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Vision

Our vision is to be an institute which preserves and reflects the cultural history and natural heritage of all the inhabitants of the Camdeboo area.



Mission

We collect, conserve, research and display the rich, cultural history and heritage of the Camdeboo area for the education, recreation and the upliftment of the community and visitors whom we serve.

Graaff-Reinet MUSEUMS

Contact

Details

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Mr P Whitlock (Chair)	-	Premier's Representative (Since February 2019)
Mrs P Wallis (Vice Chair)	-	Premier's Representative (Since February 2019)
Miss T Majoka	-	Premier's Representative
Mrs E Buisman	-	Premier's Representative
Dr A Malherbe	-	Premier's Representative
Mr A Gradwell	-	Premier's Representative
Cllr J Williams	-	Premier's Representative
Mr B Hough	-	Subscribers' Representative (Elected June 2019)
Ms L King	-	Subscribers' Representative (Elected June 2019)
Vacant	-	DBNL Municipality
Cllr A Mboneni	-	District Municipality
Mr Z Sakata	-	DSRAC Representative
Mrs A F Kayster	-	<i>Ex Officio</i> Member

STAFF MEMBERS:

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS:

Mrs A F Kayster	-	Principal Museum Human Scientist
Miss Denise van Wyk	-	Chief Auxiliary Service Officer
Mr B Ngandi	-	Administrative Assistant
Miss Sinethemba Citwa	-	Auxiliary Service Officer
Vacant	-	Auxiliary Service Officer
Miss X P Blouw	-	General Assistant
Mr J van Rhyners	-	General Assistant
Miss K Booysen	-	General Assistant
Mr J Pylman	-	General Assistant
Mr Z Isaks	-	General Assistant

BOARD OF TRUSTEE EMPLOYEES:

Mr W Simmons	-	General Assistant
Mr J Wagenaar	-	General Assistant

RELIEF STAFF:

Ms L Du Toit	-	resigned in 2019
Mr B Le Potha		
Mrs S Visagie		
Mrs S Du Pisanie	-	resigned in 2019

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



The fiscal year 2019-2020 will surely go down in the annals as a year to remember probably mostly for all the wrong reasons. Could we ever have conceived at the beginning of what promised to be a most challenging year that it would end with the world-wide catastrophic impact induced by the Covid-19 pandemic, severe restrictive infection control measures and the closure of our Museum.

The question as to the construction and writing of a report under these circumstances naturally arises quite involuntarily: I expect one could say with great difficulty or with significant challenges both of which would be valid responses.

This challenge has been further compounded by not having convened a formal AGM as a result of Covid meeting restrictions. The resulting deferment of the report writing process has in turn necessitated the ordering of thoughts on events no longer fresh in one's memory. One is indeed drawn to the convenience of using the word "unprecedented" that has become synonymous with the Covid-19 pandemic and all its ramifications.

Unprecedented may indeed be a valid description of many of the problems which beset our museum at the very end of the report period however every attempt will need to be made to ensure that these events should not cloud the record, both positive and negative, which preceded the unprecedented. It is a massive consolation that the constant, through unprecedented and preceded times, is the groundswell of support, dedication and hard work of the

Graaff-Reinet **Museum People**, without whom we would not be in a position to exercise our primary mandate of collection, display and conservation of and research into the cultural heritage of our community.

This year, very much like preceding years, was largely characterised by constantly diminishing visitor numbers and income on the one hand and rising costs on the other. On the back of failed fundraisers and the stagnant provincial subsidy levels the Board was once again, as the year progressed, faced with the contemplation of further austerity measures this time at the expense of convenient telephone communication. The expensive internal telephone system was dispensed with in favour of a number of external lines. Although complicating internal communication and presenting a measure of inconvenience to the public at large the cost of the old telephone system could simply not be justified any longer.

Unexpected expenses further aggravated an already difficult situation. The Board was also faced with a spate of break-ins, and instances of theft, at Urquhart house which necessitated the fitting of security gates to all outside doors, at some expense, for the protection of the staff and collection. The fact that the Board also had to foot the bill for accommodation and travelling expenses for provincial staff inductions in Makhanda (Grahamstown) was less than palatable and further burdened our already over-extended finances.

The adversities notwithstanding we once again, before being shut down ignominiously by the unprecedented, weathered yet another year without curtailing the high standards of service delivery which have become the proud hallmark of our institution. Once again sincere acknowledgement is due to all the **Museum People** who made the apparently impossible possible.

Despite adversities the Museum has retained the confidence of the public and has built up a contingent of faithful, and unexpected, **Benefactors**.

The *Save Reinet House Fund*, launched by the Board some years back, to create a core maintenance fund, continues to grow steadily.

The *Rupert Historic Homes Foundation* has once again astounded by their generosity which has allowed the Old Library Museum to receive a complete overhaul including the all-but complete replacement of the old, and potentially hazardous, electrical installation. How does one fully express the debt of gratitude for financially facilitating a project of this magnitude?

The Museum has also built up a sound reputation of curatorial expertise and **Donors** have during the report period alone graced our institution with all manner of valuable cultural artefacts from photographic plates to doll collections to a collection of beautifully handcrafted wood motor vehicles. The artefacts are not only valuable in their own right but add value to the visitor experience of our museum.

Negotiations are well advanced for the installation of a most prestigious exhibition in the Old Library building by FISA (The Fiduciary Institute of South Africa) which will celebrate the singular history of South African trust companies: a history with strong links with Graaff-Reinet. The realisation of the plans in the not too distant future is awaited with expectation.

Volunteers can be an invaluable asset to any museum in supplementing expertise, increasing capacity and injecting new enthusiasm into everyday tasks. The Graaff-Reinet Museum is indeed very fortunate to have the dedicated support of an enthusiastic and intrepid band of volunteers who readily assist when called upon and are not afraid of unusual and sometimes daunting escapades. I don't think it will be taken amiss by the volunteer corps if one particular volunteer is singled out for the time and effort which have been invested for the benefit of the Museum and to ensure that our institution is at the forefront of developments in digitisation in the museum context.

This person is Professor Johannes Haarhoff who has unselfishly dedicated much of his free time to ensure that the photographic collections of the Museum are digitised in compliance with internationally accepted archival norms. This is an ongoing and substantial task that will benefit the Museum for many years to come and therefore most worthy of special acknowledgement.

We acknowledge the Graaff-Reinet Tourism Office, our **Partner** in operating the Old Library Museum. The staffing arrangement with them is invaluable to the smooth operation of the Museum which still does not enjoy the benefit of a full staff compliment. We hope for the strengthening of this relationship of goodwill which can only be of benefit to both our organisations under increasingly challenging circumstances.

To each and every **Board** member my sincere gratitude for your unstinting service to the Museum. For sharing your expertise, wisdom and humour in both victories and defeats. I am truly heartened by the collective resilience and positivity forging ahead often in the face of apparent overwhelming obstacles. Our Museum will surely survive a mighty storm with such stalwart people at the helm. It is both a pleasure and honour to serve with you.

Lastly the **Museum People** without whom the contributions of the fine collection of people mentioned above would come to nought: **The Staff**. What can be said that has not been said already from various platforms including previous reports? A colloquial adage does come to mind: *the tough get going when the going gets tough*. Any museum would be honoured to have a dedicated, diligent and resourceful staff like ours. It is indeed our honour and privilege to have the opportunity to work with Mrs Kayster and every single staff member. You make our responsibilities less onerous and capably share the stress levels in times of difficulty. We look forward to the year ahead in the knowledge that together we will almost certainly be able to overcome challenges cast in our path however tough.

We are living in challenging times and the obstacles faced by our Museum on all fronts will almost certainly increase in severity and frequency. We should not despair, but be heartened by past victories and the resilience of **Museum People**. We will need to endorse the concept of inclusivity as we cannot be an exclusive band the future, strength and relevance of our institution is to be founded on growing the band of inclusive **Museum People** in both number and influence which will be the match and beating of any mighty challenge!

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HEAD OF THE MUSEUM



Dear Board Members, Friends of The Museum and Colleagues.

This report has been long overdue. Due to the outbreak of the Corona virus pandemic, the world was forced into a standstill and many events were put on hold. So was the Annual General Meeting of the Museum. As we slowly but surely recover from the emotional, financial and physical trauma of this mega-event, we know that we owe it to our supporters and interested parties to persevere and continue with our lives.

Despite all the adversities the Museum is still standing and we are all very fortunate to still have jobs. The lack of an Annual General Meeting was thus the least of our worries as the struggle for survival took precedence. I cannot imagine what everyone went through since the outbreak of the pandemic: many accounts remain to be recorded for our archives. I expect that speaking about trauma is the first step in the healing process; at least this is what I have personally experienced. My family and I remained indoors, with much time to contemplate our circumstances, as the virus wreaked havoc across the world. It occurred to me that it is appropriate to remember all those people in Graaff-Reinet who have lost their lives during the pandemic in a similar fashion as was done during the 1918 Influenza pandemic. I would like to propose that we at the Museum recognise, in some tangible manner, all those who fought so valiantly and lost the battle against Covid-19. Your serious consideration of this proposal will be greatly appreciated.

The introductory comments having been concluded please allow me now to report on the 2019/2020 fiscal year:

FINANCES:

A generous donation from Mrs Marie Muskett to *The Save Reinet House Fund* boosted the fund, early in the financial year, to a little more than R110,000. This is quite a substantial sum to have in the Museum kitty. The retention of this hard-earned money was however constantly threatened by unexpected expenditure and other financial crises, such as the late transfer of the subsidy. The Muskett Donation, and other donations and income acquired through fundraising and catering projects, are deposited into the *Save Reinet House Fund* with a view to building up a reserve for the more sustainable maintenance of Reinet House and the other valuable museum buildings. The majority of the donations were specifically earmarked for this fund.

One of the biggest events on the town's annual calendar is the *Stoeptasting* Festival. In June 2019 The Graaff-Reinet Advertiser reported that *Stoeptasting* was a huge success: not necessarily the Museum's experience of the event as Museum unfortunately did not benefit financially from *Stoeptasting* whatsoever. It was a lot of hard work for miniscule return. We are sincerely grateful to *Spandau Spar* for sponsoring a R500 voucher and *Pick 'n Pay* for R100 worth of beef and a bag of potatoes together with a 2.5% discount on in-store purchases for the making of soup for sale to event-goers on our stoep.

The provincial subsidy was transferred in July, followed by a communiqué that all museums will be obliged to register as service providers on the National Treasury's Central Supplier Database in order to facilitate the transfer of the subsidy in the next financial year. This posed various challenges as museums are neither legally service providers to the Department nor are heads of museums able to register as responsible individuals since they are all government officials. Our museum however, did its best to adhere to this new directive.

The financial situation of the museum once again became problematic as the year progressed. The newly appointed staff members were required to attend a week-long training session which incurred unexpected expenses that the Museum could ill afford. In addition the Museum was plagued by incessant

break-ins which resulted in significant losses and unexplained acts of vandalism. The break-ins forced a re-appraisal of security measures at Urquhart House. The Museum has, for many years, tried to avoid the installation of security gates, but with so many untoward episodes was left with very little option. Four security gates, one activated by an electronic keypad were installed at Urquhart House, to secure the building and staff, in the wake of the onslaught. The total cost of the upgrade in security measures amounted to almost R20 000 and funds from *The Save Reinet House* fund had to be allocated to fund this expense.

Visitors to the Museum have decreased during the course of the year. Despite this fact, there was no increase in admission and research fees rates and the possibility of an impending financial crisis loomed larger. Subsequently an urgent report, detailing the impending financial crisis, was submitted to the Department since a solution simply could not be reached without the cooperation and assistance of the Department. At that stage, the Museum was delving deep into its financial reserves which depleted rapidly.

The last installment of the van Niekerk bequest, a little more than a R1000, was transferred to the Museum in November 2019. This bequest has helped, in no small way, to steady the ship so the Museum is most grateful to the unknown benefactor.

OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS:

Educational Programmes

Volunteers, with a heart for children, often come to the aid of the Museum to assist with the educational programmes. They dress up in historical costume to entertain learners, and enliven the experience, at the historical buildings which they visit, they present talks and assist with learner control. It is obvious that these volunteers derive as much joy and satisfaction from their participation, as do the learners. The Museum would like to extend a special thank you to Rev. and Mrs Buisman, Mr Koos Grobbelaar and Mr Izak van Rooyen, from the Drostdy Hotel, for their enthusiasm and willingness to assist with the educational programmes of the Museum.

Learners from all over the country visit The Graaff-Reinet Museum and for some schools this has become an annual event. Connie Bodenstein and his group of learners, for example, are regular visitors to the museum. This year they also included the historical fire arms collection at the Old Residency in their visit. They travel all the way from Rustenburg on exploratory visits of historical sites throughout the country.

The first quarter of the year signaled a very busy time at the Museum as the focus on educational programmes increased with the start of the school year. The Museum hosted the matric class of Aberdeen Secondary School, on their customary visit, on 06 May. Miss van Wyk, Ms Citwa and Mr Ngandi embarked on a departmental outreach to Thembalesizwe Primary, on 09 May, where they presented the Rock Art programme to Grade 5, 6 and 7 learners.

The Grade 3's of Jansenville Primary visited the Museum on 13 September 2019. Since the children really wanted to see game, Karoo Taxidermy immediately agreed to accommodate them and the whole group was transported to their premises, at short notice, where Ms Mary Lou Dixon took them under her wing. They also visited the Dutch Reformed Church and took a trip to the dam, where they enjoyed a picnic lunch.

This year, the Museum expanded its educational programme repertoire to include a presentation about The Anglo-Boer War. This presentation, which included a short film on The Boer War Monument and the Geneva Convention, was first presented to twenty five deserving history students of the Union Preparatory School. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Learner visits are one of the largest contributors to Museum visitor figures. We are indebted to the schools that so enthusiastically make use of the education services that the Museum offers.

Commitment to Service Delivery

Researchers did not frequent the Museum as much as in previous years, however a number of interesting instances of research come to mind such as the research on military units, burghers, soldiers and armaments from the late 1700s to early

1800s. This researcher was particularly interested in any information, such as names, personal accounts, weapons, official documents, roll call lists and minutes of meetings, relating to the burghers and soldiers who formed part of the military detachment that accompanied Governor-General Janssens in the years 1803 to 1806 as a prelude to writing a book on the Battle of Blaauwberg that took place in 1806. The Museum also assisted with research into an adoption inquiry but due to its sensitive and confidential nature further details cannot be divulged.

The participants in the Rupert Social Arts Project, as advertised in the national media, also came knocking on the door of the Museum, mostly to obtain additional information of an historical nature. These participants had all kinds of innovative ideas to revive Graaff-Reinet and make it a haven for heritage and the arts. The Museum is looking forward to the end result.

Staff did their utmost to attend to all research inquiries and other inquiries. We received quite a number of inquiries via the website of the Museum and the tourism office.

Guided tours simply cannot be done impromptu and have to be booked in advance. At present the inadequate staff compliment does not permit the conducting of unscheduled guided tours as all senior staff members are stationed at the respective museum buildings. These staff members, however, are willing to share knowledge with all visitors and will move around the building relaying information, whilst still keeping an eye on the front door.

The change of telephone system is still cause for concern as all the museums have different telephone lines and numbers. This was done as an austerity measure as the Museum could simply no longer afford the Telkom internal exchange system. The additional telephone numbers were published in the local newspaper and our local Facebook Page.

Collections and Displays

This past year was quite a rewarding one for the Museum in terms of new acquisitions and artefact donations. The Genevieve Meyer Collection was

donated to the Museum at the beginning of 2019. Since no documentation accompanied the vast collection, the Museum had to unravel the puzzle as to the donor's identity and her connection to Graaff-Reinet. As it turned out, Miss Genevieve Meyer was the daughter of Carolina Theodora, a granddaughter of Mr Frans Karel te Water Naudé of Graaff-Reinet. After consultation with Mr Anton Welz, of Stephen Welz and Co. Auctioneers a representative sample of Carolina's paintings and paraphernalia was selected and assimilated into the Museum collection. Acquiring buttons, singular stamps and hundreds of photographs would have been a futile exercise. However, every single Meyer item has found a place in the Museum, either in the archive or on display.

The Museum is grateful to Prof. Haarhoff who is continuing with the digitization of images, despite the fact that there is no intern to assist him with this task. During the course of the year Prof. Haarhoff began working on the Whitlock Collection of glass plates. In addition he also continued with numbering and describing the levels of identification in the ATOM system. We are amazed at the amount of sheer hard work and dedication he voluntarily invests in this project.

Mr Deon Herselman, representative from the Rupert family organisations, donated three very interesting artefacts to the Museum. A copy of the original dissertation by Cosmo Henning completed in 1971 (it resembles a Bible), a William Roe album especially compiled as a parting gift to one of the teachers of The Midland Seminary and a collection of copied documents pertaining to Gideon Scheepers, the Graaff-Reinet rebels and the Anglo Boer War in Graaff-Reinet. These valuable documents were personally handed over to the Museum by Mr Herselman.

Another interesting donation, which is currently on display at Reinet House, is a collection of dolls from Mrs Rina Haarhoff from Paarl. This wonderful addition to our collection, complete with its own display case, compliments yet another doll, named Suzie Sue, donated by Mrs van der Rijst from Olifantshoek.

The model car collection, the donation of which was approved by the Board in August 2019, is another wonderful addition to the museum displays. The collection of 21 models arrived on our doorstep shortly after Heritage Day in

September 2019. The collection is on display in the wagon house in a case, slightly modified to ensure the security of the collection, that had previously been donated by Mr Louis Blom. Each model was thoroughly cleaned, acquisitioned and labeled.

The Military History Museum was given a thorough scrutiny in anticipation of a group of Anglo Boer War academics who visited the Museum in June 2019. Labels were replaced and all the display cases received a good cleaning. The museum is very grateful to Mrs Buisman for funding the blinds for the Military Museum. Blinds, made from a very sturdy sunblock material, were custom made for all the windows and installed by Mr van Rhyners and the rest of the team. The Interns for the Department of Tourism stationed at the Museum since 2019, were tasked to organise all the bits and pieces of newspapers in the archive chronologically and to store them in acid-free paper. This will facilitate easy access. The archives still require shelving. The acquisition of shelving has been put on hold owing to the lack of funds.

Mr Ngandi has sorted all the acquisition records and succeeded in filling the gaps that existed in the record. He has completed and verified all the records until the end of 2018. Miss Citwa updated the 2019 acquisition register after which Mr Ngandi's task will continue. We are extremely relieved that our acquisition record is now updated. Although a digital record is the ideal, the old three card system is infallible.

Finally I have to report that a silver dish, pickle fork and knife, two pipes and a little Bon-bon box were stolen during the last Urquhart House break-in. These items will have to be written off from our collection by the MEC.

The Hourglass

It has become customary to publish two newsletters during the course of a year. We were once again able to realise this objective. The contributors to this year's newsletters included Prof. Johannes Haarhoff and Dr Ansie Malherbe. All newsletters and annual reports are available on our website at www.graaffreinetmuseums.co.za.

Partnerships

The Museum is very positive about a partnership with the Fiduciary Institute of Southern Africa (FISA) which commenced during 2019. FISA will be celebrating the establishment of its heritage project during the course of the year, part of which is to establish a heritage exhibition at the Museum. Negotiations are well under way and the Museum is honoured to be a part of this project.

The Museum's partnership with E.C. Parks and Tourism continued during the year, but was characterised by many stumbling blocks, one of which was that the interns could not attend theory classes. The interns occupied themselves with studying within the Museum and cleaning tasks. Apart from assisting with visitors, they also assisted in cleaning the document archive, distributing newly acquired artefacts to different locations and the labeling and sorting of artefacts. Their helpfulness was greatly appreciated. In October 2019 the Museum landed an additional intern when *Fly Karoo*, where he had been doing his internship, closed down. The internship programme was terminated at the end of November 2019 and the interns were bid a hearty farewell with all good wishes for the future.

The partnership with the Sobukwe Museum is well-established at this stage. During the reporting period, the museum hosted their interns for an explanatory session on the basics of archival and collection management. The session included aspects like shelving, humidity and temperature control, archival containers and cataloguing.

The visit of this year's German delegation, an initiative of the twinning agreement with the museums of Lower Saxony in Germany and Eastern Cape Department, occurred in January 2020. It is always difficult to draw up an itinerary at such short notice, but we managed a visit to Karoo Taxidermy and as always, they were most accommodating. Mr Ngandi handled this part of their visit and also accompanied them to The Valley and the game viewing area. The delegation, in turn, presented an insightful workshop, introducing new perspectives on collection management, which served as assurance that we were

still on track in this regard. This session was also attended by Somerset East Museum, Great Fish River Museum and the Middelburg Museum.

Museum Outreach

The Museum outreach took on a very interesting flavour during the report period. On 03 April 2019 the Museum hosted the launch of a book *Die Boerevrou*, the product of intensive research by Dr. Jeanette van Rensburg for her doctoral dissertation. The morning was very well attended and the Museum made a few new friends. We received very positive feedback and in addition, earned R50 for every book sold.

In September 2019, the Museum also hosted the Friends of The War Museum: true experts on the Anglo-Boer War. The Military Museum was thoroughly cleaned in preparation of their visit. They were suitably impressed with the collection and offered expert advice.

Eventually the TV series *Fynskrif* was recorded on 1 October over a period of two days. We hope to see our museum on the tube soon and I am sure that the free advertising will make it worth our while.

Our open day on 16 December was a resounding success and we plan to make it an annual event. The Museum is especially grateful to Country Mouse Design for designing such an attractive leaflet publicising the open day. The leaflet, posted on Facebook and shared many times, was also distributed by Mrs King at the Christmas Market on 14 December.

Marketing and Media Coverage

Facebook has once again proved to be a very valuable marketing tool. Not only did we advertise the launch of the book *Die Boerevrou* on our Facebook page, but the *Graaff-Reinet Magazine* page managed by Carol-Anne van Jaarsveld, dedicated space to Urquhart House. The hits on this post nearly totaled 500.

The highlight of our media coverage was definitely the article in the March edition of *Weg Magazine*, which named our museum complex as one of the must-sees in Graaff-Reinet. The author of the article visited the Museum in

December 2018. It was such a surprise to see an article in print which looked most inviting for prospective visitors to the Museum.

Elsabe Pienaar, a freelance journalist working for *Karoo Express* (later in the year the newspaper became *Komani Karoo Express*), did a series on the museum complex which kicked off at the beginning of May 2019. She wrote it from a slightly different angle and included anecdotes and information not commonly known. We are also indebted to her and Komani Karoo Express for publishing an article on the completion of restoration at The Old Library and the open day on 16 December. The newspaper is distributed free of charge to all the surrounding towns, including Cradock and Middelburg.

Mrs Sue Shaw has written a wonderful article on the Annual General Meeting which took place in June 2019. An article on the German delegation visit also appeared in the Advertiser. We are very happy with the print space afforded to the museum in this way.

ADMINISTRATION:

The Board of Trustees

The Museum is particularly privileged to be on the receiving end of the commitment and loyalty of a wonderful Board of Trustees. This group of individuals always takes their role as the custodians of the Museum very seriously. Each board member brings a set of valuable skills and expertise to the table ranging from history and heritage, to finances, art and local government.

We would like to thank the board members for their continuous support throughout the year and for making the museum their priority.

General Administration

The Museum adhered to the departmental request that four narrative and financial reports be submitted annually to the Head and District Offices. Visitor statistics are also submitted on a monthly basis.

The leave register was reconciled manually and leave applications were submitted well in advance, for approval by the District Office. Leave policies, including the annual audit of personnel leave days, are adhered to consistently.

The final staff reviews were completed and contracts signed for the new financial year in April 2019. Operational and 3 – 5 year Business plans were also duly completed and submitted as part of the Service Level Agreement which is required to facilitate the transfer of the annual subsidy. Miss van Wyk succeeded in registering the Museum on the central governmental treasury database in order to facilitate the transfer of the subsidy. We also obtained a LOGIS number, which will also assist in the subsidy transfer.

The Museum also added its voice to those of other Provincial Museums in the submission of a formal enquiry relating to the implementation of the new organogram signed by the MEC in November 2018. A letter was compiled detailing all concerns, one of which is that the organogram has not been implemented. This process is ongoing.

Staff Matters

During the period under review many staff issues surfaced. The newly appointed staff members settled well into the routine of the institution and were duly inducted into the public service by means of week-long workshops.

Miss Citwa attended the SAMA conference in Umtata. This was a very expensive exercise which she funded herself with the expectation of learning from the experience.

During the course of the year, Miss Citwa requested a transfer. The process was put into motion to facilitate her speedy transfer. Unfortunately the Museum will lose a very important post but the hope remains that some of our vacant posts will be filled in the near future.

With regard to relief staff, Mrs du Pisanie tendered her resignation as she was presented with a better job opportunity. Miss Visagie and Mr Le Potha are still as dependable as ever, and an asset to the institution. They are always willing to go the extra mile. The Museum is very fortunate to have such dedicated individuals

as part of our team. Later in the year, Miss du Toit also resigned from her relief staff duties. Although we were sad to see her leave, we understood that the time had come for her to retire.

Passing of a Museum Stalwart

We were very saddened to learn of the passing of Oom Dennis van Wyk on 30 December 2019. His passing was sudden and so close to the end of the year. Oom Dennis will be remembered as the custodian at Reinet House. His knowledge of the Museum and the town always surprised the visitors. He loved riding his bicycle and never walked to work, and his daily cycle ride to town was a regular sight for all and sundry in the mornings. With his maroon pull-over and white cap, he became a familiar figure in town and everyone associated him with Reinet House. He will be sorely missed. The Museum extends condolences to his wife of many years, his children and grandchildren and especially our colleague Ms Denise van Wyk, his eldest daughter.

FACILITY MANAGEMENT:

Restoration work at The Old Library commenced in 2019 and was completed at the end of the year. In the beginning of 2020 only mere touch-ups were required. The interior of the building was also renovated and the result is quite impressive. We are very proud to have such an outstanding example of architecture in the museum building portfolio and we remain indebted to *The Rupert Historic Homes Foundation*, who once again funded the costs of restoration. Over a period of three years, this organization has made a huge financial contribution to museum maintenance resulting in the fact that all the buildings of the museum complex are in a fine condition.

Load shedding, further aggravated by problems with the municipal water supply is the cause of much frustration. The Museum acquired additional rechargeable bulbs which are placed into a light sockets and can charge whilst the power is still connected. A new generator was acquired at the cost of R5000 as we were losing money from admission fees (and probably also popularity) despite

visitors paying a reduced fee during load shedding as natural lighting levels are poor to non-existent in areas of the Museum, notably in the cellar of Reinet House where the generator is now deployed.

The borehole was also troublesome and *Erasmus Bookwork* was called in to investigate. They found that the pump is siphoning sludge. The pump was successfully repaired and the water leading furrows made good. Water from the borehole now once again flows down all the way to the Reinet House garden. The water is pumped directly into the furrows as the dam is not in good condition and no longer watertight. Mr. van Rayners, now unfettered from the constraints of water restrictions, is able to water the gardens regularly and methodically. Mr. van Rayners has also started filling up the numerous open spaces with all kinds of plants, but mainly succulents.

Mr. van Rayners, and the rest of the male staff, worked hard to prepare the area under the vine and the cellar section of Reinet House in preparation of the shooting of *Fynskrif* in October 2019. They weeded the area around the farm implements, and when I arrived at Reinet house one morning, Mr Pylman was cleaning and painting the low wall in front of Reinet House. The staff was really excited and went the extra mile. Reinet House looked spotless.

The security systems are maintained regularly and the services of the security company are satisfactory.

We try our utmost to keep the museum buildings, collections and the premises in good order. It remains a constant challenge as funds for general, or specific, maintenance work is non-existent. We are very grateful to the Friends of the Museum who still contribute to *The Save Reinet House Fund*. We understand that times are extremely difficult and appreciate their ongoing contributions that much more.

THANK YOU'S

Ladies and gentlemen, this concludes the report for the year 2019/20. Your support is invaluable and without it, we would find it very difficult to remain

positive. As hard as times are, the Museum has managed to weather challenge after challenge. We look forward to the year ahead in the knowledge and assurance of your continued support.

VISITOR STATISTICS:

April 2019 – March 2020

Month	No. of SA Adults	School Outreach Programmes	Foreign visitors	Total
April	330	0	178	508
May	255	0	31	286
June	484	0	66	550
July	220	0	45	265
August	216	0	67	283
September	343	95	101	535
October	224	68	126	418
November	192	46	207	445
December	495	36	42	573
January	264	0	157	421
February	186	70	131	387
March	268	0	54	322
				4993

SAVE REINET HOUSE FUND

DONOR'S LIST

1	Mr W & Mrs H Jansen
2	Mrs Thandeka Majoka
3	The Rupert Historic Homes Foundation
4	MJ Brodie
5	EC Brodie
6	Magdalene Olivier
7	M Weyer
8	Mrs CM Sheard
9	Mr Willem Loock
10	A & D Short
11	The Graaff-Reinet Heritage Society
12	Mrs E Maasdorp
13	Mrs M Muskett
14	Mrs J Hobson
15	Mr A Van Biljon