

THE ABE  
BAILEY



BURSARY  
FELLOWSHIP

Newsletter # 95  
September 2020

ABE BAILEY TRAVEL BURSARY WEBSITE:

P O Box 86  
CAPE TOWN 8000

<http://www.abebailey.org/travel>

**Vice-Chancellor Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng** at a UCT Graduation in December spoke boldly to the graduands: *"I challenge you to use your education, this precious gift, to serve your community and your society, to help achieve the dream of a future that is more just, equal, fair, to make it inclusive for all. I challenge you to set your super-power dials to 'in service'. If you dare to accept my challenge today, what a wonderful miracle might unfold in our country and our world."* As I listened to her, I thought of Abe Bailey Fellows across more than 6 decades who have taken up this challenge, making a vital contribution to a better world. This task is more urgent in these days both for older Fellows and for the new bursars as they join our ranks. Be encouraged to carry the baton in every space where you have influence. I am certain that Sir Abe is there in the wings cheering us onwards!

Warm greetings to all Abe Bailey Fellows across the globe. I pay tribute to each Abe who is making a positive difference to the lives and communities where you serve.

## 1 ABE BAILEY TRAVEL BURSARY TOUR CANCELLED FOR 2020

The Trust cancelled the 2020 Tour in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. Application procedures at the universities, selection panels, travel possibilities to and in Ethiopia and the United Kingdom, and bursar health security were the overriding factors leading to this decision. The only other time when the Tour was cancelled was in 1980 because of extensive student protests on university campuses. It is hoped that the annual Tour can resume in 2021.

In February 2020 the Chairman of the Abe Bailey Trust, **Prof. Brian Figaji**, wrote the following to the Trustees. *"On a more urgent matter I think these challenging times require us to be proactive and I would like to propose that the Abe Bailey Trust makes R200 000 available to three organisations (Salvation Army, Community Chest and School Feeding Scheme) to be used solely to feed children and the unemployed."* The Abe Bailey Trust approved this proposal and supported the vulnerable.

## 2. FAREWELL 2019 DINNER AT THE RADISSON PARK INN, NEWLANDS

A new venue hosted some 112 old and new bursars for a lively send-off to the eighteen 2019 Abe bursars on the 68th travel tour to Ethiopia and the United Kingdom. Trust Chairman **Brian Figaji** welcomed everyone and challenged the new bursars to set high standards in their interactions, discussions and debates, and during tour activities in line with the objectives of the programme.

All eleven of the living 1969 Abes, for whom this was the 50th re-union celebration, were present, including two with their wives from Australia. A hugely happy occasion amidst a 3-day stay in Cape Town for some of them.

**Richard Goldstone (Wits 1960)**, **Marike Groenewald (US 2004)** and **Tevarus Naicker (US 2018)** reminisced amusingly and inspirationally about their tour experience and its impact on their subsequent lives. Here are some extracts from what **Marike** had to say:

*"It's been 16 short years since I embarked on that special journey, and sat here at a table like this one, not quite knowing what to expect. If I had to try to describe the Abe Bailey programme, I would describe it as an immersive experience, meaning that it places you IN an experience instead of telling you about an experience. I would describe it as transformative, meaning that you come out changed... it is a leadership travel experience, with a group of people from the same place as you, but who are wildly different to you, encountering a series of provocative engagements, meaning that it will probably poke you in your intellectually and emotionally soft places, and that that will enable you to see the world, your world, if you're open to it, in a different way. This experience will change your point of observation.*

*But there is even more to this programme. I think much of the magic comes as a result of bringing together this group of people, who will never get together in the same way ever again, to embark on a journey in a unique period of time, and who will in their own way, gently perturb one another, and contribute to the development of each other through conversation and engagement. And let me say that for our group, at times, that development process of each other, and the possible changing of your view of the world, was not always a comfortable one. And how fabulous it is to dive right into the deep end of the cool pool of South Africans in conversation...*

*Thinking back, I now see those few weeks as my first real encounter with the richness of South African diversity and difference - and it prepared me for the career I embarked on in a most remarkable way. It opened to me a world of conversations, of exploring different ways of thinking, and of coming together as South Africans, as humans to tell stories, to explore, to engage, to relate. And to then be able to take a stand...*

*We live in interesting times. And, our time calls for our involvement. It requires of us to be ok with the immense discomfort that comes with a world that is changing. Of a world that is asking for us to step back into the conversation, again and again.*

*Our era offers itself to you, as leaders, to reimagine, to redesign. As leaders, you are standing at the very edge of a journey to another*

country, a country where you will also encounter grappling, where you will really meet each other, and where you will possibly discover new paths in the conversation that were not available to you before, and new parts in yourself as leader that were not available to you before. I know that this journey is just one short chapter in your overall development. But it is a potentially story-changing chapter. The change of scenery enables a richness in the conversation that would not otherwise have been achieved. I am convinced that our world needs more spaces for such conversations.

*My wish for you is an experience of immersion, of long, and maybe just a little bit uncomfortable, revealing and enlightening conversation and of authentic and magical transformation: of one another and of yourself. That was the enormous gift that the Abe Bailey experience brought to my life, and it has served me every day since."*

### **3. KEITH RICHARDSON, TOUR MANAGER, COMMENTS ON THE 2019 TOUR**

*"How privileged we all were to experience tours of this nature. To speak with leaders and cognoscenti in a variety of fields (politics, law, history, education); to experience the best of British culture in music and drama; to visit buildings and institutions which have stood for thousands of years in order to serve their communities and the nation; to explore some of the world's finest museums and finally to finish up with a relaxing spell in a Scottish country house are all opportunities to be savoured, relished and appreciated.*

*All this can be gleaned from a cursory look at the itinerary which has been built up over a period of 68 years. However, the tour is more than a programme of events as the camaraderie and esprit de corps built up as the tour progressed was very evident. Where this particular tour stood out was the involvement and quality of questions asked of our various speakers. Every speaker was tested and put under pressure. This group was articulate, confident and full of opinions and they certainly had their own (strong) views on many issues and it was a learning experience for me to listen to the interactions in our discussions."*

*"I remarked on the value of the **Bursar presentations** - a concept which John Gibbon had introduced some years back. In these presentations, Bursars reflect on personal, social or educational issues which have impacted on their lives. Some Bursars really open up on their personal journeys which inevitably result in an understanding and empathy from the rest of the group. Many of the Bursars referred to these sessions in their reports. I genuinely believe that Abe Bailey, himself, would be nodding in approval if he could have heard them talking in these presentations. In my opinion, they certainly fulfilled the first objective of the trip: "To effect greater understanding and co-operation among those from different language and cultural backgrounds."*

*"The third aspect where this group stood out was in the Bursar research on speakers, the buildings and the institutions which we were scheduled to visit. I learnt a huge amount myself from some of their prepared briefings to us."*

### **4. THIS IS WHAT THE 2019 BURSARS HAD TO SAY ABOUT THEIR TOUR**

#### **Gareth Gericke-Central University of Technology**

I would like to start off this report with a tremendous thank you and congratulations to the Abe Bailey Trust family. The Abe Bailey Trust has brought more knowledge and understanding to light in my journey than any other moment in my past. The opportunities and growth packed within the programme are unmatched and unrivalled by any degree.

Being thrown in rooms with 18 bursars for 21 days is challenge for anyone. But to walk out of those rooms appreciating the perspectives and opinions of fellow outstanding bursars is a gift unlike any other. To voice my opinions and not have them examined and aligned to the general consensus, but commended for the unique individuality one possesses, allows one to grow and appreciate the virtuous spaces that act as a catalyst for growth. The passion behind speakers and the space to grow allows for greater understanding, co-operation and appreciation for one another; this cannot be taught in any classroom or seminar.

#### **Izaan Jacobs-Durban University of Technology**

No other tour, meeting or committee will ever be able to offer a better platform for young South Africans to be able to learn more from each other's differences than the Abe Bailey tour. The tour enabled each one of us to freely express our different opinions but also to be open-minded, to learn from individuals with different viewpoints and opinions. I thought I was open minded until I went on the tour, where I realised just how limited my thinking was in terms of our South African history, apartheid, feminism, language barrier, etc. But I can gladly say that I was able to go on the tour with an open-mind, and this allowed me to learn more about our different South African cultures and diverse backgrounds than I ever could have learned from a textbook.

#### **Lauren van Niekerk-Cape Peninsula University of Technology**

I have seen tremendous personal growth in a space of 3 weeks and have learnt many things about myself that I would not have known if it was not for every bursar sharing their experiences collectively through meaningful dialogue. My work-shadow day gave me the privilege of attending *WorldPay* for the day and learning how they have integrated financial information systems, and the service they provide through exchange data information. It was fascinating listening to economists, business analysts, strategists, programmers and entrepreneurs who are the masterminds in contributing to the service which covers 42% of London's finance and over 2500 companies globally. The different systems the company has in place from global expertise and infrastructure to data-driven insights that unlock amazing opportunities in providing a safe mechanism for online transactions and powering global Omni-commerce have put them ahead in being the leader in integrated payments.

#### **Leago Sebesho-University of Cape Town**

Everyone was excellent in their field. Politics, history and governance were topics I was interested in and the tour presented the opportunity to discuss these topics with people who were heavily involved and knowledgeable. With time, I found my place in these conversations. The discussions facilitated this perfectly as I had a constant in-pouring of information, perspectives, opinions and conclusions that I had never been exposed to before.

I now have a family of brilliant young South Africans and a powerful network of people who will change South Africa. We had so many meaningful conversations about politics, race, religion, mental health and emotional wellbeing. That sums up the tour for me: having meaningful conversations about who we are internally and our place in the world, but also being able to debate and challenge each other intellectually. All the places we visited and the people we engaged with created the necessary stimuli to foster those conversations.

Date	Activity
<b>Thursday 28 Nov</b>	Visit African Union Headquarters Discussions with AU Officers; Tour the AU
<b>Friday 29 Nov</b>	Visit United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Headquarters
<b>Saturday 30 Nov</b>	Arrive London - to Goodenough College. Check-in to <i>Goodenough Club</i> History of Goodenough College Bursar Discussions: Overview of British Constitutional History Sights & Sounds of London: Piccadilly and West End- walking tour
<b>Sunday 1 Dec</b>	Tour of London with stops at Tower of London, Sky Garden and Westminster Abbey; Oral Recital at Westminster Abbey
<b>Monday 2 Dec</b>	Talk in Churchill Room by Andrew Feinstein on: <i>Ethics in Politics</i> 1 <sup>st</sup> Bursar Presentations Visit to Amnesty International hosted by Kumi Naidoo Reception: hosted by Director of College, Jessica Matthews.
<b>Tuesday 3 Dec</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Bursar Presentations Meeting with Mayor of Camden Lunch in Mayor's Parlour; Meeting with Camden Town Councillors
<b>Wed 4 Dec</b>	Visit to SA High Commission in Trafalgar Square Visit to the British Museum with Blue Badge Guide
<b>Thursday 5 Dec</b>	Houses of Parliament Day: - Tour of the Houses of Parliament - Talk with Dawn Butler MP (Labour) - Lunch in Attlee Room: Host: Lord Bilimoria (Crossbench) - Observe s in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons Bursar discussion: Suffragettes
<b>Friday 6 Dec</b>	Visit to Old Bailey; Lunch with members of the Judiciary: Old Bailey <i>Hamilton</i> at Victoria Palace Theatre, West End
<b>Saturday 7 Dec</b>	Museum Day [individual choice] - History - Churchill War Rooms;- Science:National Science Museum, - Art: Tate Modern; - Horticulture: Kew Garden
<b>Sunday 8 Dec</b>	Depart on coach for Winchester Visit Mendi Memorial in Southampton; Visit Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth; Visit D-Day Museum
<b>Monday 9 Dec</b>	Talk by Prof. Jessop—Deputy VC of Bristol University Tour Winchester University; Depart Winchester for Oxford –Talk: <i>British Education</i> by Prof. Victoria Elliott

**2019  
TOUR  
P  
R  
O  
G  
R  
A  
M  
M  
E**

<b>Tuesday 10 Dec</b>	Dinner: Green Templeton College; <i>Overnight: The Randolph Hotel</i> Tour round Oxford with 2018 Abe Dr Kumeren Govender Visit Ashmolean Museum; Lunch at Turf Tavern Natural History and Pitt Rivers Museum; Bursar Great Debate Dinner with Old Abes and Rhodes Scholars in Oriel College
<b>Wed 11 Dec</b>	Depart for Stratford-upon-Avon by coach Cambridge Visit Shakespeare's House, Burial Place, Anne Hathaway's Cottage; Dinner at The Rooftop Restaurant <i>Museum in Baghdad</i> at Royal Shakespeare Theatre. <i>Overnight at The Swan's Nest</i>
<b>Thursday 12 Dec</b>	Depart for Cambridge; Tour round Cambridge; Lunch in the Market Bursar Discussion with Old Abe Khomotso Moshikaro on <i>Oxbridge College System</i> Dinner at Trinity College; <i>Overnight Queens College</i>
<b>Friday 13 Dec</b>	Depart for Edinburgh; Lunch <i>en route</i> Dinner in Pollock Hall; <i>Overnight at MacDonald Holyrood Hotel</i>
<b>Saturday 14 Dec</b>	Tour of Edinburgh with Davina Gibson Young; Lunch at the Royal MacGregor Tour of Edinburgh Castle; Dinner at Pollock Hall
<b>Sunday 15 Dec</b>	Depart for The Burn; Discussion on The Burn by David Turner Lunch at the Burn; 3 <sup>rd</sup> Bursar Presentations Welcome Reception and Cocktail Party; <i>Overnight at The Burn</i>
<b>Monday 16 Dec</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Bursar presentations; Lunch at the Burn Depart for Curling and dinner: Brechin Rotary Club
<b>Tuesday 17 Dec</b>	Depart by coach for walking trip to Glen Esk and Loch Lee 5 <sup>th</sup> Bursar presentations Dinner –Post-dinner discussion with David Turner
<b>Wed 18 Dec</b>	Coach Glamis Castle; Walks on the Burn Estate/ to Edzell; Scottish themed dinner & Ceilidh
<b>Thursday 19 Dec</b>	Depart The Burn; Train from Montrose to London, King's Cross Debriefing dinner in Churchill Room
<b>Friday 20 Dec</b>	Work Shadow Day Lunch at Work Shadow
<b>Saturday 21 Dec</b>	Late Breakfast; Final Bursar Briefing and Bursar Awards Lunch; Depart by coach for London Heathrow Airport. Depart Heathrow ET 701 for Addis Ababa and Johannesburg

I return as a proud of South African with a new love for its people and a new passion for what the country can become. I am grateful for the tour and the bursars who embarked on the journey with me because I was able to not only identify gaps and toxic traits within myself, but to replace them with love and understanding for people and the differences we share.

#### ***Luan Staphorst-Nelson Mandela University***

I am immensely grateful for what the Abe Bailey Trust has provided me. Whilst much will fade with, through and because of time - the tastes of Addis Ababa, the colours of Piccadilly Circus and the costs of a drink in Covent Garden - one thing will never be forgotten. People. This is perhaps the heart of what I wanted from this experience. The opportunity to learn, unlearn and relearn from, through and because of others. And in the end - whether or not I wanted it - this will be all that ultimately remains. This, of course, does not mean that the contexts and cotexts surrounding *People* are unimportant, unimpressive or simply forgettable. Rather, that these are cemented and rooted within *People*. I write this just over a month after we said our goodbyes as a group, and yet I have not said farewell to anyone...a testament to the bonds of deep and meaningful relationships which were established over the course of our travels, adventures and even misfortunes.

#### ***Michelle Oelofse-University of Pretoria***

The tour was truly a once in a lifetime experience, an experience that has inspired my immediate future, regarding study options, and I believe it will also have a major impact on my career in the longer term. The initiative to bring together a diverse group of students, in race, but also in geography, study fields and institutions served to show me the struggles of each of the individuals, enhancing my understanding of the broader South African story, activating a greater capacity for empathy. This unique group also exposed me to and encouraged me to go for opportunities that previously lay just beyond my gaze.

I intend to do a postgraduate degree at Oxford; this decision I owe to meeting South African Oxford students and seeing the colleges and city.

#### ***Mikaela Oosthuizen-Witwatersrand University***

In reflecting on my Abe Bailey experience, all I can say is thank you to the Abe Bailey Trust for a trip that has become a life-changing event. I have learnt that one's power lies in knowing what one does not know, and being open to learning is the key to sustainable success. Nothing beats interacting with those living their day-to-day life in these spaces and so our interaction with students at Radley College as well as Cambridge and Oxford, was most rewarding. A huge thank you to the tour manager, Keith, as well as every one of the Abe Bailey bursars who added great value to every minute of the tour. This tour and the exposure to the UK, equipped me to better serve my country back home in South Africa.

#### ***Romeo Drabile-Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University***

Having spent 4 weeks with strangers turned friends, through uncomfortably confronting my own ideologies, I have grown and been blessed with a platform to continue challenging my thought and making the South Africa in which we all live in a better place. Being able to interact with fellow South African leaders from different walks of life allowed us to share our views from different perspectives creating interesting discourse amongst us. The final activity we had was our work shadow day and mine was absolutely phenomenal spending time with **Prof David Katz (Abe: UCT 1967)** and Dr. Harry Carter after they so willingly shared about the medical system and opportunities for us as South African doctors. I landed at OR Tambo a proud South African citizen, concerned about the challenges we face as a country but aware of the possibilities and my ability to confront those challenges and bring about change.

#### ***Samkezi Mbalane-University of the Free State***

During the tour I began to realise something different in me. I became more of a listener, not that I ceased being outspoken, but listening with the aim to understand others started to be ingrained in me and the growing willingness to co-operate with other Abes. It's amazing how this tour didn't force me to assimilate other people's culture, instead it taught me how to live with people from different cultural backgrounds. I am more confident now than I ever was before and am able to embrace differences. The DODO (*Director of Daily Operations*) experience took me out of my comfort zone and fostered good communication skill. Bursar presentations were the best platform where effective engagements were realised. This is where my listening skill was tested and respect for other people's opinions fostered.

#### ***Morobadi Seanego-University of Limpopo***

Autonomy, public speaking skills and qualities, patience, networking, debating and expressions were skills which each Abe attained. Through these activities, we learned about ourselves and the people around us. This was also evident at the African Union where robust engagements were held about Agenda 2063 and its implementation process.

My work shadow day was an exceptional experience. I found myself at the Old Bailey Criminal Court which contributed exponentially to my Life Coaching and Motivational Speaking Career. The two cases that I attended on murder and robbery changed my whole life in terms of understanding the urgency of disseminating information about crime and its effect on young people. I learned a lot about the importance of my work in terms of school visits to take young people out of the street into making them understand the importance of education. The travel bursary transformed my life by giving me the experience that can never be offered anywhere in the world. Thank you Abe Bailey.

#### ***Shannon Arnold-University of the FreeState***

Being 'born frees', daily we are required to navigate the legacy of apartheid, our transition, and now our current socio-economic milieu all at the same time; and I think that often, along the way and through the forest of clashing life-experiences, world views, ideological beliefs, and mounting racial inequality and discord, we don't see each other as people, but as markers of difference. The tour took us out of South Africa and demanded that we confront these markers of difference, interrogate them, challenge them, and in so doing we started to realise that we weren't that different and that each one of us is a person, with a history, and a sense of humour, a family, a life, and we all had that in common, we all could find common ground in the willingness to share ourselves.

I learnt so much from the other bursars through this process, not only about South Africa and them as people, but also about myself. That experience, more than anything else has shifted me fundamentally to the core. I left the tour with a secure sense of self, a love for my country and its people, and a fire in my belly to pursue goals that I hadn't dared allow myself to think of beforehand. We had the opportunity to engage with real thought leaders and change-makers from both South Africa and the UK. Not only was it exceptional to be able to pick such interesting and successful individuals' brains, but it was such an honour to hear their thoughts and ideas about the issues challenging our world and society today.

#### ***Anne-marie Mailovich-Tshwane University of Technology***

I was lucky enough to spend my Work shadow day at the Royal Opera House touring the inner workings of the establishment and learning



what it takes to be in one of the best Opera houses in the world. We went to the beautiful country of The Burn where we were hosted by David Turner. He was marvellous and took us to Loch Lee and to Glamis Castle, and told us more about his time in the military as well as the history of The Burn. We had the most amazing bonding experience as a group when we had our Scottish Ceilidh celebration, and when we huddled around the fireplace.

#### ***Yonga Madikizela-University of Fort Hare***

I went into the tour with a sole intention: to learn and unlearn - both from a personal and professional perspective - as well as to acquire the knowledge, skills and networks needed to effect social and economic change in our country. The tour far exceeded my expectations. It stretched me and taught me more than I could imagine. We had the opportunity to meet Andrew Feinstein, who is a well-renowned arms trade activist and former member of the ANC. He is now the executive director of Corruption Watch UK and an investigative writer, broadcaster and campaigner. His session challenged me in many ways. His work enabled me to really think deeply about scholarship, race, power and activism.

We met students who make up the Goodenough College community at our welcome reception. The room had about 40 people from all corners of the globe. We were the united nations of sorts, all of us had travelled across the world to seek an education and we were 'taking our shot at life'. This allowed us to create meaningful connections with people from around the world. I believe that the networks we developed will continue for years to come.

#### ***Muano Nemavhidi-University of Venda***

Throughout the trip, having to swap roommates made becoming a unit not only an incidental thing but a conscious determined effort to understand and appreciate everyone. Most importantly, the trip began a culture of striving to be on time and being better at networking. In that sense, it is an ongoing process. I am now able to relate to a wider set of people as well as feel better equipped to engage with my community.

#### ***Sergio Alves-University of Stellenbosch***

I was privileged to be a part of a multicultural team with people from so many different parts of South Africa which I have never visited - this helped me with improving my intercultural communication skills. Between meeting many distinguished individuals as well as the bonds with my fellow bursars, my network has certainly grown both in size and diversity. One of the greatest benefits I received from this trip was that I developed my ability to speak out and give my opinion even when it may differ from the popular opinion held by others.

While there were many high points on our trip, it was often the difficult moments of honesty during our debrief sessions from which I benefitted the most. Those times where people explained how they truly felt about aspects of the trip or how they were treated by an individual. This is where I started to build genuine relationships with people as they shared their vulnerabilities and from here we were able to develop a shared vision of personal growth. Every time I learnt something new, had my opinions challenged, met people who were so passionate about so many different subjects...was the process of meeting incredible people and building relationships which sharpened my edge, fostering my personal growth.

#### ***Siphesihle Ndaba-Rhodes University***

Being selected to be an Abe Bailey Travel Bursar has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I anticipated that I would enjoy my experience and that I would learn much. However, I did not anticipate how much I would learn about South African culture through the other bursars. I also had not anticipated how much I would grow through open debate. I learnt to trust my thoughts and opinions but also not to be too sentimental about those opinions so as to allow the understanding of new perspectives from my peers who have differing life experiences to me. They not only created an environment where I felt that I could express myself but they also encouraged differing opinions which created a space in which we all could share perspectives knowing that if someone disagrees they disagree with the idea and not the person expressing it. I have gained lifelong friendships through this tour with people who are in fields that I would have never thought I would engage in.

#### ***Thandi Hlotshana-North West University***

Incredible experiences, people and cultures that I came across during the tour. To be afforded an opportunity to wine and dine with dignitaries, politicians, authors, mayors, judges and lawyers to mention a few, was surreal. Almost every bursar was willing to give room for someone of a different race and culture to elaborate on their distinct viewpoints without any judgment. This fostered space for learning and growth. The group had some of the finest and most outstanding young South Africans...who engaged and truly wanted to understand how certain races felt...fostered commitment and effective communication in building and sustaining a common future. There were many commitments made that could shake up our country even if it is by impacting one person, university and city at a time. I look forward to seeing us all take up our baton of change and fearlessly stir up some action.

#### ***Kapil Narain-University of KwaZulu Natal***

Learning about South Africa's place in the world was certainly accomplished by a visit to the African Union, a full day's engagement in high level discussions with technocrats at UNECA. A great honour was an invitation to lunch at the House of Lords. It was a truly grand affair, and I was ecstatic to be seated next to Lord Bilimoria and enjoyed discussing, along with other Peers, the development of events leading up to, and the ramifications of, Brexit, as well as South African politics and leadership. The magnitude of insight at the table was intense and inspiring and I felt truly privileged to have been in the midst of such political juggernauts!

The group itself was composed of highly dynamic and diverse individuals, each accomplished in their own right. A significant portion of learning, originated from interactions and scintillating discourses amongst the group itself (sparked by guest speakers or visits to certain places or museums) and nurtured through the tranquility and serenity of The Burn which I tremendously enjoyed. I place on record my most sincere compliments to Mr Keith Richardson, Dr John Gibbon, Ms Debbie Weber, the Abe Bailey Trust and every single individual responsible for making this tour a most memorable and awe-inspiring one.

## **5. FELLOWSHIP RE-UNION IN THE CENTRAL PROVINCES**

The Trust invited Abe Bailey Fellows living in the vicinity of Gauteng and who are unable to attend the annual new bursar farewell dinners in Cape Town, to a re-union event at the Johannesburg Country Club Woodmead at the end of March. Just over 100 Fellows responded enthusiastically and we looked forward to a fascinating evening. **Bill Pierce (Natal 1973)** was the kingpin in making the arrangements.

Unhappily the Covid-19 virus and the declared national disaster put paid to our plans, so the function was postponed indefinitely until conditions make such a gathering possible! All who replied and others in the area will be informed when this re-union can be rescheduled.

## 6. PAINTING OF 2018 ABES ON DISPLAY IN SAATCHI GALLERY IN LONDON



This portrait of the 2018 Abe Bailey bursars will be exhibited at the London Saatchi Gallery. It was painted by Khushna-Sulaman-Butt who is studying for a Masters in Fine Art at the Slade School of Art and who lives at Goodenough College.

Her story: "I met the group by chance while they were singing on the steps of the Great Hall before a rehearsal. I was attracted to their energy and presence and asked if I could photograph them. I captured a beautiful bank of images to create the final piece."

## 7. AN INTERESTING GLIMPSE OF ABE BAILEY'S LIFE BY GIDEON HAIGH, AN AUSTRALIAN CRICKET JOURNALIST [[www.espncriinfo.com](http://www.espncriinfo.com)]

Bailey belongs in that long tradition of wealthy cricket patrons. The stern, shrewd, acquisitive Bailey was kept busy by much besides his mining and pastoral empire: he played polo; he spent lavishly on bloodstock; he became a vigneron; he owned the *Rand Daily Mail*. But nothing obsessed him like cricket - he seemed to feel he owed it something, and perhaps he did. Several versions exist of how Bailey, a merchant in Queenstown who had made and lost a fortune by the time he was twenty-one, was rescued by a cricket exploit after his business exploits turned sour. Walter Hammond, retells in *Cricketers' School* (1948):

*"He made some money, lost it, and got into rather low water. Then he heard of openings for adventurers in Australia, and bought a ticket to sail from Cape Town. Just before his ship was due to leave, Bailey agreed to play in a cricket match in Cape Town. He was the best bat in the side and knocked up a sparkling 114. An onlooker who had won a number of side bets on the result of the match was so delighted that he went round to the team's dressing room and presented young Bailey with a cheque for £100 as a reward for pulling the match out of the fire. A hundred pounds was power to Abe Bailey and he immediately cancelled his passage to Australia, invested his £100 in some land on the Rand, sold the land shortly afterwards at a big profit, and began again to amass that elusive fortune. This time he succeeded... Sir Abe Bailey never forgot that amazing turn of fortune, whereby a century scored in a chance match in Cape Town set his feet on the royal road to millionairehood."*

Once his own modest playing days were ended, Bailey set himself to repaying the debt many times over. Bailey commented tersely to Bernard Tancred, the best South African batsman of the era: "We must set ourselves to beat the Englishmen on equal terms." That they did, and little over 15 years later, was due in no small part to Bailey's deep-pocketed benefaction of Transvaal cricket... It was only Bailey's bankroll, for instance, that lured Australia to South Africa in October 1902; likewise was the national team's successful visit to England eighteen months later underwritten, at considerable expense, by a Bailey guarantee.

These indulgences were shoehorned, often improbably, into a life devoted to commerce, where he became the most daring of mining speculators, and nationalism, where he was a politician of dubious instincts, rather too susceptible to public opinion... It also entailed some improbable commitments, such as Bailey's advocacy of the inclusion of the coloured fast bowler Krom Hendriks for South Africa's first tour of England, and his promotion of the coloured all-rounder Buck Llewellyn as coach at the Wanderers Club.

But for Bailey, promotion of South African cricket was a cause with its own rules and parameters... the impetus for the ICC was South Africa's unexpected 4-1 home triumph against MCC just over a century ago... Bailey seized on the breakthrough to begin agitating for a tri-cornered summer of cricket in England involving the hosts, Australia and South Africa... he urged the South African Cricket Association's meeting of March 1908 to "press for the creation of the Imperial Board of Control as soon as possible"... the upshot was a long-term commitment to a Triangular Tournament three years hence.

From 1912, Bailey was increasingly resident in England, either at his rural seat in Surrey, or a city mansion in Bryanston Avenue, where Winston Churchill was a frequent visitor: one of Bailey's sons later married one of Churchill's daughters. He was newly a KCMG, and recently remarried, almost a decade after the death of his first wife, to Mary Westerna, 20-year-old daughter of the notorious Anglo-Irish rake Baron Rossmore. Their union yielded five children but Sir Abe was a distant, distracted husband, and Lady Bailey after the war took flying lessons in secret to obtain licence and to "get away from prams". In March 1928 she informed Sir Abe that "I have felt the need for a change of scene and interest lately" and promptly flew solo from Croydon to Cape Town, then back. When her record for the journey was broken, she retrieved it, her husband indulging her with equal generosity, if somewhat greater bemusement, than South African cricket.

## 8. WARM SYMPATHY AND CONDOLENCES

We share the sad news that has come to us of the deaths of: **Johnny Nell (UP 1956)**, **Madder Steyn (UP 1957)**, **Mike Kimberley (Wits 1957)**, **John Gurney (UCT 1965)** and **Willem van der Linde (UPE 1978)**.

**Benjamin Pogrund (UCT 1957)** paid this tribute to **Mike Kimberley**: "My memory of Mike is of a man with a great capacity for laughing at himself and the world. He was the lawyer on the executive of the Rhodesia/Zimbabwe electricity supply commission, and a group picture was taken every year. It was always white men; then there was one black face, then another, and finally Mike was the only white face."

## 9. THE FIRST 15 YEARS: OUR EARLIEST ABE BAILEY TRAVEL BURSARS

In following up the whereabouts and contact details of the 78 living Old Abes in the first 15 years of the programme (1951-65), I was delighted to hear from these Fellows:

### Gys Steyn (US 1956)

"I am fortunate to still enjoy good health and remain active inter alia playing a lot of golf. **Chris Rachanis** and **Neville Rubin** are apparently the only ones of the group still alive."

In November 2019 **Benjamin Pogrund (UCT 1957)** launched his new book in Cape Town and Johannesburg on *Robert Sobukwe: How can a Man Die Better*. "Thank you, as always, for your latest September newsletter with all its interesting information about Abe Bailey people. I was an Abe in a long-past era, when the 12 Fellows were men and white. Even more, we travelled with the complication that the government was in the process of imposing apartheid on universities. As we were all in the student leaderships at our universities, it meant the six from "English" universities were actively anti-apartheid and the six from the "Afrikaans" universities supported the government. So we started with potential problems. But the organisers had a quiet word with us before we boarded the mailship for the 12-day journey to Southampton and we agreed to be respectful of each other. This gave me a memorable and mind-forming six weeks.

The visit of course opened me to the world - the splendour of London, the beauty of the countryside; the plays and operas we went to (with an ice-cream put on our seats during interval); the students we met in Edinburgh at a dance (the organisers thought it necessary to tell us in advance that black students would be dancing with white women - none of our Afrikaans colleagues attended); the Lord Mayor of London showing us the city's priceless collection of gold plate, each item presented by mayors over centuries.

A year later I went into journalism with the *Rand Daily Mail* in Johannesburg, focusing on reporting black politics and existence and eventually landing up as deputy editor. Sadly, this disrupted connections with my Afrikaner colleagues, some of whom rose to high positions in the apartheid era. We were on entirely opposing sides. I tried to make contact a few times and then gave up.

The *Mail* was closed down in 1985 because of its unyielding opposition to apartheid, and Britain gave sanctuary to me and my family. I specialised in foreign news with the *Today* and *Independent* newspapers, did lots of TV and radio commentaries during the last years of apartheid, moved to Boston in the US to edit an international newspaper, and then moved to Israel: I was invited to start a dialogue centre to foster peace. As is obvious from current events, my modest efforts for more than 12 years were not successful.

I have written books - about Robert Sobukwe, the Africanist leader who was my close friend; about Nelson Mandela, also a friend; about the press under apartheid; and about Israel and apartheid. My wife, Anne Sassoon, an artist, and I live in a small comfortable apartment in Jerusalem. We visit South Africa often to see our youngest son and our five grandchildren in Johannesburg. Reflecting my continuing strong links with the country, one of the proudest moments of my life was in April last year when President Cyril Ramaphosa conferred the *Order of Ikhamanga Silver* on me for services to journalism and academia."

### Chris Wade (Natal 1958)

"A couple of years after our extremely interesting and educational Abe tour - for which I shall always be grateful - my family moved back to England. I worked for 7 years with a consulting engineering firm in London, before moving to a Swedish Consultant in Stockholm in 1967. I met my Swedish wife, Agneta, and we married in 1969, and the expected one-year turned into some 35 years! We returned to England on our 'retirements' aged 65, where I embarked on a second career with my own Consulting Engineering firm, until 2019. We have now been married some 50 years, and we commute between Stockholm, where we have our 3 children and 7 grandchildren, and our lovely ancient house in the Kent countryside.

For my Swedish Consultants, I worked on infrastructure projects almost exclusively abroad, mainly in the Middle East and Africa, but also in South America. I was based in Riyadh Saudi Arabia for some five years in the 1960s, and more recently have visited Tanzania some 20 times, made some 30 work trips to Turkey, and lectured on contractual subjects in Malaysia and elsewhere. The projects included hydropower, water supply, water towers, nuclear energy plants, tunnels, canals, public buildings, preservation of ancient monuments, railways, and other infrastructure projects. Of particular interest might be a tunnel under the Danube in Budapest, and another tunnel under the Bosphorus in Istanbul, both for expanding metro systems. My work was on the contractual side, including procurement of contractors, contract documentation, dispute settlement, etc., and considerable lecturing on topics of interest to consulting engineers.

Over the years I have worked with the International Federation of Consulting Engineers, and producing standard documents for construction procedures. I have authored a number of FIDIC documents, which are now used world-wide by governments, contractors, consultants and lawyers.

During my years in Sweden I partook in many athletic competitions, and was Swedish marathon champion in 1968 and 69, with several times better than 2hrs 20 mins, my best times being 2hr 17mins. I also competed abroad, e.g. in Ankara, Kosice, Manchester, Windsor to Chiswick."

**Rob Parker (Natal 1959)**, when correcting our record of his email address, mentioned: "I am working as the Resident Engineer on a multi-million development in Rustenburg."

### Willie Pietersen (Rhodes 1960)

"I still teach full time as Professor of The Practice of Management at Columbia Business School in New York City, and have been at it now for 25 years. It has been the longest of my three careers (law and corporate careers came first). I am a believer in Albert Einstein's dictum: 'Life is like riding a bicycle. You either move forward, or you fall off.'"



### **Richard Goldstone (Wits 1960)**

*"It is very disappointing that the 2020 Tour has had to be cancelled. I share your hope that it will be back on track for 2021. As for my "retirement", I am being kept more than busy. During January 2020, I was appointed to chair a group of nine international experts to review the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute system. The Independent Expert Review Group was established by resolution of the Assembly of States Parties (the body made up of the 123 nations that have ratified the Rome Statute for the ICC). The IER is the consequence of widespread criticisms and concerns that had been expressed in many quarters about the performance of the ICC. We worked in The Hague in February and the first half of March where we held almost 300 interviews and received many thousands of pages of submissions from Governments and non-governmental organisations, The Covid-19 pandemic sent us scurrying home in the middle of March and we have been working remotely since then. We will submit a final report by 30 September 2020. I consider myself fortunate in having this work to keep me busy in these trying times."*

### **Neil Callie (Wits 1962)**

*"I turned 80 in May, so feel I am progressing up into the senior Abe ranks! At present my wife Gail and I are in Sydney, Australia, visiting family, on a programme well extended past originally planned dates due to the Corona disruption of all travel plans around the world. Thankfully, the family seemed thrilled at the prospect of our extended stay! But tragic indeed to read of the 2020 Abe Tour having to be cancelled-what an opportunity gone missing! Thank you for the great work you so tirelessly undertake to keep the Abe dream alive."*

### **Mike Raath (Rhodes 1963)**

*"I retired from Wits University in 2006. In my job at Wits I had quite a lot to do with another old Abe, who has sadly also left us -- Prof **Phillip Tobias (Wits 1952)**, and I interacted quite a lot with yet another Old Abe and in fact a senior contemporary of mine at school in Rhodesia, Professor **Bill Evans (Wits 1960)**. Both men trod deep spurs at Wits, and as you know, Phil Tobias was declared a 'National Treasure' by the President not long before his death. When I retired my wife and I moved from Johannesburg to Cape Town, where we built a home in a relatively new and growing residential development called 'Imhoff's Gift', a division of Kommetjie, where we enjoyed 13 idyllic years. But when stark realities told us we needed to downsize, we bought into a new development in Simon's Town, where residential apartments were included as part of a commercial centre, But delay prevented us from taking occupation. My wife Ann died in November of that year. So ever since lockdown was imposed, I have been living on my own. I was very sad to get the news from your last Newsletter than **Stan Ridge (Natal 1963)**, a member of our team, had died. He and I were trying to plan a get together, but it was sadly not to be."*

### **Herschel Flax (UCT 1964)**

*"Thank you very much for the outstanding job you've been doing in producing the Newsletter, which I always devour avidly. It has been remarkable and heartening to witness the changes in the SA University scene, and in the AB Fellowship itself, over a period of decades. Warmest greetings to you, to all the Bursars, and, especially, to my 1964 fellow Abes, from whom I'd love to hear.*

*I'm writing from New York, where my wife and I have been since 1974, and where we are currently hunkered down, like most people, trying to avoid the Covid-19 scourge. Every part of the world has had its own specific factors and problems trying to battle the pandemic, but the USA has unfortunately suffered grievously from a politicisation of what should be purely medical/scientific considerations and from the absence of a unified, coherent national policy.*

*After my memorable Abe Bailey Travel Fellowship, I settled down to train in General Surgery, both at UCT/Groote Schuur Hospital, and in the UK at the Universities of London, Birmingham and Cambridge. After gaining my FRCS and Ch.M degrees, (and marrying my wife Elana), we departed the UK in 1974 with our first 2-year old child for what was initially intended to be a year of experience in the USA. However, the dynamism and excitement of the American surgical world proved hard to resist, and we have remained in New York till the present. After a career in General Surgery, ending up as Professor of Clinical Surgery at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, I eventually retired from operating and moved to teaching, also at Einstein, where I am currently Professor of Anatomy. Four married children and 8 grandchildren keep us constantly on our toes!*

*Along the way I managed to indulge a few outside interests, such as going to New York University at night to complete an M.A. in Political Science, and training to become a Tour Guide at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where I have been conducting regular public tours for visitors for the past 12 years. I'd be delighted to hear from any Abes visiting this part of the world."*

### **Gus Garforth (Wits 1965)**

*"As I near the age milestone of 80, I eventually worked myself into final retirement at the end of March. I was privileged to have lectured in Mech. Eng. at Wits for 15 years while undertaking successful and original research in the field of combustion and flame propagation, being awarded a PhD in 1975. Having consulted to industry in South Africa and to the US Bureau of Mines, I was then enticed into the commercial and forensic fields of insurance loss adjusting, joining a small firm as a partner in 1979. I was instrumental in developing the company into the largest such local organisation, with an internationally recognised reputation, to the effect that I was asked to handle major insurance claims arising from accidents in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, throughout Africa and in several South American countries. It has been a most rewarding career.*

*I lost my wonderful wife in a heart operation just on ten years ago. My lovely daughter, who was a TV celebrity here and in America, decided to emigrate to the USA 4 years ago with her immediate family, including my grandson. I am now resident in Waterfall Hills, Sunninghill, possibly the finest "mature lifestyle estate" in the world where, amongst other activities, I still practise piano and guitar."*

## **10. NEWS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE FROM ABES POST-1965**

From **Japie Engelbrecht (UPE 1972)**: *"Thank you for this wonderful service that you are rendering, ensuring that the Abe's stay in touch!! And to learn about the new Abe's in our region. I must, however, admit to being jealous of the 2019 group, who spend some time in Cape Town, and in Addis Ababa. However, I am sure they would be jealous of our group who travelled by ship (SA Vaal, if memory serves me) to the UK!"*

**Bill Pierce (Natal 1973)** wrote: *"Always a real joy to hear from you and to receive the Newsletter - many thanks indeed! I feel blessed in that I have interesting work to do - I have been busy with a mixture of Lecturing and Business Coaching over the last year, a number of good friends that I spend time with, and have time to keep reading great books and to spend with my family."* From the same year, **Adam Klein (Wits 1973)** a medical doctor in New York: *"Many years have passed. I often smile with great pleasure as my Abe experiences emerge in my memory. Thank you for all you do to keep the Fellowship alive and vital. Today I received the March edition of all past Abe's via regular mail and feel extremely guilty at the wasted expense of not being among those receiving it electronically. Please transfer me to that list. Currently*



very affected by the Corona virus lock down in New York and my daughter starting college in California in August! Kindest regards and best wishes." And **Louis Louw (UP 1973)**: "Dankie vir hierdie kosbare naamlys wat geen mens seker akkuraat kan byhou nie. Ek merk net dat **ds G Madder Steyn (UP 1957)** die afgelope jaar oorlede is."

Very good to hear from **Stephen Hofmeyr (UCT 1977)** in London: "Many thanks for the news and address lists. I took silk in 2000 (with Nelson Mandela!). I am also a Deputy High Court Judge. All the best." **Lloyd Smuts (UPE 1982)** was in touch: "As with so many times in the past, it was again a huge pleasure and privilege to receive your latest email and newsletter. Thank you for keeping us all connected in this very special and unique manner. Your role in this endeavour is hereby acknowledged and appreciated."

**Bev Jacobson (WITS 1987)** sent an update: "I graduated as a medical doctor in 1990 however, following an HIV needle stick injury I completed an MBA at the London Business School and went into management consultancy until my eldest daughter was born and sustained extensive brain damage from meningitis. I spent years at home looking after her and the three wonderful children that followed. Since 2008, I have been working as a CEO in the charity sector focussing primarily on learning disabilities. At the end of 2018, I took up the role as CEO of a 225-year-old children and learning disability charity called Norwood. We look after children with social, emotional and learning challenges and adults with learning disabilities supporting both groups to live happy and inclusive lives." **Mike Joubert (UP 1988)** wrote: "Thank you for the as always welcome Abe Bailey update and Newsletter. It remains a pleasure and privilege to be a part of this very special fellowship. Reading all the comments from past Abes always stimulates fond memories."

**Samantha Walbrugh-Parsadh (US 1994)** wrote: "Thank you very much for always keeping us updated and connected. Good luck this year with the tour. I do hope the Corona virus will be something of the past when they have to travel." As above, unhappily the tour was cancelled but we look forward hopefully to 2021 to resume the programme.

On social media I noticed that **Monwabisi Luxande (UCT 1998)** holds the post of Manager: BBBEE Development & Community Relations at Nordex Group, Cape Town Area.

**Sinazo Mboye (Mntambo) (UFH 2004)** sent new contact details and a name change. Congratulations, Sinazo, on your marriage whenever it took place: "Thank you for all the work that you've tirelessly put into this mailing list and the newsletter over the many many years. I should also let you know that my last name has changed to Mboye 😊"

**Tanya Smith (Rhodes 2006)** responded to last year's Newsletter: "As always, it is so wonderful to see the news of the newly elected bursars and to relive the excitement of the trip they are just about to embark on! We have decided to take up an exciting opportunity which will take my family and me back to the UK in December for a few years. We'll be staying in Surrey with easy access to London, and I'm really looking forward to visiting some of the spots we saw back in 2006 on this life changing tour. I wish all the 2019 Abes the very best!" From the same year: **Tshepo Mvulane Moloi (UZ 2006)** "Thanks for the latest update on the Abe Scholarship. I am now the holder of a PhD in Political Studies, from the University of Johannesburg. All the best."

News from Canada-**Hendrik van der Watt (UP 2007)**: "I received the 2019 Fellowship Newsletter today. I find it so great that the tour is continuing to inspire and develop new leaders from our great country as well seeing the updates and influence of old Abes! I still think back with great fondness to our tour. I am actually working with another Abe, **Dr Keeve de Villiers (US 2010)** here in Bonnyville." From the UK, **Nobulali Dangazele (Wits 2008)** wrote: "I have been living in the UK for 5 years now. I work as a theatre producer and part-time lecturer. I teach in both the drama department as well as the business school at Warwick and Queen Mary University. I worked as a Fund Raising and Partnerships manager at Canon Collins Trust. In July I graduated with my PhD in business management at the University of Warwick. I still run my production company called ShakeXperience which is currently staging a show at the Soweto Theatre and later will be at the Johannesburg Theatre. My focus is still on helping high school learners engage with their curriculum and this year I chose to focus on 'My Children My Africa' by Athol Fugard which is a matric set work. All in all I am happy, healthy and most importantly grateful for the opportunity I had to travel to the UK on the Abe Bailey Travel Bursary."

Providing a new address, **Ryan Lamb (UFS 2011)** wrote: "All going well this side. I started a new job in January, working as the Chief Technology Officer for an online education company. We focus primarily on the Asian markets and I work remotely, so still in London. Recently moved a bit further out from central London, enjoying the quieter neighbourhood!"

**Jordan Griffiths (UP 2013)** was in touch: "As always a pleasure to receive the latest Newsletter. I noticed some interesting changes to the programme which I am somewhat jealous of. I have read Andrew Feinstein's book "Shadow World" which looks at the global flow of arms and I see the Abes got to speak to him about it.

On my side, I still hold the same role in the City of Tshwane as Policy Advisor to the Executive Mayor. Politically still jumping through multiple hoops in navigating the dynamics of a minority government. Nonetheless I continue to enjoy the role and the challenges it presents. I recently got back from a 6-week jaunt to Norway where I was at the University of Oslo on their International Summer School programme. I was doing a short masters course in Energy, Environment and Social Change. I was very lucky to be awarded a full scholarship to do the course and cover my living expenses, Oslo is most certainly one of the most expensive places I have ever been to so this was graciously received. The course itself was quite fun, coordinated by none other than a South African who was based in Norway. Many of my fellow classmates were fervent environmentalists and "hippy" sorts if you will, which was quite an experience. It seems I have picked up some of their ways since returning home and I am now toying with the idea of starting an environmental NGO."

This Sunday Times 9th February report caught my eye: "Rodney Kohler is planning a solo kayak voyage across the South Atlantic in November...to produce 15 litres of fresh water every day custom solar panels are built into the kayak's skin...developed with help from TUT engineer, lecturer and PhD student, **Tiaan Oosthuizen (TUT 2014)**. His response to my enquiry: "Aha, so glad you saw this! Thank you for the kind words, I am quite interested in weird and wonderful Engineering applications, and this one is just that-it's for a good cause! Keep an eye on the media, I am sure they will be broadcasting his journey quite a bit!"

On LinkedIn I saw that **Faith Pienaar (US 2014)** is the Senior Programme Officer at Accountability Lab. in the Johannesburg Area, and that **Farai Mubaiwa (US 2015)** started a new position as Partner Management Lead at Youth Employment Service (YES), SA.

From **Rehana Odendaal (UCT 2016)**: "I am currently at the University of Pennsylvania on a Fulbright Scholarship reading towards my PhD in Education, and one of the research projects I have been assigned is to create a database of Leadership Development programmes for young Africans. Given the profile of many Old Abes and the long history of the programme, I would really like to make sure that the Travel Bursary is included in the database." Congratulations to **Riedwaan Fakier (UWC 2018)**: "I managed to get the Kader Asmal Fellowship and I

am now doing my Masters (MSc in Strategy and Innovation) in Ireland. I'm right next door to the UK and hope to meet up with the Abes of 2019 somehow during their tour." **Samkezi Mbalane (UFS 2019)** wrote: "I received an invitation from my University to take up the Facilitation position in the Department of Political Studies and Governance and I am now involved in teaching and learning within the University of the Free State. Things are going well!"

## 11. 10th ANNIVERSARY -- THE 2010 ABES

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Abe Tour of 2010. The bursars had been planning keenly all to attend the 2020 Farewell function as a joint celebration of their 10th re-union. With no tour this year this opportunity has fallen away. However, here is an update from many of them following a lively 2010 Zoom session online:

### **ABRIE MARAIS-University of the Free State**

It has been 10 years since 18 of us embarked on what truly ended up being the journey of a lifetime. The 3 weeks I spent in England and Scotland at the end of 2010 with some of the brightest minds I've ever encountered, remains one of the top 5 highlights of my life.

Simply put, I am an optometrist residing in Cape Town, but numerous of my biggest accomplishments and proudest moments over the past 10 years can be traced back to the Abe Bailey Tour.

Visiting prestigious universities, such as Cambridge and Oxford, and meeting South African students who were studying postgraduate degrees in the UK, opened my eyes to the possibility and planted the seed to do so myself. In 2015 I obtained a Chevening Scholarship which allowed me to complete my MSc Public Health at the University of Southampton. My Masters dissertation was aimed at reducing basic visual impairment in areas in South Africa where people have limited access and funds to primary eye care. This led to me starting the *For Sight Trust*, a public benefit organisation that conducts eye examinations and provides people with spectacles, in poorer communities in and around Cape Town.

As a white Christian male growing up in the Free State my interaction with people of different races and beliefs was fairly limited. Through debates and discussions the Abe Bailey Tour offered me a wonderful opportunity to broaden my horizons and made me realise that although we may differ on grounds of gender, race, age, religion and sexual orientation, we are all humans first. Being surrounded by the other Abes of my cohort - all of us so different, but getting along so well at The Burn - helped me see the beauty in diversity and spending 3 weeks in the UK, where people were more liberal and embraced their uniqueness, helped me to take more pride in my own uniqueness. Lastly, being an Abe, connected me to people I would never have met otherwise. Thank you Sir Abe Bailey.



### **PHIWE NDINISA-University of Fort Hare**

I remember the 2010 team and experience with great fondness. Being a Bursar allowed me to forge lifelong friendships and deepened my understanding of South Africa at a crucial time in my personal development and imminent professional journey. The tour afforded me the opportunity to gain invaluable knowledge and perspectives that I would otherwise never have gained. I can never quantify the value and experience of spending three weeks with such inspirational students from various walks of life.

Today, professionally, I am a senior legal advisor for the City of Cape Town. Socially, I serve on the executive committee of Ubumbo, a nonprofit organisation based in Cape Town and Johannesburg with a national footprint that helps showcase talented individuals and their careers by supporting them and continuously expressing the spirit of togetherness. The COVID-19 pandemic presents Abe Bailey Fellows with the opportunity to showcase the best of humanity in order to overcome this pandemic.

### **MARIZELLE PIENAAR (VAN DER WALT)-North West University**

Having the opportunity to join the Abe Bailey tour 10 years ago was a sincere privilege and made a major impact on my personal and professional growth. The people that I had the privilege to share this tour with, touched my life, opened up my world view and instilled a can-do attitude in myself. The way in which this tour opened us to the world and to different ways of operating and working created an ideal that there is so much we can achieve if we just put our minds to it. My career kicked off in 2011, as a researcher at the CSIR in Pretoria.

Love led me to Namibia, and in 2012, I worked as a teacher of mathematics and science. My path led on to banking, and soon I started developing mathematical models for a bank in Namibia. This led to an analytics and modelling career, enhanced by the IFRS 9 model development when the accounting standard was introduced. Early 2020 I joined FNB Namibia as Head of Retail Credit, with the exciting challenge of leading a team of individuals as the Covid 19 pandemic hit the world, in an area that was greatly impacted by this crisis. I have held on to what I learned in 2010 - that all things are possible and that there are so many different ways to solve problems and ensure growth in organisations and individuals; my journey has been an exciting one, filled with growth and creativity.



### **KEEVE DE VILLIERS-University of Stellenbosch**

After spending 5 years as a medical doctor providing full spectrum family practice in the rural northern prairies of Alberta, Canada, I've now made a change to a bigger centre and a slightly warmer climate! I'm currently in the process of relocating to Kamloops in British Columbia if anyone wishes to look me up. I was fortunate to have been able to complete my MBA whilst still working full-time through the University of Alberta in 2019 and have been actively involved in various Medical Leadership positions which I plan to continue. I've been fortunate to work with another Abe, **Herc Van der Watt (UP 2007)**, on some exciting projects that will transform the current paper-based record-keeping system for the hospitals in the province and will be looking for opportunities to continue making a huge impact in the medical and health communities in this next chapter.

### **RICHARD WILKINSON-University of Cape Town**

Above all else, the Abe Bailey Tour exposed me to Oxford and Cambridge. Just a few years later, I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to study at both of these magnificent universities. I will forever be grateful for the time that I spent there. Needless to say, this has massively expanded the array of career options available to me both in South Africa and around the world. I am currently working as a tax attorney at PwC in Johannesburg. I am studying to become a Chartered Accountant (SA).

### **MARIUS ELLIS-University of Pretoria**

When reflecting on the 2010 tour an old proverb comes to mind that says: "*Surround yourself with like-minded people and people with distinction and you are sure to succeed in life*". The effect of the 2010 tour helped me to build on those words and to strive to work hard in life. At the end of my studies I finished my degree in Theology *cum laude* and have gone on to work successfully in two congregations. The tour helped me to strive towards excellence in my own life and taught me that however difficult the path may be, you are sure to succeed if you build on a firm foundation. The tour became part of that foundation. When times get tough and I have to make hard choices in my life, I can do so with confidence.

Today I am working closely with different organisations in Kroonstad to help people in need. When the Covid pandemic hit, we started a feeding scheme helping more than a 1000 people with food and started a care group to help people get back onto their feet after losing their jobs. I would have never embarked on this road if it wasn't for the experience that I had in 2010. I have also started to change the way we do Church at our local congregation. We have started digital services that get streamed over the internet. I learned from the past, placed myself firmly on the foundation laid in 2010 and have seen great success in my own life. The tour changed my life for the better. I am truly grateful.

### **MARNA TURNER (DU PLESSIS)-University of Limpopo**

It has been such a long time since my tour but I still have fond memories of that adventure. It feels like yesterday that I was running down the streets of London or playing in the snow in Scotland. Unfortunately I didn't build any lasting friendships from the tour, but I gained something more. I always wanted to be part of groups but being ill for most of my youth, I had never learned that subtle skill set of fitting in. I learned during the tour that I am okay with just being me. I liked sharing experiences but I was also okay at taking chances and not waiting on others to have my adventure. I learned I am more self-reliant than I thought I was and I loved myself as I am. That is a rare quality. I live in the moment and I stopped being concerned with what other people thought.

Today I am fighting for my patients. I still assist in theatre but have since left the rush of the ER. I am building a thriving practice that focuses on tick-borne infections, not supported or understood in our country. I hosted my first conference in SA on Lyme and other tick-borne infections in August 2019 which was a great success with a follow-up lecture in February. I am the sole importer of Nutrined products in South Africa and I am one of the first doctors to offer my patients Supportive Oligonucleotide Technique (SOT) treatment for their viruses and infections. I have an amazing husband and a delightful son. I am excited about what my future holds. I won't change the world, but I will change the world for one patient at a time.

### **TONI PALMER-University of KwaZulu Natal**

I was a 2010 'Abe'. 10 years have gone by and I remember most fondly our time at The Burn, for its warmth and hospitality and the opportunity it gave us for restorative rest and quiet reflection. Our time on tour made me alive to so many of the United Kingdom's problems and predicaments, and struck me because those problems were largely overlapping with our own. Our problems are truly universal - something the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted once again. These days I practise as an advocate in Durban, mainly in public law, a field of law where many of our biggest problems play out before the courts. My husband and I welcomed a delightful little girl into the world 9 months ago who, along with my practice, has kept my hands (and heart) full.

### **ADRIAAN VD MERWE-University of the Free State**

I think back with fond memories of my adventures with the 2010 Abes. The tour enriched my life, expanded my world view and forged



relationships that will continue long into the future. I believe that the experience moulded all of us into better South Africans and that the tour had a lasting impact on all of us. I still have contact with many of the cohort and we watch each other's impact in the world with great interest. Since the tour I completed an honours degree in Economics and a masters in Law at Stellenbosch University. Thereafter I moved to Sandton where I practised as a solicitor in the project and infrastructure



team at Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr, with a focus on the development of energy projects in Africa. I moved to Sydney in 2019 and now work as a senior associate in the property, infrastructure and construction team at Minter Ellison. The Abe Bailey Bursary gave me a platform to do great things, and I will always be immensely grateful and humbled to have had the opportunity to be an Abe bursar.

#### **CATERINA NICOLAOU-University of the Witwatersrand**

I am currently a working and studying mother. This is by far the most fulfilling yet most challenging task I have ever set myself to do and I applaud all working mothers. I am in my second year of specialising in Orthopaedic Surgery at Wits University and completing my MMed concurrently. Yes, I am probably one of the smallest Orthopaedic Surgeons you will ever meet! I have been blessed with a handsome, smart young prince, almost 2 years old.

The Abe Bailey tour continually reminds me of the greater picture and the endless opportunities we have laid before us. That from one milestone we reach to the next. There is no final destination but rather an exciting step ladder up and up to wherever we choose to go. The tour also continues to give me inspiration and strength when I need it with that which I most thrive on-learning and growing from human connection. I wish all the Abes, past and future, enlightenment in this rather confusing year. May we take from it lessons we would not otherwise have learnt; and leave behind all our fears and negative energy.

#### **DAVID MINNÉ-Nelson Mandela University**

It is crazy to think it has already been 10 years. The Abe tour was my first time in Europe and now this is where I live together with my wife Michele, son Eli and dog Leo.

I can truly call the tour a significant milestone in my life. I was just about to finish my degree at the time and had been accepted to join the Volkswagen team in Uitenhage, as an engineer. I was ambitious, dedicated and excited to take on the next chapter. My entire education up to that point had taken place with a 5km radius: pre-school, primary school, high school and university all within the bounds of sunny Summerstrand in Port Elizabeth. The Abe tour was about to rock my world view. The Abes were wonderfully diverse, next-level intelligent and fascinatingly interesting in every aspect. They helped push so many perspectives and paradigms I had ingrained into my mind over the years. The debates prepared me not just for the corporate world, but also helped me adjust my attitude and approach to a world filled with different personas, views and ways-of-life. I still remember the shock I felt when I presented my topic, which I felt so certain everyone would feel the same way about, only to realise I had sparked a topic with more under-tones, backgrounds and sensitivities than I could have imagined. From that day forward I was different: I wanted to understand the people around me. I do not want to push across my agenda, I just want to understand people. Not everyone I meet thinks like a surfer from Summerstrand. This realisation may sound obvious, but the 10-inch drop from head to heart is one I believe many are still to fully experience.

I married my incredible wife a year later, moved to Germany and then to the USA. We have had the privilege of visiting 33 countries and we currently live in Munich, Germany where I work as an engineer for BMW AG. I truly believe that the tour would not have the impact it had without its inspirational leader John Gibbon. What a phenomenal human being. Thank you for all you do for the South African youth, and for the direct words of wisdom you spoke into my life. I am so grateful for you. To the 2010 Abes - I miss you all!

## **12. ABE CONTACT DETAILS**

Old Abes with whom we had lost contact have been traced by fellow Abes or have reconnected with the Fellowship. Welcome back! If you know details of any bursars listed as 'unknown' in the March 2020 Official Contact List, or of Fellows who have passed away, please let me know.

## **13. NEWSLETTERS BY E-MAIL**

All Fellows receive this annual Newsletter and the March Official Contact List by e-mail, unless we have no e-mail address for you. In these few cases, they are sent by post-and, unfortunately, take a long time to reach you. If you are in this category, please send me your e-mail address so that we can update our records. **Be sure to inform me of any changes in your e-mail details.**

## **14. OUR APPRECIATION:**

- ✿ To all who sent in news, contributions and up-dated contact details.
- ✿ To Chairman **Brian Figaji** and the Abe Bailey Trustees for their commitment to the annual travel bursary programme
- ✿ To Ms **Lynnsay Jones**, Trust Officer, for her work on the Abe Baily Travel Bursary Programme.
- ✿ To Tour Manager, **Keith Richardson**, for leading the 2019 tour to the UK and for developing the two-day programme in Addis Ababa so creatively.
- ✿ To Goodenough Director, Ms **Rebecca Matthews**, for her valuable role in receiving and interacting with the new bursars.
- ✿ To **Amanda Streeter, Alan McCormack, David Turner** and their teams who co-ordinated arrangements in the UK in 2019
- ✿ To dozens of speakers, guides and event organisers in Cape Town, Ethiopia, and the UK who all contributed to the success of that tour. The organisations who put themselves out to host various Bursars on their Work Experience Day are warmly thanked.

Best wishes to you all

**JOHN GIBBON**  
SECRETARY/ORGANISER

Phone: 082-872-3464  
[disag@mweb.co.za](mailto:disag@mweb.co.za) or [disajohn@gmail.com](mailto:disajohn@gmail.com)