



UNIVERSITEIT
STELLENBOSCH
UNIVERSITY

e-Matieland

AUTUMN 2017 • #1

FROM THE ALUMNI OFFICE

What a blast! We were delighted to have welcomed back Maties from across the world to Matieland during our second Homecoming and Family Weekend from 2 to 6 March 2017. With a jam-packed programme in place, the Homecoming Weekend had something for everyone.

We are also pleased to welcome Reanne Olivier as our USA Alumni Relations and Fundraising Coordinator. Reanne will be taking care of Maties in the USA, but we are certainly encouraging Maties to volunteer as alumni hub coordinators, as we seek to reconnect with you wherever you may find yourself in the world!

This edition concludes with a fascinating anecdote of a student field trip in April 1918! The university will be marking 100 years in 2018 and we would like to hear from you as we build towards our centenary celebrations.

The Alumni Office has some exciting events planned over the next few months and certainly don't want you to miss out. To keep abreast of all the latest news and activities, like our social media pages by clicking on the icons below.



Emo Adams performs at our Homecoming Music Extravaganza. (Photographer: Stefan Els)



Stellenbosch University
Alumni (Maties) and
Friends



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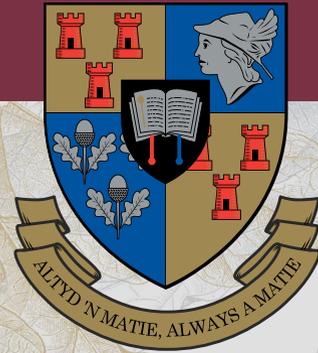
alumni@sun.ac.za



www.sun.ac.za/english/alumni

Homecoming 2017

was a blast!



TUISKOMS
HOMECOMING
— 2017 —



A music extravaganza, a taste of those familiar class days with “Back to Class” lectures, class reunions, a fun run and mountain-biking experience for sports enthusiasts and a host of Woordfees shows. These were just some of the special events organised for alumni at Stellenbosch University’s (SU) second annual Homecoming and Family Weekend for 2017 held on the Stellenbosch campus from 2 to 6 March.

“It was a blast – there’s nothing better than welcoming back alumni to a place that shaped their future. This year’s Homecoming and Family Weekend gave Maties the opportunity to revisit their alma mater, take a stroll down memory lane and reminisce about the good old student days.

And by the looks of things, they certainly did just that,” says Shaun Stuart, Manager: Alumni Relations.

“We also had repeat visitors who were here for our inaugural Homecoming Weekend in 2016 and who made sure to participate in 2017,” he adds.

The Alumni Office once again elected to collaborate with the Woordfees, SU’s literary and art festival, which has made quite a name for itself since its inception in 2000. This partnership meant that alumni could claim a special discount for selected Woordfees shows.



Don't miss Homecoming 2018 during the University's centenary celebrations!

The Homecoming Weekend had an exciting start with an opening concert at Coetzenburg where a host of popular South African artists and musicians performed music by Queen, Abba, Barbara Streisand and Tina Turner, as well as some classical favourites. Artists included Corlea, Jannie Moolman, Emo Adams, Timothy Mloi and Lindiwe Bongani, among others. A special Homecoming VIP area was reserved for alumni, where Prof Wim de Villiers, Rector and Vice-Chancellor of SU, was on hand to do the official welcoming.

corruption and what you can do about it, and genetically modified food.

Sport enthusiasts could also take in the breath-taking scenery at Coetzenburg while keeping fit at our Homecoming Veldtrap met Woorde race for an 18-km or 35-km mountain bike experience or a 6-km or 12-km fun walk/run.



Visit our Facebook page for more photos of the Homecoming Weekend.



Click here for video

For some cerebral stimulation, alumni could support their respective faculties at a series of "Back to Class" faculty talks. Topics covered included the state of the economy and career choices for the world of work in 2050, how technology affects the learning environments, the ageing process and whether you really need Botox,



Do you have ideas for #MatiesHomecoming 2018? Send your thoughts to alumni@sun.ac.za.

Photographers: Anina Fourie & Henk Oets

NEWS in short



SU team develops new image recognition software

The lack of a standardised procedure for collecting data about elusive and hard to find species like the great white shark has to date seriously hampered efforts to manage and protect these animals.

However, now a marine biologist, an applied mathematician and a software developer from Stellenbosch University joined expertise to develop a custom-made software package, called Identifin, which may offer a solution to this problem.



[Click here to watch the video](#)

SA's port, transport and logistics sectors set to benefit

A memorandum of agreement between the Dutch education, training, research and consultancy organisation STC-Group and Stellenbosch University will benefit the port, transport and logistics sectors in South Africa.

Mr Albert Bos of STC and Prof Eugene Cloete, Vice-Rector: Research and Innovation, recently signed the agreement in Stellenbosch.

The purpose of this agreement is to develop and implement an Academy in Port, Transport and Logistics. The proposed Academy will provide a wide range of educational programmes, technical assistance and research.

Language takes centre-stage at Convocation meeting

Stellenbosch University recently hosted the annual meeting of the Convocation where the spotlight fell on SU's Language Policy. The Rector and Vice-Chancellor, Prof Wim de Villiers, shared the highlights of 2016 and some aspects of the Language Policy, while Advocate Jan Heunis, Convocation President, asked for a meaningful debate on the role of language at SU and, in particular, Afrikaans.



[Prof De Villiers](#)



[Advocate Heunis](#)

How best to transform higher education?

While the **#FeesMustFall** movement highlighted the urgency of questions around transformation in the higher education sector, it left many stakeholders, in particular universities, perplexed about how best to respond to students' claim of continued inaccessibility and discrimination. Now, thanks to a R11.2 million Andrew W Mellon grant, SU's Sociology and Social Anthropology Department will delve deeper into questions about how best to transform higher education environments by concentrating on its own existing curriculum and engaging with critical pedagogy and institutional transformation through its Indexing Transformation project launched in February.

Events

30 March
Alumni Cocktail
Event in Pta
RSVP alumni@sun.ac.za or
call Wena on 021 808 4020

17 May
Rector visits
UK-based alumni
E-mail: alumni@sun.ac.za
Tel: 021 808 2941

18 May
Rector visits
Munich-based
alumni
E-mail: alumni@sun.ac.za
Tel: 021 808 2941

Two new Deans appointed



Stellenbosch University has appointed Prof Nicola Smit as the new Dean of Law and Prof Wikus van Niekerk as the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering. Prof Smit, who succeeds Prof Sonia Human, completed her undergraduate studies in Law at the University of Pretoria, and received a doctorate in Law from the Rand Afrikaans University in 2002. She starts on 1 August. Prof Van Niekerk, who completed his undergraduate studies in Engineering at SU, succeeds Prof Hansie Knoetze. He received his PhD in Mechanical Engineering from the University of California, Berkeley in 1994, and is currently studying towards an MBA. He takes up his position on 1 July.

NEWS in short



USAID awards \$4.1m to African universities

The wild fires that have raged across the Western Cape are a striking reminder of the life-threatening risks we face as our environment changes. They also highlight the urgency for South Africa and other African countries to develop their own skilled and accessible local risk management expertise. Thanks to a \$4.1m award from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to SU's Periperi U (Partners Enhancing Resilience for People Exposed to Risks) initiative, SU will be leading one of its largest continent-wide operational collaborations to date and doing just that. The grant will allow SU, in partnership with 11 other African universities, to take forward Periperi U's agenda to train more than 8 000 students and practitioners in 12 African countries by 2019.



Tee off in support of bursary fund

Alumni and friends of the University recently putted in support of Die Vlakte Bursary Fund at SU's annual golf day held at the Arabella golf course. A total of R26 474 was raised and donated to the Fund. Mr George Steyn, Chairperson of the SU Council, called on those present to dig deep, become involved and invest in Stellenbosch University's future. "If you are still wondering whether to give or not - think about it like this... Did Maties play a role in shaping who you are today? Did Maties help build your networks placing you in the privileged position you find yourself in today? Do you want there to be a higher education institution of excellence for your children and grandchildren?"



[Click here for photos](#)

NEWS in short



'Predict-TB' aims to cut treatment duration



Prof Gerhard Walzl from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences is involved in a large

international study aimed at shortening TB treatment in the majority of patients.

Over the next five years, the Predict-TB consortium, led by Prof Clifton Barry from the US National Institutes of Health and Prof Walzl, is planning to develop a smart set of treatment stopping criteria, and a point-of-care device to measure immunological markers that can contribute to the decision making. The group will perform an ambitious clinical trial in South Africa and China, looking at demographic, radiographic, bacteriologic and immunologic parameters, to answer key questions.



Institute celebrates successes

The development of South Africa's first prototype vineyard robot; a sensory facility where expert tasting panels can compare the aroma of various wines; funding of a full-time coordinator for the six months' long internship programme; an own newspaper and the support of information days by which relevant know-how is provided to the local wine and viticulture industries.

These are some of the success stories of SU's Institute for Grape and Wine Sciences (IGWS), which was founded in 2013 thanks to funding received from the Reinet Foundation, VinPro and Sanlam. To celebrate the IGWS's fifth anniversary, important role players in the local wine and viticulture industries recently gathered on the wine estate of SU chancellor, Dr Johann Rupert.

What is the IGWS?



NEWS in short

Financial support makes dreams come true

A total of 1 981 students of the more than 5 300 undergraduate students who received their well-earned degrees at SU's December 2016 graduation ceremonies, did so thanks to some form of financial assistance - whether it be bursaries, bursary loans, or loans, University records show.

Says Ms Karen Bruns, Senior Director: Development and Alumni Relations, the Division tasked with raising funds for the University: "It is just gratifying to see the students' dreams of a brighter future becoming a reality because companies, foundations and individuals elected to invest their hard-earned money in higher education."



Stellenbosch University recently launched the 'Partnering for Access' bursary video series. This video series celebrates the inspiring stories of donors who are a net of support for students striving to reach their highest potential. Please view, like and share our videos and play your part in partnering for access.



Maties Gymnasium is open to everyone

You might not be a student at SU any more, but the Maties Gymnasium can still be your training facility of choice.

Maties Gymnasium offers world-class facilities and services – not only to professional athletes, but also to students, SU staff and the rest of the public.

This includes an online registration process, biometric access system, high-performance training area and Olympic-standard swimming pool. Access to a wide variety and number of training equipment leads to minimal queuing and short waiting times.

"Anyone can join us at very competitive fees and flexible options," says Francois Kotzé, Head: Fitness and Wellness at the gym.

The length of a contract can vary from as short as one month to 12 months. Discovery Vitality members qualify for a 25% discount.

Dr Willem Sirgel (75), alumnus and former lecturer in the Department of Zoology, joined the Maties gymnasium in 1987 and still thinks it is the best gymnasium in town.



For more information about registration, classes, schedules and prices, visit <http://matiesgym.co.za>

SU wants to build alumni relations in the USA

She is a Haitian-American, a New Yorker and a lover of Pinotage. She is also a Maties graduate, a master's student and Stellenbosch University's current Alumni Relations and Fundraising Coordinator in the USA, writes Pia Nänny.



Reanne Olivier recently returned to the USA after graduating from Stellenbosch University (SU) with a BA honours degree in International studies in 2016.

"My parents encouraged my siblings and myself to live and study in South Africa. So, upon their advice I researched SA's top-ranked universities. Stellenbosch University was amongst the top five and it started from there."

She enrolled for a BA degree in Political Science and became an active participant in campus life.

"One of the highlights of my time in Stellenbosch was the opportunity to be a part of the Listen, Live and Learn (LLL) initiative. It allowed me to grow tremendously as a person. The experience gave me the opportunity to understand my surroundings, people and their diverse cultures and also encouraged me to be more active on campus."

Reanne served on the Student Representative Council (SRC) in 2015/16. Soon after being elected, she and her fellow SRC members were confronted with the #feesmustfall movement.

"I never expected nor had the opportunity to see such activism and mobilisation in my

life. And being placed in a position where we as a newly formed team had to deal with the plight of students in need was rather challenging. I gained admiration and respect for many of the students who actively engaged and for those who took the time to understand what was going on."

After moving back to New York, Reanne became the USA Alumni Relations and Fundraising Coordinator.

"My role is to strengthen and regenerate alumni relations in the USA. My focus will be on keeping alumni informed, updated and engaged and on working closely with existing US hub coordinators across the country to strengthen their hubs and assist with major city events. I also want to form new hubs where feasible for people who want to actively participate and engage with alumni around them."

She believes it is important for alumni to stay involved with their alma mater.

"Regardless of how you may feel about your alma mater at a particular time in your life, your identity is shaped by it - and to not engage would honestly mean you've wasted your time. It's a way to stay connected. Wherever you are in the world, you will definitely run into fellow alumni and you will share your individual but familiar memories."



Maties are revolutionising the way you use space

Do you have stuff to store? Or do you have extra storage space? No problem. Meet Michael-John Dippenaar, Henri Bam and Michael Louis, three Maties who say they have created an affordable, accessible and flexible solution to your storage problems.

The Scurry: Michael-John Dippenaar, Michael Louis and Henri Bam. (Photographer: Henk Oets)

So alongside his team of co-founders, or the Scurry as they call themselves, they crafted the idea into a value proposition and business after participating and winning support from the Stellenbosch based accelerator **Launchlab**. The three Matie-entrepreneurs bring different skillsets – Dippenaar graduated with his BCom degree, majoring in Investment- and Financial Management, and is completing his Honours in Financial Analysis. Michael Louis is pursuing his BSc Honours in Computer Science whilst Henri Bam will complete his Master's degree in Industrial Engineering by the end of this year.

“Through disrupting an existing industry to solve self-storage based solutions through consumer-based sharing solutions; Sxuirrel creates an entire new storage market, focused on the growing millennial generation,” says Dippenaar.

“Until recently, the storage industry has been defined by ominous storage lockers, orange banners and long trips to that side of town you actually never visit. Sxuirrel believes it can provide a more affordable, accessible

and flexible space solution, by connecting a community in dire need of space with willing providers. Through our solution, you search and find the space you need, store your belongings at someone's home you trust, access your belongings when you choose and only pay for the space you actually use! And - if you have underutilised space, as a host you can make a listing of your own and turn your space into profit with no effort at all. You can even conveniently arrange pick-up and drop off times with the built-in messaging service,” he explains.

“Our immediate focus is gaining momentum in the local student- and young working adult, storage market. From there we plan on expanding our product offering, expanding regionally and penetrating new markets across the country, with a long term strategic vision of expanding internationally.”

How does this work?

With the Sxuirrel App, you can search for storage solutions according to your preference. With a default geographical filter built in, Sxuirrel helps you find the closest listings to your desired location. You can filter listings according to your preferred accessibility, e.g. needing an open-access solution, talk to your host with the built-in

messaging platform, agree on a price and book instantly.

Users are referred to as Listees or Storees. They have profiles and peer-to-peer ratings and reviews to build trust between the parties and to inform other community members of the great service by their neighbours, helping them find better solutions to their specific need.

Dippenaar is also quick to allay safety fears. “Of course, there is a no-storing illegal goods policy. Sxuirrel ensures a rigorous verification process, helping create trust between both parties. Backed by a peer-to-peer rating system, storees can decide by whom they feel secure to store their belongings, and listees can accept requests of their choosing.” After acquiring a strategic seed investor as a partner in December 2016, the much anticipated iOS app is scheduled to release early March - just in time for the April holiday, with the Android app soon to follow.



Their solution is called Sxuirrel – an interactive mobile and web-based application that seamlessly connects people with available space with those in need of storage space. After building what's called a MVP (most viable product) and a test-version of the actual App (the Beta) in 2016, the anticipated release of the Sxuirrel iOS app aims to provide Stellenbosch students with a viable solution to their storage needs.

Michael John Dippenaar, Sxuirrel's Founder and CEO, says the idea for Sxuirrel came up when he was still a student who battled to find adequate and affordable storage space on campus. He says he realised that the increase in demand for storage availability with associated traditional solutions were unaffordable, inaccessible and quite frankly not a viable short term solution for most students.



For more information go to their website, www.sxuirrel.com or e-mail them directly at hello@sxuirrel.com.

BSc students walk 130 km on first big field trip in April 1918

Do you have an interesting story to share with us? Then contact us at alumni@sun.ac.za or 100@sun.ac.za!

Stellenbosch University celebrates its centenary in 2018. Here is the first of many fascinating anecdotes from the University's past. Wiida Fourie-Basson unearthed this gem from the University Archives.

On foot and, for the luggage, a donkey cart. This is how a group of 19 Victoria College students and their lecturers, all from geology and botany, undertook a "hike between Prince Albert Station and George" in April 1918.

The aim was not only to enjoy a "pleasant holiday" but also "as we went along, [to] discover more about the natural sciences; and so observe the various phenomena about which we have learned in the classroom in their natural environment", explained an article that appeared after the excursion in the Stellenbosch Universiteitsblad of June 1918.

The idea for this "big party of people" was that of the Australian biologist and palaeontologist Prof Ernest James Goddard (1883 – 1948), who succeeded Prof Robert Broom at Victoria College in 1910. Dr Goddard returned to Australia in 1922, where he became greatly respected; the Goddard Biological Sciences Building on the campus of Queensland University in Australia, among others, was named after him.



LEFT: Prof Ernest James Goddard. Photo: University of Queensland Archives s177 p1437

RIGHT: Dr Augusta Vera Duthie, more generally known as Avera Duthie. Photo: Wikiwand http://www.wikiwand.com/af/Ave_Duthie

The other two lecturers were Miss Gardiner, a geologist, and Dr Augusta Vera Duthie (1881 – 1963), a botanist. Dr Duthie was appointed in 1902 to establish the Department of Botany at Victoria College. In 1912, the degree Doctor of Science (DSc) was awarded to her by the University of South Africa for her dissertation The vegetation and flora of the Stellenbosch flats.

According to the article in the Universiteitsblad, the tour group set off with great "scientific gusto", Prof Goddard with "his usual brisk stride":

Die wetenskaplike geesdrif loop hoog en elke klippie, bossie, of gogga word storm geloop, die hamers kap en die spaanders waai, en mens hoor net van "Slickensides," "Ecca Beds," "Euphorbias," "Pareiosaurus," en sulke hoë dinge. Die ou Tante maak net klippe bijmekeer en arme Louis N. word oppgelaaie als of hij 'n pakos was. Ja, ik glo als sij die Swartberg kon los krij, dan was dit ook

The botanists and one "Gentleman" were not far behind, either:

op ou Louis se rug. Die Botaniste was nieq minder ijerig nie, en Hawie en Ouma (?) het gou hulle hande vol gehad van al die soorte bossies en bolle, grassies en knolle. Maar, Meneertjie was nog die meeste in sij element. Als hij 'n hakkedis of 'n koggelmander sien, is hij agter hom soos 'n kat agter 'n muis, en hij vang hulle ook, sonaar met sij blote hand. Slange, spinnekoppe, en al die kruipende gediertes, is so's speelgoed vir hom. "Maar sal die goed jou nie bijt nie" vra óén. "Nee wat, ik glo nie!" se Meneertjie. "Ja, maar als hulle jou bijt sal jij dan nie dood gaan nie" vra 'n ander. "Nee wat, nie so gou nie," antwoord Meneertjie so ewe droog.



Arriving in Prins Albert, the party apparently "caused [a] sensation" – the residents there thought it was the "Circus" come to town.

After Prins Albert, the group went up and over the Swartberg Pass, made its way through Oudtshoorn over the Montagu Pass and so walked into George – having covered a distance, all in all, of 130 kilometres on foot. By the end of the trip, the scientific gusto had apparently lost some of its steam and "the only stones of interest were the mile stones".

According to the Stellenbosch 186 -1966 commemorative publication, this excursion into the Karoo was the first of many and it ultimately led to the establishment of the 'Berg en Toer Klub' on 4 June 1928.