

John Masefield High School and Sixth Form Centre

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26 January 2010

Dear Parent / Carer

SOUTH AFRICA - 24 JULY 2011 - 8 AUGUST 2011

Your son/ daughter has expressed an interest in going on a trip to South Africa. This is the fourth time this outstanding trip has been run by the school and once again it is expected to be an amazing opportunity. Students who have taken part in earlier trips have invariably enjoyed themselves immensely whilst learning about a different culture.

The anticipated MAXIMUM cost of the trip is £2,000 (subject to currency fluctuations) and the proposed trip itinerary is detailed below and includes:

- hosting with a South African family;
- visiting and working on outreach projects;
- visiting and learning about important historic events such as the Battle of Rorkes' Drift;
- going on safari to spot 'the big five';
- staying at a beach resort and hoping to watch dolphins in the Indian Ocean.
- visiting and working at the adopted charities of JMHS

As a school party, we get unrivalled access to the 'real' South Africa and in visiting outreach projects gain experiences that will stay with your son/ daughter for life.

In order to secure a place a deposit of £240 is required by **Friday 26 February 2010** (in the event that there are insufficient numbers to make the trip viable, this will of course be returned to you). However, if numbers are sufficient for the trip to proceed, this will be transferred to Bundu Bashers, our tour company, as a non-refundable deposit for the flight tickets.

It is hoped to take between 25 and 35 students; if our trip is over-subscribed there will be a witnessed draw for places and an ordered waiting list in case of any pupils withdrawing. Pupils who have provided the £240 deposit will be entered into the draw, to take place in the first week of March 2010. If pupils are successful, they will then be required to pay £240 towards the cost at the end of every 2 months (April 2010, June 2010 etc). With this 18 month notice period, it equates to roughly £30 per week and our payment plan avoids large bulk payments.

Additionally, we will encourage interested pupils to take some responsibility for fundraising necessary to go on a trip like this and in turn they may then be able to reduce the overall cost and help subsidise their own place. On previous trips, students have been successful in achieving this.

If you would like your son/ daughter to have the opportunity to go on this trip, please complete the tear off slip and return to the finance office together with your deposit in order to register your interest, no later than 26 February 2010. If for any reason you are not able to make the deposit at this stage please still return the form as after this date if the trip is oversubscribed then all reply slips will be entered into a lottery to allocate the available spaces. Any students who are not successful on this trip will automatically have a place on the next trip if they wish. Once the spaces have been filled, we would expect the deposit within one week of notification, if you have not already done so.



Cheques should be made payable to John Masefield High School and payment should be made directly to the finance office where a receipt will be issued. The finance office is open to students before school, during brunch and lunchtime. If you would like to discuss any payment issues then please contact Melanie Fish, the finance assistant responsible for trips, who should be able to help you

NB: Please could you also confirm the name of your son/daughter as it appears on their passport. This is needed to book the airline tickets and any changes or alterations will need to be charged for.

Proposed itinerary

July 2011

Sunday 24 - Depart London for overnight flight to Johannesburg
Monday 25 - arrive, Johannesburg - tour of Soweto - hosted at Dainfern College
Tuesday 26 - **project work** at JMHS adopted high school - overnight with hosts
Wednesday 27 - **project work**- visit to Cradle of Humankind - evening at Montecasino with hosts
Thursday 28 - leave hosts and transfer to the battlefields of Isandlawa - excellent tour - hosted at Elandsheim
Friday 29 - visit Zulu kraal - sports day at local school - transfer to Khanyisela Social Upliftment programme
Saturday 30 - combination of **project work** and choice of social activities (paintballing, swimming etc)
Sunday 31-social activities - Hillcrest shopping pavilion - transfer to Lily of the Valley (JMHS adopted orphanage)

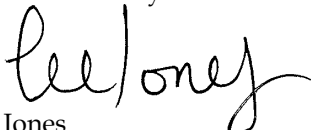
August 2011

Monday 1 - **project work** with Lily
Tuesday 2 - **project work** and visits with Lily
Wednesday 3 - transfer to Hluhluwe game reserve
Thursday 4 - at Hluhluwe - dawn and dusk 3 hour game drives - swimming pool/relax in day
Friday 5 - visit St Lucia for river cruise (hippos and crocodiles) - transfer to Salt Rock hotel
Saturday 6 - Salt Rock hotel - beach, swimming, social time
Sunday 7 - Depart Salt Rock for journey home - flights Durban to Johannesburg, Johannesburg to London
Monday 8 - arrive London. Depart for Ledbury, approximate arrival 11am.

The pupils have had a presentation on this trip, showing photographs and stories from previous trips. If you would like any more information, please feel free to contact the tour leader Mike Baker.

michael.baker@jmonline.org.uk

Yours sincerely



L Jones
Head of Sixth Form / Assistant Headteacher

To: Finance Office

Full Name of Student <i>(as it appears on passport)</i>		Mentor Group:	
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I would like my son / daughter to go on the trip to South Africa on **24 July 2011 - 8 August 2011** and I enclose a deposit of £240 which I understand is non-refundable (unless there are insufficient numbers to run the trip).

Signed: _____
(parent / carer)

Date:

By Rebecca McPherson

On 12th July 2009, a group of twenty-five sixth form students, led by Di Hawkins, Mike Baker and Val Chadney, said a fond goodbye to parents and set off on a two-week trip to South Africa. We had an 11-hour flight ahead of us but the plan to sleep on the plane didn't really happen for most of us and we arrived sleepy but safely on a sunny winter's morning in Johannesburg. We met our coach driver, Wilson, (best driver ever!) and Andy, a South African retired teacher who accompanied us on the trip to share his knowledge of the country.

In Johannesburg, we were immediately aware of a distinct divide between the rich and poor. Driving around Soweto we passed the wealthy houses of millionaires, with their barbed wire-topped walls and private security, and then would turn the corner to find a vast area of tiny, crowded slum dwellings stretching away from the road. It was quite shocking to be confronted with this poverty and inequality on our very first day, but despite the hardships of Soweto life, we got an amazingly positive feel from the people and a great sense of community. Driving through the township, groups of adults and children walking along the pavement would look up at us and grin and wave, or do the thumbs-up sign, which means "sharp" or "everything's OK" in the township lingo.

For the first two nights we stayed with hosts, which we did twice again on the trip. Though all our families were on the richer end of the spectrum (many had maids and private pools), there were lots of differences between their lives and ours – the accents, food, weather... (They were amazed to hear that their winter is just like our summer, only without the rain!) It was great to have such a unique insight into another way of life. That first night at our host school we experienced our first of many Braais (South African barbecue) which was basically hot dogs, salads, and pap, a kind of starchy maize mix, very popular in South Africa, that some of us liked and most hated! The students sang for us afterwards and they made a fantastic sound with lots of harmonies – it was an honour to hear them.

Some of the best moments on the trip were during the outreach work we took part in. We spent time at several different schools and care centres. On our second day when we went to visit the Siyafunda Nursery School for AIDS orphans. Like at the other places we visited, the children were extremely warm and affectionate and seemed really happy and excited to meet us. They loved having their pictures taken, having piggy back rides and trying on our sunglasses! For us, we had great fun playing with them, and it was such a privilege to meet these children who had so little by our standards but were so full of life. It was great as well to be able to help these schools a little – we painted classrooms, planted trees, and left donations of books, stationery, games and money. At one school we had a (very one-sided!) game of football against the Zulus and left them a football strip which they were very pleased with.

Apart from the outreach work, we learnt lots about the history and culture of South Africa – visiting the Hector Pieterse Museum, named after the first boy to be killed in the student uprising in Soweto during Apartheid; visiting the caves at the Cradle of Humankind, where the earliest human remains, Mrs Ples and Little Foot, were discovered; having a fantastic history lesson on the site of the Battle of Isandlawana, where the Zulu army completely wiped out the Red Coats in 1879; and of course going on safari in the beautiful game reserve of Hluhluwe. The early morning and sunset drives were absolutely freezing but so worth it – we spotted giraffes, zebra, rhino, buffalo – one group were even lucky (or unlucky!) enough to be charged by a bull elephant!

We also got a glimpse of the more traditional Zulu culture whilst staying in a youth hostel in KwaZulu Natal when we visited two remote Zulu villages or "Kraal". Though it was their first sight of a white person for many of the people, they welcomed us and gave us beef and their own brew of beer, which was an honour for us. To respect their male-dominated culture, we girls had to do our best to be "demure and subservient". Traditionally, a Zulu man will pay 11 cattle for his wife, and the girls in our group got several proposals in the time we were there. One man wanted to exchange all the girls for 20,000 cattle – Di was quite tempted!

It's fantastic to think we were able to make a small difference through our outreach work, but seeing first-hand the poverty and inequality so many people live with was really eye-opening. For us, the trip was an amazing experience, and was made extra special by the warmth, friendliness and inspiring attitudes of the people of South Africa – something we will remember all our lives. A huge thank you to Di, Mike and Val for taking us!