



S.A.T.S. General Botha OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION BURSARY FUND

Nurturing Sea Fever

AUGUST
2026



Robyn Ambler
photography



CHAIR'S REPORT

The Bursary Fund is sailing along with her new crew settling into their roles with confidence, competence and cool heads.

Whilst our maritime industry rears under the pressure of the Middle East crisis the future plans for our Fund remain steadfast in our support for the youth development of our bursary recipients.

Academic performance is, of course, a desirable achievement but so too is the moral well-being of our young men and women as they enter the maritime world that they have chosen.

Supporting them on this journey are "old salts" who have sailed the seven seas and have learnt how to conduct themselves to succeed in troubled waters.

These volunteer men and women make up the backbone of the Bursary Fund and gives it the positivity over donors who aren't all that interested in their beneficiaries.



One example would be the B F's Sail and Motor programme. On any free day for scholars from Lawhill in Simons Town a group of youth board a motor or sailing craft to learn the art of seamanship with trusted mentors. What better way to endorse the subjects taught at Lawhill Maritime Centre and to have any cobwebs blown free in the sea breeze off the False Bay coastline?

I trust you will enjoy the pages that follow in this edition with the wonderful achievements of our bursary recipients. At a time when so much negativity is published regarding the education and employment of our young South Africans the stories that our youth display makes such good and worthwhile reading.

Thank you for the time, support, effort and funding you assist the Bursary Fund with, and we value your contributions in whatever form they take.

Simon Pearson

*Cover photo:
Robyn Ambler, MSC Week - Durban:
Jostling at close quarters amongst a fleet of boats,
what a way to spend the day!*

THE VISIT TO THE S.A. AGULHAS II



Visit to the Agulhas II Bridge

The S.A. Agulhas II visit in late April was a great hit with all of our bursary students.

The two cadets who showed us around the ship had such obvious pride in her and they proved themselves as excellent ambassadors, very willing to answer the multitude of questions that we had for them.

The *Agulhas II* has a gross tonnage of 12879, a LOA of 134m and is capable of breaking one-meter-thick ice at a speed of 5 knots. She has accommodation for 100 passengers and a crew compliment of 45. What none of our young charges knew was who Miriam Makeba, the lady the ship is dedicated to, was. It gave the old salts a chance to expound on how good a singer she was and tentatively try recall a bit of the click song, much to the amusement of the students.

GRADE 10 OPEN DAY



Group photo Open Day 2026

With all of our Grade 10's successfully completing their water safety training, they have moved on to the next important step in the sail and motor program, deciding which of the three options they are going to get involved in, **sailing, motorboat or, for the tough, rowing.** Open day was held on Saturday the 23rd May and the Grade 10's had the opportunity to look over the boats, ask questions of our two skippers, before putting pen to paper and making their choice. Regardless of which they choose, we know that they will thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to spend time on the water and grow in confidence as they learn new skills.



WELL DONE SBONGA SIBIYA

Sbonga Sibiya a Nautical Studies student at DUT sponsored by FPT has graduated Cum Laude. His WhatsApp post after the event says it all.

"Hi Mama T. I. hope you are well. I'm happy to share that I graduated yesterday. I want to sincerely thank you and the Bursary for the incredible support throughout my studies. Your kindness and belief in me made a huge difference in my journey and I am truly grateful for the opportunity you gave me".



LIFE GOVERNOR BLACKIE SWART

The AGM on the 6th of June was a fitting place to acknowledge the service of a stalwart of the Bursary Fund and especially, the sail and motor program, Blackie Swart. He has been the active driver behind our sail and motor program since getting involved in 2020 and we have seen the program grow from strength to strength under his guidance. He is now taking a well earned rest, but has promised to be available should we need his excellent guidance.

"A steadfast champion of practical seamanship, he will be long remembered for the passion for the sea that he inspired in others".

SAIL AND MOTORBOAT TRAINING



MSC REGATTA DURBAN

Thank you to Sail Africa for kindly offering a berth on one of their yachts for Lwandile Sibeko to participate in the MSC Regatta held in Durban over 6 days in the July holidays. Our Sail and Motor program is geared towards giving all our students as much opportunity as possible to be out on the water, meeting new people, new challenges and nurturing sea fever.

NSRI WEEK



The weather might not have been great, but it did not dampen the spirits of our students who spent the week getting to know what would be required of them should they decide to volunteer for the NSRI.



The GBA Bursary Fund Sail and Motor program at Lawhill Maritime Centre teamed up with the NSRI Station 10 at False Bay to prepare the next generation of maritime professionals. Our relationship with the NSRI and particularly Station 10, has been strengthened over the years by a shared belief that maritime education should extend beyond the classroom. The Sail and Motor program, in partnership with Station 10, brought that learning to life through a hands on rescue and seamanship training over the last three days of the school term.

Our students spent this time immersed in rescue and seamanship training, gaining confidence in the water, learning survival techniques and the benefits of functioning as part of a team. They learnt rope work, towing techniques, anchoring, firefighting, capsizing procedures, collision regulations and vessel handling.

Throughout the training the students impressed their instructors, Mawaxole Nkumanda and Melodie Hermann with their willingness to embrace unfamiliar challenges.

"Seeing two of the girls who were scared of going in the water face their fear by jumping into the water from the pier and seeing the smiles after, reminded me why we do what we do - not just save lives but also change lives" Maxaxole shares.

Mike Vonk, CEO of the NSRI commented "It is a wonderful example of the saying that it takes a village to raise a child, with different organisations and individuals contributing their knowledge, time and resources to support these young people"

We would like to thank Keith Burchell, a founding member of the Bursary Fund and an Honorary Life Governor of the NSRI for his efforts in bringing this event to fruition.

SAIL AND MOTOR PROGRAM

The Sail and Motor program kicked into high gear last term and into the school holidays.

Our girls came second in the Ullman Sails Women Series race 1 at the Royal Cape yacht Club.



DAY SKIPPERS TICKET



Anele pulling on the jib sheet

Anele Ndlovu, a Fairships sponsored Grade 10 student, thoroughly enjoyed the experience and had this to say in his note of thanks.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for giving me the chance to complete the Day Skipper course. I have finished all the exams, including the practical. Thank you for your support throughout the course. I learned a lot and made many unforgettable memories along the way.

Completing this course was the highlight of my holidays.

Thank you again, Anele

From Sive Magong, who whilst not one of our bursary students, is a participant in the GBA BF sail and motor program, was also very grateful for the opportunity:

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for making it possible for Anele and me to complete our Day Skipper's Course.

Thank you for giving us this valuable opportunity. The course has helped us improve our knowledge, practical skills and confidence in seamanship and navigation. We truly appreciate the time, effort, and resources you have dedicated to helping students like us succeed.

Once again, thank you for believing in our potential and for making this experience possible. Your support and generosity are greatly appreciated.

Thank you, Sive Magong

FUNDRAISING NEWS

DURBAN GOLF DAY by Roy Scallan



The winning 4 ball: From Left to right Jessica Lefevre, Melanie Edley, Karen Vermaak, Kerry Harper with the Durban Bursary Fund Chairperson Nomkhitha Mbele

Thank you to the 72 golfers that participated in the **Fairship SA** Marine Bursary

Golf Day – Durban recently held in June. Mount Edgecombe Country Club's – The Woods course was in superb condition and along with the usual calm and warm Durban winter climate, provided a fair test of golf for the players.

The prizegiving provided an opportunity for two past bursary recipients Simnikiwe Vundla

and Sbonga Sibiya to share their educational journey directly with the sponsors and players, whose support of the Bursary Fund is invaluable.



SUNDAY MORNING HIKE

Charles Kingon and Lwandile Mnyango, a FPT sponsored tertiary student, went on a hike up the Constantia Nek to Table Mountain trail on a warm sunny winter's morning. Dennis Henwood joined them for part of walk and so enthused were the three of them that they are now threatening to make it a regular event, with talk of descending at Plaateklip Gorge. After studying and sitting his exams, it was a good way to unwind a little before the holidays. With the two old salts leading the way we are sure his newly tested navigation skills were not required.

BOOK
YOUR
4 BALL
NOW



FAIRSHIP SA MARINE BURSARY GOLF DAY

5 NOV 2026

CAPE TOWN
RONDEBOSCH GOLF COURSE

gm@generalbotha.co.za

NEW BURSARY STUDENTS

We would like to thank Bruce Henderson and the team at Wreckless Marine for agreeing to sponsor Elihle Ngcobo. He is in grade 10 and until Bruce stepped in, he did not have a sponsor. We look forward to watching this young man excel over the next three years.



Elihle Ngcobo



Grade 10

Our tertiary golf days and sponsors have made it possible for a further two students to be able to concentrate on their studies, knowing that their fees and accommodation are now covered.

Luyanda Nxumalo is in his final year of studying Nautical Studies and is sponsored by FPT

Andiswa Khubeko is also in her final year of Nautical Studies and is sponsored by Fendercare and Hapag Lloyd



Nautical Studies Durban
University of Technology

Luyanda Nxumalo



Nautical Studies Durban
University of Technology

Andiswa Kubheka

A big thank you is owed to all our sponsors and golf day participants in helping to grow our tertiary student compliment. We currently have seven students working towards completion of their Nautical Studies and Marine Engineering degrees. Our Cape Town Golf Day is on the 4th November and we look forward to your continued support of this annual event, which is again funded by Fairships.



S.A.T.S. *General Botha* OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION BURSARY FUND

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BANKING DETAILS

S.A.T.S. *General Botha* Old Boys Association Bursary Fund

Nedbank, Constantia

Branch Code 101-109

Account Number 10111 33164

Swift Code (Foreign Transfers) NEDS ZA JJ