Graaff-Reinet Museum
Posbus 104
Graaff-Reinet
6280

Liewe Vriende

Ek het my skoolloopbaan op 'n plaas in die Wolseley/Ceres distrik begin. Die NG Sendingkerk-skooltjie het vier klaskamers gehad en ek het sommer met 'n kortbroek skool toe gegaan. Klokslag twaalf-uur het ek saam met my maats die plaas ingevaar en menige keer op die walle van die waterblommetjie-gate gesit en kyk hoe daar waaghalsig na waterblommetjies gesoek word om in die dorp te gaan verkoop. My ma is altyd deur 'n vars pampoen of twee verras, maar waterblommetjies was taboe – my pa het beklemtoon hoe gevaarlik dit kon wees. Aan die einde van die skooldag het ek in Juffrou Millie se groot grys Peugeot gespring en die 7km rit dorp toe aangepak. Juffrou Millie sou met ons aankoms voor die deur stop, die toeter blaas en ek sou vaak-vaak uit die kar klim. Dit het my minder as 5 minute geneem om aan die slaap te raak.

My pa het toe 'n pos by een van die groot skole in die stad gekry en ons moes trek. My hart was seer en ek was bang. Stadskinders het hulle hare geknip en ek wou nie van myne ontslae raak nie.

Die enigste troos was die briefskrywery:

La Plaisante
Wolseley
6380

Beste Anziske

Met my gaan dit baie goed, hopende om dieselfde van jou te hoor…

Elke brief is gewoonlik afgesluit met: Jou vriendin Nooientjie (en dan plegtig tussen hakies) Jacoba Koopman asof ek geen benul had wie Nooientjie was nie.

Mettertyd het die lekkerte van briefskryf en -ontvang begin vervaag. Die 12c posgeld was te veel om af te knyp en boonop was die poskantoor vêr.

Weinig van ons ervaar vandag die ongekende lekkerte van briewe. Dié van u wat gereeld 'n briefie van Mev Dalene Every (geliefde oud-personeellid) kry, herken die warm gevoel wat 'n netjiese handskriffie en opregte belangstelling bring.

In die dae van elektronika en kort niksseggende boodskappe in e-postaal, selfs die onskadelike telefoon, besef ons nie die waarde van 'n stukkie geskrewe taal nie. In die ou dae was 'n brief soldate se lewenslyn en die koerant van dié wat in afgeleë gedeeltes moes sien en kom klaar. Dit was 'n manier om jou liefde te verklaar en om jou misnoeë te kenne te gee. Die vermoë om die pen op te neem het natuurlik ook geletterdheid en aansien bevestig. 'n Brief was dus 'n kleinood. Dit het die familie van John Griffiths ook terdeë besef, nadat hulle van sy

dood in donker Afrika in kennis gestel is.

John Griffiths, gebore in Devonport in die suide van Engeland, het tragies in die ou Graaff-Reinet Hotel gesterf. Alleen en desperaat, het hy geen ander uitweg gesien as om sy lewe te neem nie. Jare later, so vertel John Parsons in *Stoepstories,* het Japhta Goliath wat in die ou Graaff-Reinet Apteek gewerk het, op 'n boks met Griffiths se foto's briewe en dagboeke, afgekom.

Uit sy briewe kon ek aflei dat John, of Jack, soos sy susters hom genoem het, traag was om die pen op te neem. Sy susters, Jenny, Eliza en Lizzie, het hom gedurig versoek om af en toe aan sy moeder, wat oud en sieklik was, te skryf. 'n Brief was die enigste kontak wat sy met haar seun gehad het en sy het gesmag na nuus van hom. Sy skryf:

Dear Jack

Glad to hear by yours of the 12th Sep you're in good health. Was very very sorry to hear that the information sent was of no good and am doing now as instructed. If you write to Mr Lamb's Registry Office Chapel St. Devonport you'll get all the necessary information.

Hoping your still in good health as it leaves us all at present hoping to hear from you by return of mail

Yours affec.

Mother

Goodbye for the time

Is it not strange how little Mrs Griffiths actually says in her letters? One would think that she would use such an opportunity to fill page upon page. Keeping a stiff upper lip, perhaps? The last sentence is the only indication that she wanted to say more and missed her son terribly.

As mentioned previously, Jack ended his life in one of the rooms of the old Graaff-Reinet Hotel. Little did his family know of the bitter life he led. As a member of the Mashonaland Mounted Police he travelled to Beira and arrived in Salisbury on 22 May 1897. They were soon involved in skirmishes with the Mashonas, but boredom set in and Jack's trouble with the military began. He was often drunk and was repeatedly warned and punished for leaving camp.

Jack was clearly a trouble maker. Once he knocked an officer off his horse and was court-martialled. He spent two months in prison.

After leaving what was then called The British South Africa Police in 1901, he barely survived by doing odd jobs. He wrote in his diary: "I should never have come up here (South Africa) in the first place."

Maybe if he had been honest and more forthcoming in his letters to his family, they could have intervened instead of

bringing a lifeless body back to their home. Reading between the lines is an easy task when you love someone.

MUSEUM-NUUS

Mnr Jacob Daniels herstel tuis nadat hy 'n beroerte-aanval gekry het. Hy verseker ons dat hy binnekort op die been sal wees, maar het nie planne om terug te keer na Kroonvale Primêr waar hy vir baie jare lank Afrikaanse onderwyser was nie. Ons sien uit na die dag wanner hy voltyds by die museum betrokke sal wees.

The Camdeboo Municipality has agreed to transfer the Africana Collection to the Old Library. The collection is presently housed at the Horseshoe Library and in desperate need of repair and conservation. The idea is that the museum staff will restore the collection and keep it for the public in a room that adheres to museological requirements.

We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to the Rynheath Trust, The Acasia Street Festival Committee and Montego Feeds for their generous financial assistance. The donations will be put towards bookshelves for the recently acquired Africana Collection.

The museum staff spent a wonderful morning with the staff of SANParks at the Camdeboo Education Center. We had a very informative talk about the mission and vision of the Camdeboo National Park augmented by wonderful pictures of toothy grins from children and visitors to the park. We also took part in an obstacle course, which separated the men from the boys. Although our joints were stiff and our muscles ached, we wore broad smiles for the rest of the week. The scenic beauty is something to behold and every one of us should be encouraged to experience it. Graaff-Reinet has a basketful to offer domestic and foreign tourists.

ANNA NEETHLING-POHL (1902 – 1906) Die Doyenne van die Afrikaanse Teater

Skets deur Hermi Baartman

Aktrise, regisseuse,
voordragkunstenaar,
adiopersoonlikheid, professor,
skrywer, vertaler,
kind van Graaff-Reinet.

Anna Servasina Pohl, dogter van Pieter en Evelyn Pohl, is op 24 Desember 1906 op Graaff-Reinet gebore. Sy matrikuleer aan die Hoër Volkskool en sit haar studies aan die Universiteit van Stellenbosch voort waar sy in 1927 haar BA-graad en daarna in 1929, haar HOD aan die Transvaalse Universiteitskollege behaal.

In 1930 trou sy met die ekonoom Dr. Johann Neethling, maar hierdie huwelik is in 1945 in die egskeidingshof beëindig.

Om verwarring met die sopraan Anna-Elizabeth Pohl te voorkom, het sy destyds besluit om ‘Anna Neethling Pohl’, te gebruik. Sy het reeds as skoolkind onder die wakende oog van haar vader begin toneelspeel.

Onder die skuilnaam A P Niehaus, het ‘n hele paar romans uit haar pen die lig gesien. Sy was bruisend én driftig, iemand wat twee van Shakespeare se stukke vertaal en in boekvorm uitgegee het. Van hierdie groot werk sou sy op ‘n stadium te kenne gee: “Dit was maande en maande se baie harde werk en sal bewys lewer dat ek wel iets van Shakespeare geweet het’.

Van 1965 tot 1971 was Anna S Pohl medeprofessor in die Departement Dramatologie van die Universiteit van Pretoria. Van haar oud-studente sou later die Suid-Afrikaanse teater oorheers: Sandra Prinsloo, Katinka Heyns, Tobie Cronje, George Ballot en Trudie Taljaard.

Anna sal vir besondere rolle soos Koningin Elizabeth en Hanna in Maria Stuart onthou word. Van 1923 tot en met 1986 het sy in meer as vyftig verhoogwerke in hoofrolle opgetree en was sy regisseur van byna sestig toneelstukke. Haar vroeë filmwerk sluit in *Die bou van die nasie* en later *Majuba.*

Die Afrikaanse digkuns het haar baie na aan die hart gelê. In 1937 en 1938 het sy twaalf en in 1949, vyftig voordragkonserte in Vlaandere en Nederland gehou. Gehore het haar staande toegejuig. Ook in haar eie land het haar voordrag groot sukses behaal en is dit selfs op grammofoonplaat verewig.

In 1948 ontvang sy die erepenning vir toneel van die SA Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, daarna die Italiaanse Ristori-medalje, die D.Phil graad aan die Universiteit van Pretoria in 1978 en ereburgerskap van Graaff-Reinet in 1980 waar sy haar in 1991 gevestig het.

Sy is op 14 Augusts 1992 in Bloemfontein oorlede – 'n ware pionier!

Die Anna Neethling-Pohl paneel sal as deel van 'n uitstalling oor Graaff-Reinet Presteerders in die Ou Biblioteek uitgestal word.

Met dank aan Hannes Horne &,
OJO Ferreira vir die artikel.
Graaff-Reinet ATKV borg die uitstalling
in die Ou Biblioteek
Anna Neethling-Pohl (1906 – 1992): 'n Huldebetuiging in haar eeufeesjaar (2006)

AL WEER DIE WEER

Terwyl die koue in die Karoo begin byt aan ons bene lees ons in die Graaff-Reinet Herald van 5 Oktober 1853 die volgende:

Die ergste sneeu wat gedurende die afgelope paar jaar geval het, het gedurende die afgelope twee weke in die berge om die dorp geval. Op party plekke in die Sneeuberge sien 'n mens net hier en daar 'n bietjie groen bossies uitsteek onder die sneeukombers. Op plekke lê die sneeu meer as 'n halwe meter diep, maar elders maklik een en 'n halwe meter.

Vier perde van die Richmond poskoets het in die sneeu verkluim.

AANTEKENING

Die hewigste sneeuval in menseheugenis in hierdie omgewing was op 11 en 12 Julie 1886, toe die sneeu 10 duim dik in Graaff-Reinet se strate gelê het. Die vlaktes van die Kamdeboo tussen Graaff-Reinet en Aberdeen was spierwit, bedek deur 'n dik laag sneeu. Groot skade is aangerig en baie boere se hele bokkuddes het verkluim.

The Graaff-Reinet Museum Transformation Charter

On 11 March 2008 the Graaff-Reinet Museum's transformation charter was launched at the Old Library. Dignitaries from all over the Eastern Cape attended the occasion, as well as representatives from the sixteen province-aided museums and the rest of the museum world. For more than a week, a banner, spanning Church Street, introduced the Graaff-Reinet Museum to visitors, proclaiming that our museum is transforming.

Transformation signifies our commitment to deliver the best possible service, while ensuring that our museums are accessible to all, exhibiting, preserving and collecting the history of all the people of the Camdeboo.

Here follows an extract from our transformation charter:

To overcome the legacy of Apartheid and other forms of discrimination, The Graaff-Reinet Museum is adopting this Charter to publicly declare our commitment to transformation and the process of reconciliation through:

Service

The Graaff-Reinet Museum will strive to ensure that the Board of Trustees and staff uphold the highest standards of service to

the community, visitors, researchers and others who might have an interest in this institution

Community Participation & Representation

The Graaff-Reinet Museum will strive to ensure community participation and representation pertaining to research, collections, exhibitions and public programs

Research

The Graaff-Reinet Museum will endeavour to uphold the highest ethical standard of research and will ensure that said research is to the benefit of the South African and local community

Capacity Building

The Graaff-Reinet Museum will strive to develop the skills of its employees and WILL ASSIST IN BUILDING a Skills base in particular amongst the previously disadvantaged South Africans, through various strategies at its disposal

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS (ICOM) AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN MUSEUM ASSOCIATION (SAMA) CODE OF ETHICS

As an institution concerned with the documentation, collection and exhibition of heritage, the graaff-reinet museum adheres to the icom and sama code of ethics

LEX BREMNER, 'N MAN MET VELE FASETTE

Deur Hermi Baartman

In ons alledaagse bestaan ontmoet ons vele doodgewone mense wat geen merkie laat op die geskiedenis nie. As die wind oor hulle spore waai, is dit uitgewis en aan die vergetelheid toegesê.

Dan kry 'n mens weer iemand soos Lex Bremner, wat 'n ongelooflike klomp merkwaardige dinge gedoen het gedurende sy kort verblyf hier tussen ons. Sy diens aan die gemeenskap is 'n blywende monument.

Hy het uitgeblink in sport maar bowen alles was hy 'n natuurkundige en amateur paleontoloog by uitstek.

Hy is in 1910 in Kaapstad gebore maar het baie van sy kinderdae deurgebring op die plaas Blaauwater, die Thornton familieplaas.
Toe die oorlog in 1939 uitbreek, het hy aangesluit by die Weermag en het gekwalifiseer as 'n loods in die Suid-Afrikaanse Lugmag. Hy word gesekondeer aan die Royal Air Force se kommunikasievleuel en word hoog aangeprys vir sy vaardigheid as loods, sy uitstaande leierskap, toegewydheid aan 'n taak en betroubaarheid. Besoekers vind die pragtige foto van die Dakota met die Egiptiese piramides onder, baie interessant.

Met sy aftrede het hy uiteindelik die geleentheid aangegryp om voluit te konsentreer op een van sy groot

belangstellings, fossiele. In 1970 het hy ‘n permit ontvang van die destydse Nasionale Monumente Kommissie om fossiele te versamel in die distrikte van Graaff-Reinet, Aberdeen en Murraysburg .

Onder kuratorskap van Dr Mike Cluver van die Suid-Afrikaanse Museum in Kaapstad, het hy talle fossiele versamel, wat vandag bekend staan as die Lex Bremner Versameling en uitgestal word in die Ou Biblioteek museum.

Voeg hierby sy kennis van antropologie, plantkunde, en natuurbewaring en jy kry ‘n voortreflike bron van inspirasie. Voeg dan daarby sy liefde vir geskiedenis en sy goed-nagevorsde en gedokumenteerde geskiedenis van die Graaff-Reinet “Mens Club” en jy kan met gemak en vertroue sy naam voeg by die uitblinkers van ons dorp.

Extract from the Graaff-Reinet Advertiser of 15 August 1963:

“FOSSILS WERE NEWS
IN 1853 ALREADY”.

5 JULY 1853

Our district of Graaff-Reinet abounds in fossils which may be found in the Sneeuberg range. Dr Richard Rubidge collected many specimens whilst resident here as also did Dr Guybon Atherstone, both of whom deserve much praise for their efforts in the cause of science.

The two sons of Mr Bain also collected and sent from here many fossils dug out from the rocks in the Sneeuberg Mountains.

They have received satisfactory accounts of the fossils sent to England.

The collection was sold to the British Museum for the sum of £150. Her Majesty the Queen, in honour of the very great exertions made by Mr Bain, to throw light on the geological formations of South Africa, on the recommendation of Sir Robert Peel, granted Mr Bain the sum of £200.

FOOTNOTE: Dr Richard Rubidge (1819-1869) was the second son of Captain Robert Henry Rubidge, R.N. who, with his family, immigrated to South Africa in 1821.

Dr Rubidge was for many years the leading surgeon in Port Elizabeth and was a founder of the Provincial Hospital, to the maintenance of which he eventually bequeathed his entire estate. To this day the hospital benefits from the bequest which is in the care of the Guardian Trust Co., Port Elizabeth.

WHAT IS IN A NAME

By Hermi Baartman

During a recent shake-up of the fossil exhibition at the Old Library Museum, the names given to the fossils impressed me tremendously. I have not much ambition or a great yearning for worldly goods, but the idea of having a fossil named after yourself would be the best honour to be bestowed on a person, like a head-stone of marble, with an indelible inscription carved on its shiny surface. This is not an honour bestowed on many people, but it focused my attention on the well-known fossil-hunters and persona whose names are permanently engraved in the annals of paleontology. A quick survey of the display cases around me came up with the following:
Trigomia Kitchingi 1908- a fossil of a mollusk (Must have been named after Prof James Kitching's father).

Aulacephalodon baini - named after Andrew Geddes Bain, the father of South African paleontology. He had a copy of Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology* and being a road engineer, he could combine his interest with his occupation. His first discovery was made in 1838 on the farm Mildenhall, south of Fort Beaufort, in strata named the Beaufort Group, part of the units of the Karoo Supergroup. At the time he was building the Ecca Pass.

Atherstonia – Karoo fish fossils, named after Dr William Guybon Atherstone, who arrived with his family in South Africa in 1820, and was apprenticed to his father, Dr John Atherstone, Distinct Surgeon in Grahamstown. After his medical studies in England, he joined his father's practice. His greatest inspiration was Bain's fossil collection, which fired his interest. He formed a close working relationship with Bain.

Dr Atherstone was one of the founder members of the Albany Museum in Grahamstown in 1855.

Whaitsa Platyceps – a fossil found at Hoekplaas, Graaff-Reinet, is named after Reverend J H Whaits, an Anglican priest, Rector of Beaufort West, as well as railway chaplain. He had an enormous parish to serve and a very small stipend. He began collecting fossils and sending specimens of mammal-like reptile fossils to the S A Museum. Dr L A Pèringuey, the Director of Museums, learned about his financial straits and offered to refund his field expenses in return for his contributions.

Owenetta – fossil of a Karoo amphibian named after Sir Richard Owen.

After whom was *Myosauroides minnaari* found at Doornplaas,,

Dicynodon luckoffi from the farm Zuurplaats, Graaff-Reinet, named?

The farmers at Voetpad near Murraysburg must have been inundated with fossil hunters, as it seems to me that every second fossil was found at Voetpad.

The most interesting, and sensational fossil found at Voetpad, is the cast containing the two small Coelacanths which swam around our neck of the woods about 300 million years ago!

From The Graaff-Reinet Advertiser of 1 Feb 1988, the following:

"FOSSIL FOUND ON DOORNPLAATS IS NEW TO SCIENCE – A small fossilized skull found on Doornplaats, farm of Mr and Mrs Mark Brodie, by Lex Bremner in 1983, has created no small excitement in paleontological circles. According to the S A Journal of Science it is a new reptile (*Reptilia: Diapsia)* from the Upper Permian Daptocephalus zone of South Africa: an archosauromorph, the sister taxon of Prolacertiformer + Archosauria.

The small diapsid skull described in this paper as found by Mr A T Bremner on the farm Doornplaats, Graaff-Reinet, South Africa, in Karoo beds of Daptocephalus age. No trace of the postcranial skeleton was recovered. The skull is housed in the paleonthological collections of the South African Museum, Cape Town.

The fossil is called ACANTHOTOPOSAURAS BREMNERI (new species)
and the name is as follows:
Greek – Akantha;
Latin: Acantho (thorn)
Greek: topo (place of)
Greek – Saurus – lizard, after the type locality – Doornplaats (Afrikaans – place of thorns) in honour of Mr A T Bremner, who collected the specimen.

In the collection in the Old Library we can drop some famous and other well-known names.

INTERNASIONALE MUSEUMDAG INKLEUR-KOMPETISIE

Internasionale Museumdag het sinoniem met die 18de Mei geword en word al reeds sedert 1979 in museum- geledere gevier. Museums kry dan die geleentheid om die publiek en die gemeenskap te ontmoet en om hulle bewus te maak van die missie en visie van museums.

Die Graaff-Reinet Museum, in samewerking met die Graaff-Reinet Advertiser, bied hierdie jaar 'n inkleur-kompetisie vir

kinders van verskillende ouderdomsgroepe aan. Die wenners kan verseker wees van onder andere pryse van Steers, Foto First, XTT, PDK, Waltons, McNaughton's Bookshop, RJS & Wimpy en Bella Rose. Moedig asseblief u kleinkinders, kinders, nefies en niggies aan om aan die kompetisie deel te neem en só Internasionale Museumdag in Graaff-Reinet te ondersteun.

BETHESDA CRAFT CENTRE QUILT EXHIBITION

The Bethesda Arts Centre is a community project started by Jeni Couzyn in 1999. It works through the arts, offering an opportunity for personal growth, skills development and income generation, to the local community in Nieu Bethesda. Among its successes are performances and an exhibition at the Grahamstown Festival, four successful exhibitions in London and a number of prestigious commissions.

The Centre works through a variety of disciplines. Its current projects include a textile group, The Pomegranate Group, who has made quilts for The Constitutional Court, Old Mutual, and South African Breweries, as well as for individuals in the UK.

Quilts are not bedcovers anymore. Since 1987 the AIDS Memorial Quilt has been a tool for healing, remembrance, education and prevention in the struggle to prevent AIDS. The Quilt has become an educational tool, educating communities on a variety of subjects ranging from HIV/AIDS, heritage and history, hopes and dreams for South Africa and our future.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu applauded the quilt display at Parliament and predicted that the display will bring about a change in the attitude of people. Not only does the quilt bring about changes in attitudes of those who enjoy it, but also in the makers of the quilts.

One of the quilts on exhibition at the Old Library depicts Bible Stories chosen by the makers because they had special significance in their lives. Brilliant colors have been masterfully shaped into the form of a rose window. The quilt measures about 3m x 4m and sells for between R60, 000 and R100, 000.

Anyone interested in sponsoring the buying of a quilt for the museum are welcome to contact the Museum or Jenny Couzyn at 049 8411729.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting is scheduled for 19 June 2008 at the Old Library at 14h30. Please send your agenda items along to Miss Denise van Wyk.

As you may recall, we also introduced the Friends of the Museum award, to

be awarded to one member who has contributed actively to the development of the Museum during the course of the year.

It is that time of the year again and we invite all to complete the nomination form enclosed and give your candidate a chance to be identified as someone who has the Museum's welfare at heart.

Mr Ivor Markman, journalist at the Herald and Weekend Post, has agreed to be our guest speaker and it promises to be quite a thought-provoking presentation. We hope to see you there.

RELIEF STAFF

Since the opening of the Military Museum and the transfer of the William Roe Collection to the Old Residency, it has become a battle to keep all the museums open over a weekend. We are very grateful to our diligent relief staff, but we are also in need of people to lend assistance when a member of our relief staff is experiencing a personal crisis or has to go away for the weekend. Please help us to keep our doors open by volunteering to be trained at the Museum, in case an emergency arises.

NAUDÉSBERG PASS

Roundabout 1836, a group of Trekkers camped this side of Perryshoogte (first rise between Graaff-Reinet and Middelburg) for a month after which they moved onto the next rise where they stayed for two months while trying to clear a road to the next rise. Mr J F Naudé was evidently the organizer. The women and children had to hold the ropes attached to the wagon to keep the wagon upright while moving. A little child, Jannie Naudé, got tired of holding the rope and climbed onto the "disselboom" (wagon shaft) to get into the wagon. His foot slipped, he fell and the wheel of the wagon went over his head. He died instantly. Little Jannie was buried there and the rise was called Naudésberg Pass.

BEURTKRAG

Gehoor van die mense wat van Port Elizabeth Graaff-Reinet toe gekom het omdat hulle so moeg was van beurtkrag?

Hier by die Graaff-Reinet Museum is ons altyd gereed vir enige gebeurlikheid. Reeds in 2003 het Hermi Baartman besef dat ons soveel baat sal vind om 'n kragopwekker aan te skaf. 'n

Kragopwekker is toe aangeskaf en vandag kom dit handig te pas as ons deur beurtkrag verontrief word.

'N LAASTE VERSOEK

Mnr & Mev Dirk Viljoen is
opsoek na ou King James en
Nederlandse Familie-Bybels,
veral dié met koperbeslag,
leeromslag en dekoratiewe
inlegwerk. Hulle is bereid
om die verkoper
mildelik te vergoed.
Hul kontakbesonderhede is
tel: 083 384 1772 of 028 754 2532

Dit was lekker om weer met u te gesels. Ek hoop ons entoesiasme het ook aan u afgevryf sodat die winter nie 'n tyd van langtand en slakkegang word nie.

Tot wederom:

Anziske Kayster en Personeel

REDAKSIE

Artikels & Navorsing:
A Kayster & H Baartman
Redigering:
E van Wijk & J J de Gama
Produksie:
D van Wyk & V Pika