

THE BLUEPRINT

Paarl Boys' High | Hoër Jongenskool Paarl

BLUEPRINT-REDAKSIE



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1st TEAM vs GREY XV

Wikus Visser

On the 11th of May, all 900 Boishaaiers got those goosebumps which you experience during Grey week. It was that time again: The Gallies from the South would meet the College from the North; The blue, white and blue would take on the grey. Marked on every Boishaaiers' calendar, that weekend was one of the cornerstones of what turns a boy into a man: Paarl Boys' High versus Grey College 2024.

The First Team was set to kick off at 14:00 on Saturday, the 11th of May. Despite not having the best track record of the season at that point, our boys were keen on bringing the cup back to Paarl.

All odds were against them, though. Just a few weeks prior to the match, Paarl Boys' lost 27-30 to the prestigious Wynberg Boys' High. Shortly thereafter, they lost to another foe, Affies, by 21-43. The chances of Boys' High being whitewashed were good, as Grey was producing fine individual performances by the likes of players such as Phillip McLaren, Heinz Stöckenström and Pieter van der Merwe. Messrs David Sadie and Sean Erasmus had other ideas though. Being a rugby player myself, I watched in awe as they trained from dawn till dusk.

We were ready to tackle Grey College for the 48th

time.

Flying up to Bloem, the First Team had one goal in mind: to slay the Grey Giant. Being a very important event to all of us, getting a win there would be crucial for Boys' High.

Just minutes before kick-off, 900 Boys were on the stands shouting their lungs out in support of the First Team.

Then, at 14:00, the first whistle blew, and Grey kicked off. From the start, it was an intense tussle. Both teams tried to get the upper hand, but they were too evenly matched. Grey College drew first blood, though. Boys' High quickly bounced back with a converted penalty kick.

Grey quickly scored another try. Paarl Boys' scored and converted, and added two penalty kicks to make the halftime score 14-19. The Boys kept on fighting hard and it was a bitter fight, but Grey ultimately won 28-40. However, the boys didn't lose that day. We saw a new energy and spirit in the First Team that day. Our boys did us proud in Bloem. Having already beaten Bishops, we started making a comeback, restoring the Boys' High pride. Although the score might tell you differently, on the 11th of May, the First Team showed everyone that Paarl Boys' High respects all, but fears none.

Culture at Grey

Matthew Lamprecht

The Blue-Grey Evening was once more a resounding success, as on the evening of the 9th of May, Paarl Boys' High's and Grey High School's culture departments shared an evening of amiable music in Grey's Stabilis-hall. Consisting of a varied program of windband, marimba, vocal, orchestral, dance and drumline performances, the audience was left in awe by the talent these two schools displayed, who aimed not to compete, but to grant the audience a special experience together.

The evening was kicked off by the welcoming words of Mrs Brenda Myburgh, whose eloquent speech set the tone for the evening. After giving special mention to Mr Swart, for whom it would be the last of these con-

certs, Boishaai's Suonare kicked off the program with their rendition of the classic, *Sweet Caroline*, and ending their performance with an exciting collection of metal music.

A wonderful aspect of this event is the exposure granted to the participating students. To this end, Grey's Boereorkes, marimba bands and string ensemble, proved to be exciting. In particular, the combination of their band and strings during a performance of Djawadi's *Theme from Game of Thrones*, was an epic display of their music department and its ability to move audiences. Their Senior Gumboot dancing group was particularly exciting as they unconventionally entered the stage from behind, moving through the audience! This unusual approach kept the audience glued to their seats as the rhythmic tapping and stomping of gumboots filled the hall and in the process, told a vivid story and served as continuity of a

special tradition, originating from the gold mines of South-Africa.

The only other group that rivalled the presence of this one was Boishaai's Drumline, who in their organised entrance and exit, made quite an impression. This meticulous approach was apparent in their performance as well, as not a beat was out of place.

Boishaai's Cantare touched hearts with their beautiful performance of *Vier Seisoene Kind* and *Oceans*. Their fun would, however, not stop here, as they proceeded to partake in a masterclass with Werner Standeer, conductor of the University of the Free State choir, early the next morning. Here, they would learn about warm-up methods that focus on choir technique, like the blending of the group's sound by the singing of similar vowel sounds, in the process ending the musical part of the tour on a high note.

Piano Symposium

Matthew Lamprecht

The first week of school proved to be busy for Boishaai's pianists amidst the Stellenbosch International Piano Symposium, which took place from the 1st to the 7th of April. The symposium, accompanied by the Hennie Joubert Piano Competition was a unique opportunity for the students to interact with and experience masterclasses and performances at a high level under the guidance of experienced university professors and internationally acclaimed musicians.

One of our students, Charl Steenkamp, partook in masterclasses with Luis Magalhaes, Francois du Toit and Mario Nell respectively. He would also perform Rachmaninoff's *Moment Musicaux Op. 16 No. 4* in e-minor at one of the Symposium Lunch Hour Concerts. A few other piano students would also attend as

observers on the 3rd. Those who tagged along are grateful to their teacher for the exposure and agree that it was a remarkable experience.

The day all the Boishaaiers were there started off with an invaluable lecture from Leah-Patterson Jones about the intricacies of piano playing and what goes on behind the scenes. From how to practice for true improvement to how to explore the piano and discover the different colours behind the keys, the lecturer gave some valuable insights and wise words on how to acquire and develop the skills needed to master the instrument (or any other instrument, really, at that). Furthermore, the boys were taught how to approach sight-reading and problem-solving in pieces, truly essential skills often taken for granted in young, aspiring musicians.

The rest of the day was spent listening to music, of course. These included observing masterclasses

with some of the best piano students in the country and internationally acclaimed instructors. The observation of these lessons can prove to be invaluable to musicians as they learn from the feedback their peers receive from a variety of experts, all with different opinions and contributions to the same person's playing. The constructive criticism and tips other players received were thus valuable to the observers as well, who could apply it to their own playing and practicing.

The day ended with a recital by Jan Jiracek von Arnim, a Van Cliburn Piano Competition winner who has taught in positions all over the world, including Yale University School of Music and the China Conservatory in Beijing. The audience was enthralled by his performance, which displayed his perfectly refined technique, clear tone and fresh interpretations: an appropriate end to such an exciting day.

Boishaiers At IYOB

Helgard Nolte

The beauty of music is not necessarily the sound it produces, but the fact that it can connect people from all over the world. At the start of August an event like this took place. The International Youth Orchestra Bridge is an international tour featuring musicians from various different countries and continents. Trombonists from Australia, violinists from America and cellists from England. These musicians came to South Africa for two weeks to play, learn and interact with young musicians from here.

The West Coast Youth Orchestra and Stellenbosch Youth Orchestra represented the young musicians from South Africa for this festival. The SYO consists of musicians from different schools, with Paarl Boys' High making up a quarter of it. Not only is it conducted by Mr Reghardt Kühn (the conductor of Boys' High's *Suonare*), but a hefty amount of musicians from the school took part. This included Matthew Lamprecht (violin and concertmaster), Andro Louw (clarinet), Daniel Fulton (bass clarinet), Charl Steenkamp, Oliver Sales (both alto saxophone), Helgard Nolte (baritone saxophone) and Nicolaas Kruger (percussion).

This youth orchestra had one week of rehearsals to get to know each other and learn the numerous amounts of pieces they were to perform later. This meant that these dedicated students from Boys' High had to rush over to Stellenbosch every day after school to attend a three-hour rehearsal, while still keeping up with homework and practicing for eisteddfods. All this hard work would lead up to them performing five concerts over six days.

Concert venues included the Frank Peterson Music Centre, The Baxter Concert Hall, Darling Cellars, Parklands College and of course the SYO's home turf, the grand Endler Hall at the University of Stellenbosch. Repertoire included various classical pieces, such as *Finlandia* and *The Lark Ascending*, as well as music from the different countries, including three movements from *Enigma Variations* by the British composer Edward Elgar and South African classics, such as *Pata Pata*, *Kwela Kwela* and *The Lion Sleeps Tonight*, arranged specifically for the youth orchestra. Some new material was also written for the orchestra, namely a composition called *The Future is in Africa*, written by Malcolm Dedman. These pieces were conducted by the prestigious British conductor, Alexander Walker.



Baxter Hall in Cape Town

The youth orchestra faced major obstacles. Venues not having enough music stands, long practice hours and the transportation of huge percussion instruments. But this did not stop them from delivering brilliant performances. The IYOB tour was an enormous success. There are also discussions about having another tour to England, where 25 players from the SYO and West Coast Youth Orchestra will be selected to go in 2026.

This tour proved once again why Boys' High creates balance, where these musicians had to sacrifice various afternoons for concerts and rehearsals, while still keeping up with their academics, individual pieces and performances, as well as Interschools. The dedication of these musicians prove that Boys' Highers are up for a challenge.



Endler Concert Hall, Stellenbosch

Left to right: Helgard Nolte, Daniel Fulton, Matthew Lamprecht, Nicolaas Kruger, Mr Reghardt Kuhn, Andro Louw, Oliver Sales, Charl Steenkamp

Did you know? Elgar's *Enigma Variations* are based on a singular theme, that Elgar referred to as the "Enigma Theme", never clearly stated, but hinted at through different facets of the music. The mysterious nature of the theme still sparks debates amongst musicologists. Furthermore, each movement of the work is dedicated to one of Elgar's friends, displaying different aspects of their personalities and characters. The most famous of these is the *Nimrod* variation, known for its intimate solemnity.

Geskei met rugby

Ben de Villiers

B-span... My grootste vrees staan my in die oë. Hoe is dit moontlik? Saterdag stoei ek nog heel lekker op die A-veld en gee Grey 'n kriekettelling op hulle eie gronde, maar nee, "Ben is 'n slagpat."

Dit was 'n Maandagoggend by die skool en almal kyk op my neer. Soos ek by die gang afstap en verby my mede-Boishaaiers oogkontak vermy, loop ek vas in die herder van die skool, Mnr. Swart. "Jy sal nooit weer so vir my skool se eerstespan speel nie, Mnr. De Villiers; jy is die swart skaap van Boishaa-rugby. Skaam jou!"

Jinne.
Kan iemand net sê wat ek verkeerd doen? Ja, ek weet ek was opgetrek A-span toe omdat Pietman sy knie dwars gedraai het, maar nou speel derdespan Jan bo my. Die arme ou weet nie eers wat "Holding!" beteken nie.

By oefening, oefen ek my skoppe soos gewoonlik en die volgende oomblik vat Mnr. Sadie my bal af en sê, "Goeie nuus, Ben. Jy speel nou vleuel. Om jou skoppe te oefen gaan jou spoed nie verbeter nie." My mond hang oop: van eerstespan losskakel na tweedespan vleuel. My dam loop oor van teleurstelling.

Die naweek is Wildeklawer en vir die eerste keer ooit gaan die tweedespan saam. Wel nie regtig 'saam' nie. Johan se pa het 'n hele vliegtuig gehuur vir die eerstespan terwyl ons, die tweedespan, met Gertjie moet ry, die bus wat nie net dertig jaar oor sy waarborg is nie, maar wat die legendariese eerstespan van 1982 tot sukses gery het.

By Wildeklawer speel ons teen Garsfontein se tweedespan. Ek het twee woorde om te sê...

FLIPPEN.
GROOT.

Die wedstryd is baie taai – hulle druk 'n drie; ons druk 'n drie ens. Jan, die losskakel wat mos beter as ek is, word uit sy toks geduik in die laaste minuut.

Prrrrrrrrrr!

Strafskop vir ons! Die telling is 17-17. Maar wie gaan skop om te wen? Die rugbybal word soos 'n warmpatat vir my gegee.

Ek vat drie tree terug. Haal diep

asem.

Vat een tree terug. Tref die bal...

Ooooo gats!

Aarde sluk my in.

Donker en stilte

Nicolaas Bruwer

En honderd en veertig kilometer per uur; die aaklige geluid van metaal wat teen metaal skraap; glas wat breek en in miljoene stukkie deur die lug vlieg wat my vel laat prikkel soos ek deur tyd en ruimte beweeg.

BEEP

BEEP

BEEP

Ek sien swart; my arms voel soos lood. Ek probeer my oë oopmaak, maar dit voel asof dit vasgegom is. Ek probeer my arms beweeg, maar ek bly roerloos. Alles is stil, behalwe 'n herhalende geluid.

BEEP

BEEP

BEEP

Ek hoor mense praat, maar dis te sag en onduidelik om af te luister. Voetstappe kom al hoe nader en 'n deur kraak. Iemand huil.

"Maar Dokter, dis my kind, jy moet iets probeer," sê 'n stem. Agter al die huil en snikke klink die stem bekend.

"Ma", "Ma", ek basuin haar naam uit, maar my lip beweeg nie. My stem weergalm soos in 'n leë vertrek. Soos die gesprek aangaan, kom ek agter niemand kan my hoor nie.

"Mevrou, daar is niks wat ons kan doen nie." My ma snik en huil verder. "Mevrou moet verstaan, sy nek, sy rug, altwee arms en sy been is gebreek." Die huil raak erger. "Hy toon geen breinaktiwiteit nie. Hy is gekoppel aan 'n masjien wat hom help asemhaal... Dis slegs die masjien wat hom aan die lewe hou." Die stem raak vir 'n rukkie stil. "Ek sal vir mevrou 'n tydjie gee."

'n Deur kraak weer en voetstappe verlaat die kamer. Ek voel 'n warm hand op myne. Ek kan voel dis my mad, maar sy sê nie 'n word nie.

Voetstappe kom weer nader. "Mevrou, dis tyd." Ek voel hoe my ma haar hand van myne afhaal.

Alles is stil; dit voel asof ek in 'n see van donkerte dryf; dit voel asof die aarde my ingesluk het.

Wag, ek is nog hier! Ma!

BEEEEEEP

'n Boot op die See

Matthew Lamprecht

Ek lê op my rug, my oë toe, soos my gedagtes met die onreëlmatige vloei van Ravel se *Une Barque sur l'Océane* dans. Ek voel terselfdetyd leeg en vol – enkele gedagtes weergalm met helder duidelikheid en amalgameer om 'n rommelende kakofonie te vorm. Ek lag. Dis snaaks hoe teenstrydig liefde kan wees; hoe uiters bittersoet.

Dit was eers na 'n jaar van weeklikse orkesoefeninge wat ons werklik gesels het, maar sodra ons begin het, kon ons nie ophou nie. Dalk was dit die beeldskoonheid van die argitektuur wat die lig net reg op haar gesig laat val het, maar dit was daar – in die Atrium van 'n museum – wat ek verlief geraak het.

Daardie aand, toe ek my foon oopmaak, sien ek 'n enkele boodskap van haar af – 'n skakel na 'n opname van die Ravel. 'n Skakel wat my hart vir haar ooggemaak het en wat sou lei tot maande van gesels – net gesels – elke aand. Ons sou beurte maak om vir mekaar stukke te stuur; hierdie musiek sou ons geheime taal word waarmee ons ons vreugdes en hartseer, bekommernisse en afwagtinge kon deel in 'n Lied sonder Woorde.

Sy het al dieper in die waters van my hart geseil en met haar helder lig het sy die donker oppervlakte deurgedring en ongesiene waarhede aanskou wat selfs tot myself weggesteek was. Sy het geleer van ongedeelde geheime en onderdrukte berou en met haar helder lig my donker onreinighede weggee, ons verhouding uniek in sy suiwer diepte.

Maar, die oseaan het begin onstuimig word soos tyd min geraak het. Ons het nog te veel gehad om te sien en te hoor en te sê. Wat ons sou hê was te min om genoeg te wees.

Dus, het ons met hierdie wete beide onttrek na stiller waters, lafaards sonder die moed om die ekstreme aan te durf. Ek onthou my laaste woorde aan haar: "Soms gaan liefde verlore."

Ek lag weer. En ek huil. Soos die laaste note klink, vlieg ek en val – weg.

The Death of Privacy in the Digital Age

How Did We Get Here?

Charl Steenkamp

In the modern digital age, privacy has become a contentious issue, with the rapid evolution of technology outpacing the frameworks meant to protect personal data. As tech giants grow and expand their influence, concerns about data privacy intensify. By analysing the journey of one such giant, Google, tracing its humble beginnings, its transformative evolution, we can see its current approach to user data. To understand Google's current stance on privacy, it's essential to first explore its origins and the innovative thinking that set it apart from its inception.

The Inception of Google

Google's origins are rooted in an unlikely partnership between Larry Page and Sergey Brin, who met at Stanford University in 1995. Despite initial clashes due to their strong personalities, their mutual curiosity and complementary skills forged a groundbreaking collaboration. Larry Page, fascinated by the structure of the burgeoning World Wide Web, conceived a project called BackRub, aimed at analyzing the web's link structure. His

idea was inspired by academic citation practices, where the value of a paper is partly determined by how often it is cited by others.

Sergey Brin, captivated by the potential of Page's project, joined forces with him. Together, they developed an algorithm named PageRank, which evaluated web pages based on the number and quality of their backlinks. This innovative approach provided more relevant and authoritative search results compared to existing search engines of the time, which primarily relied on keyword matching.

In August 1996, the duo launched the first version of Google on Stanford's website. The name "Google" was derived from "googol," a term for the number 1 followed by 100 zeros, reflecting their mission to organize the vast amount of information on the web. Initially, Google was a project running on borrowed hardware in Page's garage and consuming a significant portion of Stanford's

network bandwidth, causing occasional disruptions.

The early success of Google on campus and among academic circles hinted at its potential. The search engine's ability to deliver highly relevant results quickly garnered attention, setting it apart from competitors like AltaVista and Excite. However, despite the promising start, Page and Brin faced the challenge of scaling their operations and securing funding to support their growing infrastructure needs.

Page and Brin's innovative approach to web search laid the foundation for what would become one of the most influential tech companies in the world. Their commitment to improving the search experience by focusing on the relevance and quality of results, rather than just keyword frequency, marked a significant leap forward in information retrieval. This philosophy of prioritizing user experience would continue to guide Google's evolution in the years to come.

As Google transitioned from a university project to a commercial enterprise, its core mission expanded beyond search. Over time, Google evolved into a multifaceted tech giant, introducing various products and services that have profoundly impacted the digital landscape. However, this growth also brought challenges and criticisms, particularly concerning user privacy and data handling practices. The journey from a dorm room project to a global powerhouse is a testament to the transformative power of innovative thinking and technological advancement.

The Evolution of Google

Google's transformation from a university project to a global tech giant is a story of innovation, strategic pivots, and an unwavering commitment to organizing the world's information. After the initial success of their search engine, Larry Page and Sergey Brin realized that to scale their operations and achieve



Larry Page's Garage, the Birthplace of Google

their vision, they needed significant financial backing. This realization led them to incorporate Google Inc. in September 1998 and secure their first investment from Sun Microsystems co-founder Andy Bechtolsheim.

The early 2000s marked a period of rapid growth and diversification for Google. In 2000, the company introduced Google AdWords, an online advertising platform that would become the cornerstone of its revenue model. AdWords allowed advertisers to bid on keywords, with ads appearing alongside search results. This pay-per-click model revolutionized online advertising, turning Google into a highly profitable enterprise.

Google's commitment to innovation led to the development of numerous products that extended beyond search. In 2004, the company launched Gmail, offering unprecedented storage capacity and advanced search capabilities. This was followed by Google Maps in 2005, which provided detailed mapping services and introduced the revolutionary Street View feature. The same year, Google acquired Android Inc., setting the stage for its dominance in the mobile operating system market.

The company's IPO in August 2004 was a significant milestone, raising \$1.67 billion and establishing Google as a major player in the tech industry.

This influx of capital fueled further expansion and acquisitions, including the purchase of YouTube in 2006 for \$1.65 billion. YouTube's integration into the Google ecosystem enhanced the company's reach and influence, particularly in the realm of digital media.

Google's evolution also involved significant advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning. The introduction of the Google Brain project in 2011 aimed to improve search algorithms and develop new AI applications. These efforts culminated in the creation of Google Assistant, a virtual assistant powered by natural language processing.

However, as Google grew, so did concerns about privacy and data security. The company's extensive data collection practices, essential for targeted advertising, drew scrutiny from regulators and privacy advocates. Google's shift from a user-centric ethos to a profit-driven model raised questions about the balance between innovation and user privacy.

Despite these challenges, Google continued to expand its product offerings. The launch of Google Cloud positioned the company as a leader in cloud computing services, competing with giants like Amazon Web Services and Microsoft Azure. Google Workspace, formerly known as

G Suite, became a staple for businesses worldwide, offering a suite of productivity tools.

In recent years, Google's focus on hardware has intensified. The development of Pixel smartphones, Google Home smart speakers, and Nest smart home devices showcased the company's commitment to creating a cohesive ecosystem of connected products. These efforts are complemented by ongoing investments in quantum computing and autonomous vehicles, promising to shape the future of technology.

Google's journey from a simple search engine to a diversified tech behemoth underscores its adaptability and relentless pursuit of innovation. As the company continues to evolve, it faces the dual challenge of maintaining its pioneering spirit while addressing the growing concerns around digital privacy and data security.

Google Today

The recent leak of Google's internal documents has provided a rare glimpse into the intricate workings of the Google Search engine and shed light on some of the critical elements that influence content ranking. The trove of leaked documents, originating from Google's internal Content API Warehouse, was released on March 13 by an automated bot named yoshi-code-bot. These

documents, shared with industry experts like Rand Fishkin, co-founder of SparkToro, and Michael King, CEO of iPullRank, offer invaluable insights into how Google's ranking algorithm operates.

The leaked documents reveal a wealth of information about Google's ranking features and processes. They indicate that Google employs 2,596 modules with 14,014 attributes to evaluate and rank content. These modules include re-ranking functions known as "Twiddlers," which can adjust the ranking of a document based on various factors. Additionally, the documents highlight the use of demotions, where content may be downgraded in ranking for reasons such as irrelevant links, user dissatisfaction signals, or the presence of explicit content.

One of the key takeaways from the leaked documents is the continued importance of links in Google's ranking algorithm. Link diversity and relevance remain crucial factors, with PageRank still playing a significant role in determining a website's ranking. Furthermore, the documents reveal that Google considers the quality of user interactions, including successful clicks, as a crucial factor in determining a page's ranking. The leaked documents also shed light on Google's approach to content evaluation and ranking.

Google appears to prioritize longer documents, which may get truncated if they exceed a certain length, while shorter content is evaluated based on originality. Additionally, Google considers the authority and reputation of the content creator, with brand recognition playing a significant role in determining a website's ranking.

Overall, the leaked Google documents provide valuable insights into the complex and multifaceted nature of Google's ranking algorithm. They underscore the importance of understanding and adapting to Google's evolving ranking factors for businesses and marketers seeking to improve their organic search rankings and visibility.

The revelations from the Google Search engine source code leak underscore the critical importance of privacy in the digital age. As users increasingly rely on online platforms for information and services, concerns about data security and privacy violations have grown. The leaked documents provide a rare glimpse into the inner workings of one of the most influential tech companies, highlighting the need for greater transparency and accountability in how user data is collected, stored, and used. This leads us to explore broader issues of digital privacy and the implications of companies' data

practices on user trust and regulatory scrutiny.

Digital Privacy Violations

Digital privacy is facing unprecedented challenges as advancements in technology blur the lines between convenience and intrusion. Microsoft's latest endeavor to integrate AI into laptops, exemplified by the introduction of "Copilot Plus PCs," raises significant concerns about user privacy. These laptops, developed in collaboration with major partners like Dell, Lenovo, and HP, are equipped with a neural processor designed to power AI features embedded within the Windows operating system.

One flagship feature, called "Recall," promises to create a searchable "photographic memory" of users' activities and interactions on their devices. While touted as a breakthrough in productivity and user experience, the continuous capturing of screenshots every few seconds to maintain a digital history raises alarming privacy implications. Users may find themselves inadvertently sharing sensitive information or compromising their privacy as their every interaction with the device is recorded and analyzed by AI algorithms.

Moreover, the proliferation of AI-powered technologies extends beyond hardware integration to encompass the vast

ecosystem of online services and platforms. Companies across various industries are increasingly leveraging user data to train AI models and enhance their products and services. However, this practice raises ethical concerns regarding data privacy and consent.

As companies collect and analyze massive amounts of user data to fuel AI algorithms, questions arise about the transparency of these processes and the potential for misuse or unauthorized access to sensitive information. The reliance on AI for decision-making in areas such as personalized recommendations, targeted advertising, and risk assessment further underscores the need for robust privacy safeguards to protect user rights and autonomy.

The introduction of Copilot Plus PCs represents a pivotal moment in the intersection of AI and personal computing, signaling a shift towards a more integrated and intelligent digital experience. However, it also highlights the urgent need for comprehensive privacy regulations and safeguards to mitigate the risks associated with AI-driven technologies. As individuals navigate an increasingly digitized world, preserving privacy and data security must remain paramount to safeguarding fundamental rights and freedoms in the digital age.

The implications of these developments extend beyond individual privacy, shaping the broader societal landscape. The convergence of AI and personal computing transforms technology interaction and redefines surveillance and control in our digital society. We must remain vigilant in protecting our rights, ensuring that convenience does not cost privacy. Google's transformation serves as a cautionary tale, highlighting the importance of safeguarding our digital autonomy.

Conclusion

In our digital age, the clash between innovation and intrusion is stark. Microsoft's AI laptops and Google's leaked source code embody this dilemma. These technologies offer unprecedented convenience but raise serious privacy concerns, echoing Orwell's 1984. Ironically, Google, once a champion of user privacy, has become what it sought to avoid.

As we embrace these advancements, we unwittingly invite surveillance into our lives, blurring the line between progress and privacy. We must remember the cautionary tales of dystopian fiction and ensure that our digital future is one where innovation serves humanity, not subjugates it. In this delicate balance, we hold the key to a world where technology enriches our lives without compromising our rights and freedoms.

The National Arts Festival

Matthew Lamprecht

This year, as the National Arts Festival celebrated its 50th anniversary, I had the privilege of experiencing its magic firsthand as one of the Top 12 HL candidates in the National English Olympiad. From June 25th to 29th, I, along with nine others from schools across the country, immersed ourselves in a remarkable celebration of the arts. We attended numerous workshops and shows while staying in a hostel on the Rhodes University campus in Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown), where we gained a deep appreciation for a diverse array of artistic expressions

Our festival journey began with Monageng Vice Motshabi's *The Red on the Rainbow*, a powerful portrayal of the 2017 Coligny incident. The play, which tells the story of a young Black man shot by the son of the farm owner he works for, captivated us with its unorthodox narrative. The use of vivid imagery, the interplay of Setswana and English, and the non-linear storytelling drew us into its dystopian world, compelling us to grapple with the characters' emotions in unprecedented ways. The deliberate pauses to explain scenes, combined with the continuous presence of all actors on stage, allowed the audience to both connect with and reflect on the play's themes. The innovative use of music and different timbres, particularly the improvisational trumpet lines, enhanced the narrative's flow and added depth to the overall experience.

Among the other performances, *My Fellow South Africans* stood out as a brilliant satirical commentary on South Africa's socio-economic landscape. Led by the phenomenal Kim Blanche Adonis, this Mike van Graan piece was a rollercoaster of emotions, seamlessly transitioning

between humour and serious introspection. The monologue's rapid shifts in scene and character, coupled with the performer's physical dexterity, kept the audience engaged from start to finish. Ranging from the absurd to the uncomfortably familiar, this monologue held up a mirror to the collective consciousness of the audience, balancing the moments of reflection with moments of laughter. A powerful socio-political criticism, the play's success lay in its fearless confrontation of uncomfortable truths, ultimately delivering a message of hope and resilience, urging the audience toward change.

All My Ex-Lovers Are Dead, by Dara Beth and performed by Qondiswa James, was another highlight. This poignant exploration of love and sexuality was brought to life by James in a minimalist setting. Her portrayal of obsessive, disjointed recollections of past relationships culminated in a gripping reflection on modern love and infatuation. The sparse stage, dim lighting, and the haunting projections of past lovers on the wall created an atmosphere of distant, murky memories that added to the play's emotional impact.

The Stranger, by Brett Bailey, was a controversial performance at the festival, with its vivid and evocative portrayal of the Orpheus and Eurydice myth set in a dystopian, xenophobic town. The play, infused with traditional African instruments and ritualistic elements, created an unsettling atmosphere through the repetition of uneven melodic fragments in non-Western temperament, that led many audience members to leave midway through, overwhelmed by its intensity. In a shocking moment, a woman seemingly from the audience rose, disrobed, and stepped into the role of Eurydice, blurring the line between performance and reality.



The Red on the Rainbow

Themes of love, loss, and the transformative power of the arts were intertwined with a stark commentary on materialism, alienation, and the fragility of life. The play culminated in Eurydice's death and Orpheus's lynching, leaving the remaining audience in a state of emptiness as the cycle of despair and transformation closed.

Beyond these plays, other memorable performances included *The Return of Elvis Du Pisane*, *Thaba Bosiu*, and *1 Yard, 7 Shacks*. The art exhibition was equally impressive, featuring linocut depictions of basic rights and an encounter with a Justice involved in compiling the South African constitution. A contemporary dance piece, mesmerizing in its fluid choreography, added yet another layer to this artistic feast.

My time at the festival was not just about the performances; it was also about the connections I made with the other prize-winners. We explored local restaurants and markets, participated in workshops, and quickly became a close-knit group, enhancing an already exhilarating experience.

The National Arts Festival is an event I will never forget. From minimalist monologues to grand stage productions, from art exhibitions to discussions with dynamic street artists, and from dance to jazz, the insight and appreciation I've gained from this exposure to diverse artistic expressions is invaluable.

2024 Drama Competition

Wikus Visser

The culture side of Paarl Boys' started off with a bang this year with its annual Interhouse Drama Competition! This is always a big highlight on the school calendar. Not just for the culture learners, but for the whole school and faculty alike. This year was different, however, because this year our teachers took to the stage, and they gave quite the show! There were performances from Villieria, Imhoff, Monte Bello and Bellevue. Then there was the unforgettable performance of the male teachers.

The night kicked off with introductions from 2 Boishaaiers as our hosts, one ex and one current. Our Afrikaans host was none other than old boy Nico Smit. Our English host was the Matric learner and GK member, Anothando Mpungutye.

They led us through the night's performances and made the audi-

ence have a good laugh every now and then. The night's first performance was the male staff members. All the houses followed thereafter. Ultimately, House Villieria won the overall performance with their breathtaking display of a true Paarl-inspired adaptation of Little Red Riding Hood.

The general theme of the night was fantasy, which everyone thought was going to be easy to create a play from. That wasn't the case, though. There were very specific criteria that every house had to follow. For the first time, every house had to have a girl as one of the cast members. Unfortunately, there wasn't a lot of practice due to severe storms in and around Paarl. Nevertheless, the boys managed to pull a few good tricks out of nowhere and made the night a true success. Quoting Ms Wiwe Ras-Pretorius, organiser of

and head of the drama department at the school, "The goal of this event is not just to get a few good laughs from the audiences, but for boys to truly give exceptional performances and showcase their uncovered talent to the rest of the school."

The night was a true success, and there was a huge hype in the school after that night. This continues to be a benchmark and tone setter for the rest of the culture year. I have no doubt that next year will be just as good, if not even better.



Mr Sadie as "Houtkapper"

Music Teachers Shine at WPO Concert

Matthew Lamprecht

On the 1st of June, a group of Boishaaiers (learners, parents and staff) gathered at the Ender Hall in Stellenbosch to support the music teachers in what proved to be a memorable concert performed by the Winelands Philharmonic Orchestra (WPO). The event featured the remarkable talents of three beloved teachers: Mrs M von Mollendorf, Mr R Kühn and Mrs B Goldstone.

The concert opened with 'n Aand op Simonsberg by Kristi Boonzaaier, a modern composition that captivated the audience with its intricate harmonies and evocative imagery. Mr Kühn, the conductor of the orchestra, led the ensemble with precision and passion. Despite being a community orchestra, the group delivered a performance that rivaled that of professional ensembles, a testament to his exceptional leadership and the dedication of the musicians.

A reprieve from the contemporary, the next item on the programme was



The stars and their supporters

Krommer's Double Clarinet Concerto, a classical display of virtuosity. Mrs Goldstone, along with Mr Boonzaaier, flew through this charming piece like two birds in absolute synchronicity. Despite the technical challenges posed by the piece to both soloists, they displayed great comfort and elegance in their interpretation, with a lively, virtuosic third movement ending their performance, leaving the audience in absolute silence as the last notes faded away. They were met with a standing ovation for their sublime performance. It was very inspiring for the Boishaaiers to see their teacher on stage as soloist, displaying her skill as performer.

Following the Krommer, the orchestra performed Copland's Appalachian Spring, a beautiful symphonic suite known for its portrayal of American pioneer spirit and serene pastoral scenes. Mrs von Mollendorf demonstrated her extraordinary versatility by playing the piano part with grace and depth, adding a rich layer to the ensemble's sound. Under Mr Kühn's baton, the masterpiece was done justice as the audience was transported to the rolling hills and open fields of the American countryside. His slightly slower and more introspective interpretation, as opposed to the standard, proved to be highly effective.



**Mrs Goldstone
in action**

Mental Health Month

Pieter Combrink

Mental Health a person's condition with regards to their psychological and emotional well-being.

A person's mental health affects how they think and act. Maintaining good mental health is crucial, as it influences how you manage stress and make rational decisions.

Originally, the 'World's Mental Health Month' was in July of each year; as of 2012, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared that the 10th of October will be known as 'World's Mental Health Day'. Nearly a decade later, in early 2022, the South African government has decided to declare October as 'South Africa's Mental Health Awareness Month'.

This was not due to just wanting to educate people and young adults about their mental health, but also the rise in stigma and discrimination that people with mental illnesses are subjected to. Although it is clear how people with depression, schizophrenia, and anxiety may be stigmatised, it is less clear how they experience stigma. According to a study done on the 8th of October, by Mental Health Foundation, "Nearly nine out of ten people with mental health problems say that stigma and discrimination have a negative effect on their lives." Negative effects that follow include social isolation, increased stress and lower quality of life.

During the two weeks, from the 7th to 18th of October, Boishai's staff asked the students questions regarding their mental health. It is important to realise that other students are endlessly struggling just to stay afloat and need someone to rely on. Not only is there October,



Mental Health should be a priority

but also June, 'Men's Mental Health Month', which is unfortunately not as recognized as it should be.

This is due to men being less likely to seek help for mental health issues; a consequence of societal norms that promote stoicism and emotional restraint. July encourages men to talk about their feelings, share their experiences, and seek help when needed. By highlighting men's mental health, we aim to break down the barriers that prevent men from discussing their struggles and encourage them to prioritize their mental well-being.

Maintaining a good state of mental health involves several important practices. Prioritise self-care by setting aside time for activities you enjoy, such as reading, exercising, or spending time with friends and family. Establishing a daily routine can provide structure and stability throughout the day. Practise mindfulness techniques, such as meditation or deep breathing, to help reduce stress and clear clouded thoughts. Stay connected with supportive friends and family.

Limit exposure to negative news and social media, or anything which can and will contribute to anxiety. Finally, seek professional help when needed, as therapy can provide valuable tools for coping and resilience.

Did you know?

Not only is mental health often overlooked among men, but it is frequently dismissed in teenage boys as well. Many attribute mental health challenges in teenagers to hormonal imbalances or the inability of adolescents to regulate their emotions effectively. They may assume that time and experience will naturally resolve these issues. While some negative feelings may indeed fade with time, many struggles run deeper and cannot be addressed without deliberate attention and care.

Recognising the signs and symptoms of mental health problems, such as anxiety and depression, early on is essential for effective intervention and treatment. Thus, developing the ability to identify these challenges for what they truly are should be a priority for both teenagers and their parents.

Mental health problems in adolescence can lead not only to decreased academic performance but also to isolation and alienation. When left untreated, these issues can establish roots during crucial developmental phases, growing into more severe problems in adulthood.

Although identifying the causes of mental health challenges in individuals can be complex, research underscores the importance of early emergence. A study published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* revealed that half of all mental health disorders begin by age 14, and three-quarters by age 24. Prioritise your mental health.