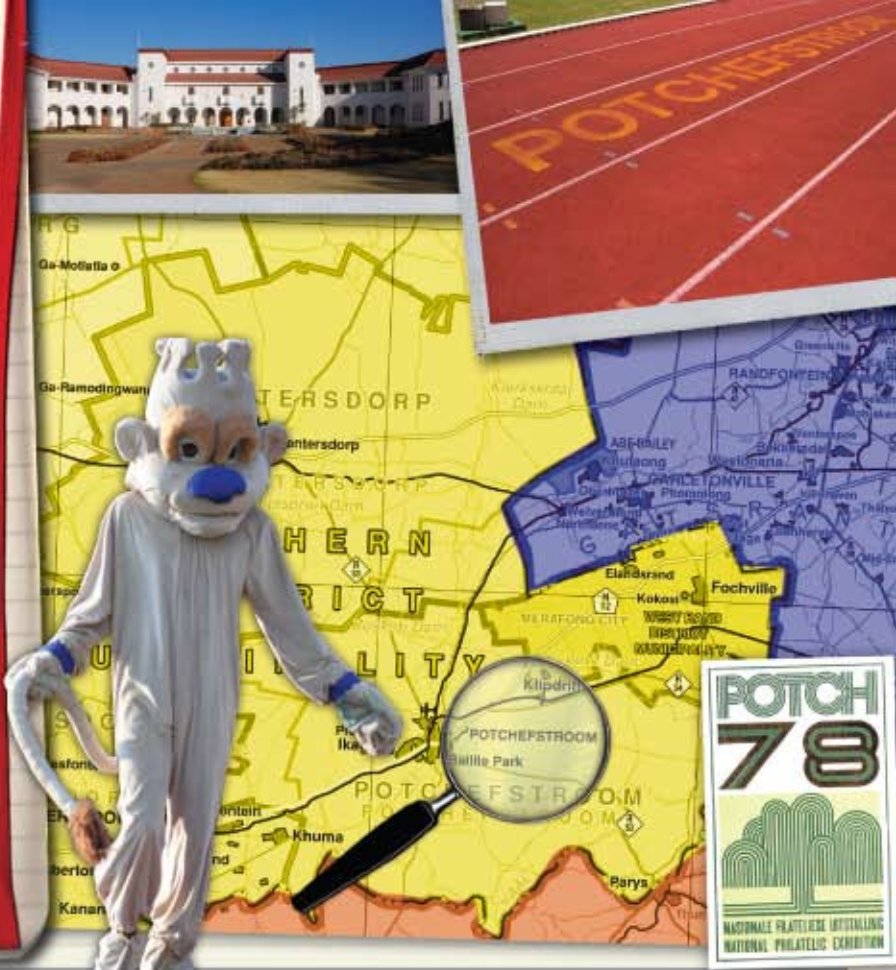


# Potchefstroom

It is suggested that Potchefstroom takes its name from the man who saw to it first becoming a settlement: Voortrekker leader Andries Potgieter, the name being a combination of "Pot" from Potgieter, "chef" from chief of his Voortrekker group and "stroom" from stream. He established the settlement known as the Mooi River in 1838 on the banks of the stream, where he took his oath of office as first President of the Transvaal Republic. The new town was the subject of the Sand River Convention allowing the area north of the Vaal River (the Transvaal) to become an independent republic, thus making it the Transvaal's oldest Voortrekker town. For 17 years it was the capital of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek Potchefstroom, where the national flag of the Transvaal Republic, the Vierkleur, was hoisted for the first time, was the first capital of the republic. Pretoria, as the seat of government, gradually assumed pre-eminence and the town on the Mooi River eventually had to relinquish its status. Among other Transvaal firsts that Potchefstroom could claim were the first Afrikaans and English-medium churches, the first qualified teacher to set up school, the first printing press, the first experimental farm, and the first shot in the war of 1880-81 between the Transvaal and Britain. Since the 1930s it has been a centre of the gold industry, agriculture and education - lots of education. The Godefroneerde Kerk transferred its theological seminary, established in 1869, from Burgersdorp to Potchefstroom in 1905, and the institution developed into the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. It is now a part of the North West University.



## Potchefstroom Gimnasium



**FOUNDED:** 1907  
**MOTTO:** FAC ET SPERA  
(ACT AND STAY HOPEFUL)  
**ADDRESS:** 20 MOLEN STREET,  
POTCHEFSTROOM  
**WWW.GIMMIES.CO.ZA**



### School History

The school, 101 years old in 2008, was founded in January 1907 as Die Voorbereidende Skool with HJJ van der Walt as its first principal ... not that he was there long. The preparation work which the schools did was in getting young men ready for theological studies. After all, the seminary had been moved to Potchefstroom two years earlier. On 25 January 1915 the school changed its name to Goevernement Skool. A year later it became the first school to start using Afrikaans as well as Dutch and English. In 1918 it became solely a high school and changed its name to Potchefstroom Gimnasium.

### Rugby at Gimmies

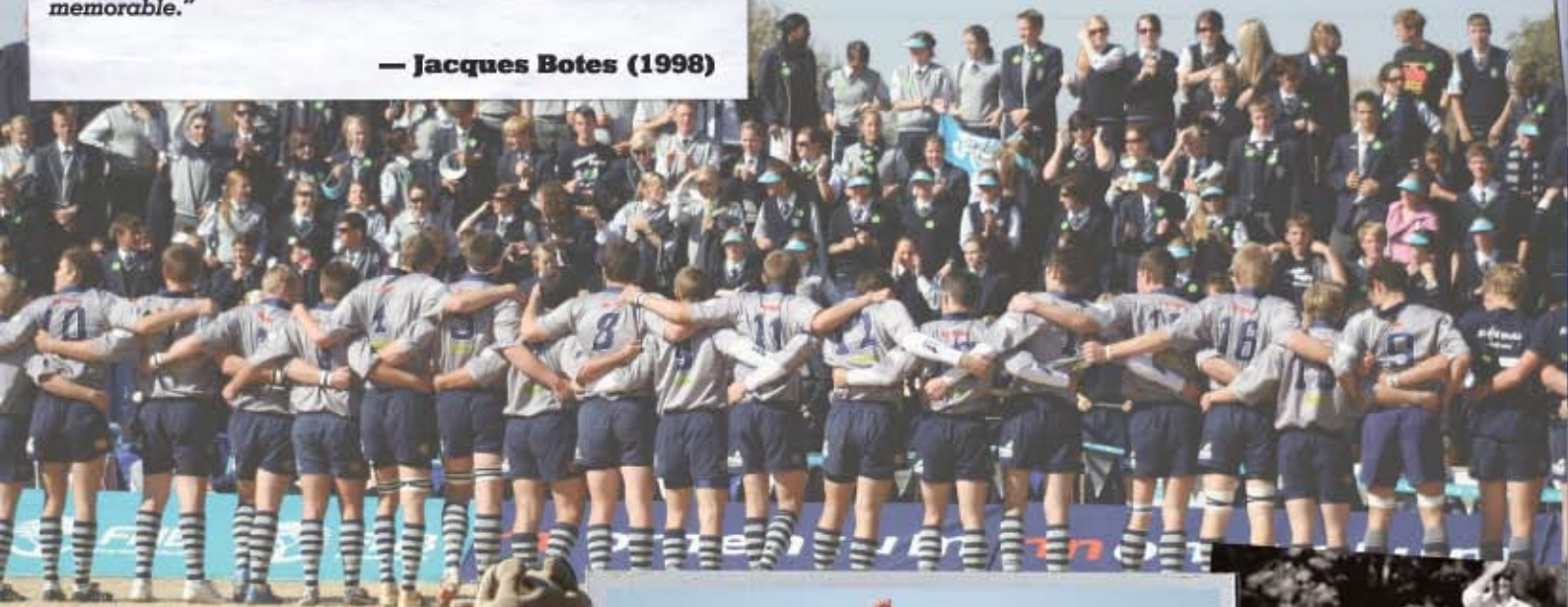
The school started playing rugby in 1918. From its early days it has won trophies: Blaine Cup (1920), Davey Cup (1928) and Jacob Wilkens Cup (1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1963, 1967, 1984, 1985, 2000). In 2004 it won the Beeld Trophy. The Jacob Wilkens Cup was started in 1944. Volkies won it for the first seven years and then Gimmies for the next four. Gimmies lost in the final of the Administrator's cup in 1953 and 1954. Die Fakkels knocked Gimmies out in the semi-final in 1955 and in 1956 HTS Vereeniging beat them 6-5 in the final. Brandwag beat them in 1966, but in 1967 Gimmies won the Administrator's Cup for the first time. Eddy Williams was the captain and a member of the team was James Stoffberg, the present president of the Leopards RFU. The coach in those golden years was Oom Feel Visser.

The school has nine rugby teams and is classified a medium school for rugby competition. It has regularly sent players to Craven Week. Old Boys who have played for the Springboks include Piet Malan, Theo van Rensburg (the versatile back of the Nineties) and Johan van der Schyff. Pietman van Niekerk, the Lions and Cats prop who has played for South Africa in age-group teams, is a prominent rugby Old Boy. The big derby is with Potch Volkies, and also with Lichtenburg.

# Potchefstroom Gimnasium

*"Beating Volkies was the ultimate. The whole school took part in the various sports against Volkies, so winning the First Team rugby game was obviously important to us. The year I played First Team rugby, you would give your jersey to a girl or your girlfriend to sleep in it on the night before your game. Singing the school anthem prior to the derby and having crowds of 5 000 attend the game, was also memorable."*

— Jacques Botes (1998)



## Internationals

### South Africa:

Piet Malan  
Theo van Rensburg  
Johan van der Schyff

*"Pietman van Niekerk was one of the few players I knew who started training for the rugby season from the start of the year. He worked with the sprinters and the athletics team to increase his speed and fitness. In his final year, he captained the First XV, and the players respected him and his decisions, which is what you want as a coach."*

— Johan Mienie (coach 2000-07)

*"Potch Gimnasium groomed me with a well-balanced education. The school offers a lot more than just good rugby, and the basis of that was balance. Life isn't all about rugby, even more so when I was at school when professional rugby wasn't an option. Despite playing in an excellent side and reaching semi's and quarters of the Administrators Cup in the mid-80s, I am grateful to Potch Gim for preparing me for life beyond school."*

*I played outside centre in '83 and flyhalf in '84/85 for the First XV. Potch Tech were very good when I was playing First XV rugby, and the big derby was without a doubt against Volkies. Everyone came to watch and there was an incredible atmosphere."*

— Theo van Rensburg  
(1983-85)

