3. St Andrew’s International High School 1995 to the Present Day

Malawi became a democracy in May 1994 with the first multi-party elections since independence seeing Bakili Muluzi elected leader of Malawi. Muluzi’s son, Atupele was later to attend St. Andrew’s, which, in 1995 officially took on the name of St. Andrew’s International High School. This name change reflected both the decline of the Designated Schools Board – which was to finally end in 1999, and also the growing international feel of the school – no longer was the school catering solely for the ‘ex-pat’ community. Keith Johnston-Harris took on the role of Acting Head Teacher in 1995 with John Taylor arriving in 1996. One of the first tasks John Taylor undertook was a review of post-16 qualifications – the International Baccalaureate was mooted and then dropped as it ‘does not satisfy our needs’ and vocational qualifications were introduced, along with Careers Guidance.

New name, new school badge - the logo was designed by Jannatul Haque who won a competition set by Mr Green to design a new logo for the school.

In 1996, after almost fifteen years with little or no change to the physical environment of St. Andrew’s, the school finally saw some changes. The first development was the opening of the gym, giving a boost to volleyball, badminton and basketball, with the second development focused on technology provision with the Owen Room (an Audio-Visual Aids Room, named after former Headmaster Bill Owen) being converted into the school’s first Information Technology Room. Before this, there had only been three computers for students to use! In the 1996 edition of The Fisherman, Head Teacher John Taylor labeled the new IT room ‘one of the best in Africa.’

Keith Johnston-Harris (left), acting Head Teacher 1995-1996
and John Taylor (right), Head Teacher 1996-1998
1996 Fisherman reports on the cricket tour to Zimbabwe
December 1995’s school production of *The King And I* was a notable success and in April 1996, the Sixth Form students cycled to Zomba, walked from Monkey Bay to Cape Maclear and then swam
1km to Thumbi island to raise 100,000MWK to install a solar powered water pump at St. Anne’s Hospital in Nkhotakota.

In 1996, current Head of the Mathematics Faculty, Mr Jabulani Walasi joined the school and in 1997 Mr Selvas Dixon joined as two of the first Malawian trained teachers to work at St. Andrew’s – sadly Selvas passed away in 2007 but his motto, ‘the students come first’ served to make him a popular and respected teacher – his oft-stated desire was to become the best Physics teacher in Malawi! 1997 also saw a swimming tour to Jameson High School in Kadoma, Zimbabwe, satellite TV installed at SAIntS and ‘Assertiveness’ and ‘Cookie Club’ offered as afternoon activities. In 1998 a ‘Jubilee Special’ issue of The Fisherman was produced when the school celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the High School and the 60th Anniversary of the founding of the Junior School (then known as “St. Andrew’s Preparatory”, now known as “St. Andrew’s Primary”).

The 1998 issue of The Fisherman, celebrating 40 (or 60) years!

Many celebratory events took place in 1998, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the change of name to a ‘High’ School. It was also 60 years since the original St. Andrew’s School was set up. The achievements of former Head Teacher Major Bryan Bayly and the longest serving teacher at the school, Mrs Florrie Mullon, were recognised by renaming the revamped School Hall as the Bayly-Mullon Theatre. At the same time the Drama Studio, built above the enlarged Dining Hall was opened with money from the Beit Trust. In 1996, Head Teacher John Taylor visited a school in Gaborone on a fact finding mission and concluded that, by comparison to what he had just seen in Botswana, the School Hall and Dining Hall at SAIntS “resembled a Bosnian soup kitchen during a rougher episode of the armed conflict.”
In 1998 Head Teacher John Taylor left to be replaced by short-term tenures of Gordon Espley-Jones (1998-1999) and David Morrison (1999-2000). In 2000 Roger Dallimore took the reins as the school became more stable in terms of leadership. By 2001 the school felt that it was possible for it to enter the Guinness Book of World Records and this is exactly what they did on the 1\textsuperscript{st} May 2001 when 47 students sat through 25 hours of PE and History taught by Mr. Anderson (PE) and Miss Meyer (History), enjoying (or enduring?) the longest lesson ever taught! The record lasted until 2008 when 36 students took part in a 78 hour lesson in Bangalore about the life and times of Gandhi.

Roger Dallimore (left), Head Teacher from 2000 until 2004. 
He was replaced in 2005 by Bernard Bonner (right) who led the school until 2007.

St. Andrew’s went from strength to strength in the first decade of the 2000s – 2002 saw the first ever ‘bonfire night’ event and 2003 saw St. Andrew’s named as number 57 in The Economist’s list of Top 100 Schools in Africa. Firmly reflecting the international ethos of St. Andrew’s, 11 students went on the school’s first ever French Exchange - to the Indian Ocean island, and French Outré-mer Département, Réunion, where they linked up with students from the Lycée Pierre Poivre, an event repeated in 2004. Also in 2004, St. Andrew’s hosted the first 24 Hour Swim Against Malaria and also its first lifesaving course – led by Lifesaving SA. Both of these events have become regular occurrences since. Always leader in education, St. Andrew’s carried out its first video-conferencing session with a school in Scotland, at the time placing SAIntS at the forefront of schools worldwide.
As the school motto tells us, education has responsibilities and throughout the history of the school a countless amount of charity work has been carried out. Year 13 students are here seen ‘entertaining’ local children at Chikwawa in 2007

In 2008 St. Andrew’s officially celebrated 70 years since being founded and the High School’s Golden (50th) Anniversary and Gordon Benbow became Head Teacher, taking over from Bernard Bonner. Under Gordon Benbow’s long tenure St. Andrew’s continued to build its reputation as a place where students thrived in all spheres. In 2009 alone, St. Andrew’s saw its first ever Valentines Disco, the first ever SAIntS rugby tour – to South Africa, where the school team competed admirably against both Soweto Rugby Club and Wonderbloom High School and the introduction of the ‘S-Factor’ – a talent show for St. Andrew’s students, based on the reality television programmes coming out of the UK and USA at the time!

The official opening of the First Merchant Bank IT Centre, 15th June 2009

The FMB IT centre was opened on 15th June 2009 allowing students access to and 2010 Malawi’s first Microsoft Centre was opened there. 2010 also saw the reopening of the refurbished swimming pool and the retirement of Mr Stephen Wimbush - after 29 years at the school! The year also saw a Gordon Benbow-led squash tour to Peterhouse School near Marondera in Zimbabwe – found out the coach of one of the other participating schools was a former Andrean who had taken part in the 1979 Lilongwe to Blantyre run to raise money for the current squash courts at SAIntS.

In 2011 sad news reached the school that a true SAIntS legend had passed away - Florrie Mullon, who still holds the record for the longest school service (1954-1990). In the same year, St. Andrew’s became the first school in Africa to offer BTEC (Business & Technology Education Council) qualifications.
St. Andrew’s has an excellent track record in the arts – something which has been clearly illustrated in other chapters of this history and shows that St. Andrew’s is committed to excellence for all, in a truly international holistic education context. The 2010s saw huge developments in the arts at St. Andrew’s – in 2012 there was a Drama Trip to Cape Town and on January 18th 2013, The Dudley Drama Studio was opened. The studio was of course named after long-serving teacher Mrs Sandy Dudley in recognition of her work in developing the arts, in particular Dance, at SAlntS. An accompanying recording studio, Sonic Arts, was also opened. Preparations were then made for the launch in 2014 of SAlntS Internet Radio. On 5th June 2015, the Benbow amphitheatre opened in recognition of the work of Gordon Benbow who had been Head Teacher from 2008 until leaving for Phoenix International Primary School in 2015.

*Early promotional material for Radio SAlnts*

*The opening of the Benbow Amphitheatre on the 5th June 2015 - the naming of the new Amphitheatre after Gordon Benbow recognised Gordon’s tenure as Head Teacher 2008-2015.*
Gordon Benbow’s move to Phoenix left a vacancy which was filled by Kieron Smith – who had once taught Mathematics at St. Andrew’s some years before. He became Head Teacher in September 2015 and oversaw the re-introduction of regular newsletters to parents and other stakeholders, thus making it easier for future historians who may need to write about the history of the school for the 70th anniversary of St. Andrew’s!

Kieron Smith – who, in September 2015, became the 21st person to take the role of Head Teacher.

Much has happened since Mr Smith took over – 2016 saw, amongst other things, yet another successful international evening, a new school uniform with ties and blazers making a comeback and an enthralling production of The Lion King. The first ‘Languages Live’ event took place and the SAINtS Cheerleading group were making waves at sports events held here. A whole-school sponsored walk for the charity AMECA was also a talking point, as were the regular Amnesty International cake sales, publicity events and fundraisers.

New uniform 2016 – Blazers made a comeback, as shown here in an Economics lesson.
Head of Year 13 and long-serving History teacher, Joe Percival (left), left the school in 2016. In 2008 he produced a booklet chronicling the history of the school for the 50th anniversary of St. Andrew’s High School.

2017 witnessed the first fundraising quiz evening and the inception of the Peace Garden, which opened officially on the 8th June 2017. The garden has quickly become a place of quiet contemplation for many but has also seen its fair share of coffee breaks, poetry readings and even Sixth Form lessons. The Peace Garden idea was initially sparked in Mrs Sarah Samanyika’s mind by the passing of Teaching Assistant Mrs Sonia McFadden in 2015. It gained more momentum on the back of two other members of staff whose spouses had passed away recently as well as former members of staff, students and their families who had lost loved ones.

The Peace Garden just before the opening event on 8th June 2017
The first SAIIntS delegation to the ALA Model African Union in Johannesburg, March 2017

The year also saw the first ALAMAU trip to Johannesburg for senior students, led by Mrs Hannah Grant. St. Andrew’s is increasingly playing a key role in an increasingly international world. The first trip to ALAMAU Johannesburg took place in March 2017 and has become a yearly fixture. Our first trip for juniors to a Model United Nations event took place in June 2018 when 24 delegates took part in a MUN event at Bishop Mackenzie School in Lilongwe. Also in 2017, solar power was introduced to the school - slowly allowing ESCOM blackouts to become less irritating to staff and students alike.

With no disrespect to 2016 and 2017, all eyes were on 2018 as Saint Andrew’s turned 60 years of age a whole year of Diamond-themed events were planned to help the school celebrate its Diamond Jubilee – the highlight being the Fun Day weekend, a record breaking day and a black tie event. As the three chapters of the school history completed so far show, the first 60 years have been amazing. It is clear that the school has a very bright future ahead of it and the next chapters of the school history should prove to be equally exhilarating.

World premiere of Inside Out, adapted for the stage by our very own Kevin Troughton, 2018
New reception area 2018

Family Fun Day and ‘Road to Relief’ colour run April 29th
Acknowledgements and Thanks...

Firstly, a huge thanks to the excellent booklet Joe Percival created for our 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2008. A great deal has happened in the intervening ten years since Joe produced his booklet – many more students have passed through the hallowed gates of Brereton Drive since 2008, there has been a change of Head teacher and many more sports days, trips, productions and charity events to be proud of and this online edition has been able to add to the history of St. Andrew’s by showing what we’ve been up to in the last ten years. In addition, many people contacted us with omissions and corrections from the first edition of our history which we have been able to amend in this work. We are also hugely indebted to many people, in particular Ian ‘Witty’ Whitfield, who runs the excellent Federal Saints Journal website (federalsaints.net) who was particularly helpful. We got much assistance from Sandy Dudley (English, Dance, Drama and PE Teacher 1986-2003, Senior Teacher 1998-2003) and Helen Clothier (Head of Geography and Geography teacher 1986-1994). Former students Dr Mary Mkandawire and Nathan Baliles went above and beyond in terms of commitment, research and fact-checking. Credit must also go to everyone who posted photos on the SAIntS Diamond Facebook page! The passion for Saint Andrew’s clearly never leaves you!