



## Foreword

When Robert John Mullins embarked on the *Cossipore* on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1854 and sailed from England to South Africa in the party of the first Bishop of Grahamstown, John Armstrong, the youthful aspirant missionary and cleric, could never have envisaged the stature that the name Mullins would one day enjoy in the history of education in Grahamstown and, indeed, South Africa. Vigorous, courageous and doughty, the young man came imbued with the missionary spirit. His individual contribution over the next fifty years to the education of the sons of the indigenous population and the training of the first black Anglican clergy ensure a venerable place in the history of the Eastern Cape.

But it was not only Rev Robert Mullins who was destined to play so significant a role in the life of this frontier town. Almost every member of his extensive family, including his beloved wife, Jennie, has become entrenched in the story of Grahamstown for their memorable personalities and individual contributions – mostly in education.

Today, the institution most particularly associated with the Mullins family is St Andrew's Preparatory, and members of that family – from the second headmistress to the author and designer of this book - have served it continuously for 125 years. It has provided headmasters and headmistresses, teachers, benefactors and the loving carers of generations of small boys, ensuring a sense of continuity which must be unique in the annals of the history of South African schools. The lore of St Andrew's Prep, of its 'big brother' St Andrew's College and of the Diocesan School for Girls is rich in the exploits of the Mullins clan. In many ways it is the spirit of loyalty and belonging so representative of this family which has influenced, considerably, the bonds which continue to bind these three schools together.

Lorraine Mullins, however, would be the first to object to associating the success of St Andrew's Prep solely with the endeavours of his family. In his book he has paid considered tribute to all who have served Prep – in whatever capacity – with even-handed generosity and insight and a shrewd understanding of the vicissitudes that the school has faced over the decades. He has paid meticulous attention to each of the headmasters, especially the educators of recent years who have done so much to assure Prep's position as a leading independent preparatory school.

It is fortuitous that Lorraine Mullins was available to write the history of St Andrew's Prep on the occasion of its 125<sup>th</sup> Jubilee for no man could have a deeper insight into his subject. Born into the school he, too, has served it with distinction all his life. His research is meticulous and his personal experience of the day to day workings of the school unparalleled. This is not just a history of the trajectory Prep has taken in the years since it opened its doors in the small white building in Speke Street in 1885, it is a book which captures the spirit of Prep. As a son of that heritage himself, Lorraine Mullins has drawn on the beloved Prep song - a sort of rallying cry which distinguishes a clan - to describe the traditions, the characters, the ethos and the time-honoured anecdotes which are dear to all Preppies. Designed by his daughter Jocelyn Wortley and richly illustrated with photographs spanning 125 years, Lorraine Mullins' book is a not only a work of scholarship but also an intimate tale of loyalty and love: characteristics which distinguish not only the author himself but the staff and children of whom he writes so warmly.

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