



## NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPE TOWN BRANCH OF THE SIMON VAN DER STEL FOUNDATION NO 2 2016

### NUWE LEDE/NEW MEMBERS

Ons wil graag die volgende nuwe lede hartlik verwelkom by die Stigting Simon van der Stel:  
We wish to welcome the following new members to the Simon van der Stel Foundation:

Mrs C Van Waesberghe, Mrs J Bishop, Mr M du Toit, Mrs L Brandt

### DONASIES/DONATIONS:

Ons bedank graag vir die volgende lewenslede en gewone lede vir donasies ontvang.  
We are extremely grateful for the donations received from our life and general members:

Mrs A J Chadwick

### RHODES STATUE DEBATE



Debate rages around the future of statues of Cecil John Rhodes. We have three in Cape Town. The bust at Rhodes Memorial has been defaced by having the nose sawn off and attempts have been made to set it on fire. The statue in the Company Gardens was attacked earlier in the year by a group claiming to be workers sent to clean the statue who then whipped out an angle grinder and cut into the rear right ankle; they were chased off by security

guards. The statue on the university campus was also a target and the university sought permission to have it moved to a place of safety. This was granted by Heritage Western Cape on a temporary basis and then approved for permanent removal last month. This approval coming with provisos that the statue be securely housed and further applications have to be made as to where it should be placed, whether it should be cleaned (It has water based paint on it.) and what should be done with the plinth still in place on the Jameson Steps.

Apart from siting it at the Grootte Schuur residence, four offers to house the statue came from the Crow Foundation in the US, the owner of a series of properties adjacent to the Cheetah Foundation at Paardevelei in Somerset West, the Nooitgedacht Estate near Stellenbosch and the South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation (SAIHSC) at Twee Riviere, Langkloof, which is midway between Port Elizabeth and George.

The report says the Crow Foundation was willing to pay for the relocation of the statue to a sculpture garden in Texas "that includes works of Winston Churchill and Vladimir Lenin on condition that the Foundation would become the owner of the statue". The SAIHSC has proposed the relocation of the statue to its campus "where it may serve the purposes of education and research".

The decision to approve its permanent removal was not based on any artistic critique of the work, but solely on its current political / social significance and informed by the fact that the current position was not the original and it was never intended to be a feature of the Jameson steps, but was originally erected further down the slope and only moved when the M3 was built through the campus. Which then led to discussion as to whether the plinth should be removed as well and the steps restored to their original design or whether the platform should remain with some sort of signage to record the statues removal. This last option is favoured by the university as the plinth has become a meeting place for students and they are worried that someone might injure themselves climbing on or off it. Various initiatives have transpired with students spontaneously using the plinth to highlight their issues on the matter.



But we are not alone. The statue on the façade of Rhodes House in Oriel College Oxford University and the plaque in the High Street have both become contentious with student groups demanding they be removed. The plaque was originally set to be removed but the decision has now been made to retain both in place. Claims that the university bowed to pressure from major donors have been denied by the authorities. The celebrated classicist Mary Beard told the students: “The battle isn’t won by taking the statue away and pretending those people didn’t exist. It’s won by empowering those students to look up at Rhodes and friends with a cheery and self-confident sense of unbatterability.” I love that final word!

Closer to home statues of Rhodes have been removed in both Zambia and Zimbabwe, though ironically the simple plaque on his gravesite in the Motopas Hills is still in place.

Closer still there is the strange case of the statue of Rhodes that someone actually wants back! The statue of Rhodes, by empire sculptor John Tweed in 1932, which stood on the platform of the Mahikeng Station (an important stop on Rhodes proposed Cape to Cairo railway line) was removed by Transnet when part of the station was demolished to make way for a shopping mall. The statue was lodged in the train yard and then removed to the Kimberley Club where Mr. Rhodes has become quite a celebrity and popular to have selfies taken with. However local Mahikeng heritage campaigner Galefele Molema has been trying to find out on what authority the statue was removed and whether the town can get it back please.



The statue in its current position at the Kimberley Club.

### IAN'S FAMOUS CARROT CAKE RECIPE

For those of you who were at our AGM, in line with our paired down catering to accommodate our parlous financial position, our chairman, Ian Pretorius, baked a delicious carrot cake for the after tea. We had so many compliments on the cake and so many requests for the recipe that here it is. Our very first recipe page in the newsletter!

## **TRAY BAKE CARROT CAKE - three recipes combined by Ian Pretorius**

A very handy recipe for the crowds as you can cut up to 30 squares. You will need a 23 x 33 cm tray (line with baking parchment). Preheat oven to 170 Celsius.

### **A**

150g soft dark brown sugar  
150g golden sugar  
300 ml sunflower oil  
3 medium eggs

### **B**

300g plain flour  
1 tsp bicarb of soda  
1 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
½ tsp ground ginger  
½ tsp salt

### **C**

300g carrots, grated  
100g walnuts or pecans chopped  
Zest of ½ an orange, finely chopped (optional extra)  
100g raisins (optional extra)  
Tinned pineapple wedges (optional extra)

## **METHOD**

- A. Whisk ingredients together until smooth
- B. Slowly add to above and continue to beat until well mixed
- C. Stir in – make sure it is evenly dispersed
- D. Pour into lined tray and bake 35 – 40 minutes until golden brown. Test with skewer (must come out clean). Cool in tin for 20 minutes. Lift out and cool fully on wire rack. Peel off paper before icing.

## **TOPPING** (cake has to be cool)

100g cream cheese  
30g unsalted butter, softened  
200g icing sugar  
100g caster sugar  
100g chopped walnuts or pecan (optional)

Use electric whisk to blend cream cheese and butter. Add icing sugar in separate additions. Whisk on high speed until thick, pale and light. Finally, sprinkle nuts (optional)

And for those of you who weren't there, see what you missed.

## **ARDERNE GARDENS GUARD HOUSE**

The Conservator Trust was approached by the Friends of the Arderne Gardens to sponsor a new guardhouse for the entrance as it has now become necessary to have security on hand 24 hours a day. The Conservator Trust felt this was a suitable project and the new guardhouse was officially opened by our Chairman on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2016 along with a plaque acknowledging our sponsorship.



The Plaque and the smart new guardhouse.



## BLUE PLAQUE SCHOOLS PROJECT

In line with our ongoing School Project a Blue Plaque was awarded to St. George's Grammar School and placed on the old Bloemendal Manor House at the heart of the school campus in Mowbray.



Our Chairman, Ian Pretorius at the unveiling.



Sigi Howes the co-ordinator of the project.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> February members will be able to visit the school and have a guided tour of the Mowbray Campus and then board the school bus to be taken in to the city centre to visit the Herbert Baker buildings next to St. George's Cathedral which used to house the school before it moved to Mowbray. Here we will have a guided tour and presentation about the history of the school.

St George's was founded on 11 April 1848 by Bishop Robert Gray on the premises of the present Cathedral at the top of Adderley Street in Cape Town. This makes the school the oldest independent school in southern Africa. St George's originally began as an all-white, all-boys school. Significant changes occurred in the demographics of the learner population in 1978 when the school admitted the first learners of colour. In 1989 St George's also became a co-educational school.

From the earliest days, they worshipped in the Cathedral and provided boys for its choir. In 1904, a magnificent new school building, designed by Sir Herbert Baker, was opened adjacent to the Cathedral and in 1950 another wing was added to the building in Adderley Street.

The lack of sport fields prompted a move to Mowbray, on the old Bloemendal Estate. From early in the 18th Century, the Bloemendal Estate was farmed alongside the Liesbeek River, in the area where St George's and part of the suburb of Mowbray are now situated. Gradually, the land was divided and the five large houses on the Estate were absorbed into the residential area that surrounds the school.

In 1936, the school purchased the main house, Bloemendal. For the first time, St George's possessed its own playing fields and permanent boarding establishment.

## VOC HEADQUARTERS AMSTERDAM



Whilst visiting friends in Amsterdam in September we walked through the old part of the city and after some false starts eventually located the old head office of VOC Dutch East Indies Company. It is tucked away in a courtyard of what is now the university but is still, as you can see, on the tourist guided walking tour route.

Surprisingly the very grand and venerable house belonging to Simon van der Stel's in-laws, the Six family, on the Heerengracht was sacrificed in order to widen the canal and they were able to acquire a second, smaller, but equally historic home where the Dutch government contribute towards the upkeep of the collection of Rembrandts on the condition that the family keep the collection in one piece and allow limited public access (800 people per year and no more than 10 at a time).