

THE DROSTDY MUSE NEWS



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Editorial

Warm winter greetings to you all!

At this time of the year, the view from the top of Swellengrebel Street is quite breathtaking. There are still a few amber leaves on the oaks as their 'clear anatomy arrives', the view to the Glen is cloaked in emerald green, and the thatched roofs and shadowed white walls of the Drostdy complete a picture of romantic beauty. Research is ongoing at the moment to fill in more detail of the lives that were lived at the Drostdy in centuries past as these lovely elements became part of Swellendam. Our human history here has a darker side though, as we will discover when a fuller picture of activities at the Drostdy is unveiled in spring. Watch this space!

There is a consistent theme running through international and national museum policy. In the last month Minister of Arts and Culture Mr. Pallo Jordan has commented on the manner in which he sees the cultural function of museums in South Africa. He emphasized the importance of making

the past relevant to the present and future, the critical importance of integrating museum activities with the present culture and milieu in which they are situated, and of community participation in its affairs.

Recent and ongoing projects indicate that the Drostdy continues to make strides in the right direction.

Easter Festival



Kosie Seffoor Youth Band

Following on its highly successful Christmas Festival, the Drostdy organised a community Easter Festival that took place in the Town Hall on the 12th April. The venue was packed to capacity, and the audience enjoyed the programme of music and gospel dancing presented by five different

local choirs and bands, including Kosie Sefoor's Youth Band. Once more the inimitable Joseph Dyantyi was a highly spontaneous master of ceremonies, and Dr. Anwiek Lategan's melodious voice expressed the spirit of Easter in musical terms. The crowd that gathered participated with gusto in the community singing.



There was an immediate request from a number of sources for the Easter Festival to become a regular item on the Museum's programme of events. Now that's a success story!

Museum Annual Meeting

The Museum's AGM was held at the Drostdy barn on the evening of 28th June. In the absence of Board of Trustees Chairman Nick Oosthuizen, Koos Brink presided. Museum Manager Tizzie Mangiagalli reported on an extremely busy year in which much was achieved. Tizzie reported on human resources, finances, administration, maintenance of the buildings, public programmes and marketing. One of the exciting developments is the restoration and refurbishment of Mayville to ensure that its exhibits, wall finishings and décor are as much in keeping with the original Victorian house as possible. Earlier this year a Department Museum Scientist visited the Drostdy, and with the help of Kobus Lombaard undertook research regarding the original interior walls. Social archaeologists had previously conducted a investigation on

interpretation of the site, and in the coming year work will begin to re-align exhibits, wall finishes and the uses of various rooms to be more in keeping with the historical lay-out of the Drostdy. The Museum Manager also reported on the highly successful public programmes of the past year, particularly those involving the youth of the town. The good news regarding Zanddrift is that finally an applicant has been accepted to run the restaurant. Once the last administrative process is complete, visitors to the Museum can look forward to once more enjoying tasty meals in the beautiful Zanddrift building. A vote of thanks to the Museum's management and staff for their achievements in the face of staff shortages was proposed from the floor.

Sadly the speaker for the evening, Dr. Joan Prins, was unable to attend owing to illness. We wish her well.

Friends of the Museum

The Museum's meeting was shared by the Friends, whose AGM took place on the same occasion. Chairman Koos Brink reported that the mandate of the new committee had been carried out in terms of financial matters and reinstating paid-up members from the 2004/2005 financial year. As far as a recruitment drive was concerned, much is still needed to be done. The meeting agreed that the Interim Committee should continue its mandate until November, with a focus on recruitment. At that point a meeting will be called and a new committee elected.

There was some discussion regarding a possible merger with the Heritage Association, but the Museum Manager pointed out that the Friends are a

statutory body regulated by the Museum's Ordinance, which is to be updated in the near future.

AGM guests enjoyed a wonderful spread of eats and good wine after the meeting, courtesy of the Friends' healthy bank balance.

Take the challenge! Join the Friends and make a difference to the most important historical icon in Swellendam and indeed in the whole of the south-western Cape.

Become a member now! Complete the attached application form below and return it to the museum offices at 18 Swellengrebel Street as soon as possible.

Today's office junk is tomorrow's museum piece



Jessica Dirks

So says Bill Virgin, a business columnist from Seattle. 'Look at the stuff around your workplace. Some of it constitutes working assets...some of it has outlived its usefulness and is headed for the recycling bin. And although you might not recognize it as such, some of it might just qualify as artifacts. Or at least it will have achieved that status in 50 years, when people want to look back half a century and get some understanding of how we lived our lives in this decade.

The objects that would have been considered commonplace in the workplace of the 1920s hold a certain fascination to us today, but they also spark an interesting question: what will fascinate people – whether it's the casual museum-goer or the serious researcher – about our work lives today? What papers and objects will tell the story of how we worked and what our businesses did? That's the challenge for museum curators of today...' Company records and advertising campaigns from past decades become collector's items, and its always interesting to read about old brand names and how they achieved fame.

(See our article below on old brand names.)

Bill Virgin's article first appeared in the Sunday Times of 26 March 2006.

Old Brown Sherry – from the Captain's Rooms



James Sedgewick was captain of a tea clipper on the China-England run around the Cape of Good Hope. So when, in the 1850s he decided to 'swallow the anchor', he settled in Cape Town and married one of the daughters of a Mrs. Parker who owned an hotel in Strand Street. He ran a tavern known as The Captain's Rooms, and became famous for visiting seafarers for his wines and spirits. Thus the foundations were laid for the

House of Sedgewick, which was established in 1859. After his death his two sons Charles and Alfred launched a tawny fortified wine which they called Old Brown Sherry. It was popular from the start, living up to the reputation of all the wines served in The Captain's Rooms. It is today the oldest surviving South African sherry, now produced by Stellenbosch Farmers' Winery. Simply known as 'Old Brown', it continues to win awards. Anyone for a glass?

Successful holiday programme at the Drostdy Museum



During the week of 26 to 30 June, local youngsters enjoyed a week of fun activities with an historical theme at the Drostdy. They learnt to bake 'stokbrood', pot bread and to make potjiekos, as their forefathers had done, over the coals. A number of skills were taught during the week, including traditional rock art techniques, and the girls learnt how to embroider under the tutelage of Jomien Havenga. The boys learnt how to make 'catties', which were used in the old days to kill food such as small animals and birds. There were games, and talks by Rev. Eugene Vaas on the Foetal Alcohol Syndrome and on HIV/Aids. The children also put together their own family trees and talked about their family histories. The week ended with a walk around

historical sites in Swellendam, led by Museum Manager Tizzie Mangiagalli.

This full week of learning activities for 40 of our youngsters is an example of the way in which the Museum is providing youngsters with a sense of pride in their own personal histories, our shared past, and the icons that make Swellendam such a special place.

Congratulations to team leader Jomien Havenga, her BADISA colleague Mr. Stallone Govender, and thanks to Mrs. Valerie van Heusdon, the Museum's intrepid volunteer, and Mr. Mkhululi Scott, for their valued assistance.

Launch of Bontebok archaeology project



In a joint project between Bontebok Park and the Swellendam Senior Secondary School for the last number of months high school students have been learning the basics of archaeology at the Park under the leadership of Charlie Arthur, an enthusiastic young British archaeologist from the University of Cape Town. Khoikhoi sites such as kraals and graves have been identified in the Park, and the youngsters have been taught how to excavate a site, sift through stones to identify artifacts, and how to handle these sensitive reminders of a past nomadic lifestyle. The students then

mounted photographs of their various activities for display in the Drostdy. The entire project was publicly launched on Youth Day, 16th June, at the Drostdy Museum. Do yourself a favour, and visit the display on the archaeological project that is on view in the Drostdy. Congratulations to the youngsters involved! Their involvement in the project is something they are likely to remember for the rest of their lives.

Artefak met 'n Storie **Die Drostdy sel**



Ek het 'n Belgiese vriendin wat moedeloos iets kwyd geraak het oor die "adolessente tieners" se belangstellings of die gebrek daaraan. Menige ouer/opvoeder sou met reg kon sê dat meeste stellings of opmerkings oor tieners meestal eufimisties is. In hiërdie geval, het ek baie deernis vir die veertienjarige tiener, Seyntje, en voel dat sy opgesaal was met 'n baie ongelukkige toedrag van sake.

Die iewat knorrige pa was drie-en-twintig jaar ouer as sy vrou en het erken dat hy nie 'n goeie verhouding met sy dogter gehad het nie. Ewenwel, Knorpot het vir Witbooi, 'n vyf-en-twintigjarige Khoiman, in diens geneem om hom op sy kleinhoewe buite Swellendam asook met sy ander landmeterbedrywighede te help.

Seyntje se gedrag teenoor Witbooi het veel te wense oorgelaat en hy het haar gevra of sy by hom wou slaap. Sy het dit heftig ontken, maar tog van plan verander, want heel gou het sy snags by Witbooi in die kombuis, waar hy geslaap het, gaan kuier. Dit was die gebruik dat werkers of selfs slawe gewoonlik onder die tafel geslaap het. Ewenwel, die kombuis was baie ver van Moederlief en Knorpot se kamer af en van die nagtelike eskapades het hulle niks geweet nie. Die arme jongelinge was gedoem, want dié Kersfees het Witbooi vir Seyntje probeer soen en o wee! hulle is betrap. Witbooi is tronk toe gestuur om lyfstraf te ontvang. By sy terugkeer het Moederlief hom lelik die liviete voorgelees en verklaar dat sulke gedrag hom verseker na die galg sou lei.

Witbooi is toe saam met Knorpot op 'n drie maande werkopdrag en by hul terugkeer het hy gesien dat Seyntje swanger was en sy het erken dat dit sy kind was. Op 12 September 1820 het sy geboorte geskenk aan 'n voltydse baba wat dood was by geboorte. Moederlief was die vroedvrou en die enigste een teenwoordig. Witbooi is gevra om 'n sak met inhoud en al te gaan begrawe en by nadere ondersoek het hy vasgestel dat dit 'n babaseuntjie met ligte krulhaartjies was. Hy het dit naby die huis begrawe en dit is waar die honde van heuningjagters dit gevind, en die poppe begin dans het.

Die geregsdienaars is in kennis gestel en die heemrade het die gesin tot verantwoording geroep. Knorpot het enige kennis van enige gebeure summier ontken en Moederlief het voet by stuk gehou dat die baba doodgebore was. Die uiteinde was dat Seyntje tot ses maande tronkstraf gevonnissen is en Moederlief tot ses weke. Moederlief het

vertoë tot die owerhede gerig en gepleit dat sy swaar genoeg gestraf was met 'n dogter soos Seyntje en haar straf is verminder. Witbooï wat volgens die hofstukke die meer betroubare getuïenis gelewer het is tot drie jaar tronkstraf gevonnissen. Sy grootste oortreding? - As ongedoopte mag hy nie omgang met 'n blanke gehad het nie! Hy is daarvan beskuldig dat hy Seyntje verlei het asook die kind stilletjies begrawe het. Seyntje is in die tronk op Swellendam aangehou en haar sel se venstertjie het uitgekyk op die binneplaas en sy kon die strafpaal met die gepaardgaande aktiwiteite gadeslaan. Ongeveer dertig Khoi- en slaweprisoniers is op daardie tydstop daar aangehou.

Seyntje het haar kanse op 'n "goeie huwelik" lelik verbrou, maar het heel gou met 'n jongman getrou wat in die distrik 'n leenplaas ontvang het en hulle het sewe kinders gehad.

Sjoe! Met ouers soos Knorpot en Moederlief het 'n kind seker nie vyande nodig gehad nie. Weereens laat ek die analyses aan die deftiger mense oor, maar die arme gefrustreerde en waarskynlik intelligente Seyntje met haar rooi hakskeentjies het nie 'n regverdige kans gehad nie.

(Die feite en storie is korrek, name nie.)

Jomien Havenga

Ukuya kwam okokuqala kwiziko lolondolozo lwamasiko nenkcubenko

Ndandisoyika ndingumntu othuleyo ndandicinga ukuba ndiza ebantwini abazakundiphatha ngenye indlela kanti ndifikela ebantwini abanobuntu abaye bandi fundisa yonke into

enxulumene neMyuziyam yase Swellendam.

Ndaqala ndafundiswa ngabantu ekudala bephangela apha abango Ina, Nick kunye no Jomien. Ngabona bantu abandinika inkxaso enkulu kule Myuziyam. Ngoku ndifuna ukuyisebenzisa imfundo endayinikwa apha. Ngoku ndibiza wonke umntu omtsha ukuba aze kubona imisebenzi yoo khokho bethu.

Ndifuna ukuba ndinixelele ukuba ukuza kwenu kunokuba luvuyo olukhulu kuthi ngoba nani nizakuyazi impilo ababeyiphila ngaphambili. Kulena iDemokrasi entsha kufuneka siyamkele ngezandla zombini amathuba esiwafumanayo ngoba asisahlelanga kubunzima esasihleli kubo Wonke ubani unelungelo lokuya kumasebe emicimbi nenkcubeko kule Demokrasi entsha.



Phumzile Mpiyakhe

Restoration at Mayville

On the 6th and 7th July, I was taken on a site inspection of the restoration process at Mayville, the pruning of

roses in the garden, and the Museum workshop. It gave me great pleasure to have this peek into the work that goes into the restoration of an historical site. In each of the Mayville rooms, a square patch of wall has been scraped to find the layers of paint that provide the history of the décor in the lovely old house. Pots of paint, ladders and other tools stood in passages. Paint colours have been matched as closely as possible to the originals found way back on the scraped patches.



Isaac Abrams

I found Isaac Abrams and David Langerveldt hard at work painting the kitchen. The boy's room has already been restored to its original blue and grey, and work in the pantry is afoot. The front room in which the rotten floorboards were removed is soon to boast its sprung floor of pine planks (oregon planks are almost unobtainable now). Sadly the skirting boards and the cat-slide roof over the veranda were removed some decades ago. The originals were not saved. In the grounds Johnny Slingers was hard at work pruning the heritage roses.



Johnny Slingers

I felt as if I had stepped back in time to a gracious age in which long-skirted Victorian ladies took tea in the gardens, horses whinnied from the nearby stables, and chicken nests filled the niches in the garden wall.

At the Drostdy's workshop Ampie De Wee was carefully cleaning an old sash window, and Kobus Lombaard was engaged in restoration of a piece from Mayville. Tizzie showed me the clerks' desk, which came from the Barry Stores. The desk stands at hip height, and would have accommodated three clerks standing at their work. (Remember Charles Dickens' portrayal of bank clerks in *Our Mutual Friend*?) Tizzie lifted the desk lids, and we admired the pigeon holes underneath for storing writing materials and documents, and the scratched signatures of various clerks to identify their particular stations.

Another potent invocation of times past, and I returned home well aware

not only of the hard work that goes on every day in the Museum gardens and buildings, but also of the privilege of living in Swellendam and being privy to these treasures and conservation activities.

Forthcoming events at the Drostdy

9th August – Special Women’s Day celebration

24th September – Heritage Day – visit of the Western Cape Premier for the launch of the Drostdy’s Slave Lodge

As the bard said ‘If winter comes, can spring be far behind?’ We all look forward to the coming of spring, and the launches and exciting events that will take place at the Drostdy then. See you there!

Leslie Howard
Editor

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