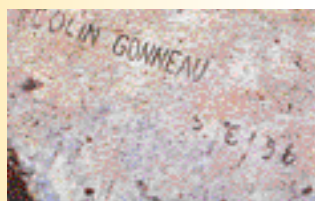


# Yesterday's Boys Today



Carved in stone ... even in the 50s, boys were leaving their mark.



Writing letters – and getting them – helps the boys keep in touch.



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## 'The best years of my life'

It may surprise you to hear our 'Old Boys' describe their time with us as the best years of their lives. In his own words, Old Boy Malcolm Govender shares his memories ...

Boys Town is a wonderful place. I found the Lord just before I went to Boys Town and God gave me the best place through which I could feel loved and reach my goals. All kids have problems – some more than others – but I was blessed because I had specialist staff to help me with the different issues I had. The abundance of love and caring I received amazes me to this day.

I knew about 'diversity' and 'power struggles' even before I started working, because of Boys Town. Boys Town is the training ground for future leaders. The way in which they deal with boys arises from one simple statement: No boy is bad. Love was shown to me even though I had done many bad deeds. The love eventually melts your heart and you cannot continue in your anti-social ways because someone understands and cares.

I was given a structured environment that left little time for being idle. This was beneficial to me in achieving my goals. The issues that I had, always destroyed whatever progress I made – but with help from my social worker, I was able to identify what was happening and fill my needs appropriately. I learned to accept that my needs were not the only thing in the world and I should be less selfish.

Today, I see so many teenagers have the same problem, but they don't have specialists in child care to help them. This makes me sad because I know that Boys Town can only do so much. When I saw that Boys Town had started a programme to help parents, it showed me that Boys Town had once



Malcolm Govender

again seen a need and offered a helping hand.

We worked on a Peer Group System, so it was our responsibility to make sure that chores got done and we decided on the amount of pocket money we would receive. We had meetings to discuss ways to help certain boys; then we would partner these boys with strong leaders who would pass on their skills. We learnt responsibility and we learnt to be strategic – skills I still use on a daily basis.

Boys Town also created an environment for different boys from different backgrounds to all share a sense of belonging and pride. We connected with each other because of this and we were united. Boys Town was the best two years of my life and I will always cherish the memories.

*As the Festive Season approaches ...*

**W**e wish you abundant joy over the festive season and thank you for your generosity over the past year. May you be blessed with the love that ultimately heals the hearts of every child we're privileged to know.

# Youth

November 2004

# Update

Your investment at work



## It's no longer just a man's world

This is one of the most defining times in our history, now that we're opening our doors to girls. If you're thinking, 'It's about time!', I agree.

From January, our Alpha Family Home in Claremont, Cape Town will be home to our first group of young women. The circumstances that have led them into our care are as serious as those experienced by the boys. Their need for our services and programmes will be as great.

Because thousands of boys have emerged from Boys Town as responsible young men with sound principles and values, I have every confidence that the same success awaits the girls.

By God's grace and with your loyal support, Girls & Boys Town will grow from strength to strength, and will continue its work for as long as there are children who need our help.

We welcome the opportunity to serve more children – the only alternative for troubled girls.

It's been said that 'It's a man's world' – but not around here anymore!

*Joe Araujo*

JOE ARAUJO  
Executive Director



Where we're going matters more than where we've been

## Our true roots

**A**s we head into a new era, we remember the inspired vision that shaped our organisation – and its future.

Our true roots lie in one man's dream. As a teenager he'd seen the movie *Boys Town*, based on the story of Father Flanagan, a priest who started a village for 'problem' boys in Nebraska, USA in 1917. Our founder, the late Bishop Reginald Orsmond's dream finally came true in 1958, with the opening of South Africa's first Boys Town in Magaliesburg.

Now, nearly 50 years later, we are Girls & Boys Town, – with eight facilities throughout the country. We're also the proud custodians of a range of innovative programmes aimed at preventing children going into care and improving the lives of

children at home, in the classroom and within their own communities.

But as far as we've come, we know that it's only because people like you have been there for them. Thank you for believing in our work and the potential that rests within each boy and girl.



There's a time ...



... for dreaming



... for learning



... for helping

### Andrew BT 628-02 Final report

Andrew has made progress, but still struggles with the unanswered questions of his past. Although he has tried to come to terms with his traumatic childhood – marked by the suicide of his mother – he yearns to know who his father is.

Fortunately, Andrew has the support of his grandmother and is well on his way to being reunited with her. He admits that Boys Town has taught him a great deal and our best wishes are with him as he prepares to start a new chapter in his life.

### Etlin BTK 047 Second report

Etlin is excelling. He represented his school in the Rugby Championships in Durban, attended the Golden Lions rugby trials, participated in the USSASA Soccer Tournament and played in the Junior Soccer Championships.

Etlin is currently on our Independent Living Skills Programme (which is preparing him for self-sufficiency) and will leave us at the end of the year. He is keen to pursue a career in soccer and intends to enrol at the School of Excellence.

### Bheki BT TONG 673 03 Second report

Bheki still experiences problems interacting with adults, but he's benefiting from our Social Skills Programme. His relationship with his family has improved and his father and siblings enjoy the weekends and holidays Bheki spends at home. His mother is still overseas – a temporary arrangement – but has visited him at Boys Town. Bheki will return home soon and we wish him continued success in everything he does.

### Zane CDD MAC 580 Second report

Although Zane passed Grade 9 last year, he has had to work hard to cope academically in Grade 10 this year. His



Friendships form that last a lifetime.

relationship with his teachers is positive and he has shown remarkable improvement in his behaviour at school.

Zane has earned the position of Councillor on Probation in our Peer Group System and is doing an excellent job. He's determined to succeed and takes advantage of every learning opportunity. He was identified at a recent leadership training camp as someone with the potential to become an Instructor himself!

Zane will leave us at the end of this year and he's already exploring some career opportunities. As we prepare him for independence, we're certain that he'll excel in whatever field he pursues.

### Jimmy CDD MAC 555 Second report

Jimmy has continued to make progress, largely due to the continued interest shown by his family. The tracing of one aunt led to contact with other family members – including his sister. Psychologically, this has been a turning point for him. Jimmy no longer sees himself as the child abandoned by his father, but as a long-lost relative who has been found and is loved.

Reunification with family members has been successful, and through many long distance telephone conferences between Cape Town, Johannesburg, Witbank and Zimbabwe, it was decided that it would be in Jimmy's best

interests to live with his aunt in Witbank.

He has enrolled at a new school and is happy with his aunt and renewed family ties. Go well, Jimmy and remember, you are loved.

### Peter MAC 595 First report

Thirteen-year-old Peter was physically and emotionally neglected. His parents are separated, pending a divorce, and his home life was one of strife and violence. Peter played truant, displayed aggressive behaviour, culminating in fights and was asked to leave school.

Since his admission to Boys Town in January, he has adapted well. His relationships with his peers and staff are positive and he is not afraid to express his opinion or ask for help. He is committed to the Peer Group System and takes full responsibility for his duties.

He has progressed well and achieved good marks in his exams. He is well liked by other pupils and teachers. His home visits are split between his mother and father, and feedback has been positive in both instances. With continued guidance, we're sure that Peter will develop the skills he needs to succeed in all areas of his life.

Well done, Peter!

### Angelo KAG First report

Angelo arrived at Boys Town as an angry young man who had joined bad company and disrespected authority. Although his parents were supportive, they couldn't cope with his behaviour.

Angelo has progressed in leaps and bounds since then. He's currently the Boys Town Mayor and gets along with his peers. He has great potential and is committed to making a success of his life.



Trust boys to turn mundane chores into the chance for a game.



Team sports help build bonds – and health and confidence.

