

Newsletter 1 - 2025

Dear Hoenders,

We hope you're keeping up with the fast pace of 2025! This letter contains the latest developments in the Helshoogte world, and we hope it sparks some memories of your Matie days. Here's what you'll find in this edition:

1. Message from our Chairman, André Kilian
2. Feedback from the Alumni Forum Meeting
3. News from the Residence
4. Alumni Calendar – Important events and dates to diarise
5. The Future of Alumni Communication Networks: Helshoogte WhatsApp Community

1. Message from the Chairman, André Kilian

On Saturday morning the 9th of March 2025 I parked at Stellenbosch High School to watch my boys play hockey. As I got out of the car, I noticed a student wearing a Helshoogte cap walking past me. I didn't think much of it, but when a third Helshoogte student passed me, I realised they were returning from Botmaskop, having just completed the annual Helshoogte first-years' Bergklім, a tradition all of us old Helshoogters participated in over the years. I knew exactly what it felt like, and I could still see my own Helshoogte Bergklім experiences vividly in my mind - 1993 as a first year, 1995 as a HK member and 1996/1997 as Prim. Although I didn't know the guy's walking passed me that morning, I felt like I did. Just before I entered the school, I saw two guys walking with a Helshoogte flag, and I decided to stop and talk to them – immediately there was a connection when I told them I was there too many years ago and without asking them they realised I know exactly where they were returning from. When I mentioned I was there in the 90's the one guy exclaimed: "My dad was on the HK in 1995". Turns out his dad (Leslie van Zyl Smit) and I had served on the HK together 30 years ago! Time flies yes, but for a moment time stood still for me.

Being part of the Hoender family is such a privilege. Life goes on and all of us transitioned into new challenges but that morning I realised that we are all connected, and we carry the Helshoogte flag in so many ways. There are so many of us making a difference around the world, but experiences like the annual Bergklім connect us with so many other stories. As the Old Boys Committee, we want to keep things simple and keep these stories alive. But we want to make sure that there is a feed of news, stories, current happenings in Helshoogte and worldwide that we acknowledge and hold on to. We are part of something special and the current Helshoogters continue writing our story. What a privilege!

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André



2. Alumni Forum Meeting

The purpose of the Residence Alumni Forum meeting on Wednesday, 9 April 2025 at the Alumni Clubhouse, was to discuss key updates and future plans for Stellenbosch University and its alumni community. Prof Deresh Ramjugernath, Rector and Vice-Chancellor, presented his vision for the University, followed by a review of the 2024 fundraising and alumni engagement efforts. The meeting also outlined the Homecoming 2025 programme, aiming to foster continued connection and collaboration among alumni. All Old Boys' associations were represented, and we, as Helshoogte, feel positive about what was shared, particularly that student affairs and residence communities will remain a central component of the SU experience and identity.

3. News from the Residence

The 2025 Archive HK, Hendrik Vos Hattingh, is launching a new project to compile a book documenting Helshoogte's history and stories over the next three years. This is a great initiative that they want to make available at the 55-year reunion. He invites all of us to share stories via email to 26948559@sun.ac.za or on WhatsApp via +27 78 1185 864.

Helshoogte recently updated their website. You are welcome to visit www.helshoogte.com or <https://blogs.sun.ac.za/helshoogte/> for the latest news. The Old Boys page still needs to be updated and the Old Boys Committee is currently working it.

News from Helshoogte includes the launch of a new interactive Helshoogte Calendar for residents, as well as the introduction of Dog Tags – a new merchandise item that first-years receive at the annual Bergklim as well as Ukubayi, an in-house Leadership and Personal Development Workshop to prepare and develop Helshoogters for life after residence. The current Primarius, Corné Prinsloo, describes this year's Welcoming Week as a highlight and very successful. We (the Old Boys Committee) are very grateful for the HK as well as current students' effort to keep developing Helshoogte and making it a leading player on campus and keeping Helshoogte relevant.

Please remember the annual derby against Eendrag taking place on August 15th. We will share more details on the WhatsApp groups.

4. Alumni Calendar – Important events and dates to diary

Stay informed about worldwide alumni events via the official Maties Alumni calendar of Stellenbosch University. Please [CLICK HERE](#).

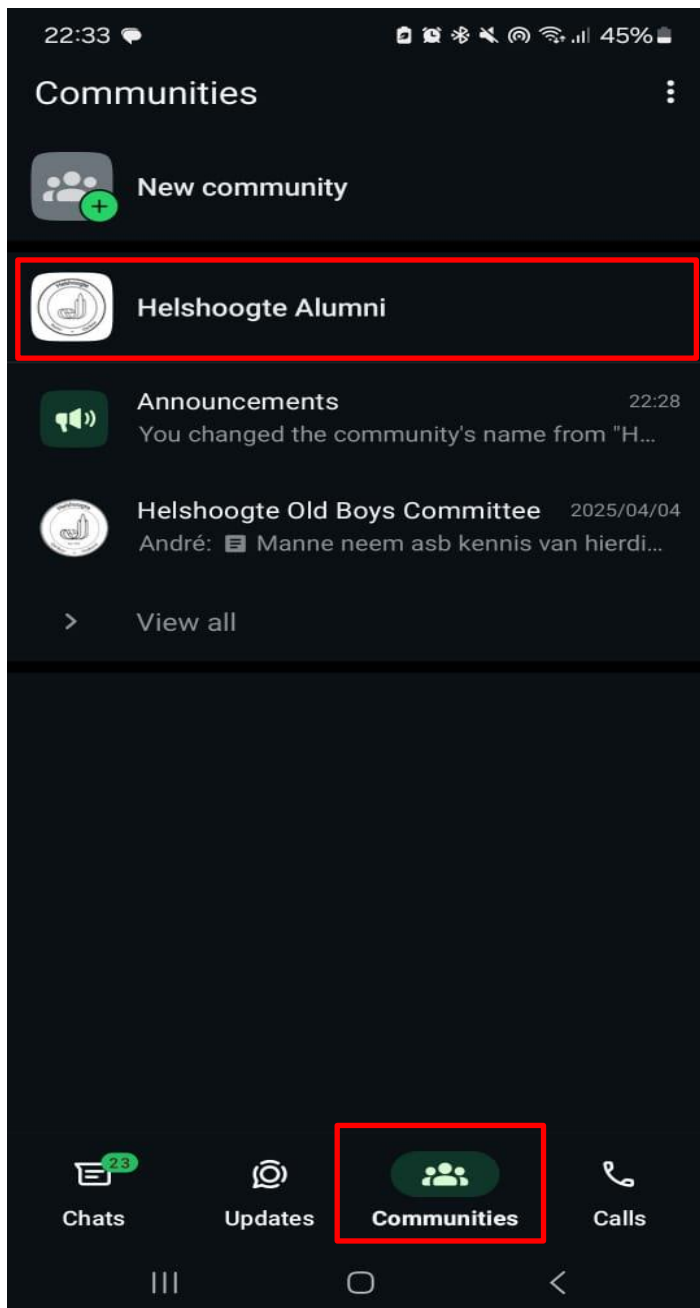
Important dates:

- Derby Rugby: 15 August 2025
- Homecoming Weekend: 11-13 September 2025

5. The future of Alumni Communication Networks: Helshoogte WhatsApp Community

In our last communication, we introduced the concept of WhatsApp communities aimed at making it easier for Helshoogters to connect with each other.

Soon, we will group all related Helshoogte Alumni Groups under an overarching Official Helshoogte Alumni Community. To briefly recap from the previous newsletter - the idea is to maintain the main alumni group for general announcements while giving members the opportunity to join specific year or interest groups, such as first-year groups, study groups, sports teams, or House Committee groups.



The image to the left will give you an idea of where to find this community (and consequently all the relevant Helshoogte groups). Once you are a member of the community, you will be able to see which other interest groups are available and join them accordingly.

The idea behind this is to help our Old Boys reconnect with one another by leveraging our Helshoogte-Maties Alumni network. Please keep an eye on the formal Helshoogte Communication Group (link at the bottom of the newsletter), where more information will be shared soon. This will take the form of a communication plan to also address any questions that may arise.

All formal communication channels can be found on the next page.

We would like to remind you again that we use the following channels to communicate with you and to circulate important information between the House, the University, and the Old Boys:

- Email: Oldboys@helshoogte.com
- WhatsApp group for formal communication (this will henceforth be grouped under the Official Helshoogte Alumni WhatsApp Community):
<https://chat.whatsapp.com/GvHW0XOsG7t548KgNzgMgn>
- Old Boys Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/HelshoogteOldBoys/>
- Helshoogte Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/helshoogte>
- Helshoogte Instagram page: [Helshoogte Men's Residence \(@helshoogte1973\)](#) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)
- Helshoogte website: <https://blogs.sun.ac.za/helshoogte/>
- Helshoogte LinkedIn: [Helshoogte Men's Residence: Overview | LinkedIn](#)

Lastly, please contact us - through any of the communication channels listed above - with any ideas, stories, or questions. We would love to hear from you.

Until next time!

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André en Hugo

