

# Michael Stern

Born 13.1.1922.

Life story compiled by Alex Reid.

Available online at [www.livesretold.co.uk](http://www.livesretold.co.uk)



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*The following three chapters are an obituary by Colin Legum. They are reproduced as a tribute to Michael Stern, with acknowledgement and thanks, from The Guardian of 1<sup>st</sup> August 2002. Colin Legum (3 January 1919 – 8 June 2003) was a South African journalist and writer on African politics. A popular author, he was authored several popular books and worked for most of his career at The Observer in the United Kingdom. He was a notable Anti-Apartheid activist.*

## 1. Early Life

Born in Cairo, Stern went to Ravenswood Preparatory School, Devon, and Gresham's school, Holt, in Norfolk. From 1941 to 1946, he was with the Royal Signals in North Africa, Italy and Greece, rising to the rank of captain.



Bedales School.

War service delayed until 1947 his graduation from Downing College, Cambridge, with a degree in history and English (his favourite teacher was FR Leavis). Although he launched on a promising career as a teacher, including senior English master at Bedales, Stern's real interest was in social work. So he left teaching to become principal teacher at the Cotswold Home Approved School from 1952 to 1954; and deputy headmaster at the Langham Oake Approved School from 1954 to 1955.

Stern's career changed completely after reading an Observer article by the Rev (later Bishop) Trevor Huddleston (right). Huddleston invited him to go to South Africa as headmaster of St Peter's in Johannesburg - a school for Africans. It had among its pupils future leaders like Oliver Tambo, later president of the African National Congress. When the apartheid regime closed the school, Stern reluctantly went to St Martin's, a school for white children based on liberal Christian principles. But he found no satisfaction in such a racially exclusive school, and decided to cross the border to start Waterford in Swaziland. Of his backers - the anti-apartheid campaigner Christopher Newton Thompson, Robert Kennedy and Richard (now Lord) Attenborough - the last remains a trustee and governor.



## 2. Waterford

Revolted by the racist education system in South Africa, he founded Waterford, a multi-racial school in Swaziland, on the lines of an English public school. He set it up from scratch and singlehandedly, on a hillside above Mbabane, capital of the landlocked British protectorate (now an independent kingdom) between South Africa and Mozambique. In holiday times he travelled to fundraise and to recruit outstanding teachers. During his headmastership - from 1963 to 1973 - parents from Swaziland, South Africa, Mozambique and Rhodesia sent their children to benefit from the high-quality education in a multiracial environment.

Waterford became a haven for children of anti-apartheid leaders like Nelson Mandela (right), Walter Sisulu and Desmond Tutu. President Seretse Khama sent his eldest son, Ian. The list of distinguished old boys includes Alan McGregor, professor of medicine at King's College London, and Matthew Parris, once a Tory MP and a former parliamentary sketch writer on the Times. Thus Stern created an oasis of non-racism in a remote country surrounded by colonial and racist regimes.



One of the most remarkable old boys was a Mozambican, Fernando Honwane, sponsored by an anti-Salazar Portuguese architect who twinned Fernando with his own son. Honwane became a senior political aide of Mozambique's first president, Samora Machel, with whom he died in an air crash in 1986.

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### 3. After Waterford



*The Beeches Children's Home, Sidcup.*

Having established Waterford on a firm foundation, Stern resigned in 1973 to return to England for family reasons. There he embarked on a varied career which included that of superintendent of the Adolescent Unit at The Beeches Children's Home in Sidcup (1973-76), principal of Millfield Children's Home in Highgate (1976-80) and appeals director of the mental health charity, Mind (1981-83).



*Michael Stern (fourth from left back row) with a mixture of staff and kids at Millfield, getting ready for a trip to the Netherlands in about 1980.*

Michael Stern's personal life was tinged with tragedy. His father, a civil engineer, was killed by an Iraqi nationalist when Michael was nine. His mother later married

Lieutenant Colonel Roland Hamilton, a Labour MP who had a deep influence on his stepson's life.

In 1986, at the age of 65, Michael married for the first time - to Sarah Roberts, who had been widowed young, leaving a small son, Hugh. But his happiness in marriage was cut short when Sarah died of a brain haemorrhage, leaving him with a baby daughter, Miranda, as well as Hugh. For the rest of his life, Michael devoted himself principally to caring for them. Shortly before his death he was happy to see Hugh graduate at Clare College, Cambridge, and to witness Miranda as Titania in a school production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Stern's appearance was always deceptive. Compact and neat, his manner was crisp, contained and military. But his ever-present sense of humour, his anger against any form of oppression and his tenderness for the outcast were his outstanding personal characteristics.

Waterford is now linked with the United World College movement. It is known as Waterford Kamhlaba - the name given to it by the Swazi king. It means "Wherever you are in the world does not distinguish who you are" - an apt description of the democratic tradition Stern started.

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## 4. The Story of Waterford Kamhlaba

*The following history of Waterford Kamhlaba is reproduced, with acknowledgement and thanks, from the Waterford Kamhlaba website at [www.waterford.sz](http://www.waterford.sz).*



*School 1963 - Students, staff and volunteers*



*WK students in their maroon blazers and navy blue ties.*

Waterford School was opened on a mountainside at the edge of Mbabane in 1963, after founding headmaster Michael Stern spent 6 years teaching in South Africa, first at an all black school (St. Peter's, which was closed in 1956) then at an all white school (St. Martin's, on the same site as St. Peter's, where he was the founding headmaster), under the Apartheid Regime. Michael Stern came to South Africa to teach in 1955 after responding to an article written by Father (later Archbishop) Trevor Huddleston called, "And the Church Sleeps On" but he became increasingly dissatisfied and frustrated with the pervasive environment of racial intolerance. In 1961, after several years of St. Martin's work camps in the then British Protectorate of Swaziland, and after it was clear that Michael could not teach

and live his ideals in South Africa, he committed himself to the idea of a multiracial school in Swaziland. Waterford was established in clear and expressed opposition to the South African Apartheid regime and its laws of racial segregation.

Michael Stern was not alone in his efforts to make Waterford a reality. His colleagues Gordon Milne, Deon Glover and Jim & Jean Richardson left St. Martin's to join him in Swaziland. Gifts of service and skill were also made, the most famous being architect and parent Amancio (Pancho) Guedes, who offered to design the school for free, and Stanley Kaplan, a consultant engineer, whose combined efforts allowed the physical structures of campus to be built despite little funding.

Not only did a school need to be built, but the founders of WK wanted all students who qualified academically to be able to attend regardless of their ability to pay, making funds for bursaries a necessity. Early fundraisers were Christopher Newton Thompson, chairman of the school's Executive Council, which later became the Southern African Trustees, and South African businessman Clive Menell, a friend of Michael Stern's. In 1963, Michael Stern established the Waterford School Trust in London, with chairman Dr. Eric Abbott, Dean of Westminster. The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Wolfson Foundation and the Anglo-American Corporation were early donors, with Harry Oppenheimer, Chairman of Anglo-American, funding the science laboratories (which are still used today). Friends of Waterford also established a 'Fifty Club' in Johannesburg, for those who were willing to give £50 for the initial costs. All of these efforts allowed what seemed a crazy idea discussed over a campfire to become a reality.

The school opened with little fanfare on February 3, 1963; an opening ceremony was planned for a few weeks later.

The first students were 16 boys. The boys consisted of seven white (five of who came from St. Martin's), six black, two 'coloured', and one Indian student (the racial demarcations set by the Apartheid regime). Two of these boys were unable to continue their studies at Waterford after a border between South Africa and Swaziland was established in July of 1963 and a few more didn't return after the first year.

It would be remiss to not also mention the founding staff members, because, as Tony Hatton puts it in his memoirs, "the nominal salaries they received must rank them among the School's first major donors."

- Michael Stern - Headmaster; French, Latin, English
- Gordon Milne - Housemaster; Mathematics
- Tony Hatton - Bursar; History, Geography, English
- Jim Richardson - Building & maintenance; Divinity, Woodwork
- Jean Richardson - Matron
- Alan Harman - a VSO volunteer turned Science teacher
- Peter Klatzow - Music
- Nicholas Buchan - General helper, including daily runs down to Mbabane

Despite the school's early successes, many local and international observers deemed this diversity as 'sick' and 'unnatural'. To those who supported racially segregated Waterford School was opened on a mountainside at the edge of Mbabane in 1963,

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education, and society, Waterford was a threat to their convictions. During the early days, this animosity was displayed through slashed car tyres, increased tension with neighboring schools and the taunting of white students, who, as Tony Hatton put it, were learning "at a young age that racial prejudice produces a special sort of viciousness towards those of the same colour but different mind."

Over the next couple of years, the school grew exponentially, and with it, support for its ethos and mission. In 1967, King Sobhuza II Ngwenyama of Swaziland granted Waterford School the name *Kamhlaba*, saying, "*Wherever you are in the world, the earth does not distinguish who you are. You live in it whatever your colour, whatever your religion, whatever your race. You live in it and it does not try to ostracise you or show any difference as to what you are. And this is the meaning of Kamhlaba.*" And from then on the school was known as Waterford Kamhlaba.

THE  
**TIMES**  
OF SWAZILAND

REPRINT FROM THE TIMES OF SWAZILAND, 3rd NOVEMBER, 1967.

# The King's name for Waterford-Kamhlaba

**KING SOBUZA GAVE WATERFORD SCHOOL, MBABANE, A SWAZI NAME ON FRIDAY — KAMHLABA, THE WORLD.**

He told a large gathering at the school why he had chosen this name. "Wherever you are in this world", he said, "the earth does not distinguish who you are."

"You live in it whatever your colour, whatever your religion, whatever your race. You live in it and it does not try to ostracise you or show any difference as to what you are. And this is the meaning of Kamhlaba."

The King, who was speaking at the celebrations to mark the fifth anniversary of Waterford, said he felt such a school was needed not only in Swaziland but in other countries throughout the world.

He had always been keen that

## DIFFERENT RACES — ONE IN SPIRIT

they had achieved, and wished the school success. Mr Stern said that at times before they started the school it seemed impossible to start, and at times after they had started it seemed impossible to continue. They had had their knocks and disappointments and difficulties.

Gifts But as I look at the buildings, and even more at the boys, and at our friends gathered here today, and when I think of others all over the world who have helped us with their time and money, sympathy, interest and support of the many big gifts and hundreds and hundreds of smaller ones, I realise clearly that something has emerged, something which I hope is permanent which could never have grown to this size and this comparative stability without the faith and support of a very large number of people here and elsewhere — boys and staff, architect and donors, Governing Council and trustees, a friendly



The King and Michael Stern looking through a scrapbook which shows Waterford's progress.

group now exceeding 2,000, who have between them over a period of six years raised over R250,000, to make the school begin to prosper."

Mr Stern said that he had firm conviction that in the long run, things built on mutual trust, understanding and co-operation between races, peoples and classes and

nations and individuals would outlast man's inhumanity to man.

**Growth** Dealing with the growth of the school, Mr Stern said that the enrolment had increased from 16 to 116, with 40 Swazis and a long waiting list for the future, "as we increase from 116 next year to something like 200 after 1970, with a planned double stream in the middle school to keep our classes down to about 25."

The guests were welcomed by the chairman of the Governing Council, Mr Abel Long, Acting Queen's Commissioner, who said that Waterford had established itself as a private school open to boys of any race or religion and as a seat of the great tradition of liberal education.

Mr Long recalled that success was achieved in spite of much opposition from those who disagreed with the concept of a non-racial school, and, he said, there were times when Mr Stern had to suffer personal abuse and vilification.

**Choir sang** The school's choir sang "Live Linye (Sakagwane) (The Land of the People of Nyanetshe) and Nisot Sikelel' Afrika" (God Bless Africa), and the King was thanked by two priests, Johnny Nohabeng in English and Alan McGregor in Swazi.

An album with photographs of Waterford and its growth was handed to the King, and bouquets were given to Mrs Dlamini, wife of Prince Makhosini, Prime Minister, Lady Loyd, wife of the Queen's Commissioner, Sir Francis Loyd, who is on a trip to London, and Mrs. Abel Long. Prince Makhosini, Mr Mkhosini Sakati, Deputy Prime Minister, and the other members of the Cabinet were present.



Prince Makhosini, Prime Minister, during a tour of Waterford on Friday.

the project should be a success. He was pleased to see boys of different races together — different in many respects but one in spirit and in their aim.

**Quarrelled** The kind of friendship among young people, when they planned together and built together and quarrelled and made it up, would last for life.

He felt happy that the boys of Waterford, having lived together, would go out to the world and help to put it right.

To the pupils the King said: "It is for you now to go and put into practice what you have seen and what you have lived and seen here at this school. When you go out into the world do practice what you have seen at this school." The King congratulated the headmaster, Mr Michael Stern, and his staff on what



Waterford School, Mbabane, was given a Swazi name on Friday by King Sobhuza. The name is Kamhlaba, the world. The King told a large gathering at the school's fifth anniversary celebrations that he had always been keen to see the non-racial project become a success. In this picture the King is accompanied by Mr Michael Stern, the headmaster.

During the same time of Waterford's founding, another movement in education was beginning in the UK, United World College movement (UWC). At a time when the Cold War was at its height, the aim of UWC was to bring together young people from different nations to act as champions of peace through an education based on shared learning, collaboration and understanding.

And in 1981, the two movements came together when Waterford Kamhlaba joined the UWC movement, becoming Waterford Kamhlaba United World College of Southern Africa (UWCSEA).



*The Rondavels. The original structures on the land when it was bought.*

Waterford played a small yet significant role in the struggle for racial equality in the Southern Africa region, educating the children of Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Desmond Tutu, Nobel prize-winning novelist Nadine Gordimer, the first President of Botswana Sir Seretse Khama, and the revolutionary leaders of Mozambique Samora Machel and Eduardo Mondlane. In a post-Apartheid era, Waterford has sustained its early vision to educate exceptional students regardless of race, religion or financial background. The school continues to nurture Africa's future political, business, and civic leaders.

Our Headmasters/Principals over the years are:

- Michael Stern: 1963 -1973
- Athol Jennings: 1974 -1984
- Richard Eyeington: 1985 -1995
- Paul McDermott: 1995 -1998
- Laurence Nodder: 1998 - 2012
- Stephen Lowry: 2013 - Present

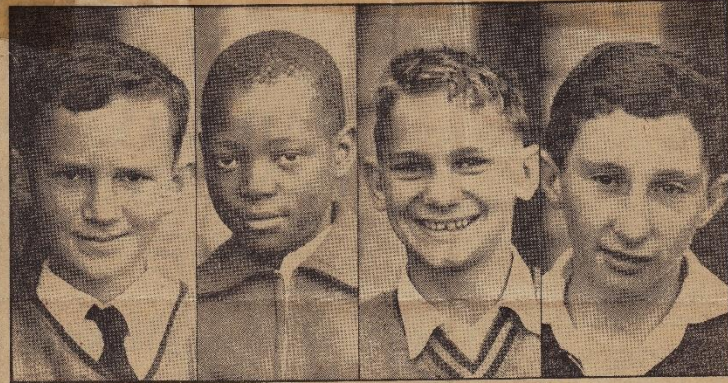


*Students helping to build WK*

# Daily Rand Mail

Established 1902.  
Registered at O.P.G. as a Newspaper.

JOHANNESBURG, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1963.



Four of the boys celebrate birthdays at the Waterford multiracial school this week (left to right), David Keet was 14 yesterday, Oswald Nkabinde is 13 today, Charles Day will be 14 on Thursday and Richard Heper will be 14 on Friday.

## Masters will also learn at mixed school

Staff Reporter

MEABANE.—Sixteen schoolboys grinned yesterday when they learnt that their teachers planned to swap seats at desks for 10 days and join them for lessons in Zulu.

The principal, Mr. Michael Stern, predicted that his youngest pupil would be top of the class of masters and boys at Waterford School—Swaziland's first multiracial boarding school, which started its first term yesterday.

For Zulu is the home language of Oswald Nkabinde—who is 13 today—a chauffeur's son whose school fees are being paid by the industrialist, Sir George Fisher.

Sir George became interested in the school when he learnt his chauffeur was planning to send his boy. He offered to pay Oswald's fees and made a big donation to the school.

School began with a pep talk yesterday from Mr. Stern and most of the boys took his advice and



Today the school has over 600 students representing 60 nationalities, taught by staff from 18 countries. Waterford Kamhlaba provides opportunities for academic achievement, personal growth, and leadership development for young people across Africa and the world. Offering education of Forms 1 to 5, with Form 5 sitting the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) qualification, followed by two years dedicated to the International Baccalaureate (IB). Additionally, all academic levels are involved in weekly community service. This emphasis on service was part of the Christian founding in 1963, was reinforced by UWC, and is now one of the most important aspects of the school, with many alumni recalling its impact on their personal and professional choices. Waterford Kamhlaba's academic reputation and commitment to service is exceptional.

For more than 50 years, Waterford has proven that young people can look and work beyond the barriers set by governments and politicians; they can create a peaceful, welcoming environment that doesn't judge an individual based on their race, religion, or socio-economic status. And for 50 years more, WK will endeavour to fulfil Michael Stern's original vision for this school on a hill in Swaziland.

## 5. Jean Richardson Remembers

*The following is a transcript, with acknowledgement and thanks, of an oral interview by Louise Hidalgo of Jean Richardson published by the BBC on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2013. It was produced to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the school at Waterford.*

*Louise Hidalgo: One English headmaster, called Michael Stern, decided he was going to defy apartheid.*

Jean Richardson: Michael decided he was going to open a school where all races would be treated alike and where there would be no such thing as a colour bar. And that's how Waterford came into being.

*Louise Hidalgo: Jean Richardson, and her husband Jim, had worked with Michael Stern at a previous school, St. Martin's, an all white school in Johannesburg. Stern was keen to make things different, but he soon ran foul of the authorities.*

Jean Richardson: One day the African domestic staff asked Michael if they could have a swim in the school swimming pool when they had finished work, and when the boys had gone to bed. Now Michael gave them permission after first checking with the school lawyers that he wasn't breaking any laws. Because Africans weren't allowed to swim in pools for white children. But as we owned the land, the lawyers said there's no law being broken here, it's your property. So after they had finished work the staff would enjoy their swim. Well, all hell was let loose. There were terrible headlines about it all. The police and special branch came flooding in. It was shocking.

*Louise Hidalgo: Jean and Jim were just as upset as Michael. They had arrived in South Africa ten years earlier as a newly married young couple escaping the austerity of post-war England to work at a missionary station in Zululand. They listened with fascination to Michael Stern's idea of escaping apartheid and building a multi-racial school outside South Africa's borders. But what convinced them to join him in making that dream a reality was what happened one day when Jean and Jim had invited some black students from the nearby theological college to have tea with them in their garden. Jean's young son Andrew brought a white school friend home.*

Jean Richardson: Andrew was eight at the time. And I saw the boys walk up the garden path, and then his friend Stewart went away. I asked Andrew where Stewart had gone. He said he's not coming to play with me because you are having tea with kaffirs. Now kaffir was a derogatory term for an African. We said, this isn't right. Our son was in danger of being an outcast among his little white friends – he went to an all white school – because his parents have black friends. I wasn't able to understand the cruelty of having a policy like South Africa's.

Louise Hidalgo: And so a few months later the Richardsons with their five children, the youngest just one week old, found themselves bouncing up a dirt track up a mountain just across the border in Swaziland, where Michael Stern had found a plot of land to build his school.

We got to this house up the hill. There was no running water, no gas, no electricity, no nothing! And a car load of children, especially the baby!

*Louise Hidalgo: And so it was, just a few miles from South Africa's apartheid laws, that Jim oversaw the building of Waterford Kamhlaba using an army of local labourers and volunteers. Jean would be the matron. And among the school's backers were the South African business magnate Harry Oppenheimer, the wife of the then British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, and the actor and film director Richard Attenborough. Finally, on February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1963 the first small band of pupils arrived.*

Jean Richardson: Six black, six white, and three Eurafricans. We didn't say coloured; they were Eurafricans.

*Louise Hidalgo: Ozi Nakamindi from Kwaz Natal in South Africa was one of those. Aged 12, he was the son of a chauffeur to an industrialist.*

Ozi Nakamindi: We were outnumbered by the staff. It was a big extended family. I didn't feel lost.

*Louise Hidalgo: For Ozi, the routine at this new school didn't seem all that different from what he had known at his all black school back home.*

Ozi Nakamindi: You would have your lessons in the morning. Lunch at a normal time of about one o'clock. Then you would have rest for an hour, when you were supposed to read and educate yourself or sleep. And then from three until five it was either sport or service. That service was helping with the chores around the school.

Jean Richardson: You must remember that some of the boys had never spoken to a black as an equal. They just knew the African people as servants. But here they were, living, working, sleeping, being educated together.

*Louise Hidalgo: The school was very different, and an embarrassing snub to South Africa's white minority regime. It angrily denounced Waterford as a sick experiment and the South African authorities did their best to make things difficult for teachers and pupils. Shortly after the school opened it became impossible to cross the border between South Africa and Swaziland without a passport – something that not all the pupils had.*

Jean Richardson: One of them, a lovely Indian boy, he didn't get a passport. He came to the school for the first term, but then had to apply for a passport and he didn't get it. And he never came back.

*Louise Hidalgo: Do you know what the South African thought of Waterford?*

Jean Richardson: Certainly two of the staff were persona non grata. They couldn't go into the Republic. They were banned.

*Louise Hidalgo: The school soon became a haven for the children of the leaders of the anti-apartheid struggle. Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Desmond Tutu, all sent children there. And among the older children politics was often the subject of conversation.*

Ozi Nakamindi: They would talk, and I would listen, in a subject called current affairs. You were meant to read the papers and listen to the news. You would be aware of what was happening in the world, and then there would be debates and discussions around that.

*Louise Hidalgo: Some of those first boys did go off and join the resistance with the ANC?*

Jean Richardson: That's right. Some of them just disappeared one night. That was a difficult time, very very difficult, very hard.

*Louise Hidalgo: Since it opened fifty years ago, around five thousand children have passed through the school doors, including the current president of Botswana. Today it has 600 pupils from 50 different countries.*

Jean Richardson: We did plant, you know, these little acorns. We wanted people to come and see that Africans, Whites, Chinese, Indians, could eat, work, sleep and play together. And they did. Because our boys were at Waterford for one reason only – to have a good education. That was it. And some of them have gone on to do splendid things. Splendid.

*Louise Hidalgo: Jean and Jim Richardson left the school in 1970. Jean lives in north east England. Ozi Nakamindi lives back in South Africa.*

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## 6. Speech to the School

*The following is the text of an address given to Waterford Kamhlaba School by Michael Stern on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March 1987.*

When we started building Waterford 25 years ago we had no idea that it would grow into such a large and successful school, let alone host the heir to the British throne. It reflects great credit on you all, and we owe many thanks to the United World Colleges.

On my way up the Malagwana Hill this evening to speak to you I gave a lift to some young Swazis and asked them what they thought of Waterford kaMhlaba. 'A very good school', one of them said, 'We have never heard of any exam failures there'. 'Is there not anything wrong with Waterford kaMhlaba?' I pursued. 'Yes', they said, 'we cannot go there'. A bit sad perhaps but a tribute to W/K.

My talk tonight is in two halves, the first for all ages about the early days and trials (about which some of you have already heard from the wonderful Richardsons) and the second perhaps for the older and more thoughtful, about what it all meant and means.

Picture in 1961 a bare mountainside, with rocks and stones and trees (mostly wattles); imaging much early research and many meetings – sites down in the valley (too hot), sites further away (too far); think of architects, in the plural, because the first one was arrested in Johannesburg and the next was the famous Pancho Guedes who offered all his services free and entered his three children.

There was the dirt road and rain and therefore mud, and more mud, so that when a mad Irishman offered to sell us half a mountainside which he had called Waterford Park (because that's where he was born), he took us the back way over the top of the mountain, ostensibly to show us the view but really, I suspect, because we would never have got up any other way and that might have affected the sale. Anyway, Gordon Milne and I saw that bit of land and though it was good and Gordon reckoned there was just enough flat ground for a playing field (the curvature seemed less from that height) so we bought ...

That meant early fundraising, with immediate and enthusiastic support from people like the Newton Thompsons and from many other liberal-minded South Africans without whom there would indeed have been no Waterford kaMhlaba.

In 1962 there were none of the present buildings, just two and a half rondavels nestling into the hill, and a bit of eLangeni which we had not yet the money to buy. There was very little money. In fact mud and money were in inverse proportion.

Next came frantic building, with the amazing Gordon and the incredible Richards (a baby just born and four other children) and a genius as architect. Fantastic efforts to be ready in time, which we weren't of course, so that we had to put the beginning of term back by at least a week. There was fog and there was rain and later Tony Hatton got lost in the mist. More fog, more rain, more mud, and some panic as the first day of term approached, but no real doubt ...



So to that first day, February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1963. More rain and mud, so the 16 multi-coloured pioneers and their parents couldn't get up the hill and we had to ferry them all in our Land Rover. I think we managed to get the electric generator going in the morning, so we had light in the evening, but no hot water till the next day.

A few weeks later came the official opening ceremony when Sir John Maud in his full regalia as British Ambassador to South Africa and the last High Commissioner to the three territories of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland (to stress the importance of the occasion) first had to close us since we were already in occupation and then opened us again in a sunny spell between the showers.

After that here many highlights, some low ones:

The scraping of the top of the curved field to provide a cricket pitch, but with still enough curvature for our first head of school and fast bowler, Alan McGregor, to disappear from sight on his run up to the wicket – which is probably why we won the first match against St. Mark's – and with a deep field so deep that fielders also disappeared from view, on one occasion for quite a long time as one of them picked up a puff adder out of the long grass in mistake for a ball.

More rain and mud, but lovely sunny days too, as the drier weather approached. Impressive increase in buildings, and in the bank overdraft, as we literally lived from day to day under the inspired amateur bursarship of Tony Hatton.

More snakes – a water snake in the pool by the rondavels where we used to swim, a night adder photographed trying to swallow a toad, more puff adders by our tents out camping, little file snakes which later found their way into Form 1 pockets, a ringhals (cobra) which was solemnly executed in the lab (half a rondavel), and even a boomslang, presumably in a 'boom' (tree).

There was the gift of a horse (for we had some riding) which found its way into the fermented molasses and so landed on its side, all blown up and dead drunk. The vet told us the only hope for its survival was to get it too its fee, prop it up and walk it round the field, which two boys gallantly did, leaning on each side, but failed to save its life. The horse died but that didn't end the story, for Alan McGregor told me just this weekend that he and Pedi Guedes (the architect's son) stole out at night and dug the corpse out of its grave, to boil it down secretly and construct a skeleton out of the remains. Thus one of our early Biology lessons.

It wasn't all biological, but there was much outdoor work, digging in the rondavel pool (which is now a thriving vegetable patch) and planting grass and shrubs and trees – to justify my pompous motto 'Unitas in Serviando' (Unity in Service) which the boys promptly translated as 'United in Slavery'.

Health was good – no epidemic, no sickness, nobody in fact in the Sick Bay, which was just as well because we had no Sick Bay.

There were brilliant sunsets, because some volcanic dust was drifting over Southern Africa at the time, to give us bright oranges and reds and purples; and much star gazing, with recent arrivals from the Northern Hemisphere marvelling at the South Cross (which still fills me with delight).

Then came the death of John. F. Kennedy, which made as big an impact upon all of us as it did upon the rest of the world. There were lessons too of course, plus co-ed French with St. Mark's children driven up here, and co-ed Church Services down in Mbabane – both popular, Alan MacGregor tells me, because it was our boys' only chance to meet some girls. Academic evaluation we had thrice a term – monocycles, bicycles and tricycles – and General Knowledge tests from which we learnt that Wilbur Wright was famous for inventing the Wheelbarrow. Music too with Peter Klatzow (ex St. Martin's and now well known in South African musical circles) who taught us to appreciate classical music and about whom on his departure one of our wags said that he reckoned the Klatzical Music would be Petering out. Also a small Library of a few dozen books (too few for Tony Hatton to disorganise), but more Bond than Bacon and more Tarzan than Trevelyan.

Next a great sadness, the tragic death of Angus Henderson in year two, followed by the incredible generosity of his parents, who made a massive donation to the school in his memory.

That was followed by Poison Pen letters placed in all the PO Boxes in Swaziland. It may seem absurd now but stories were put around and believed by some that the exhaust pipe from our boiler was in reality an aerial mast for transmitting secretly to Moscow, and that the concrete bases to our bunk beds were really mini-air-raid-shelters in anticipation of the Revolution.

On a more comfortable note there was the colossal Walk from Manzini to Mbabana in which I won our first trophy for being the first ex-service walker to get home – a glory that dimmed a bit when I learnt that I was probably the only ex-service man taking part and was completely extinguished on the next Walk a few years later when I was passed by the youngest boy in the school, aged ten.

So the years pass and we measure progress. But how? Increase in boys? In Buildings? In bank balance? All were growing but the last in the wrong direction. It seemed we were pouring money as well as concrete into the drains.

By now we had our first bilharzia, and a bit of amoebic dysentery, but otherwise health was good, to help us cope with other problems and our first girl who came somewhat by accident and was initially outnumbered 65 to 1 – a statistic from which she has perhaps never recovered. Then there was the letter from an Egyptian schoolmaster who had read our advertisement in the Times Ed Sup for teachers and wrote to say that the salaries were far too low which suggested to him that our school was in a bad way so he suggested we should all leave and go to Egypt where we would earn far more money.

Harry Oppenheimer came to open the Science Labs built with generous money from the Anglo American Corporation – this time in sunny weather but in a strong wind which blew all the sunshades inside out and sent the celebratory hydrogen-filled balloons off horizontally and out of sight before they could gain any height. We also had to cancel school that morning and the day before so that we could all lay tiles and fit drains in time for the important visit.

We in our turn visited Anglo's Iron Ore Mine on Bomvu Ridge and returned genuinely non-racial as we were all covered from head to foot in the red dust and looked like Red Indians.

Financially, there was help from all over the world – five shilling Postal Orders from retired clergymen and £5,000 from a benefactor, John Barrett who had had both his legs blown off in the First World War and who now at the age of 90 refuses to regard himself as completely disabled and has given us many thousands of pounds over the years. Much UK support from friends like Dickie Attenborough, Robert Birley, Eric Abbot (Dean of Westminster) and Martin Kenyon. Help too from the United States, through our link school in Massachusetts and many American friends; an interview with Robert Kennedy who promised support, but he too was assassinated, before he could put this into effect; and, after a six year siege, at last big money from the Ford Foundation. All the while we had loyal and active support from many liberal-minded and generous South Africans.

In 1967 came the great visit by King Sobhuza of Swaziland, again in pouring rain, for which I foolishly apologised, only to be told firmly but kindly that any project visited by the King in the rain was bound to prosper – which it certainly has, with the new Swazi name he gave us 'kaMhlaba' (in the World, or belonging to Mother Earth, which makes no distinction of colour or race or nationality or religion).

The same year a group of us climbed Mount Kilimanjaro; only a walk rally (3 days up and 2 days down) but quite tough if you go on to Uhuru Peak feeling sick as the Guide Book says you may after 15,000 feet and as I did, driven on only by a whistling Head of School (now on week-end World TV) and a singing Assistant Matron, both of whom seemed totally unaffected by the altitude of 19,000 feet. It was wonderful to circle the mountain again and view the summit more easily from our Lufthansa flight out earlier this week.

By now there were real signs of growth within the school, with students challenging authority and engaging in passionate arguments about uniform and the length of hair. Some of us just wanted to pause for breath, to consolidate, for we seemed to have come a long way from those early days when we were told we would never start and when we did that we would never continue and when we did that it wouldn't do any good anyway or solve anything, just add to the insoluble. I was wrong, however, to want to pause because a school can't stand still, which leads me to the second (shorter!) half of my talk.

Waterford kaMhlaba, as you know, had earlier roots. It was on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 1954 that Father Trevor Huddleston of the Community of the Resurrection invited me to come out to South Africa – almost exactly 32 and a half years ago when I was almost exactly 32 and a half years old (from which the Maths specialists here will be able to make an obvious calculation).

I came out for two years only and stayed for 20, and his was the initial inspiration, though the task was sadly to close St. Peter's Anglican Mission School for Africans in Johannesburg, which was throttled by the combined effect of the Group Areas and Bantu Education Acts. At the time of Father Trevor's return to Mirfield I was asked by him and by Bishop Ambrose Reeves (subsequently deported for his

opposition to apartheid) to start a 'white' school on the same site, on a Christian liberal foundation, but my friends and I found it progressively harder to put either liberal or Christian principles into practice in South Africa, so after five years and an enrolment of nearly 300 boys some of us decided to move across the border into Swaziland, where we would be allowed and even encouraged to start a new school open to all races and religions, which could grow Phoenix like out of the ashes of St. Peter's and our experiences at St. Martin's (from black through white to mixed).

My arrival in South Africa in 1955 had been against a background of racial legislation, of inferior Bantu education, of Government closure or take-over of previously independent mission schools, of the Freedom Charter of 1955, the Treason Trials of 1956, of 'Naught for Your Comfort' and the inspiring example and prophetic warnings of people like Huddleston and Reeves and Paton and Keppel Jones and many many other enlightened South Africans, of 'the writing on the wall', the lateness of the hour, and the real hope (it seemed then) of substantial and peaceful change within a decade or so. But that was three decades ago and it still hasn't happened.

I suppose I should have been warned what to expect by an experience in 1957 on Hospital Hill, Johannesburg, when I witnessed some young white men knocking Africans off their bicycles into the gutter on their long ride home from work to Alexandra Township – brazen assault which I tried to report to the nearest Police Station, hotly pursued by burly Afrikaners who threatened to beat me up. The point of the story is that I was just not allowed by the Sergeant in charge even to make a report – he simply was not interested and refused to take my statement ... I think it is that kind of police attitude that bedevils race relations in South Africa and helped to lead to the obscenities of the Sharpeville massacre of 1960.

After Sharpeville there was much talk of change, 'Things will never be the same again', but after a short interlude they were, only worse. Now again there is much talk of change and there has been some and I know there are many South Africans who genuinely want to see apartheid dismantled for whatever reason, but are there enough of them to ensure that real fundamental change takes place, and will the change be enough and will it be in time?

My scepticism is based on the speed with which security was tightened up after Sharpeville, as again now, and on the tragic deterioration of conditions and relations which led to the Soweto uprisings of 1976 (10 years after Sharpeville) and on the ruthlessness with which they were ultimately crushed, followed by mass arrests and the brutal murder of Steve Biko in prison by the police in 1977. Once more people predicted big change and more there has been, on the surface my friends tell me, and perhaps deeper others say, but is it deep and radical enough now to meet the legitimate and reasonable demands and expectations of the restless non-white population?

Emergency powers have been tightened and extended and applied without mercy time and time again, and, in spite of some change of attitude, I read only this year, 10 years after the murder of Biko, of a white youth in Pretoria who drives over a sleeping African domestic aged 58 in the Park and then backs over her again –

because he thinks blacks should not be allowed there; and the point of this story too is in what follows. Here is the breathtaking statement of magistrate Potgieter:

‘It is reasonable to foresee that a person ridden over by a car could be seriously injured and die of those injuries’ (which he did, in hospital the next day). ‘This is so much more predictable when the deceased is driven over with the second set of wheels. Your failure to foresee the consequences is thus serious, and if you were an adult (he was 18) the court could reasonably have found that you were reckless’.

The youth was sentenced to five years, of which half is remitted.

This somehow sums up the root evil of apartheid, which conditions people to a lack of compassion and human understanding, and which clearly regards black lives as more expendable than white. There is brutality everywhere in the world and there are many other brutal regimes, all of which must be condemned, but where else is it legalised and institutionalised and sanctified by all the power of the State?

There seems to have been an awful inevitability about South African affairs since the Nationalists took power 39 years ago, in 1940; but the legacy of race discrimination is surely much older and goes back no doubt to the first discovery of diamonds at Kimberly and gold on the Reef – in other words great opportunities for wealth from which the native population was to be immediately and effectively and totally excluded, first by practice and superior strength, then by regulation and law, and finally by the whole apparatus of the State. The Nationalists simply passed further legislation to ensure that his continued ad infinitum, by means of a policy which kept 1/12<sup>th</sup> of the land for 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the population – for all time.

Maybe things would have evolved differently without Nationalist rule. Who knows? There are many South African whites who perceive the fantastic injustice of this, but what have they or anyone else inside or outside South Africa really done over the years to remedy the situation radically? And, it is said, all that is necessary for the for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing. Too little has been done and now it may be too late.

What is new? Not the farce of the new Constitution from which blacks are still totally excluded. Not the all white election which by definition scarcely concerns the blacks. There is always hope in new generations, especially here at Waterford, and in other similar schools elsewhere, some of which claim to have followed the Waterford pattern, even now in South Africa itself, under the leadership of people like Dean Yates. But the sum total of all our efforts, is it enough and is it in time?

I make no apology for linking Politics and Education, for they are inextricably intertwined, everywhere but especially in South Africa, because both involve morality and justice, or the lack of it. After all, the architect of apartheid, former Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoed, when he was still Minister for Native Affairs, said in the 50s:

‘The native is not to be educated beyond certain forms of labour’ and ‘when I have control of native education natives will be taught that equality with Europeans is not for them.’

Remember the backgrounds of four extremely right wing conservative candidates for the forthcoming election:

1. Former Minister of Justice Jimmy Kruger who said publicly ‘the death of Biko leaves me cold’.
2. Police Chief Kobus Visser, who was in charge of the CID at the time.
3. General H.J.van den Bergh, who masterminded the crushing of the ANC in the 60s, and headed the notorious BOSS.
4. Brigadier Theunis Swanepoel, the much feared chief interrogator who crushed the Soweto risings of 1975, threatened Desmond Tutu (‘We will get you one day’) and said ‘Take the kid gloves off the security forces and law and order will be resumed in six months’.

The gloves have been off for some time and tens of thousands have been imprisoned by these men and are at the mercy of men like them, for they claim that 70% of the Police Force are behind them, and perhaps most of the army too. That is the cause for weeping, that is the dark cloud on the South African horizon.

Where does Waterford kaMhlababa fit into all this, and where do the United World Colleges? In my view there is no escape. They/we are concerned with education, with young people, thousands of whom (some as young as eleven) are in prison without trial, and are being tortured in many cases and therefore twisted. Can we be surprised at the necklace treatment of informers and of those who collaborate with the hated system. It may be appalling but is it surprising?

An early Atlantic College student and at least one UWC visiting headmaster told me we must be patient, keep communication open, wait for change – but what right have we who do not directly suffer to ask those who do to wait? It’s like asking Jews awaiting the gas chamber in Nazi Germany to be patient.

Besides, how much longer must they wait? People have been trying to talk to Pretoria for years and years, but Pretoria won’t listen, not to African leaders, not to Blacks, not to other Governments, not to Soni Ramphal and the EPG (as he explained in his excellent address), not to anyone who differs fundamentally from them and their views. Men of peace have been spurned and imprisoned without trial and sometimes tortured. Albert Luthuli, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu, Steve Biko were all men of peace, initially. Whose fault is it if some have now abandoned peaceful methods?

As for the United World College movement, with its fine aims and ideals, there is no doubt in my mind where the founder, Kurt Hahn, would have stood on these issues. I think he would have wanted to found schools in the black townships of South Africa, based educational justice, because he would surely have hated apartheid as much as he hated national socialism under the Nazis.

I believe that UWC is big enough and good enough and liberal enough and radical enough to understand the particular problems and concerns of education in this part of the world, and I believe that Waterford will derive added strength and inspiration from this great world-wide movement. I note that on the plaque on the Mountbatten

Building Lord Louis Mountbatten's words speak of bringing the races and the nations of the world together, in that order, and that sadly is the order in Southern Africa. Internationalism of course implies non-racism, but in this part of the world true internationalism is absolutely impossible until racism has been finally eradicated as effectively as I think and hope it has been in this fine, fine school.

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