



Rose's

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ROUND-UP

A privately-published monthly newsletter covering mainly snippets of Karoo history * Copyright: Rose Willis *
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SPOTLIGHT ON THE FUTURE

Tel No. 051 401 3812

Two top conferences will be held in the Karoo in October. The first, the Second Karoo Development Conference, takes place in Beaufort West from October 14 to 17. Discussions will focus on the future of the region, its people, and their environmental, ecological and economic role in South Africa. The programme will include talks on the effect of the SKA (Square Kilometer Array) and “fracking”, the gas exploitation of the Karoo’s shale beds. Tourism, mining management, agricultural development, the role of small towns in the general economic infrastructure, poverty alleviation and job creation, will also be covered by top speakers. There will be an exhibition of food, crafts, products and tours. More info from: Anita Harmse - HarmseA@ufs.ac.za

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE DRYLAND

Tel No. 021 424 3995

The Arid Zone Ecology Forum will follow hot on the heels of the Karoo Development Conference. This is scheduled to be held in Worcester from October 17 to 19. Topics will include emerging threats in the arid zone and finding solutions to cope with these. As ever there will be many interesting papers by top speakers. The session on climate change will include cutting edge material, say the organizers, and they expect interactive discussions during this part of the programme to be a highlight. Other topics include the impact of bush encroachment, fire, land use, development and rehabilitation. Worcester has several major attractions for delegates to enjoy. Among these are the Karoo Botanical Gardens, which is over 90 years old, the Nekkie Wetlands and Kleinplaspas Museum. More details from: Wendy Paisley, Cell: 072 625 0274, Fax2email: 086 759 2859 or contact azef.sa@gmail.com.

COMING SOON: GOOD STORIES, GOOD FOOD

Contact: info@doyle.co.za

Keep an eye out for Sydda Essop’s book *Karoo Kitchen: Food and Life Stories from the Heart of South Africa*. It lands this month and will be on the shelves at reputable booksellers soon. This well-illustrated, hardcover, 250-page book is a must for Karoo lovers. Not only does it contain fantastic recipes, its stories are unforgettable.

MORE FOR VENISON LOVERS

Contact: annatjie.r@vodamail.co.za

Food and fun are central to Annatjie Reynold’s venison preparation courses. After a two-day session at Nieuwerus farm, near Richmond, praise just rolled in. Everyone learned a few new tricks and techniques. Jenifer Victor Meyer said she ended with far more meat than ever before from a springbok carcass. Charlene Buchner loved learning how to make carbanossi, salami and “bacon.” Annatjie’s full-day demo course in June was limited to ten delegates, included lunch and was also a winner. The general consensus, among those who attended, was that venison preparation would never again be the same.

AUTUMN SCHOOL A WINNER

Prince Albert’s inaugural Creative Autumn School was a huge success. It covered much more than just fine art and good cooking. Delegates learned a great deal about the Karoo, its people and cultural heritage. Organiser Sonja McKenna was congratulated for initiating the idea. Locals hope it will be an annual event.

A SALUTE TO WOMEN AND WRITERS OF THE KAROO

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The third Schreiner Karoo Writers Festival will be held in Cradock from August 9 to 11. The festival has been broadened this year to honour all writers of these vast plains. This year's comprehensive programme will include talks by some well known authors and promises to be unforgettable. Top speakers will introduce the special theme, *Celebrating Women*, on August 9, National Women's Day. Jeaneatte Eve, author of *A Literary Guide to the Eastern Cape: Places and the Voices of Writers*, will give an illustrated talk on the flora mentioned in Olive Schreiner's writings. Hillary Lewis-Soma will discuss how the Schreiner sisters, Henrietta and Olive, triumphed over adversity in a talk entitled *Sisters Triumphant*. Karoo born and bred writer, E K M Dido, the first black woman in South Africa to publish a book in Afrikaans, will discuss this work, *Die Storie van Monica Peters*. Ingrid Wolfaardt will present her book, *Heartfruit*, a sweeping saga and a revisionist "farm novel" that traces the story of a South African fruit farm and its transition from being white owned to a new dispensation of collective ownership. *Heartfruit* is the manuscript with which she recently obtained her Master's Degree (cum laude) in Creative Writing at the University of Cape Town under Professor Etienne van Heerden. A talk entitled "*A Great Thing Happened in Cradock*" covers the work of the child diarist, Iris Vaughan, who lived in Cradock from 1892–1897. This will be presented by Sigi Howes, the Head of Cape Town's Education Museum.

AND THE TALKS WILL ROLL ON

Tel No. 082 410 5596

An exciting range of literature will be read, launched and discussed at this year's Schreiner Karoo Writers Festival. Some of the works of one of Cradock's most famous sons, Professor Guy Butler, will be read at Schreiner House. Cradock's well known poet and widely published short story writer, Clinton V du Plessis, will launch his collection, *Flitse* at Albert House and Stephen Gray will also launch his anthology, *Taking Off*. Aubrey (Gus) Jones, plans to come out specially from London for this festival, to discuss his book, *Scott's Forgotten Surgeon*, the biography of Dr Reginald Koetlitz. He and his beloved French-born wife Marie Louise (nee Butez) once lived in Cradock and theirs is a poignant love story. They died within two hours of each other in the Cradock Hospital on January 10, 1916. Both are buried in Cradock. Other speakers include Frans Boekkooi and festival founder, Darryl Earl David, who will discuss *Art Inspired by Literature*; Etienne van Heerden will discuss *Haai Karoo*, a collection of his previously published stories and Professor Elwyn Jenkins, from the Department of English Studies at Unisa, will discuss *Little Houses*, *The Child's Day* by Olive Schreiner and *The Chronicles of Peach Grove Farm* by Nellie Fincher. A special walking tour of literary interest will be conducted by raconteur, explorer and senior technical and education officer at National English Language Museum, Basil Mills and there will be an exhibition of literary-inspired art and sculptures. Two of the sculptures were inspired by Etienne's novel *Die Snye van Mario Salvati* (*The Long Silence of Mario Salvati*). The grand finale of the festival will be *An Audience With Miss Hobbouse*, a play written by journalist and playwright, Tony Jackman. There will also be excursions to places of interest, such as the Mountain Zebra National Park. For bookings and further information contact Lisa Ker at e-mail info@tuishuise.co.za.

A GREAT LOSS TO THE FRONTIER

The *Graaff-Reinet Herald of Wednesday, January 26, 1853*, reported the deaths of William Cole Currie and John Bouwer. The newspaper reported that: "Our frontier has been deprived of two brave and valuable men. They were the best quality of men that any country could produce." The news of William's death reached the people of Somerset on a Sunday evening and it shocked most people in the town. He was a valued member of the Somerset Border Police. The newspaper stated that "he had been severely wounded while out serving with a police patrol in the Zuurberg area". A "murderous gang of rebel Hottentots, led by the notorious Hans Brander", attacked the patrol and William was wounded in the thigh by a charge of "loopers" (gunshot). Some of the bullets had severed an artery and William bled to death. John Bouwer, who was also wounded in this attack died on New Year's Day.

MORE ON THE WINDS OF WAR

Military historian Col Graham du Toit says: “I read the item ‘*The Winds of War*’ in the last *Round-up* with interest. The unit referred to was the Graaff-Reinet and Beaufort Levy. Formed in 1850, this unit was commanded by Captain Heathcote and consisted of 40 mounted men and 190 infantry. It served from 1850 to 1852 in the Eighth War on the Eastern Frontier (The War of Umlangeni) and after that in the then Basutoland. The unit mustered by Octavius Bowker was called Bowker’s Rovers. It was raised in the Graaff-Reinet and Somerset East districts and with a strength of 74 men. They served under Commandant B.E. Bowker’s command in 1877 in the Ninth War on the Eastern Frontier (The Nchayechibi War).”

SYLVIA REMEMBERED

Gerald Cubitt, a Round-up reader in Australia, writes: “I read the item about a Sylvia Raphael in the June *Round-up* with great interest. I knew her when she was a schoolgirl. Her father owned the Plaza bioscope (now there is a word I’m sure no one’s heard for years!) in Graaff-Reinet. After being released from prison in Norway, she did public relations work in Pretoria for De Villiers & Schonveldt. If I remember correctly, she returned to Norway in about 1977/78 where she was arrested after a nasty incident when two people were murdered on a yacht at Rhodes (in the Mediterranean). One or other of the Palestinian terrorist groups claimed that it had killed the people and there were rumours that Sylvia had been on board the yacht. She married her defense attorney, who was quite a few years older than her, and they returned to Israel to live on a kibbutz before moving to Pretoria. I am not sure what happened to him after she died.

ANNAEUS WENT HOME

Another reader, John Rhodes, says: “After Sylvia died, her husband, Norwegian-born barrister, Annaeus Schjodt left South Africa and returned to Norway. Annaeus, who was about 17 years older than her, was named after his father (and grandfather). He obtained his law degrees in 1938 and 1947. Sylvia was his third wife. They married in 1976. He was a decorated pilot who served with the RAF during WWII and when peace was declared became a partner in his father’s law firm and later served as a deputy judge. He specialised in libel cases, but was known for the Lillehammer Case in 1974. He defended Sylvia when she was mistakenly arrested with the Mossad agents who killed Moroccan waiter Ahmed Bouchiki, whom they mistook for Ali Hassan Salameh, chief of operations for Black September.”

IN DANGER

The IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) states that unless concerted efforts are made many tortoises will become extinct within a few decades. Among them are two of South Africa’s five Padloper tortoises - the *Homopus Solus* and the *H. Signatus*, (the southern Speckled Padloper), considered to be the world’s smallest tortoise. It is listed as “vulnerable”. Adults do not exceed 10 cm in length. The species lives in warm, dry, rocky outcroppings. It is endangered by its extremely restricted range, loss of habitat, road casualties, climate change, overgrazing, mining and poaching for the pet trade. In South African all tortoises are protected by law. They may not be kept as pets without special permits.

WHAT A PLACE FOR A WEDDING

After circus owner William Pagel died, Aberdeen resident Frank Wilkie took over most of his animals. Frank had collected animals since he was a boy. At one time he had 24 lions. He created a zoo in the little Karoo town of Aberdeen and this came to the attention of the world when Numero Killian and Bubic Maiers got married in one of the lion cages. None of their friends was brave enough to join them there, so the “bridesmaids” were seven lionesses. The only other person in the cage at the time was Frank Wilkie, owner of the lions and a professional lion tamer. The magistrate, who performed the ceremony, wisely in the opinion of the locals, opted to stand outside the cage, writes Bartle Logie in *Traveller’s Joy*.

VITAL ROLE WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN

Joanna Marx recently died in her sleep while visiting friends in London. She will always be remembered in the Karoo for the key role she played in the preservation of the historical architecture. She criss-crossed the Great Karoo, Klein Karoo, Southern Cape and Overberg, like a missionary fiercely preaching conservation and cultural heritage. Joanna developed an interest in conservation while working in London in the sixties. Back in South Africa she joined the National Monuments Council and broadened this interest by undertaking historic surveys in many small Karoo towns, which initially had no knowledge nor appreciation of their architectural heritage. Joanna served on the advisory committees of Gamkaskloof and the Cango Caves. When the South African Historic Resources Agency was created she helped shift the emphasis from the preservation of individual buildings to defining, special qualities of places and cultural landscapes. She was passionate about the Karoo and its historic structures. Her personal enthusiasm helped to convince local authorities and residents of the value of humble structures. The Central Karoo learned a great deal from Joanna. Her enthusiasm rubbed off on everyone from mayors and town clerks to township dwellers. She was a unique person and a tenacious fighter for all she believed in.

IN THE COURTS OF YESTERYEAR

The *Graaff Reinet Herald of August 24, 1853* states that the magistrate had heard many cases of drunkenness, disorderly conduct and of people disturbing the peace, that month. Flora, Applum, Mietje, Dela, Annabel, Abraham and Mark were all found guilty of disturbing the peace and sentenced to three days with hard labour. Betsy Mentoer, an old and habitual offender found guilty of being drunk and disorderly, was fined a guinea. Another servant, Lys was fined 5/5d for the same offence. Robert Smith and a servant girl, Mietjie, who were both found passed out, and lying in the street, were each fined a guinea. Smith paid his fine immediately, but Mietjie served one month with hard labour. Spaas, a servant girl was sentenced to three days in solitary confinement for absconding from her job. Piet Smit, Cornelius Vos, John Henon, George Burnam, Isaac Williams, M S Parkins and Thomas Brent, a resident of Swart Ruggens, were all fined £10 for selling wine and liquor without licences. Prince Phillips was tried for theft and found guilty. He was sentenced to one month with hard labour, the first and last three days to be spent in solitary confinement. However, when Piet Hollander and Simon Piers were arrested for breaking into Burger's Store on Doornplaats and stealing a quantity of brandy, their case was referred to the Attorney General, who handed down a sentence of one month each with hard labour.

ON THE GROCERY LIST OF YESTERYEAR

It is interesting to note what general dealers, the forerunners of the modern supermarkets, stocked. In November, 1847, Dodds and King in Port Elizabeth advertised that a fresh stock of groceries had arrived and were available for shipping to venues inland. Among items just received were: Java Coffee, Rice, various sugars, Tea in 40 and 10 Caddy Chests, English Salt in Lumps and Baskets, assorted pint pickles, ham, loaf cheese, herrings and preserved salmon in tins. Also in the consignment was vinegar in wooden barrels or bottles, the best London soap, wine, Sherry, Port, Madeira and Claret as well as Hollands in glass or stone bottles and demijohns, plus Cognac in Casks or cases of 1 dozen each. Another general dealer, H J Dunnell, stated that they looked forward to receiving orders from inland towns for Cape meal, fine flour, real raisins, French brandy, Geneva, pickles, sauces, jams, jellies, sweetmilk cheese, sugar candy, Mauritius sugar, capers, salad oil, sardines, salmon, red and pickled herrings as well as currants in canisters. Also on their list was allspice, cayenne, olives, mustard, brandied fruits, caper tea, orange pekoe, cherry cordial, cigars and gunpowder. They also advertised London soap, sperm candles, Cavendish tobacco, American chairs, boiled and raw oil, paint in jars and kegs and "white wash" for mixing in barrels.

**Remember always that you not only have the right to be an individual,
you have an obligation to be one - Eleanor Roosevelt**