



GRT MUSEUM



ANNUAL REPORT JAARVERSLAG

2023 | 2024



 049 89 23801 | 049 8925650

 graaffreinetmuseum@intekom.co.za

 www.graaffreinetmuseums.co.za

1. Board of Trustee Members 3
2. Staff Members 4
6 Government Employees	
6 Board of Trustee Employees	
6 Relief Staff	
3. Chairman's Report 5
4. Report of The Head of The Museum 13
6 Finances / Finansies	
6 Line Function / Operasionele funksies	
6 Administration / Administrasie	
6 Facility Management / Fasiliteitsbestuur	
6 Thank You's / Bedankings	
5. Visitor Statistics: April 2023 – March 2024 41
6. Financial Statements 2023/2024	

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	-	Subscriber's Representative (Elected July 2023)
Ms L King	-	Subscriber's Representative (Elected July 2023)
Vacant	-	Sarah Baartman District Municipality
Vacant	-	DBNLM Representative
Dr. A F Kayster	-	Ex Officio

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS:

Mrs A F Kayster	-	Principal Museum Human Scientist
Miss D D van Wyk	-	Chief Auxiliary Service Officer
Mr B Ngandi	-	Administrative Assistant
Vacant	-	Auxiliary Service Officer
Mr Yandisa Ngongo	-	General Assistant (Since October 2023)
Mr J van Rhyners	-	General Assistant
Vacant since January 2024	-	General Assistant
Mr J Pylman	-	General Assistant
Mr Z Isaks	-	General Assistant

BOARD OF TRUSTEE EMPLOYEES:

Ms Khanya Mbaile	-	Receptionist / Custodian
Mr W Simons	-	General Assistant
Mr J Wagenaar	-	General Assistant
Ms Margaret Ngxanka	-	General Assistant

RELIEF STAFF:

Mr B Le Potha
Mrs S Visagie

Special Guests, Friends of the Museum, Museum Staff and fellow Board members it is hard to believe that the time has once again come to provide a formal review of the activities of the Museum at the end of yet another financial year: time certainly waits for no person. This is also, equally hard to believe, if my memory serves me correctly my 12th consecutive annual report as Chairman of our Board of Trustees. This occasion furthermore serves to confirm to all present that our institution has successfully negotiated yet another year.

Significant credit must go to my fellow Board Members, for not only tolerating me, quite beyond expectation, for another year, but also more importantly for providing the continued statutory oversight required by regulation. Their continued involvement and interest in the Museum is a true testament to their loyalty and dedication for which I thank them at the outset.

Museums, have invariably received a bad rap in the past as stuffy, dusty and boring buildings filled with artefacts that one acknowledges as relevant more out of politeness than real interest. Many institutions have done excellent work to erode this perception and to inject more interest into their facilities. The injection of interest can surely be equated to the injection of life in all its facets. This by definition means the involvement of people as they not only form the backbone of the operation of the institution but also by drawing in more inclusive community interest its flesh and blood. This is certainly our experience at the Graaff-Reinet Museum where would like to believe we that people are at the heart of our successes.

Our museum continues to gain recognition, having been listed among *Twinkl's* best museums to visit in South Africa.

We have had the good fortune, or indeed have been blessed by the gift of special people, in the most general sense, both from within our institution and without. Looking back we have benefited from virtues like loyalty, dedication, self-sacrifice, passion, generosity, stability and continuity all of which are arguably rather rare commodities in the world today. It is through their efforts that accolades are awarded and recognition earned.

OUR STAFF

Our dedicated staff, under the able and inspirational leadership of Dr. Anziske Kayster, has once again delivered a team effort second to none. The smooth operation of our Museum presents challenges and episodes of adversity on a regular basis, however the staff consistently finds a way to rise above the challenges and not only succeed in running the institution smoothly but also perform beyond the norm and deliver meritorious achievements.

The responsibility and task of the Board of Trustees is greatly facilitated in the knowledge that the Museum is capably managed and run on behalf of the community which we serve. It is a distinct pleasure for me to express my most sincere appreciation, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, to Mrs Kayster and every single member of the team for a job well done this year.

Staff Challenges Experienced this Year:

- Successfully running the Institution within significant financial constraints.
- The generation of additional income through shop sales, events and functions all of which require efforts beyond the normal call of duty.
- Dealing with the frustrations of break-ins, particularly at Reinet House, including the debilitating theft of important operational equipment, attendant damage to buildings, opening dockets with the Police and concluding insurance claim administration.

- Managing the administrative complexities of the insurance of our thatched roofed buildings on behalf of the Board.
- Successfully implementing the Museum's first electronic bookkeeping system under the professional guidance of Van Wyk Theron.
- Dealing with the loss to higher service of long-standing colleagues, Ms Katriena Booysen and Mr Kobus Pylman.

Staff Achievements this Year:

- Winning second place in the provincial travelling exhibition competition mounted in Makhanda to celebrate International Museums Day. An innovative "Spekboom" exhibition was created with the kind assistance of *Country Mouse Design*, *Rachel's Garden*, the Union High School and *Boundless*.
- The publication of two well researched, and professionally presented, editions of the Museums newsletter *The Hourglass*
- Excellence in the execution of tasks beyond the normal call of duty including professional assistance with research enquiries from both academics and the general public, promoting the Museum in a range of media posts and outreach events and developing and presenting engaging educational programmes for the instruction of school groups.
- The prioritisation of the Museum's curatorial function and providing the administrative and functional backup for the ongoing innovative and highly regarded digitisation process.

OUR BOARD

It is indeed a pleasure to serve on a body where all individuals involved give voluntarily of their time for the sole purpose of benefitting a public institution like our Museum. Leading meetings is a joy as absolutely no time is squandered on inappropriate and divisive outside agendas. It is

also a credit to every single member of the Board that their interest extends well beyond the confines of meetings and that they take an active part in supporting the activities of the Museum on various fronts. The contribution of each and every Board member is acknowledged with appreciation.

Board Challenges Experienced this Year:

- Providing a firm, stable and constructive governance environment for the staff to perform their function optimally.
- Attending to statutory responsibilities in a seamless prompt manner.
- Showing constructive interest in the daily operation of the Museum
- Advancing the interests of the Museum with the Directorate of Museums and Heritage of the Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture of the Eastern Cape.
- Engaging with partners, benefactors and important service providers in the interest of the Museum.
- Engaging with subscribers and fostering the growth of inclusive public interest in the Museum.
- Providing assistance and backup to the staff in the resolution of challenges and in the organisation and presentation of special functions.

Board Achievements this Year:

The Board cannot lay claim to any outstanding achievements, however I would like to believe that the reliability, steadfastness and loyalty of every Board member to the institution, and the willingness to assist with tasks that promote the smooth running of the Museum, in no small measure contributed to the stability and successes of the Museum during the course of the year.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are a singular breed of individual who share their time, skills and expertise unstintingly and with a drive and enthusiasm that is a source of motivation to all who come into contact with them. Without an iota of financial incentive, or reward, the Museum has celebrated significant milestones that have not only garnered local attention, but also put our Museum on the map provincially. It is an honour for me to acknowledge the contributions of Prof. Johannes Haarhoff, Johann Damons and their team of archival volunteers and to thank them for their most significant contribution to the Museum.

While I am convinced that they experience significant challenges in the execution of their projects the manner in which these challenges are dealt with is such that they very rarely come to the attention of the Board. The Board invariably only becomes officially aware of the new innovation when it is tabled for comment and subsequent approval. The level of professionalism and value of content of any particular endeavour is always a joy to behold and invariably enjoys the unanimous support of the Board.

Volunteer Achievements this Year:

- Old Cradock Street Cemetery Register: Ten copies of the register, that contains not only new information and photographs, but also innovative research features that promise to make it a major genealogical source publication, have now been printed. This is furthermore the first of a number of proposed volumes and the ongoing nature of the project will enhance the Museum's reputation as a serious historical and genealogical research institution.
- *Grootkerk* Records: The sorting and categorising of masses of historical documents received from the NG Grootkerk during lockdown was completed within three months.

- Digitisation of the Collection: The digitisation has entered a new phase with the digitisation of genealogical material. This process has stimulated the interest of the Department that plans, with the cooperation of our Museum, to use the methodology developed as the benchmark for implementation at the other four large provincial museums. A wonderful accolade for our Museum.

OUR PARTNERS & BENEFACTORS:

I acknowledge the support of our partners and benefactors who through their contributions, irrespective of size and nature, are of immeasurable importance to the Museum. Contributions range from backup support which allows us to keep the doors of all our buildings open to the public, the financial means to execute published research projects that would otherwise never see the light of day and most importantly the funding and staff without which we would entirely lack viability.

- The Tourism Office is a key partner in the operational success of the Museum. They staff and attend to the day-to-day running of the Old Library Museum, which is traditionally second only to Reinet House in terms of visitor popularity. The Tourism Office staff effectively alleviates the Museum of the burden of employing additional staff and allows the museum staff to be deployed with greater flexibility. This together with the fact that this museum is often the first experience that the visitor has of our complex is indicative of the importance of the Tourism Office to the Museum. We look forward to a continued relationship with the Tourism Office and undertake to promote open channels of communication in the process of building on the existing goodwill.
- We are greatly indebted to the Rupert Historic Homes Foundation for their generosity. Their contribution to our Museum shows immense insight into both the challenges inherent in institutions operating within the heritage sector generally and the relevance of museums in the context of Graaff-Reinet. Their support has found manifestation in

numerous restoration projects by the Museum over the years and in their willingness to step in to save the Museum from almost certain closure as a result of the massive decline in income during the Covid-19 pandemic. I believe it is fitting that the remainder of the latter fund has been ringfenced by the Board for Special Projects and has to date allowed the publication of two important researched works, as reported above. Equally fitting is the acknowledgement, in print in these publications, of their contribution.

- Last, but by no means least, the Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture of the Eastern Cape. It is a simple fact that without the support of the Department the Museum, as it exists today, would simply not be possible. It is the Department that lays down the regulatory framework within which we operate, provides the staff and generously subsidises the operational costs of the Museum. The Board recognises the key role of the Department and its favour toward the Graaff-Reinet Museum in awarding it elevated status accompanied by a dramatically increased subsidy. The developments in this regard are acknowledged with appreciation and a renewed commitment to assist with the progressive alignment of the institution with the requirements of an elevated status. At the same time it is beholden of the Board to act in the best interest of the Museum, and the Graaff-Reinet community at large, in all related museum matters. A policy of constructive engagement with the Department has therefore been adopted.

THE COMMUNITY & OUR FRIENDS:

Our Museum is increasingly receiving recognition as an important resource on numerous fronts. Researchers ranging from the serious academic historical researcher, both local and foreign, to genealogical researchers, architectural researchers, amateur researchers and many more, approach the Museum for assistance with increasing regularity. Our faculties are in demand with people in search of out of the ordinary

venues for important family events, for community organizations wanting meeting venues and even for individuals and groups in need of striking architectural backdrops for photo-shoots. While many of these activities may not be regarded as traditional core museum functions they increase the Museums exposure to the broader community and therefore indirectly promote awareness of, and appreciation for, the role of the Museum. This trend imbues the Museum with new relevance within the community and should be promoted and managed to our ongoing benefit and drive toward sustainability.

I will, in closing, like to thank our subscribers for their loyal support and challenge every single subscriber present to assist us to broaden our support base in the community in order that we are empowered to build on our past achievements. Let us together strive for inclusivity, sustainability and excellence. Let us continue building up this Museum so that it may become an institution relevant to all our citizens and of which all can be justifiably proud.

Peter Whitlock
Chairman of the Board
05 July 2024

Dear Members of the Board, Prof. Murray-Cooke, Friends of the Museum, and Colleagues,

It is an honor to welcome you to the 67th Annual General Meeting of The Graaff-Reinet Museum. It is heartwarming to see so many familiar faces, and I am delighted to note a few new ones as well. Having attended 26 of these AGMs, I truly appreciate that you have marked this on your calendars and taken the time to be here for this important occasion. I did miss one AGM during my tenure at the museum, but I had a very good reason—I was on maternity leave.

The Annual General Meeting is a highly anticipated event as it provides an opportunity to celebrate our achievements and address our challenges. Please allow me to highlight a few of these key points.

One of the most traumatic and heartbreaking experiences for all of us this year was the loss of two colleagues, Ms. Katriena Booysen and Mr. Jacobus Pylman, within the span of four months. Their passing was untimely, as we had always hoped they would recover from their respective illnesses. I had always anticipated bidding farewell to colleagues at their retirement functions, not at their funerals, but 2024 proved otherwise. Shortly thereafter, we also learned of the passing of Mr. Willem Loock, a dear personal friend and a great supporter and benefactor of the museum. We mourn our loss and will hold their memories dear.

We were quite elated when our subsidy was increased by a massive 123% two years ago, concurrent with our status being elevated to one of the large provincial museums in the province. However, this has also become quite a burden, as we simply cannot keep pace with the other museums given the limited resources at our disposal. Currently, our organizational structure is incomplete with only three administrative staff members and four general assistants. The rest of the staff component is funded by the Board of Trustees, which places a

significant burden on our financial resources. As previously mentioned, maintaining the high standards we have become known for is emotionally exhausting and physically taxing. Both Ms. van Wyk and I, with the help of a great team, are responsible for initiating new projects, implementing new innovations, and staying ahead on the technological front while also managing the day-to-day operations of such a large institution.

To give you an idea, during the month of June, we accommodated five large school groups as well as two additional private groups. Over the past year, we have upgraded three significant exhibitions, including the Spekboom exhibition, which was entered into the International Museum Day competition. We have also answered all research inquiries, hosted four extensive educational programs, tackled daily administrative tasks, and supervised and participated in the day-to-day operations of the museum.

On a more positive note, I am happy to report that we still lead by virtue of our reputation as one of the best museums in the province. Our achievements include being runner-up in the International Museum Day competition, publishing two significant publications in the space of three years, leading the forefront on digitization in the Eastern Cape Museum, and being recognized as the museum that submitted the most outstanding service level agreement in the Department. Plans are also afoot to roll out our digitization project to the other four large provincial museums. Prof. Haarhoff, who is our digitization project leader, and I, just had a meeting with the IT department this past Wednesday.

Een van die hoogtepunte hierdie jaar was die publisering van die Cradockstraat begraafplaas register. Dit is voorwaar 'n publikasie om op trots te wees en die breinkind van Prof. Johannes Haarhoff en sy bekoring met begraafplase, sy belangstelling in genealogie veral die Haarhoff genealogie en sy entoesiasme om dinge te laat gebeur. Hierdie entoesiasme is aansteeklik maar het ook die museum die afgelope vyf jaar gedra terwyl ek besig was met my navorsing en studies: die damboek het die lig gesien, daar is begin met grootskaalse

digitalisering, die argief is opgegradeer en die grafregister is gepubliseer. Ek weet dit stuit hom teen die bors om uitgesonder te word, maar hierdie dankie kom uit my hart. En dit geld ook vir elkeen van jou besonderse bydraes tot die museum nuusbrieff, Die Uurglas.

Graag wil ek ook u aandag vestig op ons nuwe webtuiste wat te siene is by www.graaffreinetmuseums.co.za . Dit is te danke aan Mev. Wilmari Spence se kundigheid en haar oortuiging dat selfs 'n museum 'n moderne webtuiste kan hê. Baie navrae word ook direk vanaf die webtuiste na ons e-posadres herlei, om kontak met die museum te maak is nou soveel makliker.

Skenkings aan die museum en hier verwys ek na historiese artefakte en dokumente, het eksponensieel gegroei. Ons het onder andere 'n groot versameling artefakte en dokument van Ds. Gawie Basson en sy oorlede skoonpa Mnr. Jaap Meyer gekry, kombuis artefakte en plaasimplimente van Uysela Theron Smith, baie poppe, Murray artefakte van Mev. Lilla Komnick en vele meer. Ons het bv. ook die Grootkerk se dokumente versameling ontvang. Ons aanwinsregister is op datum asook die driekaart- aanwinsstelsel.

Ons is groot dank verskuldig aan die ouditeursfirma van Wyk Theron wat ons op 'n gereelde basis te hulp snel. Die implementering van die nuwe *Sage*-boekhoustelsel wat hulle voorgestel het, het Me. Van Wyk se taak aansienlik verminder en die hoop bestaan dat dit die ouditerings-proses hierdie jaar glad sal laat verloop. Ons is ook een van die eerste museums in die provinsie wat hierdie stelsel implementeer. Me. van Wyk kwyd haar uitstekend van haar taak en ons is bevoorreg om haar aan die stuur van ons finansies te hê.

Wat die toekoms betref sal die nuwe verhoogde subsidie van R1 miljoen rand ons beslis help om ons doelwitte te bereik en wil ons graag ons dank uitspreek teenoor die Department van Sport, Rekreasie, Kuns en Kultuur in die Ooskaap vir hierdie volgehoue ondersteuning.

Dit is vir my 'n groot plesier om Mej. Khanya Mbaile en Me. Margaret Nkxanka as permanente trusteeaadsaanstellings te verwelkom. Ons

weet dat julle baie gelukkig hier sal wees en ek is baie seker dat julle hier is om te bly. Julle is voorwaar 'n aanwinst vir hierdie museum en lewer werk van hoogstaande. Mr. Yandisa Nkondo, whose surname means "church," welcome to our museum family. It has been heartwarming to witness how quickly you have adapted to our routines and the enthusiasm you bring to your work.

The past five years have flown by swiftly. It has been a privilege to journey alongside a remarkable and supportive Board of Trustees. Although your tenure concluded earlier this year, I am deeply grateful that you have chosen to continue serving during this interim period. My hope is that all of you will be re-appointed, provided you remain available. You have been incredibly supportive, understanding, and, in my experience, the finest Board of Trustees I have had the pleasure to work with. I want to especially acknowledge Mrs. Patricia Wallis, whose uninterrupted 30-year tenure as a board member exemplifies dedication and commitment.

I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Mr. Peter Whitlock, who has led this board with care, consideration, and a profound understanding of the institution's needs and challenges. His kindness and respect towards our patrons, fellow board members, and staff have been greatly appreciated. Thank you.

To my colleagues, I hope we will continue to dance and sing every Monday morning. It brings me great joy to share in your achievements, and it is heartwarming to witness how we support each other during challenging times. We are more than colleagues because we pray together and persevere together. Thank you for all your sacrifices and for consistently going the extra mile. Most of all, thank you for fostering a happy and healthy working environment.

For the past 27 years, I have neglected to mention my husband and my family, perhaps believing it was not the appropriate time or place. Yet, my husband is the one who gets up at night when the museum's alarm is triggered, and my son has transported numerous artifacts from Cape Town to Graaff-Reinet. My entire family never complains when I fit

museum business in between our holiday plans; they have grown accustomed to it and accept that the museum is an integral part of my life. In conclusion, I would like to thank my family for their understanding and unwavering support throughout the past year.

Ladies and Gentlemen, a detailed annual report will be sent to your inboxes or post boxes in the next month or two.

Thank you.

Here follows a detailed report:



At the beginning of the fiscal year, the museum's annual subsidy stood at R540,000. However, by the end of 2023, these funds had already been depleted, forcing us to rely on reserves from the Rupert Covid Grant (2020) to cover operational expenses until the next subsidy transfer. This recurring challenge underscores the importance of financial planning—not only to ensure that all funds are allocated within the fiscal year but also to make provisions for potential delays in the disbursement of the annual subsidy. A depleted subsidy is, in many ways, a testament to the responsible and efficient disbursement of funds. However, it also places the museum in an extremely precarious position. Projects scheduled for the first quarter of the year often face delays, while those in the fourth quarter must be approached with great caution, as we carefully manage the dwindling resources at our disposal.

Security remained a major concern following burglaries that resulted in the loss of a generator and exterior lighting, along with vandalism. Additional security beams, an alarm system, and a night watchman were employed at a significant cost.

The security bill was further inflated by the purchase of meters of razor wire, that was installed at the back of Reinet House and at the Old Residency. All insurance claims were settled by the end of the 2023 financial year which allowed the museum the opportunity to start the new fiscal year on a clean slate.

Despite these financial hurdles, the museum's financial position remains stable. As in previous years, a significant portion of the subsidy was allocated to essential expenses, including insurance premiums, municipal bills, security, and general operational costs. Later in the year, the financial strain intensified due to a substantial increase in

salary expenses. This was primarily due to the unfortunate illness of two staff members, necessitating additional support. Furthermore, the Board of Trustees funded the appointment of a custodian and receptionist, ensuring continued service delivery. Salaries for Board-appointed staff were primarily covered through admission fees, sales, and ad hoc fundraising efforts.

While the museum has managed to weather these financial challenges, the ever-increasing cost of living and inflation will inevitably take their toll. We continue to fight an uphill battle to make ends meet. Looking ahead, additional government support—whether through the creation of new posts or a significant increase in our annual subsidy—will be crucial in ensuring the museum’s long-term sustainability.

Visitor numbers fluctuated throughout the year, with a total of **2,520 patrons** from April 2023 to March 2024. Admission and sales revenue amounted to **R105,141**, reflecting a moderate increase compared to 2022 figures. *Stoeptasting* recorded minimal visitor engagement; however, an impromptu wedding generated R3,500 in donations.

Operational challenges included delays in subsidy transfers due to administrative issues, unexpected expenses such as security upgrades and municipal rate increases, and an increase in salary costs due to staff shortages. Damage to Urquhart House’s gates due to a runaway vehicle and an accident involving the museum’s Ranger vehicle also incurred insurance-covered expenses.

On a more positive note, funding from the Rupert Covid Relief Grant made it possible to produce the *Cradock Street Cemetery Register*—a sterling publication meticulously researched and compiled by Prof. Johannes Haarhoff. His remarkable efforts in assembling this volume have resulted in an invaluable reference work and a feather in the cap of the Graaff-Reinet Museum. We hope to complete the second volume in the new fiscal year.

OPVOEDKUNDIGE PROGRAMME

Aangesien talle skole met die aanvang van die jaarlikse atletiek- en krieketseisoen, asook verskeie sporttoernooie besig is, verskuif die Museums se fokus aan die begin van elke jaar na kleuterskole en dagsorgsentrums in ons gemeenskap. Op 14 en 15 Maart het ons die voorreg gehad om Khanyisa Dagsorgsentrum by die museum te verwelkom. Leerders, tussen die ouderdom van een en vyf jaar het die besoek terdeë geniet, asook die museumpersoneel wat hulle op 'n begeleide toer geneem het. Die besoek is afgesluit met 'n inkleur-aktiwiteit waarin verskeie belangrike artefakte en voorstellings van museumgeboue uitgebeeld is, byvoorbeeld fossiele, die gewel van Reinethuis, die Riena Reinet-poppe en die historiese wingerd. As deel van die besoek is verversings aan al die kinders en onderwysers uitgedeel.



Die Leerdertjies van Khanyisa Dagsorg

Die Museum is weer aangewys as een van *Twinkl* se lys van die beste museums in Suid-Afrika.

Die lys kan aanlyn by <https://www.twinkl.co.za/blog/twinkls-best-museums-to-visit-in-south-africa-in-2023> besigtig word.

Op 7 Augustus het ons die Graad 5-leerders van Union High School ontvang, wat 'n spesiale toer van die fossiel- en rotskunsuitstalling versoek het. Op Woensdag, 4 Oktober, het die museum die voorreg gehad om 'n dinamiese groep jong veldwagterstudente van die Karoo Nasionale Park in Beaufort-Wes te verwelkom. Benewens hul studieveld wat natuurbewaring insluit, dek hul kurrikulum ook erfenisstudie. Hierdie toegewyde studente is besig met 'n driejaar-opleidingsprogram wat hulle sal toerus met 'n diepgaande begrip van biodiversiteit en die beginsels van bewaring.

COMMITMENT TO SERVICE DELIVERY:

The Graaff-Reinet Museum remains steadfast in its commitment to preserving and sharing heritage through acquisitions, research, and public engagement.

A variety of artifacts were entrusted to the museum this year, including a collection of scales and implements from Mrs. Naudé, documents and artifacts from Rev. Basson's collection, and a selection of items from Ms. Elsabe Hayes of Pretoria. Due to spatial constraints, only Riena Reinet dolls continue to be accepted into the collection. Public expectations that all donated artifacts be placed on display rather than stored remain a challenge, particularly when items do not align with current exhibition themes. All newly acquired artifacts were properly fumigated and cataloged using the three-card acquisition system. Donors received formal acknowledgment and acquisition documentation.

Research inquiries increased significantly with several in-person visits and numerous electronic inquiries covering topics such as historical rainfall records, Adendorp Primary School, Meindert Noome, and buried time capsules in Graaff-Reinet. Notably, Dr. Kristien Potgieter sought information on the township of Kroonvale and the local water furrow system for her novel, and Professors Ronnie Donaldson and Matilda Burden collaborated on a survey regarding the proposed name change of the town. The museum assisted various researchers, including an Environmental History Honours student from the University of Pretoria, who spent two weeks working in the archives despite financial challenges related to local transport costs.

A major research achievement was the completion of *The Cemetery Register of Cradock Street Cemetery*, compiled by Prof. Haarhoff. This document integrates historical cemetery records from 1844 to 1910, providing an invaluable genealogical resource. Ten copies of the cemetery register was printed, with a few copies sold already at R1000 each.

The museum continues to leverage social media to reach a wider audience. A Facebook post on hunting in the Karoo garnered over 1,500 impressions, 1,474 reaches, and 461 engagements. Since re-establishing the museum's Facebook page in September 2023, it has gained 900 followers and 750 likes, while the Graaff-Reinet History Page now boasts 1,312 members.

The museum also played a role in public tourism initiatives, with a presentation at a South African Tourism Services Association (SASTA) event. Despite organisational challenges at the event, the museum's contributions to tourism in the town, were effectively communicated.

The museum continued to assist schools and students with research projects, including historical information on Graaff-Reinet and its educational institutions. Notable inquiries included a request for a

photograph of a former teacher's college student, which was successfully located within our archives. The museum remains a vital resource for both academic and amateur researchers, as evidenced by the steady stream of genealogical inquiries related to families such as Kruger, Adendorp, and Meyer.

The museum continues to welcome visitors from across the globe, with a significant number coming from the Netherlands. Tourists from the USA, Germany, France, the UK, and China also make their way through our doors, along with travelers from SADC countries such as Mauritius, Namibia, and Mozambique. Despite this international interest, our visitor and admission records confirm that the majority of our guests remain domestic travelers.

Visitors consistently praise the museum precinct, the friendly and knowledgeable staff, and the collections. Their appreciation is reflected in the visitor book, where many have left encouraging remarks.

The Building is well-kept and Clean

Informative information

Pragtig!

Incredible, informative and friendly

Ongelooflike versameling, so netjies!

Looked like we're in Holland. Nice!

Kultureel verrykend!

Pragtig uitgestal!

Military Museum fantastic!

Pragtig! Pragtig! Pragtig! Kon die geskiedenis voel!

VERSAMELINGS EN UITSTALLINGS

Die digitalisering van die museum se versameling het 'n nuwe fase betree, aangesien ons fokus nou ook genealogiese materiaal in die argief insluit. Goeie vordering is gemaak en ons het tot by vanne wat met 'H' begin, gevorder. Mnr. Ngandi het die grootste deel van die dokumente geskandeer en sal gedurende stil periodes voortgaan met hierdie taak.

Die aanwinsregister is op datum. Verskeie nuwe skenkings is ontvang, meestal kombuisware soos worsmakers, glas- en keramiekware. Hierdie items is reeds skoongemaak om roes te verwyder en is aangewins. Mnr. Ngandi is steeds besig om 'n aanwinslys vir hoofkantoor saam te stel. Sedert die aanvang van die aanwinsregister in 1956, het die museum verskeie uitdagings ervaar, waarvan die Reinethuis se brand in 1980 een van die grootste struikelblokke was, aangesien talle aanwinsdokumente in die brand verwoes is.

Ten spyte van ons versoeke om skenkers te ontmoedig, ontvang ons steeds aanbiedinge van poppe. Ongelukkig het ons eenvoudig nie meer plek daarvoor nie. Skenkers is dikwels teleurgesteld oor ons besluit, maar in die meeste gevalle is die poppe nie uniek nie en het ons reeds soortgelyke voorbeelde in die versameling. Tans neem die museum slegs Riena Reinet poppe in ontvangs.

Die museum het weer 'n boekbindingswerkswinkel aangebied. Alhoewel die werkswinkel aanvanklik as 'n fondsinsamelingsprojek beplan was, was die belangstelling teleurstellend, en slegs nege mense het uiteindelik die werkswinkel bygewoon. George Wentzel, die fasiliteerder wie die kursus aangebied het, moes sy fooi verlaag, en gevolglik het die museum geen wins gemaak nie. Nietemin het drie van ons kollegas waardevolle vaardighede aangeleer in die herstel en

restourasie van historiese boeke. Daar was ook drie deelnemers uit Johannesburg, en slegs twee plaaslike inwoners.



Colleagues and Members of the Public attending The Bookbinding Course

Prof. Haarhoff en mnr. Johann Dames werk tans in die argief om deur die sakke en bokse wat argivale kerkgeskiedenis materiaal bevat, te sorteer wat tydens inperking van die Grootkerk ontvang is. Hulle vorder goed en binnekort sal ons van die dokumente in ons museumargief assimileer óf aan die kerk teruggee word. Hulle beplan 'n klein museum wat sal handel oor kerkgeskiedenis.

Me. Ngxaka doen haar bes om skoonmaakwerk te monitor. Om haar te ondersteun, is werkroosters aangepas sodat al die manlike personeel nou ook moet help met skoonmaak, afstof en poleerwerk. Dit is egter duidelik dat me. Ngxaka bykomende hulp benodig met hierdie groot

werkslading. Ongelukkig het ons tans nie die finansiële middele om 'n permanente werker aan te stel nie.

THE HOURGLASS

The museum's newsletter, *The Hourglass*, continues to serve as a valuable platform for sharing historical and cultural insights. Both editions were content-rich and distributed digitally. Many of our followers, with reliable internet access, found great value in the digital format, appreciating its convenience and ease of sharing. Those interested can explore past and recent editions of *The Hourglass* by visiting <https://graaffreinetmuseum.co.za/newsletters/>.

In addition to the digital version, hard copies were also widely distributed to everyone on our mailing list. We are especially grateful to Professor Haarhoff for his insightful contributions to both editions.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Rupert Historical Homes Covid-Relief Fund remains a vital source of support for the museum. Originally established to alleviate the financial strain caused by the Covid-19 lockdown, these funds have continued to assist the museum in various ways. This year, the fund was used to sponsor the printing of the cemetery register, an important resource for genealogical and historical research. The Rupert Historical Homes Foundation maintains a keen interest in the museum, a relationship we deeply value and appreciate.

Education and community engagement are central to the museum's mission. Our partnership with local schools and the Department of Education has allowed us to play an active role in education. By hosting

school visits and educational programs, we provide learners with immersive, hands-on experiences, which not only support the school curriculum but also foster an appreciation for history and heritage among young people.

Additionally, the museum collaborates with tertiary institutions, offering internship opportunities to students. This arrangement benefits both parties—students gain valuable practical experience, while the museum receives much-needed assistance, helping to alleviate staff shortages. This year we hosted Ms Shania Syfens and Ms Amoré Fletcher. Ms Syfens frequently lends a helping hand despite her internship expiring in July 2023. This mutually beneficial relationship strengthens the museum's capacity while equipping students with hands-on training.

As a key member of the Eastern Cape Museum Collective, the museum remains committed to knowledge-sharing within the broader heritage sector. Through collaborations with institutions such as the Sobukwe Museum, The Rupert Museum in both Stellenbosch and Graaff-Reinet, The Graaff-Reinet Heritage Society, The Owl House and Fossil Centre in Nieu-Bethesda, and the Landesmuseum in Hannover, Germany, we actively engage in discussions on policy, museology, job opportunities, and funding avenues. These partnerships play a crucial role in advancing the museum's objectives and ensuring its continued growth and relevance.

UITREIKINGSPROGRAMME

Die tema vir Internasionale Museumdag (IMD) 2023 was "Museums, Sustainability and Well-being" (Museums, Volhoubaarheid en Welstand).

Hierdie tema het gefokus op die rol van museums in die bevordering van volhoubare praktyke en die bevordering van die gemeenskap se

fisiese, emosionele en sosiale welstand. Die Spekboom-uitstalling, wat spesiaal vir hierdie geleentheid ontwerp is, het werklik die kollig op die Graaff-Reinet Museum geplaas tydens die Internasionale Museumdagvieringe in Makhanda. Die uitstalling het die belangstelling en verbeelding van beide leerders en amptenare aangegryp, en almal was dit eens dat ons die 2de prys verdien het. Ons is baie dankbaar teenoor *Country Mouse Graphic Design*, Union Hoërskool, wat hul Spekboomstaander aan ons geleen het, Rachel's Garden, wat handroom en Spekboom-seep voorsien het, en Boundless, wat die pragtige Spekboom Koedoe-koppe verskaf het waarmee ons die stalletjie versier het. Dit was voorwaar 'n spanpoging.



Die Spekboomstalletjie Tydens Internasionale Museumdag 2023

Tydens 'n geleentheid waartydens die Toerismekantoor SASTA (South African Tourism Services Association) onthaal het, is die museum versoek om inligting oor die museum en sy prestasies te deel. Baie vrae

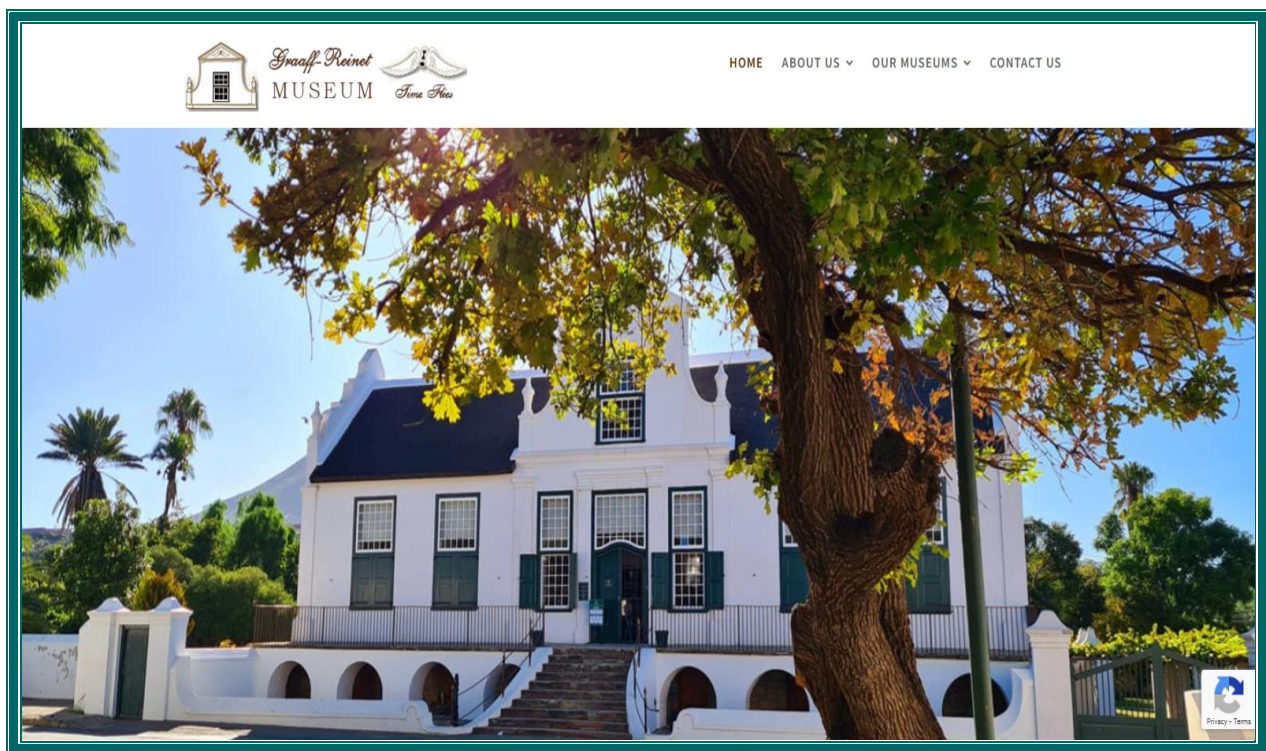
is oor die produksie van Withond gevra en mense was verbaas dat die museum self hierdie wit brandewyn distilleer.

Ons *Facebook*- en *Graaff-Reinet History Group* bly steeds 'n gewilde platform met verskeie interessante bydraes en navrae. Ons maak hoofsaaklik staat op sosiale media om die museum meer toeganklik vir die publiek te maak en om die publiek terselfdertyd op hoogte van sake te hou. Ons nuwe en moderne webwerf het ook 'n groot rol gespeel in ons bemarkingspogings. Tans is ons in staat om inligting oor gebeure en ook openingsure op die webwerf aan te bring, anders as in die verlede toe ons die webontwerper moes kontak.

Ons het ook die voorreg gehad om deur *Radio KFM* oor die geskiedenis van die dorp en museum ondervra te word. Die onderhoud is op baie kort kennisgewing gereël en dieselfde dag uitgesaai. Alhoewel dit net 30 sekondes lank was, was dit 'n ongelooflike bemarkings-geleentheid.

MARKETING AND MEDIA

In the past year, The Graaff-Reinet Museum has made great strides in expanding its reach through marketing and media. In September 2023, we launched our new website, www.graaffreinetmuseums.co.za, offering a user-friendly platform for visitors to explore and stay updated on our events.



The Homepage of the New Website

Although print space remains limited, *The Graaff-Reinet Advertiser* has continued to provide valuable coverage of the museum's activities, keeping us connected to the local community. The newspaper continues to offer valuable coverage of our activities, ensuring we remain visible within the local community.

Beyond print, the museum's presence has been boosted by the tourism office, which actively shares our events across their Facebook page. We would like to extend our gratitude to other pages such as *Grand Karoo*, *Graaff-Reinet Magazine*, and *the Nieu Bethesda*, *The Old House & Great Karoo* for also sharing our events and museum news. These platforms have become key in reaching a wider audience and encouraging engagement.

One of the highlights of the year was a beautiful article on Graaff-Reinet in the winter edition of *Platteland Magazine*. The piece, which focused on the town's charm and attractions, was illustrated with charming

photographs and generated a wave of positive responses on Facebook, drawing attention to both the town and the museum.

Our Spekboom exhibition also caught the public's eye in May 2023, with an article in *The Graaff-Reinet Advertiser* generating significant interest.

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Members of The Board of Trustees

Under the capable leadership of Mr Peter Whitlock, the Board of Trustees of the Graaff-Reinet Museum has been a driving force in the museum's success. With six meetings held each year, the Board, which consists mostly of appointees from the MEC of Sport, Recreation, Arts, and Culture of the province, has shown incredible dedication and a true understanding of the challenges museums face. The Board also includes two representatives from the Friends of the Museum, further strengthening its community connection. However, there are still vacancies to be filled, including a municipal official position and a

representative from the Sarah Baartman District Municipality, both of which have never been appointed.

As their term comes to a close in 2024, it is evident that much work remains, and we hope they will be willing to stand for a second term, continuing to guide the museum with their commitment and expertise.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION MATTERS

Administrative matters remain one of our key priorities, encompassing the preparation of quarterly and financial reports, record-keeping, and personnel affairs.

A highlight of our administrative calendar is the Annual General Meeting, a statutory requirement that provides a platform for presenting the financial report for approval and electing new representatives for the Friends of the Museum. It also offers the public an opportunity to engage with the Board of Trustees. In preparation for this event, we ensure that the financial statements are audited and the annual report is compiled. Special recognition is due to Ms. Denise van Wyk, our dedicated financial officer, whose meticulous work ensures a smooth audit process. Her responsibilities include obtaining quotations, processing payments, calculating staff salaries, submitting insurance claims, and maintaining financial records and reports. Under Ms. van Wyk's guidance, over a hundred hard copies of the Annual Report were printed. The report's design and layout required significant effort, resulting in a professional publication, complemented by a custom-designed cover by *Country Mouse Design*.

Monthly visitor statistics and outreach programme reports are submitted to the Department, and staff regularly undergo training on administrative processes as required. Beyond the financial year-end and its associated responsibilities, administration primarily involved responding to Head Office requests and attending various meetings.

Multiple staff meetings took place to prepare for year-end procedures and operational matters. Additionally, Ms. van Wyk and Mr. Ngandi submitted a report to Head Office outlining staff training needs.

Security remained a major concern, with two burglaries and an incident resulting in the destruction of the gate at Urquhart House. Considerable time and effort were spent handling insurance claims, reporting incidents to the SAPS, and obtaining supporting documents. This included securing quotes for the repair of the gate, replacement of the generator and electrical leads, and stolen lighting. The paperwork involved in such claims is extensive, but Ms. van Wyk has become highly proficient in managing these processes.

All leave applications were successfully processed through the *Isisele* platform, and the District Office confirmed that all PMDS reviews were up to date. The diligence of Ms. Fiona Williamson, Operations Manager at the Sarah Baartman District Office, ensured that the general assistant post, vacated in December 2023 was immediately advertised at the end of 2023.

Additional administrative tasks included processing abscondment submissions related staff absences and efforts to encourage them to return to work.

The resignation of Mr. Mahlasela as the Assistant Manager: Museums and Heritage came as an unexpected shock, especially given the smooth administrative operations during his tenure. However, his contributions to the sector, including the IMD competition, board member stipends, and his general support for our institution, remain invaluable.

A monitoring meeting, attended by the Deputy Manager of Museums and Heritage was held on 14 September 2023 at Reinet House.

Following this meeting, a monitoring tool report was completed and submitted.

In preparation for the annual strategic planning session, which took place on 5 and 6 October 2023 in East London, the Museum's annual strategic plan was also submitted. All our strategic plan, operational plans, projected budgets and 3 -5 year operational plans were also updated, especially in view of the fact that these documents are required for the annual transfer of the subsidy. .

Despite the challenges, the past year has been one of growth and efficiency, thanks to a dedicated team that continues to ensure the smooth running of the Museum's administrative functions.

STAFF MATTERS

With the newly upgraded security system in place, ensuring the safety of the museum has become a more intricate process than in the past. All staff, including relief personnel, received thorough training on operating the security beams and activating the new alarm system. To maintain the integrity of these measures, staff members are now required to check on one another during closing times, ensuring that all systems are properly armed before leaving for the day.

Staffing changes marked the past year with both challenges and transitions. Mrs. Amory Fletcher concluded her tenure to stay home and care for her child, while Ms. Syfens was asked to remain a little longer to assist with a new appointment. Unfortunately, the candidate selected for Reinet House took weeks to consider the job offer, only to ultimately decline it, failing to report for duty on 1 June. Ms. Syfens, having stepped in to cover for Mr. Ngandi, bid us farewell at the end of June 2023. Her contributions were invaluable, and she will be greatly missed.

At the beginning of August 2023, Ms. Khanya Mbaile joined the team. Her previous experience at the Tourism Office made for a seamless transition, and she quickly adapted to her new role. With diligence and professionalism, she ensures that all attendance sheets are signed and handles difficult visitors and tour guides with remarkable composure. Interviews for the driver position were completed in August 2023, and on 2 October, Mr. Yandisa Nkonzo, from Mthatha, joined the museum. He adapted well to the team and, with a driver's license to his name, his skills will prove useful whenever Mr. van Rhyners is unavailable.

Meanwhile, Ms. Margaret Ngxaka was informed that financial constraints prevented the museum from offering her a permanent position. As a result, she was instead offered another six-month contract.

All staff contracts for the 2023/24 financial year were successfully completed, and staff reviews—including those from 2022/23—were submitted on time. However, one staff member's review remained incomplete due to an unfinished work cycle. Budgetary constraints meant that only two staff members received a modest 1.5% salary increase.

Professional development remained a priority. From 10 to 13 October, Mr. Ngandi and Ms. van Wyk attended a four-day departmental strategic planning and marketing training workshop, while Ms. van Wyk also underwent training in the SAGE accounting system. Furthering their digital skills, Ms. van Wyk, Ms. Mbaile, and Dr. Kayster participated in a workshop on various social media and marketing platforms, including *Facebook*, *ChatGPT*, *Canva*, and *QR Codes*. Funded by the District Municipality and presented by the Tourism Office, this session proved highly beneficial. The presenter will now provide additional training to staff on operating the museum's new digital screen, which boasts state-of-the-art features.

In an exciting turn of events, the museum won a trip to Germany as part of its success in the IMD competitions. This achievement was a testament to the collective effort of all staff. However, despite Ms. van Wyk's diligence in securing a passport, the trip was ultimately canceled, leaving staff deeply disappointed. Nonetheless, there remains hope that this opportunity may still materialize in the future.

Throughout the year, moments of both joy and sorrow impacted the museum family. We extended our deepest condolences to Mr. van Rhyners, who tragically lost two sisters to cancer within two months. Our thoughts and prayers remain with him and his family.

On 14 September 2023, Ms. Booysen was admitted to the ICU ward at Cuyler Clinic in Uitenhage. A visit on 11 October found her on the road to recovery, but sadly, in January 2023, she passed away after a short illness. Her unexpected passing was a profound loss for the museum. A memorial service was held, offering much-needed solace and closure. The dedication of Ms. van Wyk, Ms. Ngxaka, and Ms. Mbaile in supporting her during her illness and in organizing the service was truly commendable.

Amidst these challenges, there were also moments of celebration. In December 2023, Ms. van Wyk welcomed her granddaughter, Scarlett, who brought much joy to her family.

Despite the many hurdles faced throughout the year, the museum staff continued to demonstrate unwavering dedication. Understaffing remains one of the most pressing challenges, with no immediate plans to implement the long-awaited organogram. The burden of staff salaries weighs heavily on the museum's budget, yet the essential work must continue to uphold the institution's stellar reputation. Though overworked, the team remains deeply committed, ensuring the smooth running of daily operations. Their dedication and loyalty are commendable, as they consistently go above and beyond to keep the

museum afloat. Their resilience and teamwork have ensured the continued success of the museum, and we look forward to another year of growth and perseverance.

Gereelde instandhouding is 'n noodsaaklikheid om te verseker dat die museumkompleks so min as moontlik uitgebreide onderhoudswerk benodig. Hierdie voorkomende maatreël verseker dat onderhoudskostes laag bly.

Ongelukkig is hierdie jaar deur verskeie uitdagings gekenmerk, insluitend herhaalde inbrake en kabeldiefstal, wat gelei het tot beskadigde slotte, deure en vensters. Die personeel het addisionele veiligheidsmaatreëls getref deur lemmetjiesdraad aan te bring, donker areas te belig en bykomende diefwering en veiligheidshekke te installeer.



The Old Vine in the Garden of Reinet House

Tans word die tuine gereeld skoongemaak, veral na swaar reëns wat tot welige onkruid lei, plante is versorg, en winter- en somerbolle is in April en September onderskeidelik geplant. Die kompleks word goed versorg waarvan kan die talle fotosessies wat bespreek word, getuig.

Verskeie instandhoudingsprojekte is suksesvol voltooi. 'n Nuwe inverter is by die Ou Residency geïnstalleer, en alle brandkrane en brandslange is in stand gehou. Die lekkende dak van die Militêre Museum en Ou Residensie is 'n voortdurende probleem, en 'n kenner sal geraadpleeg moet word vir 'n oplossing. Die museum se voertuie en historiese waens is ook versorg, asook alle hout- en metaalwerk.

Die historiese wingerd is deur Mnr. Guy Webber ondersoek, wat bevestig het dat die bestaande versorgingsmetodes steeds effektief is. Alhoewel die druiwe klein bly as gevolg van ouderdom, toon die wingerd geen tekens van swaminfeksie nie.



We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of the museum over the past year.

A special thank you to the Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture for their continued support, which enables us to preserve and share our rich heritage. We are deeply appreciative of our sponsors and donors, whose generosity makes it possible for us to undertake essential restoration and conservation projects.

To our volunteers, who give their time and energy so selflessly, we are truly grateful. Your dedication is invaluable, and your efforts help bring our museum to life.

A sincere word of thanks to the families of our staff, whose unwavering support allows us to carry out our work with passion and commitment.

We also acknowledge our service providers, whose expertise and professionalism ensure that our museum remains in excellent condition, and who always rise to the occasion when challenges arise.

Thank you.

Anziske Kayster
Hoof van die Museum
05 Julie 2024

Month April 2023- March 2024	No. of SA Adults	No of Children	Foreign visitors	Total
April	202	71	49	322
May	190	48	29	267
June	194	110	63	367
July	290	114	40	444
August	169	139	115	423
September	196	53	77	326
October	285	56	69	410
November	182	135	127	444
December	379	127	77	583
January	338	114	83	535
February	159	6	152	317
March	304	68	104	476
			TOTAL	4 914

Visitor Statistics: April 2023 - March 2024

