

MR CHANCELLOR, MR BRICELAND AND MEMBERS OF THE EAST LONDON DIVISION BOARD, AND HONOURED GUESTS, I RISE TO PROPOSE A TOAST TO OUR DISTINGUISHED HONORARY GRADUATE AND TO WELCOME OUR SECOND HONORARY GRADUATE, BOTH OF WHOM HAVE TRAVELLED FROM GRAHAMSTOWN TO BE WITH US TODAY.

ADVOCATE GEORGE RANDELL HAS MADE HISTORY IN EAST LONDON THIS WEEKEND AS THE FIRST HONORARY GRADUATE TO RECEIVE HIS DEGREE AT THE FIRST RHODES EAST LONDON GRADUATION CEREMONY. BUT MAKING HISTORY IS NOT A NEW THING TO GEORGE RANDELL - HE HAS BEEN EITHER MAKING HISTORY OR WRITING HISTORY FOR MANY YEARS.

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SINCE HE BEGAN HIS CAREER AT RHODES IN 1924 AND MADE HISTORY BY ESTABLISHING THE MEN'S HOCKEY CLUB AND CAPTAINING BOTH HOCKEY AND CRICKET, AS WELL AS PLAYING HOCKEY FOR EASTERN PROVINCE, WESTERN PROVINCE AND BORDER, GEORGE RANDELL HAS KEPT A STRAIGHT BAT AND HIS EYE ON THE BALL THROUGHOUT A LONG AND SUCCESSFUL CAREER.

RHODES HAS HAD TWO OCCASIONS ON WHICH TO SING THE PRAISES OF OUR HONORARY GRADUATE THIS YEAR, A PLEASURE WE ENJOY. DR MARGARET SMITH DESCRIBED HERSELF AS 'DONE TO A TURN' AFTER THE GRADUATION LUNCHEON IN GRAHAMSTOWN LAST MONTH. I AM SURE THAT GEORGE RANDELL FEELS EQUALLY WELL DONE.

WE ARE BECOMING SO ACCUSTOMED TO GRADUATION CEREMONIES THAT PERHAPS WE SHOULD HAVE CONFERRED FOUR MORE HONORARY DEGREES THIS YEAR SO THAT WE COULD CLAIM TO BE THE FIRST UNIVERSITY IN SOUTH AFRICA TO BOWL AN OVER.

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WE HAVE ALREADY HEARD TODAY OF GEORGE RANDELL'S SIGNAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY LIFE IN EAST LONDON, SO IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT WE CELEBRATE RHODES EAST LONDON'S GROWTH AND FIRM ESTABLISHMENT IN THIS COMMUNITY AT THIS GRADUATION CEREMONY BY HONOURING DR RANDELL ON HIS OLD STAMPING GROUNDS. THE FACT THAT A SCHOOL IN THIS CITY IS NAMED AFTER HIM IS TESTIMONY TO THE ESTEEM IN WHICH HE IS HELD HERE.

AFTER A LIFE DEVOTED TO THE LAW, LOCAL AND PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS, WRITING, AND EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN FOR THOSE AROUND HIM, DR RANDELL HAS REACHED A POINT IN HIS PROGRESS THROUGH LIFE WHEN HE CAN LOOK BACK ON MANY MEMORIES OF CHALLENGES MET, GOALS REACHED AND HORIZONS BROADENED.

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HE HAS NOT SAT WITH FOLDED HANDS AND FOND MEMORIES SINCE HIS RETIREMENT, HOWEVER. HIS INTEREST IN THE DOINGS OF THE HUMAN RACE ILLUMINATED HIS CAREER IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION AND HAS CONTINUED TO INSPIRE HIM IN HIS WRITINGS ON THE HISTORY OF THE PROFESSION IN THE EASTERN CAPE. ONE DOES NOT DEVELOP A PENETRATING INSIGHT INTO THE PEOPLE AROUND ONE ONLY TO RELINQUISH IT AS ONE GETS OLDER.

THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE OUR HONORARY GRADUATE HAS GIVEN EVIDENCE OF HIS CHRISTIAN FAITH, PARTICULARLY THROUGH THE TRIALS OF RECENT SERIOUS ILLNESS. HIS FAITH, COMBINED WITH AN INCISIVE HUMOUR, HAS GIVEN HIM A STRENGTH WHICH IS VALUED BY MANY OF THOSE WHO KNOW HIM.

THE YEAR 1987 IS AN IMPORTANT ONE FOR GEORGE RANDELL, NOT ONLY BECAUSE IT IS THE YEAR IN WHICH RHODES UNIVERSITY HAS CONFERRED AN HONORARY

DEGREE UPON HIM, BUT ALSO BECAUSE IT MARKS THE YEAR DURING WHICH HE AND HIS WIFE, DOROTHY, CELEBRATE THEIR GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY - NEXT MONTH, IN FACT. HE SHOWED THE GOOD SENSE WE WOULD EXPECT OF HIM IN MARRYING RHODES UNIVERSITY'S FIRST FINE ARTS GRADUATE.

ALTHOUGH GEORGE RANDELL MAY NOT MOVE AS FAST AS HE DID IN THE DAYS WHEN HE CAPTAINED RHODES HOCKEY AND CRICKET TEAMS, HE HAS CERTAINLY CONTINUED TO SHOW THE QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP AND SPORTSMANSHIP THAT HE DISPLAYED THEN.

WE ARE PARTICULARLY GLAD THAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CONFER HONORARY DEGREES ON GEORGE RANDELL AND MARGARET SMITH THIS YEAR. APART FROM THE FACT THAT THEY ARE BOTH OLD RHODIANS, THEY ARE ALSO PEOPLE WHO HAVE COME TO MEAN A GREAT DEAL TO THE GRAHAMSTOWN COMMUNITY, WHERE BOTH HAVE CHOSEN TO RETIRE.

RHODES UNIVERSITY CAN CONGRATULATE ITSELF ON HAVING PRODUCED TWO SUCH DISTINGUISHED GRADUATES, ONE OF WHOM WE HONOUR TODAY, THE OTHER WHOM WE HONOURED LAST MONTH.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I ASK YOU TO RISE AND DRINK A TOAST TO "OUR HONORARY GRADUATE".

DR D S HENDERSON

MAY, 9, 1987