



Ackworth celebrates the arrival of Anton Maree, their new Head, and his family.



Born and educated in South Africa at Muir College and Queen's College, both boys' boarding schools in the Eastern Cape, Anton attended Rhodes University, a residential university in Grahamstown, where he gained a BA degree in History, English and Psychology and qualified as a teacher before spending an obligatory two years as a conscript in the South African Defence Force.

After two years helping to improve relations with the Kavango people in South West Africa and witnessing the transition to independence of the modern state of Namibia, Anton started his teaching career at Sandringham High School, a large co-educational day school in Johannesburg. Anton focused on the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic era initially but developed an interest in modern history after moving to King William's College (a co-educational boarding school) on the Isle of Man with his wife Alison.

At King William's College, Anton established himself as a tutor and then a housemaster before becoming the Director of Boarding with the challenge of redeveloping and redefining boarding. He was particularly successful in encouraging day pupils to board by making sure that it was an attractive option for all.

The History department at King William's provided many opportunities to travel and Anton was fortunate to visit Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Poland, and Russia as well as China, Cambodia, Vietnam and the USA. The school toured the Southern Hemisphere regularly and Anton has been on sports tours to South Africa, Australia and New Zealand many times. On one tour the school visited all three rugby playing nations in 4 weeks, an experience worth repeating! A keen sportsman himself, Anton played rugby for Douglas Rugby Club and cricket for Malew.

Appointed to Rossall School in Lancashire as the deputy headmaster in 2009, Anton and his family left the Isle of Man and helped to re-establish Rossall as a major public school by raising pupil numbers, improving academic standards and carrying out an extensive programme of refurbishment. Anton is a passionate learner as well as an educator and will always put the needs of the students first. He has a deep interest in performing arts and the use of IT in the classroom, and his love of sport will be evident to all. He is also committed to helping international students break through the language barrier.

Anton is a great believer in the advantages offered by co-education and boarding schools which makes him sympathetic to the challenges faced by Ackworth today. All pupils should be encouraged to have a strong sense of social, moral and environmental responsibility and Anton feels that pupils should be challenged and stretched at school, not just academically, but also through sports, art, drama, music, community service and adventurous activities.

Engagement is what helps develop pupils to the full, both academically and as people. This is what has drawn him to Ackworth School where the Quaker foundation, underpinned by the Quaker testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality and stewardship, are clearly evident. Anton will continue the momentum offered by preceding Heads. He believes that relationships are at the heart of a good school and is looking forward to getting to know the staff, students, families and old scholars of Ackworth and immersing himself into the Ackworth community.

'We are thrilled to be joining the Ackworth community and look forward to many happy and successful years here.'

Alison Maree

