

CONTENTS/ INHOUD

DEAR MUSEUM FRIENDS.....	2
NEW BOARD OF TRUSTEES... ..	3
OORLOGSTORIES VAN ‘N ONNODIGE OORLOG.....	4
YOUR ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY LOO.....	6
TOETS JOU ANGLO-BOERE-OORLOG KENNIS	8
WHAT’S IN A NAME?	8
AANKONDIGINGS.....	10
WORDS TO PONDER... ..	11

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DEAR MUSEUM FRIENDS...

A lady from Head Office once could not contain her surprise when she saw me for the first time: “My goodness, Mrs Kayster, I thought you were a large, big-boned woman, about 2 metres tall!” Of course, this lady and I had only telephonic conversations and mostly when I had to relay my dissatisfaction about certain issues. To be honest, I was not very surprised because I have a very deep voice not commonly associated with a person only 1, 5 metres tall. When I was little, my classmates used to make fun of me, but a 1, 5 metre tall person, is not very easily intimidated.

The sound of each individual’s voice is entirely unique. This uniqueness is a result of the actual shape and size of the vocal cords, but also the size and shape of the rest of that person’s body. Adult men and women have different vocal folds, located in the larynx, reflecting the male-female differences in larynx size. Male voices are usually deep and low since their vocal folds are very large. Apparently my unladylike voice comes from large vocal folds and is hereditary.

Be that as it may, the human voice is a very powerful tool. It conveys a person’s attitude, personality and character and is used to express emotion and feelings.

The sound, timbre and tone of a very powerful voice are always remembered and can easily be used to convince people. A voice expresses opinion and choice, a voice can demand, complain and coax, but a voice also expresses pain, sympathy and love. A voice may refer to your vote and your Human Rights, but it also refers to the written word.

I take pride in being the voice of this institution and am sure that the Board of Trustees of the Graaff-Reinet Museum feel the same. I am convinced that if we all raise our voices, individually or in unison, this Museum will be the best it can ever be. It does not necessarily mean that we have to raise our voices in protest, we may also express our determination to save our heritage for posterity, we may tell of our vision and mission, of making this museum sustainable and viable, or we may just relay our support for this wonderful institution (if I may say so myself).

Do not stifle your voice – silence is not as golden as it promises to be. A voice is a gift, and sounds uttered by a human voice in speech or in song lend a special quality to an institution that needs the sound of your voice very much.

NEW BOARD OF TRUSTEES

After more than seven years, the new Board of Trustees was finally appointed by the MEC of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture. Quite a dynamic group of people, this new Board which consists mainly of old members promises to be just as pro-active, loyal and diligent as the previous Board. I would like to commend the previous Board who stood the test of time and who, without one complaint, served this Museum well past their official terms of office. Their services have been much appreciated.

I would like to welcome our new members, members who have never served on the board before: Cllr Eunice Kekana from the Cacadu District Municipality, Mrs Louise Lipshitz, librarian at the SAP Training College, Mr Andy Gradwell, a local teacher and Dr Roy Stauth, who, in heritage circles needs no introduction.

Of course there are a few other faces who need no introduction and one of those belongs to non-other than our resident historical architect Mr Peter Whitlock. We are also very glad to have back on the board, Messrs Mark Fynney and Daniel (Patrys) Smith, as well as Mesdames Pat Wallis, Ansie Malherbe, Thandeka Majoka and Elizabeth

Buisman. The elected Friends of the Museum Representatives remain Mrs Hermi Baartman and Mr Jacob Daniels.

The Municipal Representatives Cllr Colin Abels and as his *secundus*, Cllr Reed will only be with us until the Municipal Elections, after which a new municipal representative will be appointed. It was a real pleasure having Cllr Abels on board and we hope that he will once again be appointed to represent the Camdeboo Municipality.

Speaking of voices, the Board is the Voice of the Graaff-Reinet Museum. They represent the community and have a direct line of communication to Parliament, through the MEC of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture. To be a Board member is not an easy task. It requires commitment, loyalty to the institution and trust in the abilities of the Head of the Museum and the rest of staff. Hannes Oberholzer puts it very eloquently when he states that: *“All museum Trustees are subject to the same basic obligations: they are private individuals who as a body hold their institution’s assets in trust as fiduciaries for the public. The trustee has the obligation to put his own interest aside and act with absolute loyalty to the institution and the public for whom he exercises his trust. This objective is not merely a passive commitment - it is not enough for a fiduciary to prevent harm to the object of his trust. The obligation is rather an active mandate to promote the interests of the beneficiary with all*

the means and skills at his disposal. The museum Trustee's ultimate responsibility to his institution is to contribute with knowledge and wisdom to the discussion and formulation of wise and practical policies controlling the museum's destiny, and to ensure through active and affirmative guidance that the resources of the museum are prudently and efficiently managed and protected to serve its purposes.

The law imposes liability upon the Trustee if he fails in the fulfilment of his obligation. Although the comparison may seem startling outside the legal context, the status of Trusteeship in law is like that of marriage. Both are conditions entered into voluntarily, that nonetheless automatically and immediately confer upon the individual binding legal and ethical obligations prescribed by law and custom, regardless of whether those obligations are understood. Consent is implicit with acceptance. This condition is the direct opposite of a business contract, in which one party is bound only to definite terms and has rights as agreed upon by both parties. Because the terms of Trusteeship are not spelled out in contract form, it is imperative that those consenting to join the Boards are fully aware of the accountability and liabilities inherent in the status they voluntarily assume.

The museum Trustee has the honour of community recognition. He has the chance to contribute to his community's cultural life and to the advancement of knowledge and education in general. At the same time, museum Trusteeship is a complex and demanding service. To perform successfully, Trustees must have a full understanding of their responsibilities, accountability and liabilities."

At a special election meeting, the Board once again put their trust in Mr Fynney as chairperson. Mrs Baartman, whom we have all come to know as having the welfare of the Museum at heart, was elected as vice-chairperson. I look forward to a wonderful, rewarding working relationship with these two energetic and motivated individuals, as well as with the rest of the board.

OORLOGSTORIES VAN 'N ONNODIGE OORLOG

Gedurende die pasafgelope Paasvakansie gesels ek met 'n Australiese besoeker wat van opinie is dat die Britte nie eers kan onthou hoekom die Anglo-Boereoorlog begin het nie. Dít is natuurlik 'n wilde aantyging om te maak maar ek stem met haar saam dat oorlog darem 'n onding is. Jou stem kan sonder geweld aangehoor word en dit is so onnodig dat lewens van soldate, mans, vrouens en kinders opgeoffer moet word. Oorlog bly maar 'n seer puntjie veral vir dié wat daaronder gelei het. Snaaks hoe mense van my eie en daaropvolgende generasies oorlog as 'n soort fabel afmaak - sonder om daaraan te dink dat soldate vandag verbete in die Nabye Ooste vir hul lewens en land veg. Mog dit maar altyd so bly, dat Oorlog net vir ons 'n fabel bly.

LT. WILLIE MAASDORP

“*His sun went down while it was still day.*” So lees die inskripsie op die grafsteen van Willie Maasdorp, oudste seun van James Maasdorp van Doringplaats. Lt. Maasdorp het blykbaar sy lewe in die lang en uitgerekte stryd tussen Boer en Brit verloor.

Reeds met die aanvang van die Anglo-Boere-oorlog was Lt. Willie Maasdorp op sy pos en het menige keer sonder dat ‘n haar op sy kop geskaad is, deur ‘n woeste skermutseling gekom. Hy was geseënd met ‘n aanvallige persoonlikheid en had verskeie edel en innemende eienskappe. Waarlik onverskrokke, lojaal en baie dapper, het Willie Maasdorp altyd gereed gestaan met ‘n vrolike groet en ‘n nimlike glimlag vir ieder en elk.

‘n Afrikander in murg en been met die belange van sy land op die hart, het hy sy lewe opgeoffer terwyl die doodswolke rondom hom vergader. Hy sou alles in die stryd werp vir ‘King and Country.’ So lui die artikel wat op 30 September 1901, in Die *Graaff-Reinet Advertiser* verskyn het.

Lt. Maasdorp was ‘n lid van die *District Mounted Troops*, ‘n patrollie-eenheid wat waardevolle inligting vir die militêre owerheid moes insamel wat dit dan weer op hul beurt by ‘n sentrale plek verwerk en opgevolg het.

Die *District Mounted Troops* was volgens baie ‘n besondere groep mense wat nie geskroom het om hul deel te doen nie. Die ongeluk wat hierdie eenheid op hul eerste patrollie sou tref, sou hulle egter nog lank agtervolg. Wat ‘n besondere dag veronderstel was om te wees het ontaard in ‘n nagmerrie toe die 24-jarige Luitenant J W Maasdorp per ongeluk op 28 September 1901 naby Petersburg doodgeskiet is terwyl hulle op ‘n verkenningstog was. Hoe verklaar jy dat iemand per ongeluk doodgeskiet word? Was hulle in ‘n skermutseling betrokke?

Helaas...hy is geskiet en gedood deur een van sy makkers wat hom verwar het met die vyand. En so het Oorlog weer sy tol geëis.

(Met dank aan Mnr Charles Booysen en Dr T Botha)

‘N OOR WAT KAN HOOR

Kaptein Fred McCabe, ‘n lid van die *District Mounted Troops* was geseënd met buitengewone geluk. Terwyl hy besig was met verkenningswerk in die Graaff-Reinet distrik, is ‘n klein stukkie van sy oor deur die vyand afgeskiet en toe hy sy kop lig om beter te kan sien, word ‘n stukkie van sy ander oor ook afgeskiet!

Volgens Henry, sy seuntjie, het dit gelyk

asof sy pa so gebore is want die twee stukkies wat afgeskiet is, was identies.

(Met dank aan Andrew McNaughton wat hierdie storie in sy boekie, When Ants Get Angry, vertel)

‘N GEBAAR VAN WELWILLENDHEID

Een oggend het ‘n klein groepie boere te perd die plaasopstal bekend as Gletwyn Cottage, genader met die doel om proviand en genoeg perde te kry en alle bevoegde mans buite aksie te stel en saam te neem sodat hulle nie alarm kon maak nie.

Ongelukkig vir hulle was daar geen perd in sig nie, aangesien Arthur en Tom Murray die perde as voorsorgmaatreël na die plaas Roodebloem geneem het. Al diere oorgebly het was een armsalige donkie en een stomme os.

Op galop, het die Boere ‘n klein dogtertjie van ongeveer ses teëgekom met haar hande agter haar rug. “Meisie, wat het jy daar?” wou hulle weet, waarop sy instinktief ontkennend geantwoord het: “Niks nie.”

“Loop bêre dit waar jou Mammie gesê het,” het een van hulle haar gebied. Die kleine Eleanor Murray het nie op haar laat wag nie en het die twee blikkies sardientjies onder die stomp van ‘n omgevalle boom gaan bêre waar al hul voorraad gestoor was! Die Boere kon nie

hul geluk glo nie en het hulself gehelp en gevat soveel as wat hulle arms kon dra.

Teen dié tyd het Arthur Murray, Eleanor se pa, na die kombuisdeur gegaan om te kyk waarom al die geraas gaan. Hy is onmiddellik gegryp en sy hande vasgebind. Die Boere het op hul perde geklim en hom weggelei.

Eleanor se jongste boetie Bill het op ‘n muur gesit en alles gade geslaan. Toe hy sien sy pa word hardhandig vasgebind en weggeneem, het dit alles te veel geword. Die outjie het ‘n bo-aardse gil gegee en onbeheers aan die huil gegaan. So hartverskeurend het hy gesnik, dat die Boere se harte vermurwe het en dit was nie lank voordat die leier sy pa losgemaak en met ‘n “Ag, foei tog. Los hom maar. Ek het ook so ‘n seuntjie by die huis,” laat gaan het nie.

(Written by Anne Murray for Stoep Stories)

Dalk bring oorlog ook die goeie in ‘n mens uit, wie weet?

YOUR ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY LOO

As you all may have come to hear, the Graaff-Reinet Museum has embarked on a project to ensure that enough public ablution facilities are made available to the public and, more specifically, to visitors and tourists who are always on

the look out for clean ablution facilities. This project is aptly named The Ablution Facility Project. Our aim is to convert the old ablution facilities adjacent to the Old Library into public facilities. At present the facilities, which the Camdeboo Municipality transferred to the museum in 2005, are used as store rooms.

Contrary to belief the establishment of public ablution facilities is not the sole responsibility of the Museum and the local Hospitality industry. It is true that we are reliant on visitors and tourists to our town, but having clean ablution facilities will benefit us all.

We have recently become acquainted with a wonderful solution to our problem: the compost toilet. In a recent article in *South African Country Life*, Gary van der Merwe introduces a way of making your loo environmentally friendly.

Before proceeding to the exact details Mr van der Merwe provides a bit of background information on waterborne sewage systems. Urban legends suggest that the problem of toilets was initially of great concern to one Thomas Crapper. It is of no concern to us that somewhere along the line Mr Crapper's name was admitted into the American lingua franca as a synonym for toilet.

Mr Crapper invented and popularised the valveless toilet which became our

modern flush toilet. In earlier days it required about 50,000 litres of water to make 650 litres of waste disappear. What a waste, but probably much more hygienic, especially compared to Victorian London. In addition to being flushed, sewage needs to be treated and detoxified. This is done in wastewater treatment plants which are run at great cost and are prone to operational problems.

To mitigate the impact on the planet and to save water, a completely waterless toilet system should be properly investigated. Such a system, according to Gary van der Merwe is the compost toilet.

The concept sounds foreign and one might take some time to get used to the idea. When you think that our current system uses clean drinking water to transport the waste, the compost toilet might be our best option.

The motto of the compost toilet is simple: Don't flush and don't get rid of the sludge – rather use it. All around the world there is a growing interest in dry or compost toilets. They are quite simple to use, odourless, non-polluting and return many of the organics we extract from the environment. Some units even accept waste from the kitchen.

The compost toilet can replace your existing toilet system, but ideally it

should be part of the building's original design, it operates on gravity and the only requirement is that the composting chamber be below the actual toilet. The chamber should be properly aerated since odours are caused by insufficient ventilation. Unlike septic tanks, the decomposing process is oxygen-based. A typical domestic unit will provide fertilizer for up to 5 people after a fallow period of between 6 months and 3 years. Another advantage is that compost toilets are absolutely silent. A composting toilet should be installed with its back to an outside wall, as the composting chamber will be located on the other side of the wall.

These toilets are commercially available. A number of these toilets have been installed in South Africa already, including in camp sites and schools. It sounds as if this is the perfect solution to our problem. Why not kill two birds with one stone? This idea was put to the Camdeboo Council together with a comprehensive business plan. I just hope they also find it as appealing as I do.

TOETS JOU ANGLO- BOERE-OORLOG KENNIS

Die Anglo-Boere-oorlog bly maar een van my gunsteling onderwerpe, alhoewel ek oorloë verpes. Die kennis van

besoekers is verbasend en dit is veral die ouer garde wat graag staaltjies vertel.

Wel, as jy jousef beskou as 'n Anglo Boere-oorlog fundi is hierdie net vir jou: 'n Anglo Boere-oorlog blokkiesraaisel boek. Dit is die ideale geskenk vir Oupa of Oupagrootjie; en sal sy kennis met mening toets. Die boekie is te koop by Reinethuis en sal ure se genot besorg. Kom ons kyk wie hul man kan staan!

Vind 'n voorsmakie aan die einde van hierdie nuusbrieff.

WHAT'S IN A NAME....

I find Dr Oskar Prozesky, former Union High School Teacher and accomplished writer, extremely clever with the most wonderful sense of humour. He is very observant and always gives free reign to his vivid imagination. His books cover a variety of subjects and his poems, in German, English and Afrikaans, come from the heart. Dr Pro (as we call him) has the most amazing people-skills which I have had the opportunity to put to good use at Reinet House. If you are interested in one of his books, please visit Reinet House between twelve and two where you will find our famous resident writer.

And just to **wet** your appetite, an extract from his book *J X (Puggy) Munnik: The Time of my Life*:

“Nicknames – and their origins – have always fascinated me. Union High School provided me with many a chuckle in this respect.

Consider the case of Dennis Shone, who was a short, rather tubby, but well-built and immensely strong front-ranker. Small wonder that he was not called Dennis at all at school, but Buddha. Then there was Michael Spearpoint, who inevitably became Sharpie. Less obvious was the case of Trevor Young, another powerful boy, who was known as Froggie. I have never discovered where or why he got this name. Nor do I know why Roy Prinsloo was called Peanuts by Mr Arnott. Some of his brothers got names like Monkey Nuts, Cashew Nuts and Walnuts, but none of these stuck as well as Peanuts. Cedric Codner, because of his distinctive, smallish upturned nose was renamed Nipple by his fellows. Cedric was a lively, fast wing threequarter and whenever he got the ball, he was urged on excitedly by the primary school boys in particular, 'Go, Nipple, go!' they would shout. One of the lady parents, hearing the encouragement to the winger, went up to some of the little boys and asked them: 'What do you call him?' – 'Nipple, Miss.' – 'Do you know what a nipple is?'

– 'No, but that's his name,' came the reply. Out of the mouths of babes.

Then there was Snarlie White. Why was he called that? Bulldog Charton was obviously given that name because he resembled that breed of dog. Afrikaans provided its quota of nicknames in this rural district where English spoken on farms often contains Afrikaans words. Langies McEwan was a very tall lad and a very good opening bowler to boot.

One day I heard the boys refer to a chap whose real name was John as Tappie. I asked them why they called him that, and they told me that his nickname was actually Taproot. I thought they had heard this term in their Biology class and asked them why he should be labelled with that term. 'Sir,' they said, 'when you are on prep duty again, just come into the bathroom after prep and watch him showering, then you will see why we call him Taproot.'

One of my favourite nickname stories concern a little chap we had in the primary school named Barret. He had odd-shaped ears and was, not surprisingly, called Oortjies. I never heard his real first name: he was just Oortjies to everybody. We used to go up to Johannesburg, every second year to play King Edward VII School at rugby, and there was always a big reunion of UHS past-pupils when we played there. On one occasion I saw one of these past-

pupils heading straight towards me. It was Oortjies – and he had a really lovely young lady with him. Now I felt I could not call him Oortjies in front of her, but I did not know what else to call him. ‘Hello, sir,’ he said, coming up to me in his usual happy and cheerful way. I hesitated, and then said, I know your name is Barret, but I have forgotten your first name.’ – ‘Oortjies, sir, Oortjies,’ he said with a big smile. ‘Oortjies,’ I said, relieved and impressed by his acceptance of the name. I remembered very well what a pleasant little chap he had been.

We also had a chap from Victoria West at Union High who had beautiful blue eyes and a charming smile – but also a posterior the other boys thought uncommon-looking. He was duly nicknamed Bummy. The year after he left school we got a new boy with the same surname from King William’s Town. He was told that to maintain the tradition he should be called Bummy. His answer was that he did not like the name and would punch the first one who called him that on the nose. The boys said, ‘You are right, that’s a lousy name and we’ll change it for you.’ And that was how he became Gattie.

The two Biggs brothers, Gilbert and Anthony, had nicknames relating to their farming background. When I first got to know Gilbert, he was called Kudu Biggs, but somewhere along the line that was

changed to Chippie Biggs. He is still called that, to this day. Anthony was Dassie Biggs to everyone at school, and even in later years when he was a prominent cricketer, radio commentators would call him Dassie more than they referred to him as Anthony.

The nicknames for the members of the staff at the UHS were generally very kind. The headmaster Mr H W Arnott, whose first name was Herbert, was fondly called Herby, and his wife Joy Mrs Herby. The pupils, impressed by his authority and firmness, called him Boss. The Woodwork teacher Mr Naudé was never called anything but Horsie, I do not know why. The other Woodwork teacher Johan Strydom was Snuffie. Afrikaans teacher Ben Dippenaar, who looked Russian, became Yuri – named after the first Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin. Mrs Oliver was Ma Ollie, perhaps because she was a mother to all the Hockey girls.”

AANKONDIGINGS

Graag wens ons Nomakhosazana en haar eggenoot geluk met die geboorte van hul pienkvoet Zandile, wat in Januarie gebore is. Ons is seker sy sal vir haar trotse ouers baie vreugde bring.

Ons Algemene Jaarvergadering sal op Donderdag, 2 Junie om 14h30 by die Ou Biblioteek gehou word. Ons gasspreker

is 'n ou bekende met nuwe nuus. Onthou ook om asseblief die nominasie vir die Vriende van die Museum Presteerder van die jaar in te vul. Die sluitingsdatum is Dinsdag, 27 Mei. Moenie die kans laat verby gaan om jou stem uit te bring vir iemand wat sy kant bring nie. Vind ook ingeslote die notule van die vorige Vergadering. Ons hoop om julle daar te sien.

Ons het steeds 'n nypende tekort aan aflospersoneel. Me. André Le Roux, een van ons aflospersoneel, is ongesteld en ons moes die deure van sommige museums toemaak. Die ideaal is natuurlik om al die deure van die museum oor naweke en gedurende openbare vakansie oop te hou. Dit is ons besigste tye en kan ons nie anders as om munt daaruit te slaan nie. Om deel van ons aflospersoneel te wees verg absolute toewyding. Dit sit nie in elke mens se broek om naweke op te offer nie. Wees pro-aktief en bring jou kant. Ons maak staat op julle ondersteuning.

We would like to extend a big thank you to The Editor and staff of The Advertiser who collaborated with us to present the International Museum Day Essay Competition. A big thank you also to our sponsors: Iziene van Jaarsveld, Louise Lipshitz, Mark Senekal, Mad Hatters, Drostdy Hotel, Spandau Spar, Waltons, XTT, KFC and Steers. This year's International Museum Day Competition

also saw the introduction of the Graaff-Reinet Tourism Office's floating trophy which will be awarded to the winner in the 13-14 year category. Thank you to all our sponsors, your generosity and support are much appreciated.

The John Rupert Theatre Society willingly hosted three movie shows in support of the Museum. Thank you to all of you who extended a helping hand. The funds raised were a welcome addition to our coffers.

Oktober, die mooiste, mooiste maand, bring die **SES SNARE** tot op ons drumpel wanneer ons 'n driegang maaltyd in die Pastoriestraat beplan. Hou julle dagboeke oop. Wat beter as 'n maal uit die boonste rakke, met die passievolle stemme van die **SES SNARE!**

We would also like to remind you that our winter hours will commence from the first of June and continue until the end of August. All museums will open at 08h00, close for lunch at 13h00, open at 13h45 after lunch and close at 16h30.

WORDS TO PONDER...

The human voice can never reach the distance that is covered by the still, small voice of conscience. *Mohandas Gandhi*