of martyrdom, the victory of faith over death. Ursula's hand is guiding and protecting her companions in the boat. She carries the banner of Christ and the spear with which they were martyred. The blue waves below indicate that they were on pilgrimage and travelling by boat.

The left hand panel depicts St Angela Merici, a contemplative and an apostle, who lived from AD 1475 – 1540. The women and angels on her cloak are reminiscent of a vision which St Angela had as a teenager in the field of Brudazzo, Northern

Italy, from which time she knew that God had called her to found a group of women who would serve the Church and lead others to God. The tree in front of her and above which the Holy Spirit hovers in the form of a dove, symbolises the new Company of St Ursula which she founded in the Church to further the Kingdom of God in our world. St Angela was a dynamic apostle in her time; a pilgrim in fact and in spirit during her life, so she carries a pilgrim staff. The green waves below her indicate the earth and the world in which her work was planted. St Angela is dressed in blue, the colour symbolic of contemplatives, prophets and spirituality.

There is space between the two panels, showing the distance of centuries between these two women of God. However, their hands reach out towards one another, showing that they are connected. Also linking the two figures is the cross of Christ, which was the centre of each woman's life. The artist has also included a banner in African design and in bright African colours, which integrates the two panels of the diptych, uniting these two great saints in art as they were united in spirit and faith.

(Commissioned in 2007)





2010 – 2015

In memory of Father

Michael Fitzpatrick

Father Michael Fitzpatrick was born on 23rd June 1939 in Dublin, Ireland, the second youngest of eight children. He studied for the priesthood at All Hallows, Dublin and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Johannesburg on 20th June 1965. He arrived in Johannesburg in October 1965 to take up his priestly ministry.

Father Michael served at many parishes within the Diocese of Johannesburg. In October 1993, he was appointed parish priest to the Church of the Resurrection, Bryanston. This is where he remained for 21 years, until his untimely death on 22nd June 2014, one day before his seventy fifth birthday and two days after the forty ninth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

During his time at Bryanston, he became the beloved father of the children and staff at Brescia House School. His kindly demeanour when celebrating the Sacrament of First Holy Communion and his friendly, approachable style during the Sacrament of Reconciliation are some of his characteristics that have endeared him to us. He was ever patient when the school introduced any new innovations at our weekly school Masses. Truly he was a man of deep compassion and concern for all the people to whom he ministered.

A Requiem Mass was concelebrated by Archbishop Buti Tlhagale and over seventy other priest-friends at the Parish of the Resurrection. So many friends came to bid him a fond farewell and to commend his soul to God.

Father Michael's body was returned to Ireland

where he was buried on 25th June 2014 in Dublin's Glasnevin Cemetery at St. Paul's; this after a Requiem Mass at Christ the King Church, Cabra, Dublin.

He is a man who touched many lives in so many positive and loving ways; his memory continues to live on here at Brescia House School.



Brescia House: Microsoft Showcase School

November 2015

Brescia House School was selected by Microsoft as a 2015-2016 Microsoft Showcase School for its excellence in transforming its learning environment to deliver more personalised education to students, using mobile and cloud technology to better prepare students for success in the workplace.

Brescia House School joins an exclusive community of over 400 premier schools from around the world, recognised to celebrate their truly pioneering efforts and innovation in rethinking teaching, learning and assessment in order to drive deep 21st century competencies.

"Microsoft Showcase Schools are shining examples of those applying purpose-driven innovation in a variety of ways to build connection, motivate students and to create community in and out of school," said Anthony Salcito, vice-president, Worldwide Education, Microsoft.

In addition to the above, 16 teachers from Brescia House School were announced as Microsoft Innovative Educator (MIE) Experts, joining the more than 5 600 educators in the MIE program worldwide. As an MIE Expert, educators build their capacity for using technology in both the classroom and curriculum to improve student learning, advise Microsoft and educational institutions on how to integrate technology in pedagogically sound ways and be an advocate at conferences, events and trainings for how Microsoft technology can improve learning.

"Microsoft Innovative Educator Experts are inspiring examples of educators applying new ways of teaching and learning in their classrooms that motivate students and empower them to achieve more," said Salcito. "We celebrate and support the work they do every day!"



"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world"



*Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela
(18 July 1918—5 December 2013)*

*Artwork: Wandile Dlamini
(Gr 11 2013)*

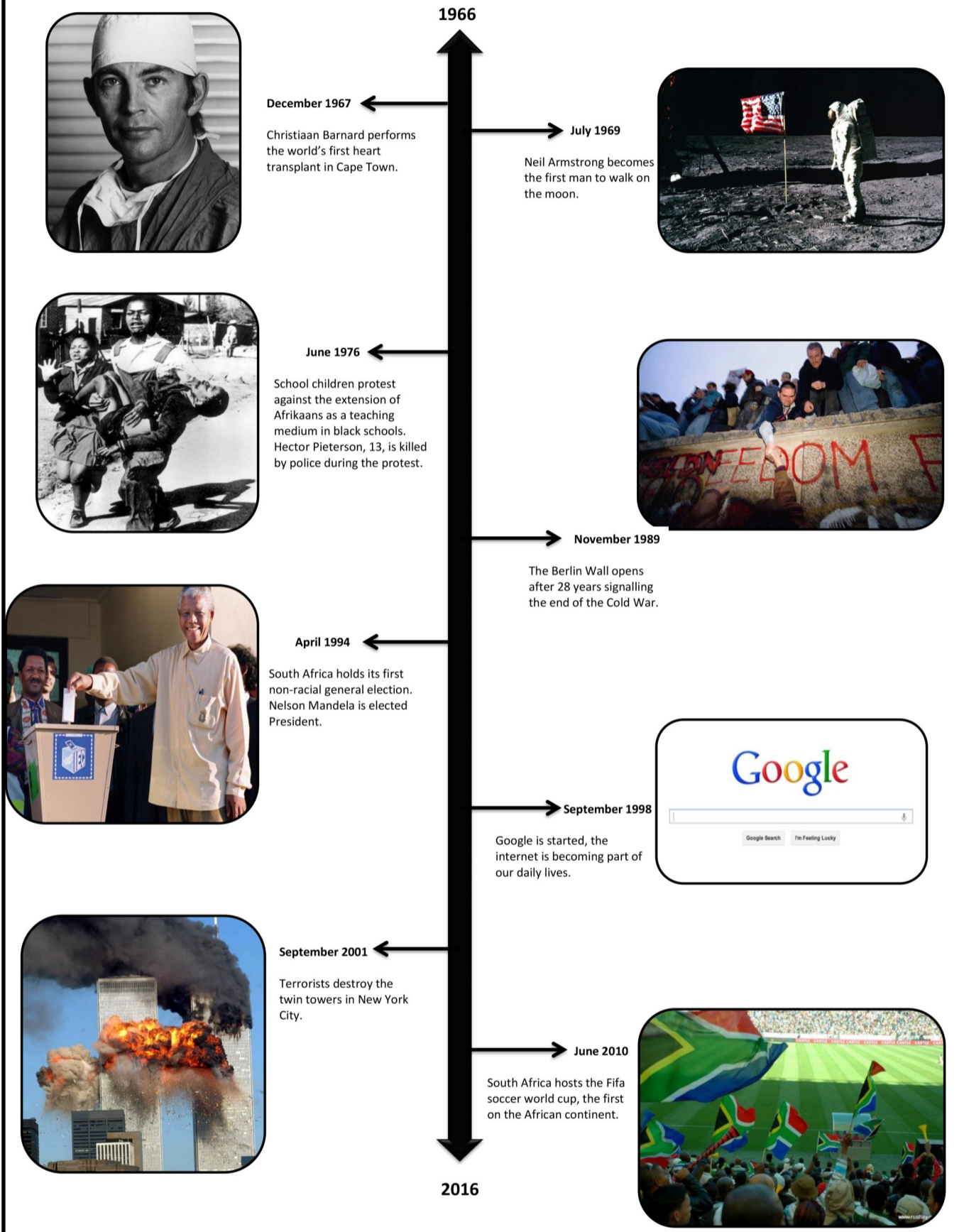
Below: The new High School Atrium (officially opened in 2012) and the newly refurbished Resource Centre





Events Calendar

Significant events over the last 50 years



Save the date!

In recognition of the Ursuline Sisters, we are planning a number of activities and festivities that will allow us time to reflect, pause and celebrate our wonderful school. Please diarise the following dates so that we can all share in these special occasions.

27 January: St Angela's Feast Day: Special Mass and unveiling of the St Angela statue.

30 January: Alumnae champagne breakfast

9 February: Blessing and distribution of the St Angela rose (*pictured below*) – library lawns.

23 – 27 February: High School Major Production *The 3 ½ Musketeers*

27 February: Open Day 09h00 – 13h00

8 April: School birthday. Special Mass and celebrations.

7 May: Matric Dance

28 May: Outdoor concert for the High School girls

11 June: Mothers' Brunch at the Bryanston Country Club

30 July: Jubilee Jamboree (Carnival)

3 and 4 August: IP Production

17 September: Jubilee Ball at the Bryanston Country Club

20 October: Celebration of St Ursula's Feast Day

25 November: Carols by Candlelight



Brescia House School Headmistresses

1966—January - July Sister Xavier Rowntree

1966—1974 Sr Gemma Lawlor

1975—1980 Sr Veronica Murray

1973—1979 Sr Mary Bateman: Head of Primary School

1981—1982 Sr Elizabeth Towell

1982—1983 Mrs Antoinette Alexander

1983—1989 Sr Anselm Peace

1989—1991 Sr Jeanette Essey

1991—1992 Mrs Jill Snaddon

1993—1996 Mrs Rona Protti: Head of High School

1993—2002 Mrs Judy Botha: Head of Primary School

1996—2003 Miss Marilyn Bothma: Head of High School

2004—2011 Miss Marilyn Bothma: Head of Whole School

2004—2006 Mrs Lisa Benning: Head of High School

2003—present Mrs Ann Owgan: Head of Primary School

2007—present Mrs Benedikte Nott: Head of High School



Classifieds

Birthday wishes

Wishing Brescia House a happy 50th Birthday. Thank you for all the memories which I hold dear to my heart. I am privileged to be a part of the Brescia Family.

Candyce Simaan Matric 2001

Happy 50th celebrations Brescia. Thank you for making my school years both enjoyable and unforgettable. May you continue to be a school that nourishes her girls so that they become the best women that they can in all spheres of life. **Gina Forssman (Blake)** Matric 1985

A very happy 50th birthday to the school that was known as our home for a little over the last decade! May the school's future be filled with blessings as we continue to live our lives daily serving God and those around us in a manner befitting the Serviam motto of our school. **Megan Fyffe**, matriculated from Brescia in 2011, **Lindsay Fyffe**, matriculated from Brescia in 2014

To the dear family and friends that make up Brescia House – Happy 50th birthday! FIFTY AND STILL FABULOUS! Love the Matrics of 2003 and the Rent-a-Crowd Group. **Skye Livingstone-Blevins (nee Da Silva)**, **Donatella Whysall (nee Rufrano)**, **Robyn Raath (nee Mills)**, **Angela Kayton**, **Je'mae Mountjoy**, **Jane Hynes (nee Whysall)**, **Sada Blok** and **Sarah Whelehan**.

Happy Birthday Brescia House! May you continue to flourish and grow. Thank you for all the happy memories you gave me in my school days! Love from **Lisa Wegner (nee Blake)** Matric 1982

Dearest Brescia House, Wishing this beautiful school a very happy birthday. Here's to many years of learning, memories, joy and growth. May its girls, staff and families continue to grow and shine. Here's to serving Our Lord, and our neighbours every day. Sending much love, **Lauren Pettit** (Matric 2005)

Happy Jubilee Year to the Brescia Family. I am certain the school will continue to excel on all fronts as it enters its second half century. Happy 50th Birthday Brescia; I hope the teachers, staff, sisters and most importantly the girls have a wonderful year. Love **Tanya (Douglas) Cromme**. Matric 1986, mother of Alex & Nicole (Brescia, Grade 10).

Happy Birthday Brescia: To the school that shaped so many young ladies across the globe. So grateful to have grown up there, and to have been a part of it all. Hope you are well and all the anniversary prep is going well. Yours Sincerely, **Harriet Worthington** Head Girl 2008

Wishing the best school ever a very happy 50th birthday. Many wonderful memories were made at Brescia! A school very close to my heart. With love always, **Romy Best Marais**, Class of 94

Happy Happy 50th Birthday Brescia House! From one of your first Grade 0s that made it all the way through to matric. The tiny school in the middle of nowhere has truly blossomed and I wish you well in all your endeavours for the next 50. Much love from **Karin Amoils (nee Meyer)** – Matric 1978.

May the school continue to go forward serving its students as well as equipping them to serve the wider community and the world in which they subsequently find themselves, upholding Truth and Honour. May integrity of soul be Brescia's first and foremost ideal. May Christ, who taught by serving, guide and bless all the work you do in the years ahead. Yours, **Andrea Klopper (Badham)** Matric 1981

Happy 50th Birthday Brescia! The Golden Jubilee year is truly here now, what a milestone! I would like to wish Brescia many many more years of raising generations of intelligent and ambitious girls in Green! **Safiya Mahlangu (nee Turundu)** Matric 2007

Dear Brescia House (Ursuline Convent), With my parents I watched you rise from the ground brick by brick, I walked your corridors before they were filled with school children and teachers. My parents were among those who voted for uniforms which included the apricot coloured shirts to go with our winter pinafore dresses, hats which are still worn today. Very little has changed – the apricot shirts are a distant memory . . .

Not many people can remember when they had the measles. I can - 50 years ago next year! First day of Standard Four at a brand new school spent outside on a chair with Sister Mary Hugh fussing over me and eventually sending me home! Many happy memories, some tears, many good friends, many moments that could have gone on forever. Happy 50th Birthday Brescia! Love, Jan (**Janice Hawkrige nee Herbert**)

Congratulations Brescia! Thank you for hosting me as an exchange student from Australia in 1997, it was one of the most formative years of my life. I have fond memories of the school, teachers and my class and formed lifelong friendships. **Clare Arthurs (nee Ponton)** Matric 1997

Happy birthday to a school that has played such a significant part in moulding me into the person I am today. May you continue to thrive and provide a space for girls to learn and grow. May God's spirit continue to be felt throughout the school and may He continue to bless all those who enter the school gates. Brescia, you beauty, to many more great and successful years producing girls with a secret sense of pride for that white basher! **Jeanine Wilson**, Matric 2006

Happy Birthday Brescia House! You hold very dear (and hilarious) memories in your foyers and halls and gave birth to friendships that still hold strong today. Thank you for the gentle and strong foundation you gave me in my life, and I wish this for all the young women who matriculate with you. Regards, **Tabitha Hume**, Matric 1990.

Happy 50th birthday Brescia, to all the staff, students and alumnae. Here is to many more years of being proud Brescia girls. **Bronwyn Bredell** 2010

A big happy birthday to the place I called 'home' for 13 years of my life. Although over the years the staff and the pupils have changed, the new and the old will always be considered part of the Brescia family. I can only ever dream that my special experience at Brescia House will too be shared by each and every girl who attends this magnificent school. Thank you for changing my life Brescia House, you deserve the biggest celebration in the world! Best wishes to all, **Jess de Kock**, Head Girl, Class of 2012

Happy 50th Birthday Brescia House School! Thank you for showing me the meaning of sisterhood and most importantly how to serve. Thank you for playing a part in making me the young woman I am today and providing a place for me to make lasting friendships. Here's to 50 more years of moulding young girls into successful, strong and compassionate ladies! **Caitlin Mackenzie-Jones**, Matric 2013

I would like to wish Brescia House, my beloved school, a wonderful 50th birthday. It taught me with knowledge, trained me with skills and filled me with love and care. I thank Brescia House for turning me into a better person, and leading me onto a higher stage. It is my honour to be a Brescia girl. Again, Happy Birthday, Brescia House! **Jing Ying Luo**, Matric Year:2013

Happy 50th birthday to Brescia House - a school that has helped shape my future and taught me many valuable lessons that I carry with me each day. May it continue to touch and bless many lives in the loving way it has in the past. Love **Stephanie da Silva** (Matric 2009) and the da Silva family.

Happy 50th Birthday Brescia House. A good life is not measured in years alone, but in the memories that fill those hours, days, months and years. All who pass through Brescia's halls know of the wonderful memories and nurturing foundation that allows us to become strong empowered women. Thank you Brescia and long may you support the young women who have the privilege to be educated at Brescia House. **Marie Claire Smith (Nee: Rouillard)** 2003 Matric Year.

Dear Brescia, 50 years and still going strong! How wonderful! I matriculated from Brescia in 1973 and have such wonderful memories of my school years. I have been so successful in my career and I have Brescia to thank for developing my skills and teaching me resilience to face what has sometimes been a difficult road. Heartiest congratulations on this momentous birthday. Kindest regards, **Barbara Bennett (nee Hughes)** Head Girl 1973

Wow I cannot believe how the past 25 years have flown by! I matriculated in 1991 and always felt so privileged to be in Matric during the school's Silver Jubilee year and remember the celebration Mass as if it were yesterday. I loved my time at Brescia, my English and Afrikaans teachers, and especially my friends. From Cape Town, I wish the Brescia family past and present, all the very best in celebrating 50 golden years. **Diana Kelly**

Brescia played a huge role in making me the woman I am today. The 13 years I spent at the school were years filled with love, family, lifelong friendships and learning - both academic and life lessons that I still carry with me today. Thinking of the school always warms my heart and I hope it continues to impact the lives of many more young women for generations to come. Happy 50th birthday to a truly special school! **Kerryn Le Cordeur** Matric class of 2004

Happy Birthday Brescia House School. Truly some of the happiest days of my life and met my best friend for life! I started school in Grade 1 in 1967 and matriculated in 1979. **Meryl Brown (nee Young)**.

Every skyscraper is built on a strong foundation of pillars. And the life of each and every one in our family is built on a pillar of support called Brescia. Dearest Brescia House School, wishing you a very Happy 50th Birthday! Thank you for so many happy memories! **Sharon McLintock (Fraser-Smith)** 1975 and **Taryn McLintock** 2007

How wonderful that Brescia House has thrived and prospered and grown over the past 50 years, it deserved to do so. As I remember it (matric 1975), Brescia House was a happy, kindly place where we were encouraged to become our best selves. There was no pressure to conform to being a 'type'; Mother Gemma and her staff wanted us to work hard, play hard and be good, it was a simple recipe, but oh so effective! I remember Brescia House with great fondness and was very pleased to be there in April 2015 for my year group's '40 years on' gathering. Happy birthday, Brescia. **Penelope Luther (Cullis)**

It seems hard to believe that it is Brescia's 50th birthday and even more frightening to think how long it has been since I matriculated after attending Brescia from Grade 0 to Matric. I am so very grateful for all that Brescia taught me and meant to me and for the significant role it has played in shaping who I am today. **Jane Badham**, Matric 1984