

## THE DROSTDY MUSE NEWS



**Volume 1, Number 2**

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### **Editorial**

The response to our first issue was overwhelmingly positive, and we would like to thank all those who emailed us with their comments. We aim to keep the newsletter lively and full of interesting snippets. Enjoy!

### **Giving our heritage a hearing**

One of the prime functions of museums is to preserve and showcase a nation's heritage and culture. One of India's most famous icons, for example, is the Taj Mahal, and this month has seen the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this beautiful and evocative monument to love. But heritage is not only about material culture such as old buildings, documents and artefacts. It is also about the way people do things, their manner of speaking, their dress and favourite foods, their oral history and folklore. And it is community-based.

In South Africa we are blessed with a rich diversity of communal culture and history, all of which deserve celebration. Throughout the country various heritage events were staged on Heritage Day. This year the Drostdy Museum celebrated differently to be more inclusive and raise awareness of the diversity of South African culture.



### **Xhosas celebrate Heritage Day at the Drostdy Museum**

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, a group of Swellendam's Xhosa-speaking people gathered at the museum to celebrate their culture and learn more about the museum and its activities. Youth dance groups and choirs presented a colourful programme. The beautifully dressed Xhosa women made a strong cultural statement in their traditional garments and head-dresses.

The group also met in the Drostdy and discussed the role of museums in preserving culture and heritage. It was agreed that the community and the museum would forge links to promote the Xhosa culture. After the meeting the group enjoyed a sponsored traditional Xhosa meal which consisted of "afval", samp, meat and mealiepap. The spirit of the day was one of lively enjoyment.

### **Xhosa culture - did you know?**

- The Xhosa-speaking nation, which is of the Nguni ethnic group, consists of several tribes such as the Pondo, Bomvana, Thembu and others, and is usually collectively called simply "the Xhosa".
- Xhosas living beyond tribal land have never lost their tribal culture. They have their mystical water sprite, Tikoloshe, consult their traditional healers, and wear tribal dress and regalia for special occasions. They initiate their teenagers into adult life with complex rituals.

Says museum manager Tizzie Mangiagalli: "Our theme at the Drostdy is social history, and that includes the history of all the people living in our community."



### **Musiek by die Museum**

'n Heerlike lente-aand met blomme uit Mayville se tuin, 'n glasië rooiwijn en smaaklike eetgoed was die wenresep vir 'n genoeglike aand met Swellendam se eie musiek ensemble.

Dit was die begin van die Drostdy Museum se Erfenisdag program wat opvoedkundig van aard was. Ek hoop die paar jong mense in die gehoor het dit stimulerend gevind. Heelwat van die instrumente wat bespeel is, is gerestoureerde artefakte in die museum se besit soos bv. die platklavier, die ou huistraporrel en verskillende soorte handsnaarinstrumente. Ook was daar die groot harp wat bespeel is deur Annetjie Uys van Heidelberg, die tjello deur Pim Stalling, die spinnette, goedgunstiglik geleen van Sandra Perold en gespeel deur die talentvolle John Hely-Hutchinson. Die ensemble het ook 'n eie komposisie van John uitgevoer wat gaan oor 'n kapkar-rit deur die strate. Die ander musikante was Sue Watermeyer - viool, Maria Truter - dwarsfluit en Gillian Rattray - blokfluit.

So tussen die Barry-familie uitstalling, waaronder 'n mooi foto van Mev Dina Barry (neé Steyn) by 'n klavier, het ons met harp en siter ons kulturele erfenis gevier.  
Miemie Rothmann

*On the 20<sup>th</sup> October the Drostdy Museum celebrates its 61<sup>st</sup> birthday! And staff member Jakobus Lombaard celebrated 25 years of work at the museum on 1 October.*



**New Overberg book to be launched at the Drostdy**

*Overberg Tapestry*, by Leslie Howard with photography by Keith Phillips, is the first book of its kind about the Overberg, and is an intimate account of the rich mosaics and cultural treasures of this diverse South African region. Coffee table in format, and backed by informative and lively copy with stunning photography, the book is a *tour de force* to delight the senses.

This publication will fill the gap that has existed since the book by Anna Rothmann and photographer John Warner went out of print. It also adds many new dimensions and brings stunning images to the reading public. The book covers a variety of topics, from the early history of the region to the landscape in all its spectacular beauty, stories of fisher folk, treasure and navigation along rocky shores, the architecture and people past and present who have shaped the destiny of the Overberg. There are accounts of historic farms, current ventures and interviews with local artists and personalities. The book features excerpts from the poetry and writing of the region. Visually, it is a stirring celebration of the incredible beauty and human endeavour of this unique environment. *Overberg Tapestry* will have enduring value.

Leslie Howard is a communications specialist for whom words and images have been a lifelong passion. She researched her subject intensively, interviewing scores of people, spending many hours in libraries and travelling more than 20 000 km in the making of this book.

Keith Phillips has devoted a lifetime to the creation of beautiful images. His innovative design provides the perfect platform for showcasing his superb images. *Overberg Tapestry* invites readers on a unique journey. The book will be on sale at

major bookstores countrywide and at the Drostdy and Caledon museum shops. The Drostdy will be the venue of the Overberg launch of the book on Friday 12 November at 12 noon. For further information contact the museum at Tel: (028) 514 1138.



#### **Who does what?**

#### **Museum intern/guide Brent Kellies**

Brent Kellies is a new young face at the museum. Having studied IT at Pentech for three years, he realised that his real interest was in people and history. There was an opening for a guide at the museum and Brent was fortunate to land the job. The museum was also in luck, as Brent's enthusiasm and interest in his work is catching.

Says Brent: "I love the work and am very comfortable interacting with people, sometimes from many different countries, and in working with artefacts. I am really excited about the learner ship that has been granted to me."

The learner ship, which falls under the Management, Advertising, Printing and Publishing SETA, runs for 8 months. Brent is one of only 17 interns and the only one to represent a rural area. He attends lectures and workshops at the Iziko Museum in Cape Town and has chosen to undertake a birthright project related to his own heritage. This means that he will be taking a close look at the history, the people, and the built and natural environment of Swellendam.

Brent was born at the Swellendam Hospital in 1983, and went to school at Bontebok Primary and Swellendam Secondary Schools. There is no doubt that his alma mater and his parents, Japie and Helga, both teachers, will be proud of him.

Brent's vision for the future is to become a conservation or heritage practitioner. Keep up the good work, Brent, we value your input!

#### **Bekendstelling van boek oor M.E.R. te Drostdy Museum**

Op 27 Augustus het die ACVV op Swellendam J C Steyn se boek oor Maria Elizabeth Rothmann aan 'n geleentheid by die Zanddrift Restaurant bekendgestel. Tydens die bekendstelling het kleindogter Miemie Rothmann, asook Anneke Boshoff en dr Riana Barnard as sprekers opgetree.

Die boek – *Die 100 jaar van M.E.R.* – vier die lewe van Maria Rothmann, wat deur professor Hermann Gilliomee as “een van die grootste Afrikaners van die 20ste eeu” beskryf is. M.E.R. is op 28 Augustus 1875 in Swellendam gebore en is op 1975 op die ouderdom van 100 jaar en 10 dae oorlede. Miemie Rothmann, M.E.R. se kleindogter, bly nog steeds in Swellendam in die huis waar haar ouma die meeste van haar skryfwerk gedoen het. Die boek is beskikbaar by die Drostdy Museum winkel.

### **Tourism news**

The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism has released its growth strategy for domestic tourism for 2004 – 2007. Their four main objectives are to increase expenditure on trips, to reduce seasonality (encourage year round travel), to increase the spread of travel destinations and to increase volumes of travellers. Achievement of these objectives will aid GDP growth, job creation and social transformation in South Africa. A museum has an important part to play in this drive, and as the Department says: “...engage with us on this journey – and in so doing open the doors of travel to all – to show *‘It’s possible, Let’s Waai’*.”

*One day Adam went off on his own and returned home very late. As far as Eve knew, they were the only two people in the garden. But just in case, she waited until Adam was asleep and then she counted his ribs. (Attributed to Archbishop Desmond Tutu).*

### **Jomien se plante wêreld – die spanspektamatie**

Toe die uwe grootoog van verwondering by die museum begin werk het, het ek die vreemde vrug of groente gesien en nie geweet wat dit is nie. Dit is die spanspektamatie of boomspanspek, “Tree Melon” of “Pear Melon”, met die botanise naam van *Solanum Muricatum*. Dit kom oorspronklik vanaf Chili en Peru en staan bekend as *Solanaceae*.

Dit word geklassifiseer as ‘n vrug, maar net soos die tamatie word dit meestal as ‘n groente gebruik. Die immergroen, meerjarige struik maak so ‘n verstrengelde bosserasie met mooi dofgroen blare. Wanneer jy die vruggie soek, kan jy die ranke optel en die vrugte is gewoonlik onder die blare, dus beskerm teen son en natuur-elemente. Die vrug is geel van kleur wanneer ryp met swart perserige vertikale strepe. Die skilletjie is dun en glad met ‘n vlesige sappige binnekant wat sonder pitte is. Soos gewoonlik is die Afrikaanse naam die naaste aan die korrekte beskrywing van die smaak. Die pikante smaak is spanspekkerig en tamatierig en heerlik om in ‘n groen slaai te gebruik.

Die plant hou van goedgedreineerde vrugbare grond, vol son en voldoende water. Volgens my bronne is dit bestand teen peste en plae, maar, wat wou, hulle ken nie ons Swellendam nie. ‘n Interessantheid is dat dit veronderstel is om die grootste deel van die jaar vrugte te dra, maar dit klink na ‘n feëverhaal.

Omdat dit gevoelig vir ryp is, is dit geskik vir gematigde klimaatstreke, wat nie kusstreke insluit nie. So nou en dan het ons darem ‘n voordeel bo die seeblyers!

Steggies is baie maklik om te maak en dit groei ook maklik. Dit is ‘n goeie plan om dit een maal per jaar so ‘n bietjie terug te snoei en netjies te maak. Plantjies is natuurlik by die museum beskikbaar.

Ander gebruike vir die spanspektamatie is ingelegde vrugte, konfyt en blatjang, wat baie lekker is. Op hierdie lekker noot gaan ek groet.  
Jomien Havenga.

**Did you know?**

In the 2002/2003 period, 49,3 million South Africans holidayed locally. They spent R47 billion.

In the same period, there were 6,5 million overseas visitors to SA, who spent R53,9 billion!

Clearly we need to ensure a warm welcome for all our visitors!

*Look out for the next issue of the Drostdy Muse News and remember to promote and conserve South Africa's diverse heritage.*

Till next time -

**The Editor**

Tel: 028 - 514 1138

Fax: 028 - 514 2675

E-mail: [info@drostdymuseum.com](mailto:info@drostdymuseum.com)

Website: [www.drostdymuseum.com](http://www.drostdymuseum.com)