

# *Graaff-Reinet Museum*

## *Vision*

Our vision is to be an institution, 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 upliftment of the community and visitors whom we serve.

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Mrs. G. Yalolo	-	Co-opted
Miss. A. Booysen	-	Co-opted

## **PERSONNEL**

### **GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**

- |                      |   |   |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Mrs. A.F. Kayster    | - | Principal Museum Human Scientist            |
| Mrs. H.J.W. Baartman | - | Auxiliary Service Officer – Chief – retired |
| Mrs. J.J. De Gama    | - | Auxiliary Service Officer – Senior          |
| Miss. D.D. van Wyk   | - | Auxiliary Service Officer                   |
| Miss. V.Z. Pika      | - | Auxiliary Service Officer                   |
| Mrs. N.A. Jacobs     | - | Auxiliary Service Officer                   |
| Miss. X.P. Blouw     | - | General Assistant                           |
| Mr. J. van Rhyners   | - | General Assistant                           |
| Miss. K. Booysen     | - | General Assistant                           |
| Miss. T. Fihla       | - | General Assistant transferred               |
| Mr. J. Isaks         | - | Trade man's Aid                             |

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEE EMPLOYEES**

- |                |   |                              |
|----------------|---|------------------------------|
| Mr. D. van Wyk | - | Custodian & Security Officer |
| Mr. Z. Isaks   | - | General Assistant            |

### **RELIEF STAFF**

- Ms. A. Le Roux  
Ms. Y. Arnesen  
Ms. L. Du Toit  
Mrs E. Boggenpoel  
Mrs H. Baartman – since April 2009

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Last year I was congratulated on my short speech and in my continuing quest for fame I am compelled to keep it short once again.

After all, we have a most worthy guest speaker in Brian (Bugs) Wilmot, and our curator Anziske Kayster, will lead us through the running and the affairs of the Museums of Graaff-Reinet in detail.

Welcome to all here today and special thanks to the Friends of the Museum for their good counsel and support for our curator, Mrs Kayster, during a trying and challenging year.

Our fantastic staff has been polishing and cleaning all week long in order to present to you, our most important guests, this wonderful testament to history: the Museum Collection of Graaff-Reinet.

Not only is the Museum “dressed” for the occasion; our staff look so professional and very smart in their new uniforms as well. Congratulations.

Hundreds of thousands of Rands have been raised by our Museum and have been carefully budgeted to spend on improvements on our facilities and equipment, with further plans afoot to continue this improvement and growth at the Museum.

Momentum is crucial when charting the course of a big ship. We hope to be blessed over the next few years by an exceptional benefactor who, together with the Camdeboo Municipality, purposes to establish a Natural History Museum within the Graaff-Reinet Museum complex. A budget in the region of fifteen million rand has been set aside and this will guarantee that once again Graaff-Reinet will hold its head high when it comes to offering to the community, tourists and visitors the very best in facilities and service.

We have a fine Curator who has the training and the know-how. We have excellent personnel and many avenues of recourse to expertise and advice. Once again, we will plan wisely to further enhance this valuable and historic asset to Graaff-Reinet.

Last year the thought I left with you ran as follows:

“Life should not slip through our fingers!”

History, for that matter, can just as easily slip through our fingers and be lost to future generations. We, here at the Graaff-Reinet Museum, are in the treasure business: but not just for the treasures of history and collections; we are also involved in the life-worth of every person that enters through these doors.

There are those who understand this principle and have dedicated their entire careers to the preservation of evidence and the portrayal of history and to the building and forming of valuable lives.

How, you might ask, can we claim to have so great an influence on people’s lives? Surely they just come to idle away an hour or two, perhaps to escape from the pressures of the day.

Yet, why do teachers religiously take students on field trips to our museums? Just to escape a tedious afternoon on a hot summer’s day? Surely not.

Consider for yourself a learner who enters a cool room, only to stumble upon an artifact, recognize a familiar item on display or find the name of a long departed family member. A strong sense of identity and self-worth quickly follows, and the boy has found himself. Many of our children need to find themselves and begin the journey towards meaningful careers and honourable lifestyles. If we can provide just one stepping stone in each child’s life, we will have achieved another of our most important goals.

We seek to influence our students in the best way possible; it takes careful training and sensitivity to ensure their young lives are not impacted negatively. For instance, the irresponsible display of a set of shackles and leg irons thrown down carelessly in a corner could so graphically explain the scars on a beloved grandfather’s spindly legs.

Ours is a careful trade and a passionate purpose.

“Stuffy old artifacts” they scoff. To which, my friend, I must reply, “No, sir – we’re in the business of preserving history and shaping lives.”

Thank you

**ANNUAL REPORT OF  
THE HEAD OF THE MUSEUM**

Annus Horribilis.

The phrase came to a wide audience in Queen Elizabeth II's Christmas message in 1992, where she said:

*"1992 is not a year I shall look back on with undiluted pleasure. In the words of one of my more sympathetic correspondents, it has turned out to be an 'annus horribilis'."*

Kofi Annan used the phrase in a speech on 21 December 2004:

*"There's no doubt that this has been a particularly difficult year, and I am relieved that this annus horribilis is coming to an end."*

In the words of the Queen and Kofi Annan, 2008/9 has been a very hard and trying year for me, particularly when a violent incident turned this museum on its head. Never did I imagine that my management skills would be tested to such extremes and never did I imagine that I would be faced with circumstances that can easily rob a person of his or her self esteem.

The Museum will always be my responsibility for as long as I am

the head of this institution.

Needless to say, a supportive Board of Trustees, staff and Friends of the Museum made the difficult times bearable. That is how it should be.

Ladies and gentlemen, apart from the challenges, we have a very successful year behind us, but before I report on the progress we made during this past year, please allow me to say that we look forward to a wonderful year ahead. We are enthusiastic and eager to achieve our goals. With your assistance and support we will gladly go the extra mile, especially for that in which we all believe.

## **PERSONNEL**

A year ago our staff organogram was completed. Although we still needed many hands to attend to daily tasks, according to the organogram of 2000 the museum did not require more staff members. The fact that our floor space has increased and that our opening hours have been extended will be taken into account when a new organogram is designed.

In February 2009 Mrs Baartman retired. At present the post of Chief Auxiliary Service Officer is vacant and I have requested the

Directorate Museum and Heritage to appoint Mrs De Gama as acting CASO, especially since someone needs to run the museum while I attend meetings and if I go on leave.

Miss Fihla, a general assistant, was transferred to Library Services in King Williams Town, and at present the museum is in desperate need of a permanent general assistant. The board has agreed to appoint Mrs Cherie Williams on a three-day per-week basis, since our financial situation does not allow for her permanent employment.

I have made submissions to the Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture for these positions to be filled. We also welcome Mrs Baartman and Mrs Boggenpoel as part of our relief staff.

This year, we also welcomed Mr Simba Dawetu on board. Mr Dawetu was appointed as tourism intern by the Camdeboo Municipality and started his practical training in January 2009. At present he divides his skills between the museum and the Tourism Office, but we are still very glad for the extra pair of hands.

I would like to thank staff for their diligence and loyalty. A special word of gratitude also goes to those staff members who still work the extra hour per week helping the museum to remain open as advertised. I know that it is very taxing on staff morale that is why I appreciate the effort and the willingness doubly.

### **VISITORS & VISITOR STATISTICS**

There has been a slow but steady decline in visitor statistics. By the start of the 2008 season it became notable. Our admission boxes have remained empty and it has seemed as if the economic recession has also increased its grip on the museum. It is the cause of many sleepless nights.

School groups and learners are at present our main source of income especially during the quiet times of the year. We have also shifted our customer focus to learners to encourage visits to the museum.

The museum still receives compliments from far and wide:

*A truly interesting and awakening experience, Fossil collection is gold, One can feel the heartbeat of history, We*



*thoroughly enjoyed all your excellent museums, Very moving testimonies, I was moved to tears by the photographs of Robert Sobukwe, Excellent guide, Cool – ou foto's briljant, The best museums ever!, Baie oorspronklik, Mooi, mooi, mooi, Entoesiastiese dames!, Feel of history, Lovely welcome. Visible evidence of transformation.*

People from all over the world visited the museum including people from countries such as Mozambique, France, the Netherlands, Germany, UK, United Arab Emirates, Ireland, Zimbabwe, Australia, Belgium, Iceland and the Ivory Coast.

This past year the museum was often visited by the media which included teams from Top Billing, Country Life, Die Burger and Morning Live.

Many esteemed politicians also visited the Museum during Sobukwe day which was held on 28 February 2009.

The Portfolio Committee of the Provincial Legislature also paid a visit to the museum to discuss challenges and assess the transformation process. This, however, will be discussed in detail as I continue with the rest

of the report.

Descendants from the Maynier family also visited the museum. Many artifacts from the Maynier estate are on display at Urquhart House. They applauded the neat and tidy museums and went home satisfied that their heritage was being looked after.

## **SLAVERY AND THE LONG ROAD TO RESTITUTION PROJECT**

This project has featured in many annual reports over the past few years, especially in view of the fact that the first installment of the grant was transferred in 2005. For three years we struggled to obtain the final payment. The National Lottery Distribution Fund was busy with re-structuring and all transfers were put on hold. The museum had to settle all outstanding accounts from our own pockets and the project came to a complete standstill.

We decided to persevere and by sheer determination and pigheadedness we got the final installment in April 2008. We immediately arranged for the slavery panels to be printed, to complete the research on the land restitution part of the project and to complete the

preparation of the venue, which included installing electrical fans and picture rails. Under the guidance of Mrs Baartman, we also completed a mural of a slave scene in the small courtyard.

The exhibition was officially opened on 20 March 2009 by the Director of Museums and Heritage, Mr Similo Grootboom. Mr Calvin Smith, former Speaker of the Northern Cape Parliament and son of Graaff-Reinet, was the guest speaker.

The exhibition received national media coverage when I was interviewed by Anel Heydenrych from Radio Sonder Grense. Afterwards we received a lot of telephone calls and I admit that many were from my widespread family, but also from those who were interested in and wanted to view the exhibition. Many local people, who came to identify their family members, also visited the exhibition.

The slavery travelling exhibition is still doing the rounds. It seems as if it has received so much love and attention that only two of the original seven panels remain. In March 2009 Mrs Baartman and I were invited to attend the opening of the slavery travelling exhibition at the Great Fish River

Museum in Cradock. Mrs Baartman was guest speaker since she was head of the museum when this project started.

We are very glad that this project has come to successful completion. It has been very trying but eventually through team effort and determination we managed to succeed. My gratitude goes to all staff members, especially those who worked with the finances, the preparation of the venue, those who organized the opening event and translated the research and those who kept the museums open while others gave their full attention to the project.

## **EXHIBITIONS AND DONATIONS**

The museum received a large collection of dolls which Mrs Baartman cleaned and Mrs Jacobs acquisitioned. Mrs De Gama put them on display at Reinet House.

Mrs Wucherpfennig donated a large collection of models of military transport vehicles which included aeroplanes and tankers.

Her husband made the models from recycled waste such as cereal boxes, pins, plastic cartons and much more. This hobby

started in 1996 when they moved to Graaff-Reinet after his retirement. The models are currently on display at the Reinet House.

The Africana Room was established in July 2008. The museum acquired new shelves that adhered to museological requirements and all the boxes of Africana books were systematically unpacked and displayed on the shelves. Mrs Baartman started cataloguing the collection and meticulously sorted it according to author, title and description. Mrs Jacobs started with the audit process after it came to our attention that many of the books are missing. She is still busy with the process, but the Africana library may be visited with permission from the Head of the Museum

After doing major spring cleaning, the Camdeboo Municipality donated crockery and cutlery from the days when Council entertained formally. Part of the collection is currently on display at Reinet House. We are expecting many more valuable paintings and artifacts and have decided to sign a loan agreement with the Council.

Our exhibitions are kept very

neat and tidy since I believe that good household practices are the first step in conservation.

## **THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

In December 2008 we decided that the Graaff-Reinet Museum should take the lead in collecting oral history from the community. A committee, chaired by Rev Nancy Charton was established and members of the community were invited through the media and newsletters to join this worthwhile venture. To date there are eleven members serving on the committee and they are representative of all the communities of Graaff-Reinet.

The project is flourishing. On 16 March 2009 Dr Roy Stauth and I held a workshop for those interested in learning about the intricacies of collecting oral history. We also put a lot of effort into compiling a sixteen-page booklet which was handed out as course material. Members had to do role playing whilst being digitally recorded. At present the members are doing the rounds and the interviewing has started.

As previously stated we hope to have enough material eventually to publish a book and make a documentary film.

## EDUCATIONAL AND OUTREACH PROGRAMMES

Education is one of our main priorities and as such this museum has endeavored to touch the minds of as many learners as we can.

We continued with our Rock Art Programme but have expanded it to include previously disadvantaged learners from Klipplaat, Jansenville and Willowmore. With the financial assistance from the Cacadu district, the learners were transported to the museum, where they received a hands-on lesson about Rock Art. They also had to stencil their own rock art picture and the day ended on a high note. We presented this programme for two consecutive days in the final quarter of the year and about one hundred and twenty learners went through our hands. In March we also presented the workshop to the grade 4 learners of Union Prep School.

Our learner education continued in May 2009 when we created awareness about International Museum Day. All learners visiting the museum received an information pack with a beaded bow. The highlight of the programme was when a drama

group from Grahamstown presented the drama, *Walking Tall* to three previously disadvantaged schools in the area. Some of these learners have never been to a museum and the drama relayed the significance of museums whilst explaining the concept of evolution in a fun and humorous way.

In June we also embarked on a programme which made history come alive for grade 4 learners from Union Prep. As part of their curriculum the learners had to visit five historical buildings in Graaff-Reinet and learn about their history. The Museum asked five Friends of the Museum to do role playing and thus Charles Murray met them at the Groot Kerk, Maria Murray at Reinet House, Mabel Urquhart at Urquhart House, Anders Stockenström at the Drostdy and a Colonist at the Powder House on Magazine Hill. It was great fun and we had a hard time convincing the children that the actors were playing the part and were not ghosts. A big thank you to Roy Stauth, Hermi Baartman,

Shirley Grindley, David McNaughton and Daniel Smith. You really are accomplished actors.

Our outreach programs continued with the Provincial Library Week celebrations. Mrs de Gama represented the museum and was in charge of organizing exhibitions for the event. She visited Somerset East and Aberdeen and did an exemplary job. Miss Pika and Mr Dawetu exhibited our travelling slavery exhibition locally.

I cannot help but to mention that Mrs de Gama received special recognition for all her hard work, from the Director of Library Services.

The Museum staff also exhibited at the first Karoo Conference and trade fair which was held from 24 to 26 March 2009. We made a substantial amount of money because our museum stock was versatile and affordable. We also had an opportunity to meet new people and to network.

Many of our programs received national and local media coverage. Our gratitude goes to Mrs Hermi Baartman from Die Burger and Mariette Burger from the Graaff-Reinet Advertiser who always have a little space for the museum.

### **PUBLIC ENTITY STATUS**

I am sure that many of us are

concerned about our public entity status. When I attended the Museum Indaba which was held on 29 and 30 January 2009 in East London, it was very clear that the Trade Unions were very unhappy about the possibility of museums becoming public entities. They especially were concerned about the status of museum employees who would lose their public servant status if museum were to become public entities.

To date the Department has decided to stop the process and that the Museum Act of 2004 will once again be amended. The term of office of board members who have been serving museums for over seven years, will also come to an end and adverts to serve on museum board will appear in the media in due course.

### **STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Mr James van Rhyners acquired his learner's licence and is in the process of obtaining his driver's licence. Very soon he will be the designated driver of the museum.

Miss Vuyokazi Pika had the opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge from Miss Nancy

Tietz, SAMA fellow, when she attended an advanced two day workshop in Basic Museology.

All staff members that were appointed in 2007, as well as Miss Denise van Wyk, attended an Induction into the Public Service workshop which was presented by Human Resource Development. Staff members were acquainted with the Public Service Act, rights of staff members, the role of the Board of Trustees and museums as public institutions.

Mrs de Gama completed a course in Entrepreneurship and Personnel management. Miss Fihla was enrolled in a course in computer practice.

I received an MPhil degree in Cultural Tourism and Heritage Studies from the University of Stellenbosch on 10 December 2009. My research topic was Robert Sobukwe. In my absence Mrs Baartman, Mrs De Gama and Miss van Wyk kept the wheels of the museum turning and I am extremely grateful to them for giving me the opportunity.

Miss van Wyk and I also attended the National South African Museum Associations

conference which was held in June 2009. Mrs Baartman and I attended the provincial conference which was held in Queenstown in March 2009, during which I also had the opportunity to do a presentation on our Slavery and Long Road to Restitution Project.

In November 2008, I also received training from Mr Johan Le Roux in fire arm competency. I received four certificates and hopefully I will be appointed by the Fire Arms Registry as the person responsible for the museum's fire arms collection

### **VISIT FROM THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE**

In June 2008, the Portfolio Committee from the Provincial Legislature under the direction of Mr Suka visited the Graaff-Reinet Museum to discuss the challenges that museums are experiencing. This visit had many repercussion including accusations that the Graaff-Reinet Museum is not transforming. I submitted a report in which I gave detailed accounts of our transformation projects, partnerships, programs and staff component. I emphasized that the Graaff-Reinet Museum as a government institution, remained committed

to transformation but that it is very challenging to commit to transformation without the necessary funds to see it through.

### **FUNDRASING**

Under the guidance of Mrs Marie Biggs the Graaff-Reinet Museum once again hosted a very successful street stall. Income almost tripled and the Friends of the Museum exhibited enthusiastic support. A big thank you to Mrs Marie Biggs and the ladies of the Board and staff. The money of the street stall was also augmented with the sale of boerewors rolls and raffling a Christmas Turkey. Mr Jacob Daniels was the winner of the Christmas turkey. Congratulations.

The museum is fast becoming a venue famous for beautiful wedding pictures. During the past year our income was augmented when wedding parties paid to take pictures in the garden of Reinet House. Our conference facility was also very popular. Thank you to Mr James van Rhyners and Zenevin Isaks who keep the garden in tiptop shape.

### **RE-NEWAL OF FIRE ARMS LICENCES**

In June 2009 we received a visit from the local Police Department who informed us that legislation required that the museum should re-new all the licences of the fire arms in our collection. I immediately started investigating since I was of the opinion that because we are an accredited public institution we are exempted from renewing licences. I contacted Bayworld and even they were busy butting heads with Fire Arms Registry in Pretoria. I eventually contacted the South African Gun Owners Association (SAGA) and they went the extra mile. We determined that it is not necessary for a government institution to renew firearm licenses and this has been confirmed by the Fire Arms Registry in Pretoria.

### **MRS BAARTMAN'S RETIREMENT**

In February 2009 Mrs Baartman retired. We thought that we were going to lose her expertise and skill and completely forgot that she was only a phone call away even if it was just for moral support. However, we are trying to get used to the fact that we will not see her every day. She has left her mark on this institution and we will have to search high and low to find

another with such a positive outlook on life, such enthusiasm and such loyalty.

### **THE PETER FLACK PROJECT**

In 2008 Mr Peter Flack, well-known attorney and former director of the First Rand Bank, approached the Graaff-Reinet Museum with a proposal of a private public partnership.

Mr Flack, world-renowned hunter, has hunted game over a period of over 30 years and now has the most complete collection of African game animals currently available on licence. At present Mr Flack is considering a partnership with the museum and donating the collection together with one million rand towards the establishment of a museum on the premises of the Graaff-Reinet Museum, to house this collection.

A lot of time went into discussions and writing proposals, not only to Mr Flack but also to the Department, to make this natural museum a reality. At present we are still waiting to hear from the Directorate Museums and Heritage and more specifically the MEC for Arts and Culture to give us the go-ahead.

### **STAFF UNIFORMS**

In May 2009 staff members started to wear their uniforms. The administrative staff wear a grey office suit with co-ordinating blouse, the female cleaning staff black overalls with cerise piping and the gents blue overalls with safety boots and a cap. We are very proud of our uniforms and immediately felt the team spirit.

All staff members also received a name tag decorated with the departmental emblem. We would like to thank the board who saw the need and assisted us in obtaining the uniforms of our choice.

### **MAINTENANCE**

In September 2008, we embarked on a major restoration project. The thatched roofs of both Reinet House and Urquhart House received major repairs. Unfortunately our funding was limited and we could not repair the roofs of the outbuildings of Reinet House.

In November 2008 a big storm was the cause of great havoc and destruction at the museum. The re-inforced roof of the strong room at Urquhart House cracked and water started seeping into the safe. We had to do



emergency repairs and Rosemurray construction rose to the occasion.

## **FINANCES**

Although the financial report will be presented to this meeting I would like to make a few comments.

The museum has also felt the ripples of the economic crisis which has its grip on the country. We had to start using our savings just to keep afloat. At present we are desperately trying to make ends meet.

One positive outcome is that we have been audited for 2007/8. Unfortunately an astronomically audit fee accompanied the audit report, since we have not been audited for the past four years.

Transformation and public programs are under severe pressure since we do not have the necessary funds to embark on new projects. This has also been given as one of the reasons why transformation is slow. We are trying our level best to maintain standards with the little resources, especially financial resources, at our disposal.

To all our friends who have diligently supported us through the year, we are extremely

grateful. A special word of thanks to Elizabeth van Wijk and Sandy Will who so carefully check my spelling and use of the English language. Thank you to all who bought raffle tickets, who took the time to submit nominations for the achievers award and all those who come and visit us on a regular basis to show interest and support.

Finally, I could not have done this without a dedicated board and supportive staff. Every effort has been noticed. I look forward to working with you in the years to come. I know that I will have to search high and low for such support, such dedication, such team spirit and such loyalty. Thank you for going the extra mile.