

Riebeek Houses

Eleanor, Elizabeth and Elton.

By Sharné Woods

School spirit, team work and camaraderie are the result of fun inter-house competition. Riebeek's Houses: Eleanor, Elizabeth and Elton, represented by the colours yellow, blue and green, have one ultimate goal each year- to win the House Shield.

All dressed up for the occasion with bold colours and cries, the girls vigorously compete in various sports, academics and cultural activities. Each activity provides the opportunity to earn much needed points, which all add up at the end of the year.

The Riebeek house system was officially established in 1924, 47 years after the school was founded. Initially, the school's learners were divided into two houses for purposes of sports competition. One house was named Eleanor, after Miss Eleanor Brown, a past headmistress in the late 1800s, and the other house was named Elton, after Miss Lucy Elton, headmistress in the early 1900s.

In 1954, another house was added to the expanding school. The new house was to be called Elizabeth, after Queen Elizabeth. The colour of the new house was blue, because of the blue sash that Queen Elizabeth wears, depicting royalty.

“During my 29 years as a teacher at Riebeek I saw some patterns had emerged. For instance, Elton became known for its swimming prowess, while Eleanor has shown strength academically. Elizabeth went through a bad patch at one stage, so much so that people began to wonder whether there was perhaps a hoodoo of some sort on the house. Elizabeth's forte appears to lie in the direction of culture, “ said Mr Jonathan Ossher, past teacher of Riebeek College.

House days are an eventful occasion on the annual school calendar. This initiative, a

development of Natalie Stear, headmistress in the late 1900's, showcases the school reaching out to the community. Each house, on its appointed day, holds a special assembly during which a guest speaker addresses the school. Thereafter the speaker is awarded a sum of money which is collected by the house by means of selling “favours”. This money is then handed to a charity represented or favoured by the speaker. Elizabeth's House Day is often held on the Queen's birthday.



Eleanor House



Elizabeth House



Elton House