

Draft for V.C's approval 1986

* This phrase reads very peculiarly: Should not the two marked items be interchanged?

Approved, subject to sorting the item out

D.S.H.

24/4/86

RHODES UNIVERSITY

THE BULLETIN (December 1986)

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

* Two years ago I said that Gold Fields House would be the last large construction project for some time. I am pleased to say that I was wrong. Owing to the remarkable generosity of the Chairman's Fund of the Educational Trust, acting on the recommendation of the Anglo American and De Beers Chairman's Fund Committee, we have received R760 000 towards a new men's residence for 80 students. It will be known as De Beers House and construction work is expected to start in January. It is hoped to open the new residence in February, 1988.

In order to avoid any financial delays the Fund has decided to lend another R760 000 as bridging finance.

With a start like this it is not surprising that I am able to announce that we have already received over R2 300 000 in donations at the time of writing. As this is twice what we received in 1981, it means that we are keeping pace with inflation. In view of the country's financial situation this is a considerable achievement and I should like to thank all our donors most sincerely for keeping Rhodes University high on your priority lists.

While on the subject of construction work, I must mention that the rebuilding of the top floor of Graham House, which was damaged by fire in May, is well under way and the residence should be ready for

students in February.

Another important project under construction is the addition of a new floor on the Chemistry building which, while not solving Pharmacy's problems, will definitely make that major department's accommodation much more suitable.

In East London we are beginning to feel the need for more room and negotiations are taking place with a helpful and generous city council for suitable land away from the city centre where we can start to expand. It is probable that the first development will be for sports facilities for the growing student body which stood at 263 on census day. There are now ten academic staff members catering for our students in East London. In line with previously established policy the East London Division is financing all its physical development with funds raised in that city.

Apart from the close links between East London and Grahamstown being forged by our academic and administrative staff, there is a growing electronic link through the PLATO terminals in East London linked to our Computer-based Education Unit in Grahamstown. This Unit is becoming well-established and apart from increasing use by Rhodes students it now helps educate and train people through 15 linked terminals at schools and industrial establishments in East London, Bisho, Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown. This practical co-operation with outside bodies is particularly satisfying because it demonstrates our relevance to the modern South Africa and helps me illustrate how closely Rhodes University is bound up with the major

changes taking place in our country. Apart from continuing services such as that supplied by the Computer-based Education Unit, there are many practical research projects where our scientists, natural or social, are producing the detailed information on which good decisions can be made. Then there are the dozens of university conferences and symposia held all over South Africa where our academics continually add to the sum of knowledge about our country and its people. At Rhodes this year, for instance, there was a law conference at which teachers from 20 universities adopted a motion emphasizing that the independence of the judiciary was indispensable. One hundred and fifty doctors, nurses, psychologists, social workers and ministers of religion met to consider the care of the dying under the leadership of a member of an Australian medical school who specializes in Community Practice. In October the Hydrological Research Unit arranged a symposium on the implications of new dam safety legislation for farmers. Recently there has been a conference on land tenure and rural development.

Finally, the University's administrators are particularly aware of our relationship to the national treasury. With the government's attention firmly on improving life for the less privileged section of our community, it is saving on things like university education. The carefully worked out subsidy system has never been paid in full. In 1986 there was a 15 percent cut, followed in April, by another two percent cut. We do not yet know what 1987 holds in store for Rhodes University. All we really know is how important it is to maintain our links to our friends in industry and commerce and in

every other sphere of life.

It is, therefore, with real warmth that I say to you all, our donors, thank you for your support in 1986 and, on behalf of everyone at Rhodes, I wish you all a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Dr D.S. Henderson
VICE-CHANCELLOR