

Cape Librarian

Kaapse
Bibliotekaris



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ON THE COVER: AFRICAN PENGUIN AT BOULDERS BEACH

Cape Town definitely has no shortage of amazing beaches, but Boulders Beach in False Bay offers something extra special — a colony of African Penguins... In fact, it's the only place in the world where you can get close to African Penguins.

In 1982 a couple of these little crowd-pleasers settled on the soft white sand between the large granite boulders that protect the beach from wind and large, stormy waves, and currently the population is estimated between 2,000 and 3,000 birds. Sadly the African Penguin has been classified as an endangered species.

Thankfully, Boulders and its surrounding beaches now form part of the Table Mountain National Park Marine Protected Area, thus ensuring the beaches are safe and clean, and the penguins protected.

Text: www.capetown.travel

EDITORIAL

The corona virus has caught thousands of businesses off-guard in their ability to adapt to the needs of a world that changed overnight.

From enforced social distancing to a hard lockdown, companies have had to think on their feet to continue servicing their customers: a textbook case of adapt or die.

However, from the ashes rose the humble library as the least likely contender in terms of adaptability; rising to the challenge of social cornerstone through the facilitating of cohesion and a long-since shift towards online resources.

For years libraries have been collecting digital assets alongside physical ones; and in whose case unlike commercial business, the balancing of the former was never an either-or scenario, but as a saving grace a parallel one instead. In the rapidly accelerated timeframe forced upon us by the corona situation, facilities offered such as free Wi-Fi, social services, e-books and online platforms suddenly made libraries far more relevant in a period where social distancing has deemed connectivity as currency.

For those fearing the demise of the library as a victim of the digital revolution, there could hardly be a better benchmark scenario as a viability test of the library as a virtual organisation.

Many of the new services born under corona conditions are likely to stay. On the analogue side, things like curbside pickups of books will continue to offer safety and convenience, especially while corona persists; while on the digital side outreaches on social media, web-based story times, remote referencing and digital conference spaces are likely to find a firmer future following.

Less than a year ago, it was inconceivable to ever foresee libraries at the forefront of such change. And it feels great, doesn't it?

Die coronavirus het duisende besighede wat nie in staat was om aan te pas by 'n wêreld wat oornag verander het nie, onkant gevang.

Tussen die gedwonge handhaaf van sosiale afstandhouding tot die onbuigbare grendeltydperk, moes maatskappye met vindingryke oplossings vorendag kom om hulle kliënte te kon aanhou bedien: 'n klassieke geval van aanpas of uitsterf.

En wie sal uit die as herry's as die mins-gerekende, maar mees aanpasbare instelling in die nuwe normaal? Die beskeie biblioteek, wat uitgestyg het as sosiale hoeksteen deur die fasilitering van kohesie en 'n reeds-gevestigde skuif na aanlynbronne.

Biblioteke versamel al oor die jare heen fisiese sowel as digitale aanwinste. Maar anders as wat die geval is met kommersiële besighede, is die balanseer van die twee nie 'n geval van die een of die ander nie, maar inderdaad 'n parallelle proses. Deur die versnelde tydsraamwerk wat deur die coronavirus op ons afgedwing is, het die aanbod van fasiliteite soos gratis Wi-Fi, sosiale dienste, e-boeke en aanlyn platforme biblioteke skielik baie meer relevant gemaak — in 'n tydperk waar die handhaaf van sosiale afstandhouding bepaal het dat konnektiwiteit koning bo alles kraai.

Vir diegene wat gevrees het die biblioteek sal ondergaan as slagoffer van die digitale revolusie, kon daar kwalik 'n meer gepaste scenario wees as 'n toets vir die haalbaarheid van die biblioteek as 'n virtuele organisasie.

Baie van die nuutgeskepte dienste is hier om te bly. Iets so analoog soos die bel-bestel-en-optel van boeke bied blywende veiligheid en gerief, veral terwyl die corona-situasie nog voortduur; terwyl aan die digitale kant uitreik-aksies deur sosiale media, webgebaseerde lees- en storievertelling, afstand-gebaseerde navorsing en digitale konferensies al hoe gewilder gaan word.

Dit is ondenkbaar dat minder as 'n jaar gelede, biblioteke aan die voerpunt van sulke positiewe verandering gesien sou word. Maar hoe lekker voel dit nie?

Braam



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Editorial policy

The **Cape Librarian** is the house journal of the Western Cape Library Service and is published bi-monthly. Articles in the field of library and information science, library administration, news items, reviews and accession lists are included. The editorial staff reserve the right to edit, shorten, or rewrite any copy should it be deemed necessary. We cannot guarantee that unsolicited copy supplied will be published. Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Library Service. Copy for a particular issue must reach the editor two months in advance. Articles, letters and news items should be submitted directly to the editor.

Redaksionele beleid

Die **Kaapse Biblioteekaris** is die huisblad van die Wes-Kaapse Biblioteekdiens en verskyn twee-maandeliks. Dit bevat artikels oor biblioteek- en inligtingwese, nuusberigte, resensies, aanwinstelyste asook praktiese artikels. Die redaksie behou hom die reg voor om, indien nodig, bydraes te redigeer, te verkort of te herskryf. Die publikasie van artikels wat nie in opdrag geskryf is nie, kan egter nie gewaarborg word nie. Die menings van medewerkers is nie noodwendig dié van die Biblioteekdiens nie. Alle kopie vir 'n bepaalde uitgawe moet die redaksie twee maande vooruit bereik. Artikels, briewe en nuusberigte kan direk aan die redakteur gestuur word.

LIBRARIES

Theewaterskloof biblioteke reik uit



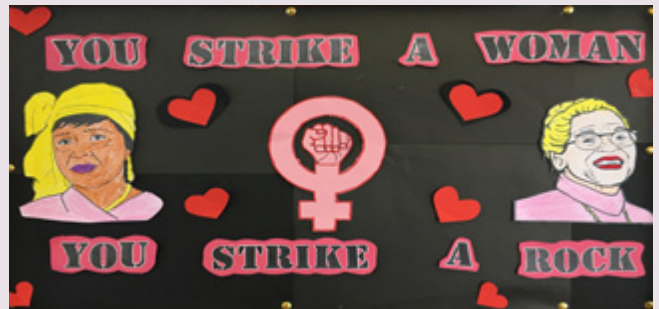
Bereaville Biblioteek



Botrivier Biblioteek



Caledon Biblioteek



Grabouw Biblioteek



Greyton Biblioteek



Oostergloed Biblioteek

Alhoewel die grendeltydperk groot eise gestel het aan die manier waarop ons sake doen, het dit nie die groep van Theewaterskloof se biblioteke gekeer om op hulle voete te dink en nuwe maniere te kry om na hulle gemeenskappe tydens hierdie ongekende en moeilike tydperk uit te reik nie.

Trouens, bykans al die biblioteke in hierdie streeksgroep het, onder meer, van sosiale media gebruik gemaak om stories aan te bied en bewusmaking rondom beskikbare dienste te skep. Riviersonderend se Sprokieland het nie minder nie as 16 luisterstories aan jong biblioteekgebruikers beskikbaar gestel, terwyl Villiersdorp 'n bel-en-

bestel-boekbesprekingsprogram van stapel gestuur het, sowel as digitale skakeling met lede deur Whatsapp en Facebook. Op sy beurt het Tesselaarsdal sy eie webwerf bekendgestel. Die gebruik van tegnologie het egter nie veroorsaak dat die menslike faktor oornag agterweë gelaat is nie. Genadendal verdien spesiale vermelding vir hul hulp met aansoeke vir tersiële studie en matriek-eksamen-voorbereiding.

Yvette Herbst, Assistentdirekteur: Kaapse Wynland en Overberg Beheergebied

Bigger, better Khayaalethu Library opened in 2019



Khayaalethu Library Week reading rally

Construction of the new **Khayaalethu Library**, located outside Knysna, was completed in April 2019, as the old 96m² library building could no longer meet the demands of a rapidly growing population. The new building covers 596m² in floor space and thus falls within the norm of 0,3m² space per capita for a population of 11,000 people who reside within a three kilometre radius from the library.

The nearest library that falls within the municipal area is five kilometres away, while the nearest high school, Percy Mdala, is 200 metres away. It has 1,100 registered learners.

In order to meet the informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs of the community, the following services are rendered:

Computer literacy skills

- The library provides free basic word processing computer lessons to the public.
- Patrons utilise approximately 90 internet sessions of 30 minutes each per day.
- At the end of the ten-day word course, patrons are taught the basics of doing searches on the internet and they are assisted with opening their own email accounts.
- Free Wi-Fi access is very popular with the youth who use it for recreational purposes.

Services to crèches and pre-schools

- The library serves approximately 360 crèche and pre-school learners who reside within a radius of 350 kilometres from the library.
- It provides relevant and suitable reading material on loan to the teachers and learners on a fortnightly basis.
- Story-reading sessions are conducted at least once a month at each school with the second visit reserved for the exchange of books.
- The pre-school drama festival which is hosted annually by the Khayaalethu Library is a highlight that crowns all the annual activities.



Spelling bee competition

Services to high schools

- Learners from the nearby high school are members of the Khayaalethu book club. They have an opportunity to participate annually in the library service-sponsored reading, book review and debating competition. Learners from this club have, on numerous occasions, represented the greater Knysna Library Service's book club in the National Funda Mzantsi championship.
- The Knysna Library Service's book club has won several accolades over the years. The club collected the 3rd prize in Afrikaans spelling and 2nd prize in isiXhosa spelling in the 10th Funda Mzantsi Championship 2019.

Library business corner

In addition to providing free computer and internet access to small and medium enterprises, the library has an up-to-date collection of pamphlets on various aspects of starting and running a business, such as business plans and how to manage cash flow.



Drama and reading competitions

Parow Library: a case study for a drop-and-collect service



‘Welcome back to **Parow Library**, we have missed you...’

This simple sentence is so powerful. As libraries and librarians, we constantly advocate the importance of our profession and the service we offer. With the easing of the national lockdown restrictions, we at Parow Library have seen first-hand how much the public has missed the library.

What we soon realised is that the library is far more than the building we are in, or the books we have in our collection. The library is a community meeting point, a hub of information and social interaction — perhaps we already knew this but needed a global pandemic to remind us.

This lockdown period is not all doom and gloom though. The distinct lack of patrons in the building has afforded us the opportunity to effectively shelf-read, weed and rearrange some furniture — things we generally only have a few hours in the month to do. We have also been given the opportunity to meet as a team on an almost daily basis to address concerns or issues, offer each other support (or even just goof off during informal teambuilding exercises), as well as explore innovative ways of connecting with the public.

Having already reshaped our social media interactions, it was easy for us to adapt and make use of the library's Facebook page to stay connected with patrons. Since the reopening for limited services, our posts with the highest engagements included the following: The video demonstrating the process to return or collect books; the video about the ‘Parow Library window shopping experience’; and LiBee, the newly launched library mascot, visiting the library, to name but a few.

We have been able to introduce a mystery bundle for juveniles, author comparisons (who writes like whom) to assist with digital browsing, as well as keeping the public connected with the staff via human interest posts.



‘Necessity is the mother of invention’ — this anonymous quote sums up the mindset of Parow Library since the staff have returned to work. We have been forced to adapt to change, to prove ourselves relevant in these times.

We have mentioned earlier that the library is a hub of information and we often overlook the fact that we provide information not only to the public, but to our colleagues as well. Comments on our innovations at Parow (which were also adapted from international libraries in a local context), have shown that other libraries are not only willing to try something similar, but also willing to think outside the box for newer features or initiatives better suited to their context.

Jacinta Avontuur, Principal Librarian and Marvin Williams, Assistant Librarian: Parow Library

Ellen van Rensburg staff does the *Jerusalema* dance

Since the beginning of lockdown at the end of March, people have been living in extreme anxiety. COVID-19 has left the whole world in devastation, with millions having lost their lives or income due to the pandemic.

It is impossible to write something about this subject without feeling the desire to extend one's condolences to the families who have lost a loved one during this challenging time.

Ellen van Rensburg Library in Groot Brakrivier is one of those work places that, like the rest of the world, has had to endure challenges. After returning to work following the lockdown, staff were living in fear of the unknown. Porcha Abrahams recalls the challenges they were facing at the library and shared this with me:

'We came back to work with a negative mindset; we had many questions and one of them were how we are going to keep on rendering a service to the public in this challenging time. We decided to do the *Jerusalema* dance because it has become a national challenge amongst many companies, hospitals et cetera. By doing it, it gave us a sense of perspective in that we became more positive. We felt that if the frontline workers can do it, [then] we can do it. We also decided to use the dance to make our community aware that it is safe to visit the library and that we do have protocols in place to follow, and to eliminate any other uncertainty that we as the staff might have.'



I could see that this realisation was a very proud moment for the staff. They performed the *Jerusalema* dance (watch [here](#)) because they wanted to show that they were fully prepared for the greater community to visit the library again without fear.

Jerusalema is a Zulu gospel song which is about singing praises to God and asking Him to watch over and protect us.

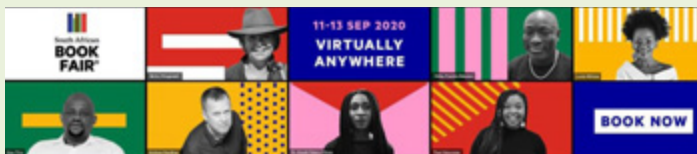
Sharon Muller, Admin Clerk: Mossel Bay Regional Library

National Book Week and International Literacy Day celebrated



National Book Week, the Western Cape Library Service's second longest running reading awareness week, was held online during the month of September. The event was held from 7-13 September, in partnership with the South African Book Development Council (SABDC). Due to the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 virus we were not able to launch a physical event as we normally do, but were fortunate to present the National Book Week event online in a digital format. 'The theme for 2020 is *Passport to tomorrow*. The country's social and economic progress depends in large measure on its people's ability to access and read. The theme is fit-for-purpose for the next decade as we emerge from the pandemic towards the promise of a better tomorrow.' ([sabookcouncil.co.za](#))

International Literacy Day highlights the importance of literacy and was celebrated on 8 September. The focus this year will be on the role of educators and the changing method and practice of teaching. International Literacy Day has been celebrated annually since 1967 to advocate the importance of literacy. Being able to read is an important part of a child's development and exposing children to books at an early age helps with their vocabulary development and language skills. Sadly, thousands of learners and adults don't have basic literacy and numeracy skills. According to statistics, nearly 60% of households don't own a leisure reading book with only 14% of the population active book readers. Reports suggest a mere 5% of parents read to their children.



Celebrating National Book Week in unusual circumstances

National Book Week took place from 7–13 September 2020, and which had to be celebrated differently this year due to COVID-19. In the past National Book Week signalled a week of Amnesty for all City Library patrons with overdue material, who were encouraged to return them with the promise of 'no questions asked'.

Since March 2020, library patrons have been allowed to hold onto the books and other items of library material in their possession, without incurring any fines, as libraries remained closed until 13 July when the department was finally able to start phasing in a drop-and-collect service starting with seven libraries. To date 30 libraries are offering this service, and libraries will continue to open in phases.

National Book Week is a campaign aimed at promoting reading and Library and Information Services (LIS) across the country. The campaign also seeks to foster a culture of reading and literacy and includes World Literacy Day on 8 September, when South Africans are encouraged to read, dream and share their favourite stories on various platforms. Library Services encouraged users to return any books in their possession to Library Services. That will give others the opportunity to also read some gems, dream about them and hopefully share them with others.

Library Services took the opportunity to encourage readers to focus their reading on books by African authors as 'we are in awe of all the wonderful local options available these days, and of course, 'local is lekker'.

To ensure that users had access to reading material during National Book Week 2020, patrons could visit the upgraded Online Public Access Catalogue at opac.capetown.gov.za to browse, reserve and renew their books. Registered library members also could and still can click on the PressReader icon to gain instant access to more than 7,000 current magazines and newspapers from around the world, compliments of the City of Cape Town's LIS Department

If you are still not sure where the libraries are, you can access the locations from the OPAC via the Maps option. You can also download the Bookmyne app, which gives



LiBee, our adorable library mascot, was in awe of all the wonderful books by local authors at Central Library

you access to the OPAC on your smartphone. If you are not familiar with OPAC, there is a convenient User Guide on the site that will help you navigate the OPAC with ease.

Be sure not to miss your favourite story on Wednesdays when LIS releases its popular Whimsical Wednesday storytelling, aimed at children but enjoyed by everybody! This virtual storytelling session is posted on social media for the entire family to enjoy.

During National Book Week social media was abuzz with information from LiBee, the newly launched library mascot. She is buzzed about reading and helped librarians to promote National Book Week and encourage children and parents to love and enjoy books.

**Merle Collins, Head: Marketing and Communications,
City of Cape Town Library and information Services**

The Western Cape Education Department's free online library

The Western Cape Education Department's virtual library is a free online library with books that are suitable for grades R, 1, 2 and 3. It is available at <https://wcedportal.co.za/eresource/121686>.

Choose the language of the book you want to read by clicking on the button for that language. The books are sorted in three levels. Choose a book on a level which you are able to read. Enjoy the books!



The top 300 picture books

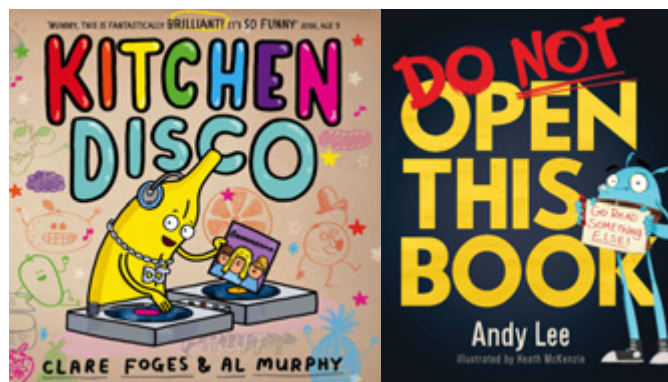
So what do the City's librarians have in common? A love for storytelling and picture books, of course. In December 2019, an email went out to children's library staff in the City of Cape Town (CoCT) Library and Information Services (LIS). The message? 'I would like to compile a list of Children's Librarians' Top 100 Picture books and would love to know what your favourite five picture books for storytelling are.'

The staff rose to the occasion and soon the responses came trickling in. Tania Blignaut, Assistant Librarian at Sea Point Library, called me aside at a Children's Interest Group meeting and with a serious look on her face asked, 'How can I possibly only give you five of my favourite picture books when I have so many?' I am sure that many other staff agree that the task of trying to choose their favourite five picture books was indeed a difficult one, especially with all the amazing picture books out there. However, by the end of January 2020 a total of 57 libraries responded and the idea of having a Top 100 Book List for CoCT LIS soon had to be adapted.

From a monster with terrible claws and terrible jaws and a wart on the tip of his nose, to a very hungry caterpillar and even a poor giraffe that couldn't dance. Throw in a witch, a dragon and a hippopotamus, or two, and what do we have... the Top 300 picture books, chosen by LIS staff, of course.

Why ask staff for their favourite books used for storytelling you may wonder? Well, libraries are the gateway to stories and creating a love for reading from a young age. From Pram Jams to storytelling sessions, picture books are used to make the reading experience for the child as fun as possible. The librarian should bring the story alive with the tone of voice, facial expressions and even through the use of various props incorporated to enhance the story.

Librarians are magicians who hold a magic wand and open up a world that tickles the imagination of little ones and big ones alike. When librarians engage with children through story



time, they should make the experience multi-sensory and enchanting. Picture books are an important part of learning how to read. Research shows that when a story is read repeatedly, a child's vocabulary can increase by up to 12%. Picture books also help children relate to the world around them and can teach valuable skills, such as empathy and good manners and even how to navigate difficult experiences like divorce, death and grief. It also helps children to get in touch with their feelings and emotions. The beautiful illustrations found in picture books not only bring the words to life, but also helps a child to understand what they are reading. In a sense, this is the child's first exposure to the world of art.

During the Whimsical Wednesday Story Time sessions posted on YouTube, several of the Top 300 books were used to share stories online. These included **The gruffalo** by Julia Donaldson, **The very hungry caterpillar** by Eric Carle, **Kitchen disco** by Clare Foges and of course **Do not open this book** by Andy Lee. These sessions came to be much loved by children and also adults, and perhaps surprisingly, the most watched online story ended up being **Do not open this book** by Andy Lee, which turned out to be a lot of fun, both for the storyteller and those watching.

If, like me, you enjoy children's stories and love looking at children's illustrations, why not delve into the Top 300 stories chosen by LIS staff? You could add it your bucket list of must-reads for (what remains of) 2020. Why not re-read an old time favourite or read a book that becomes a new favourite? Either way it is guaranteed that you will not be disappointed. So choose your book, sit back, relax and be transported into the magical world of picture books.

Tracey Muir, Senior Professional Office: Children's Coordinator, City of Cape Town Library and information Services



Erratum

Ilze Swart, former Chief Librarian: Bellville Library, whose nostalgic submission we published on page 3 of the July/August issue, has pointed out that we have wrongfully credited one of the individuals in one of the pictures submitted for the piece. She writes: *The lady in the photo*

with Ian and Allen is a library assistant, Mrs Stassen (we never used her first name) and not Bea Coetzee, the Chief Librarian. The Cape Librarian apologises for this oversight and remains eternally grateful for a superfan like Ilze for keeping us on our toes!

Records of a perilous plague

by Gustav Hendrich

Amidst the hysteria of the COVID-19 pandemic and its catastrophic impact on humanity worldwide, people have come to reappraise the importance of proper health care. This frightful pandemic has altered our lives, of which its final outcome remains unforeseen. However; viewed in historical perspective, the occurrence of pandemics in the Cape is by no means a recent phenomenon.

In 1918, at the end of the First World War, the so-called Spanish Influenza epidemic spread to all corners of the world, including the Cape, wreaking havoc amongst the local population. Without sufficient medication to combat its effects, the epidemic proved disastrous, decimating entire communities and families. Yet, what seems forgotten as a similar tempestuous disease that caused much distress and loss of life in Cape Town in particular, was the outbreak of the bubonic plague in February 1901.

In comparison to the 1918 plague, its effects on society appeared similar, though its origins can be traced to rat-infestations spread by flees and resembled that of the Black Death epidemic that ravaged Europe during the Middle Ages. In striking similarity to COVID-19, the bubonic plague was described by Prof WJ Simpson in 1901 as 'a most deceptive disease on account of its slowness of development... it is this slowness which renders it, as a rule, the most dangerous and most difficult epidemic disease to cope with. The insidiousness of that disease is seldom fully appreciated and understood'.¹

Simpson advised that sustained efforts for its prevention was critical; a case of prevention rather than cure. Whereas the COVID-19 and Spanish Influenza was primarily pneumonic, with lung infections, the bubonic plague was characterised by swollen lymph nodes on the skin and worsened by ill health and unhygienic living conditions. Nonetheless, it was later confirmed that the plague also became 'more virulent, especially in the pneumonic form'.²

A health hazard in times of war and disease

During the South African War of 1899 to 1902, with its occurrences of concentration camps, scorched-earth policy in the interior against the Boer Republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State, the Cape Colony was deemed a principle location for the importation of supplies, munitions and produce for the British. Fully-laden ships embarked to the Cape from all parts of the British Empire. Cape Town as a port became a hive of activity with British military reinforcements arriving in large numbers after 1900. Against this backdrop, the cleanliness of the city was described as appalling, especially in the proximity of the harbour and industrial areas. Coupled with the authorities' neglect for cleaning those areas at the expense of the war effort, a carelessness to ensure proper hygiene had emerged. Waste was dumped by the



J5158 Plaque Camp; Ward. 1900. Cape Town

seaside. Refuse from the Somerset Hospital and unwanted sewage from fishing vessels at Rogge Bay and the fish market was carelessly deposited onto the shoreline, creating a fertile ground for disease.

Already in 1894 and 1896, following instances of bubonic outbreaks in Hong Kong and Bombay, this plague appeared to take on a global nature. The importation of horses, fodder and wheat for the British military from Argentina, as well as other colonial territories, invariably paved the way for the transportation of infected rats; and fleas carrying a bacteria named *Yersinia Pestis*, that spread from the docks towards the residential areas.³ Unknowningly, the plague quickly spread to dock workers who were the first to make direct contact with the imported shipments.

Initially the colonial authorities attempted to conceal the apparent sickness, but as more workers fell ill, the British were obliged to inform the public of the unstoppable infections and rising death toll. Geographically, the disease spread towards the southern areas of Woodstock, as well as Sea Point through the overcrowded working class areas, which were more susceptible to social neglect. According to the then Medical Officer of Health, Dr John Gregory, the plague started on 2 February 1901 in the vicinity of South Arm, the dock area of the Imperial Military Adviser, when a European male 'was suffering from a doubtful disease', possibly ascribed to 'rats dying in parts of the docks'. Dr Gregory who would later play

an instrumental role in preventative measures, mentioned in his memorandum on the outbreak of the plague that immediate steps for isolation of patients and regulations against the plague were taken. He pointed out that due to: 'the scarcity of medical officers... and the difficulty of obtaining on the spur of the moment lay assistants of a reliable and suitable kind, some of the measures had to be delayed'.⁴ Despite the gradual spreading of the plague, the colonial authorities attended to Dr Gregory's request for more medical staff and urgently imposed regulations to halt the dreaded disease.

Ridding the city from the plague

Strict regulations and practical steps were taken to counter the plague, which was soon spreading towards Port Elizabeth and the eastern Cape regions. The Table Bay Harbour Board issued an official notice for the prevention of the spread of the bubonic plague and imposed the main regulations 'that no persons were allowed to be employed in any capacity in the docks unless inoculated against the plague; that no passengers or crew on board any vessel arriving shall be allowed, no cab or conveyance, unless the driver can produce a certificate of inoculation and his vehicle being disinfected. Shipping clerks and employees had to provide a certificate of employment in the harbour'.⁵ These draconian regulations



M4-14. Plan of the Municipality of Cape Town showing the Bubonic Plague areas and blocks cleaned, plague infected houses, plague cases and streets cleaned, 1901.



had to be complied with by the public and inspections of all vessels in the harbour were undertaken. British ships, such as the barque *Patriarch*, that were found to be rat-infested and without any steps taken for their removal, were prohibited from entering the docking area.

As a coordinated effort, the Colonial government established the Plague Advisory Board to implement the regulations more forcibly. They were responsible for the creation of hospitals and sanitary camps for the treatment of patients.

As for the urban areas, most of the dwellings close to the harbour were inspected, and when an instance of the plague was discovered, were evacuated, disinfected and white-washed. Household items were either destroyed or disinfected. Cleaners, employed by the authorities, acted vigorously but were exposed to the dangers of contracting the disease. It is estimated that 2,000 houses and dwellings were demolished.

More than 7,000 black workers, some with their families, were relocated outside Cape Town to the so-called New Contact Camp at Uitvlugt. There they were accommodated in wood and iron buildings with large dormitories, equipped with stoves and domestic utilities. Joseph Chamberlain, as Member of Parliament concurred after a visit to the camp in April 1901 that 'the health of the inmates is reported to be good... happy and content. Only three cases of the plague were reported in the last forty days'.⁶ Two Malay priests also expressed

their views that they are 'very grateful for the care of the government for the interest of their people'. Plague hospitals at Maitland, Green Point, Mackenzie's farm, Ebenhezer Road Camp; and outpost camps at the far-reaches of Saldanha Bay were erected to provide treatment facilities.⁷ Additional volunteers and twenty nurses from England were summoned to join in the effort to counter the plague.⁸

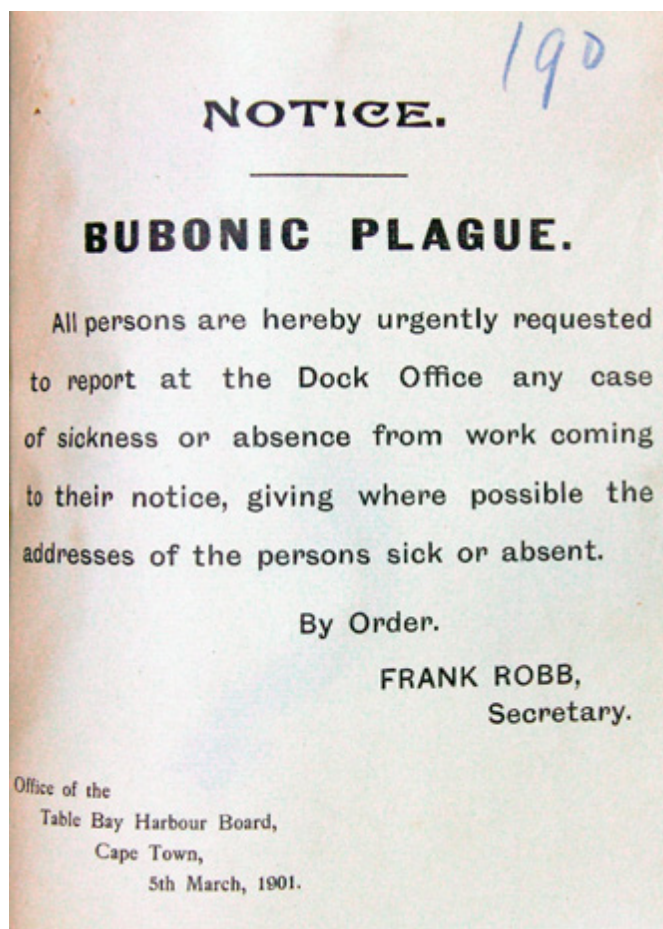
By May 1901, Dr Gregory stated that although the 'epidemic is abating... the disease is exceedingly great, death in many cases taking place within a few hours of the disease first manifesting itself in the patient, and that the mortality from plague among the rats still continues in an ever widening circle'.⁹ Reportedly there was a total number of 610 cases in May, comprising Europeans, coloureds and blacks, with 275 that lost their lives, mostly at the Maitland and Green Point Camps.¹⁰

Apart from the hospitals and sanitation camps, other ambitious countermeasures were taken to discard the refuse that carried the sickness as source of the plague. Scientific experiments were carried out, one by means of ropes soaked with chemicals or ointments, to prevent rats from climbing off the ships. Large furnaces, most notably the Horsefall Refuse Destructor, were constructed to reduce the waste to ashes by means of fire.¹¹ Steam disinfectors, such as the Equifax and Clayton disinfecting systems, were implemented.

Vaccinations and the provision of the Hafkine's Prophylactic vaccine eventually contributed in preventing further deaths. Soldiers, naval personnel, workers and labourers were inoculated to stem the plague. After the plague reached its peak in March 1901 it decreased significantly, though persisting until November with the last fatality being reported.

Perusing plague records

As the Cape Colony resided under jurisdiction of the British colonial authorities, the bulk of their records concerning the bubonic plague at the Cape was documented in a coherent



MOH 42. Plague Administration. Bubonic Plague Notice



J5159 Front Cape Town Docks

and organised manner. With the increasing expansion of British rule, the establishment of a branch under the Colonial Secretary Office was soon necessitated and named the Local Government and Health branch. In 1892-3 a medical adviser was appointed as Medical Officer of Health to whom all medical and public health-related matters were communicated.

The Western Cape Archives and Records Service in Roeland Street, Cape Town, is in possession of the archives of the Medical Officer of Health (MOH). They are, from observation, a comprehensive and largely complete archival group. The contents are for the most part administrative in nature; and contain correspondences, facsimiles, telegrams and official letters. In addition to the communiques in both hand and typewritten formats, the records of the MOH also comprise the lists of shipping vessels inspected, lists of vaccinations and fold-out sketch plans of the various plague hospitals and camps. Plans of the refuge destructor building, and supplementary booklets and information pieces on the disinfectors are bound into the archival volumes.

The records are arranged and subdivided according to geographic location, such as Maitland, Stellenbosch and other towns towards the Eastern Cape area, especially Port Elizabeth, where the plague's impact, without proper regulation, reached alarming proportions. Under the description of the Plague Administration, as indicated in the archival volumes, a truthful reflection of the disease is revealed. It attests to the vital importance of this archival group for future reference.

Apart from the MOH archival group, the archives of the Colonial Office (CO), Government House (GH), Public Works Department (PWD) and the Table Bay Harbour Board (CHB) also contain documentation on the outbreak, course and precautionary measures following the plague.

Cartographical records are available and indicate the distribution of the plague and rat-infested areas. It is remarkable how accurately detailed these maps were drawn up. Photographic records are minimal, though the available imagery provides a visual depiction of the harbour and the interior of a plague hospital.



One-hundred and twenty years after the bubonic plague ravaged the Cape, our citizens are today yet again befallen with a life-threatening pandemic. Since it was ultimately the government regulations and vaccinations that served to stamp out the plague, Chamberlain hailed the efforts of Colonial Secretary, Lynedoch Graham, for having 'taken a lively personal interest in the organisation of measures for preventing the spread of the disease, and has not hesitated to expose himself to the risk of infection'.¹²

Aided by the advice of Prof Simpson and devotion of Dr Gregory 'who has taken a series of measures which have certainly checked the plague', their contribution was acknowledged.

The historical documents housed at the Western Cape Archives for safekeeping, pertaining to the correspondences, regulations and practical measures, bear testimony to the turmoil, death and disruption caused by a sudden appearance of an epidemic, such as the bubonic plague of 1901.

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Dr Gustav Hendrich is an archivist in the Western Cape Archives and Records Service



Op reis met Annelie Botes na Kammaland

deur Ilse Verster

12 Maart 2020 breek aan as een van die mooiste, loomste dae wat die laatsomer na die Kaap bring. 'n Effe bewolkte dag wat belooft om later warmer te word. Oppad na Stellenbosch ry ons verby wynplase waar wingerde begin verkleur. As gebore Vrystater bly ek ongewoond aan die skoonheid van berge en valleie waarin wolkwurms afkruip. Ons is oppad na die Woordfees toe; om te gaan luister na die skrywer Annelie Botes se bespreking van haar nuutste boek, **Kammaland**.

Die verkeer in Stellenbosch is, soos altyd, 'n nagmerrie. Ons parkeer by Hoërskool Stellenbosch waar ons in 'n pendelbussie klim. Ek kry verder kans om my te verkyk aan Stellenbosch se skoonheid. Die bestuurders van die bussies is in radiokontak met mekaar en die beheersentrum. Die lopende kommentaar en gesels tussen die manne in hulle eiesoortige Kaaps vloei soos 'n komedie om ons; 'n opvoering waarvoor mens nie 'n kaartjie hoef te koop nie. Te gou is ons by die Boeketent. Daar is meer as 'n uur oor om te kuier.

Ek is opgewonde om Annelie weer te sien en ons hoef nie te soek nie, want onderdeur die bome kom sy op ons afgestap. *Vintage* Annelie, net soos ek haar onthou. Geklee in malse valle van verskillende kleure pers, op soek na 'n boom waaragter sy haar sigaretjie kan rook. Dis 'n vreugdevolle weersiens en ons

sleep stoele nader. Kort voor lank is ons in diep gesprek oor die lewe van skrywers en uitgewers.

Terwyl ons gesels kom die wie-is-wie in die skrywers- en akteurswêreld verby; Antoinette Kellerman, Susan Beyers en haar seun Pietie; Dana Snyman, Malene Breytenbach, Ingrid Winterbach. Nader aan die kunstehemel kan Jan en San Alleman nie kom nie. By een tafel tik die redateur van 'n bekende tydskrif gejaagd op haar skootrekenaar terwyl haar assistent doelgerig deur 'n pak bywoningskaartjies sorteer. By ander tafeltjies sit feesgangers met bottels Bolandse wyn onder die sambrele. In die boeketent is genoeg boeke om jou te oorreed om jou kredietkaart tot sy limiet te druk. Oor luidsprekers speel 'n vrolike weergawe van *Al lê die berge nog so blou*.

Chris, Annelie se man, kom haastige aangedraf om reëlins met haar te bespreek. Hy is vir dié tyd haar drywer, fasiliteerder, klankman en rekenartegnikus wat moet sorg dat alles op die verhoog reg verloop. Hy is 'n lang, skraal man met 'n bos silwerwit hare en het, soos Annelie, 'n ondeunde trek op die gesig. Hy is duidelik Annelie se toeverlaat. Hy vra sy moet nou asseblief na die tent toe kom: daar is al baie mense wat na haar soek, maar sy lui om nog te gesels.

Aanhangers ontdek haar heeltemal te gou saam met ons onder die boom en kort voor lank moet sy opstaan om boeke teken en drukkie gee. Die corona-bekommernis sou eers twee dae later met die afstel van die KKNK 'n angsgolf ontken. Maar vandag groet almal nog met die hand.

Die lokaal is vol. Middeljariges vorm die grootste groep onder die bywoners maar daar is ook 'n vrolike klomp studente in die ry voor ons. Hulle is gelukkig dat hul rooster so uitgewerk het dat hulle hierdie bespreking kan bywoon, vertel hulle, voordat Annelie haar plek op die verhoog inneem.

Chris open die gesprek deur homself op versoek van Annelie voor te stel as Die Ou Gryse en vir haar as die Heks van Endor, omdat sy soms soos 'n heks voel oor sy die arme man so rondstuur. Hy gaan weer kerm tot vanaand in Wellington, sê sy, maar ontken hewig dat hy alles onder dwang doen. Dis oor hy afgetree is dat sy hom moet besig hou. En al murmureer hy hoe, kan hy dankbaar wees hy het vir haar wat altyd aan die plan maak is. Daarsonder sou sy lewe baie saai gewees het, reken sy.

Blymoedige mens wat sy is, tref depressie haar nogtans van tyd tot tyd. Dan dink sy soms onbesonne dinge en onbekostigbare planne uit. Op so 'n onder-in-die-sloot-dag vra sy Chris wat hy sou wou wees as hy nie om den brode vir Telkom moes werk nie. Definitief 'n matroos, antwoord hy. Omrede daar nie vroumense op 'n boot is nie. En 'n gratis roomsmasjien. So word sy antwoord die geboorte van die kanaalbootvaart aan die einde van 2017.

Sy beskryf die reis in die Europese winter as meesleurend en betowerend. Sy noem **Kammaland** nie 'n reisverhaal of vakansiestorie nie maar 'n emosionele joernaal. Sy en Chris het besluit om die reis aan te pak omdat hulle ouer word en hul kragte wou toets, sodat hul hul prioriteite kon rangskik vir die sowat 15 aktiewe jare wat dalk nog mag voorlê.

Die foto's van hul reis vertel elkeen hul eie storie. Die smal groen boot lyk amper soos 'n treinwa en die woord 'watertrein' ontstaan in my gedagtes. Net soos in 'n trein se nou gangetjie moes hul heelwat planne maak om te kon beweeg en besorg dit hul heelwat komiese ervarings.

Ons het 'n afspraak met Annelie vasgemaak en ná die tyd kry sy kans om 'n paar vrae te beantwoord.

Jy en jou ou gryse was al deur diep water. Wat was die grootste uitdaging tydens jul bootvaart?

Om nie aan die slegte omstandighede in Suid-Afrika te dink nie. Op die boot het ons so veilig en geborge gevoel dat dit



Annelie en Chris

soms bitter was om te dink dat ons moes terugkom, veral omdat beide ons kinders reeds Britse burgers is.

Wie van die reis se mense of herinneringe bly jou die meeste by?

Ons het spesiaal tot by Coventry gevaar om na die ruïnes van die gebombardeerde katedraal te gaan kyk. Daar loop ons 'n horingoue oom raak wat sy laaste groet kom afgee aan die plek waar hy as jong soldaat uitmekaargeskiete mense se oorblyfsels moes bymekaar maak. Daar was ook mense wat my baie ontstel het, soos die prostituut wat by Rugby by 'n Rodney-boater haar dienste gaan lewer het, net om deur hom van die boot afgegooi te word sonder betaling omrede hy haar genoeg kokaïen gegee het. Ek het gewonder waar haar ma is en of sy weet wat met haar dogter gebeur. Dit spook nog by my.

Jul kinders het periodiek saamgereis. Wat was hulle gewaarwordinge?

Pa en Ma moet tog net nie versuip. En hulle het gedurig kos aangedra.

Het die negatiwiteit van die Europese winter ingespeel op jou skryfwerk?

Nee, dit het my juis energie gegee. As dit so koud is moet mens aan die beweeg bly. Die stofie het dag en nag gebrand. As een van ons snags opgestaan het om badkamer toe te gaan, gooi ons nog hout op sodat die boot soggens snoesig warm was.

Dit was lekker om te lees van die interessante en innoverende etes wat julle albei op die reis berei het. Ertesop met kluitjies. Karringmelk poeding met gemmerstroop. Het julle al gedink aan 'n kookboek?

Nimmer sal ek 'n kookboek uitgee! My geloof is dat dit beteken jy is op jou laaste skryfbene.

Jy is 'n musikant wat al die kerkorrel in katedrale in Engeland gespeel het en jy speel klavier en bekfluitjie. Ons lees dat jy en Chris graag dans. Watter musiek sal jou altyd laat terugdink aan Kammaland?

Where the gentle Avon flows, The blue Danube, Bad moon rising en natuurlik *Die bootjie na Kammaland*.

Met die reis wou julle sin gee aan wat verby is en besin oor die pad vorentoe. Het julle daarin geslaag en hoe?

Ons het geslaag om te praat oor ou koeie, en hulle te begrawe. Ons het besluit hoe ons vorentoe wil lewe en wat ons die graagste nog wil doen. En ons het mekaar vir vele dinge vergewe.

Beplan julle nog reise in die toekoms?

Ons sou in Oktober 2020 na Colorado reis waar ons genooi is om vir 'n maand *house sitting* te doen by 'n rykmanshouthuis op die platteland by Manitow Springs terwyl die eienaars in Batavia vakansie hou. Ons hoef nie te werk as sulks nie, ons moet net 'n oog hou. In my kop is ek klaar in Colorado, 'n uur se stap van die Rocky Mountains af. Maar ons het nog drome oor; ons wil graag met 'n motorfiets in die berge van Indië gaan rondswerf. Ons wil met 'n *motorhome* die platteland van Italië van bo tot onder toer vir twee maande. Engeland het my geleer koue hanteer daarom sou ek ook graag in 'n igloe in Ysland wou bly; en met 'n bossiebesem gaan werf vee by 'n sendingstasie in Midde-Afrika. Maar die Gryse sê ek is van my sinne beroof.

Wat is jou stokperdjies of wat doen jy om te ontspan?

Ek hou daarvan om op my bed te sit en brei en kralewerk doen. Ons tuin is my heiligdom. Huis skoonmaak, gordyne was, meubels olie en sulke sleurtake is vir my 'n tonikum. Ons woon gereeld musiekkonserte in die Veremarsaal en in NMU se ouditorium by.



Die boot staan gereed vir die omdraai suidwaarts
Foto verskaf deur Annelie Botes





Chris Botes

Herfs op die kanale



Chris Botes

Annelie maak 'n sluis toe



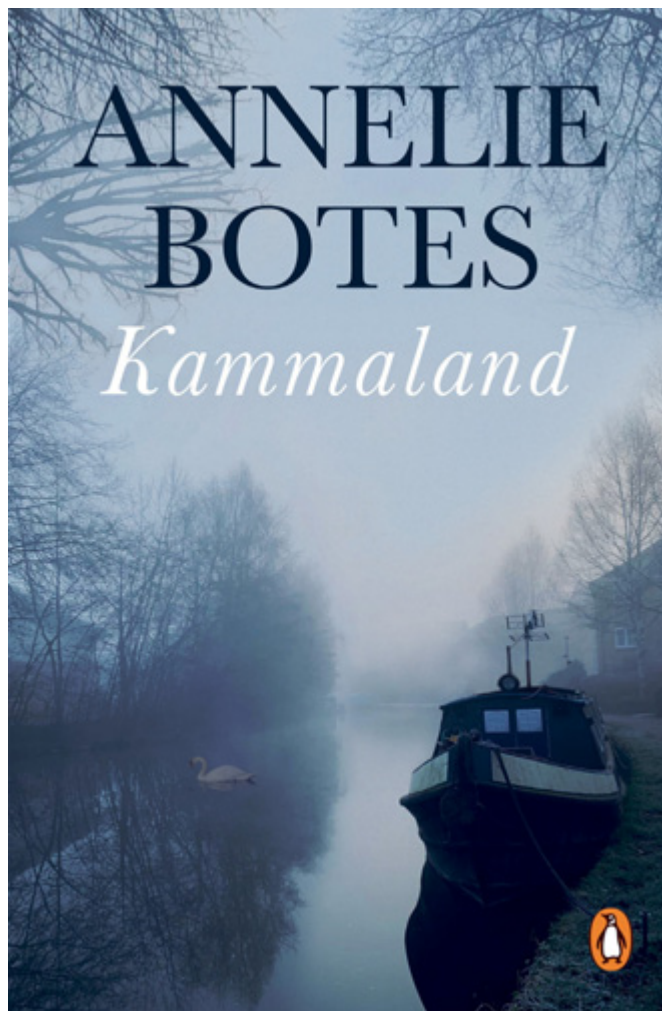
netwerk24.com

Herfs op die Trent and Mersey



netwerk24.com

Deur die Shadehouse Lock op die Trent and Mersey



En ek sal my pinkie by die tweede lit afkap, sonder verdowing vir soesji by Toro. Maar ek is in wese 'n huishen, en soms kan ek vir ure wegraak in die kuberruim. Ek het 'n brandende voorkeur vir die sielkunde en geskiedenis. Maar nie geskiedenis soos ons dit op skool geleer het nie. Ek is alewig besig om emosionele stories uit die geskiedenis van die mensdom na te jaag.

Is daar nog boeke ná Kammaland op pad?

Penguin Random House gee in Oktober 2020 'n samestelling van my rubriekwerk uit. [En] daar is klaar 'n kontrak geteken vir 'n roman wat hopelik in Oktober 2021 sal verskyn.

Wat is die grootste les wat julle twee saam geleer het op die reis?

Dat ons regtig lief is vir mekaar.

Sal jy 'n kanaalvakansie aanbeveel?

Dit was nie 'n vakansie nie, ons het verbitterlik hard gewerk op die boot, want ons moes alles versorg en in stand hou en hanteer. As mens op so 'n boot nie elke dag doen wat gedoen moet word nie, kan jy vinnig probleme optel. Ook moet mens 'n man hê wat nie skrik vir 'n hamer en 'n spanner nie.

Ek sal dit nie aanbeveel nie want dit verander 'n mens se lewe onherroepelik. Daar gaan nie 'n dag verby wat ons nie herroep waar ons op dié of daardie dag was nie; wat ons gedoen en gesien het. Ons verlang terug.

En tog, sal julle dit weer doen?

Sommer môre. Ons sal op 'n *narrowboat* gaan aftree, as ons net verblyfpermitte kon kry. Maar met ISIS en Brexit is daardie permitte geskrap.

En so loop ons kuiertjie saam met Annelie op Stellenbosch ten einde. Hulle vertrek na 'n funksie in Wellington en ons klim op die pendelbussie terug na die skool. In die bussie maak die bestuurder grappe met die beheersentrum en 'n stem sê oor die radio: 'Manne, julle moet nou vasbyt, die dag is amper verby, dan kan ons almal gaan rus. En die mense sê dankie; ons is 'n wenspan.'

Voor ons in die bussie sit 'n bejaarde omie en sy deftige vrou. Hulle kyk vir mekaar en glimlag. Miskien was hierdie dag by die Stellenbosse Woordfees ook hulle droom.

Die beblaaarde, skynskemerstrate van Stellenbosch, drome wanneer die jare begin taan en Annelie en Chris se versugting om in Engeland by hul kinders te kon aftree laat my dink aan die gedig van AE Houseman:

*Into my heart an air that kills
from yon far country blows:
What are those blue remembered hills,
What spires, what farms are those?*

*That is the land of lost content
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways that I went
And cannot come again.*

By die huis kyk ek weer na die foto's wat ek van Annelie en Chris geneem het. In hul kyk na mekaar is daar liefde en respek. Hulle is 'n mooi paartjie saam; dié kort vroultjie en haar lange man. Hul laat 'n mens weer glo in *happily ever after*.

En ook lus kry om weer 'n slag te reis.

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From fortress to living room

by Wim Els





needpix.com

Helsinki, also known as the 'Daughter of the Baltic' and the 'White City of the North', is situated on the tip of a peninsula and covers a total of 315 islands. It is the northernmost capital in Europe. Major islands in Helsinki include Korkesaari, home to Finland's largest zoo; and the 'fortress island', Suomenlinna, which is also known as Sveaborg.

The decision to build a central fortress in Helsinki housing a naval base was taken in 1747. Building started in the following year on the Susiluodot islands, nowadays known as Suomenlinna. This project had its roots in the Great Northern War, which was waged from 1700 to 1721; and in which a coalition led by the Tsardom of Russia contested the supremacy of the Swedish Empire in certain parts of Europe. The war began when an alliance of Denmark-Norway, Saxony and Russia declared war on the Swedish Empire. It ended with the defeat of Sweden, which left Russia as the dominant power in the Baltic region and a major new player in the political arena of Europe.

The fortress was built in an effort to strengthen Finland's defences against Russian expansionism. Fortification work began in 1748. But the ambitious plans had to be scaled down soon, and most of the resources were redirected towards building a fortress. Although the intention was to complete construction in four years, the fortress was never completed as planned; and the active phase of the fortification work ended some 40 years after it had begun. (The Pomeranian and Russo-Swedish Wars are much to blame for this.)

In May 1808, the fortress, known as Viapori at the time, surrendered to the Russians. Finland became an autonomous Grand Duchy of Russia in 1809, but Viapori remained a Russian military base. The Russians expanded the fortress perimeter to include other islands and an Orthodox garrison church, designed by Konstantin Ton, was built among the barracks on Viapori. The church tower doubles as a lighthouse that still serves both air and sea traffic today. During the first World War, Viapori formed part of the so-called Naval Fortress of Peter the Great, designed to protect the then Russian capital, St Petersburg. After the Russian Revolution and Finland's independence, Viapori was annexed to Finland in 1918 and renamed Suomenlinna (The Castle of Finland).

The fortress became a Finnish garrison and a base for the Finnish submarine fleet. In the mid-1960s, the country's defence force started vacating the fortress and when the Suomenlinna Coastal Artillery Regiment departed in 1972, Suomenlinna was turned over to civilian administration. Various buildings were overhauled for residential use.

In 1991, Suomenlinna was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. Being a district of Helsinki, it has some 1,000 residents and provides work for about 500 people. It is a major tourist attraction.

A community and a library

Throughout its history, Suomenlinna island has been home to small communities. Established in 1957, the Suomenlinna Library has remained part of life on the island. It is the smallest of Helsinki City Library's branch libraries.

The size and philosophy of Suomenlinna Library are encapsulated on their website, as follows:

'Suomenlinna Library is a living room, an oasis and a venue for the residents of Suomenlinna and other library users. We want to build our library and its activities together with our customers.'



Suomenlinna Library is one of very few libraries in the world where dogs are welcome

It is one of very few libraries in the world where dogs are welcome. In summer, a drinking bowl is made available for those Ladies and Tramps who 'paws' at the library for an update on Marley, Snowy, Dogmatix and others.

The library building shows a clear relationship to the military history of the island. It is relatively low, rectangular and built from red brick. Smallish windows and a heavy door complete the picture. The rather rude acronym, starting with SO- and known to everyone who has done military training, comes to mind when one looks at the entrance: ample space to manoeuvre a wheelchair, but there is no ramp and five steps to reach the entrance...

Inside, the Moomins entertain Babar at a table in the children's area. This seems to set the tone for the rest of the library. The lighting is generous and the people are friendly. There is a very pleasant hum of activity and interaction, although it isn't noisy. Whoever said that every library must have a dragon has definitely not been to Suomenlinna Library.

Being relatively small, the library does not offer a large

collection of books. The objective seems to have been to cover a large variety of topics in some depth, as opposed to providing PhD-type expertise on just a few issues. Suomenlinna may, however, borrow material from any of the other Helsinki City libraries, so the size of the collection is not problematic. Furthermore, the library offers a free book exchange as well. It works on a very simple bring one, take one basis. If one wants to take a book from the exchange trolley, one simply has to replace it with a book of one's own.

Optimal usage of the limited space enables the library to offer three computers for use by customers. Those who do not want to risk ending up in a lengthy queue may reserve a computer online for use ranging between 30 minutes and four hours. One of the computers is a 'queueing computer' and may not be booked. Copying, printing and scanning services are available in colour and black-and-white. Scans may be emailed from the standalone printer.

Two walls and two glass showcases provide space for exhibitions related to Suomenlinna. These are also used



The Moomins entertain Babar at a table in the children's area



Suomenlinnen Library lives up to its reputation of a living room

during visits from schools and day care centres. The library actively encourages these entities to visit it and make use of its services.

Helsinki City libraries run events throughout the year and the Suomenlinna library is no exception. These include performances by the Helsinki City Orchestra and fun activities with sounds and rhymes, presented by the Sydusten's School of Word Art.

A living room

Suomenlinnen Library describes itself as a living room and an oasis for the residents of the island. It stands out from the various reminders of the numerous wars endured by the library building. It is indeed an oasis.

The colourful history of the island and the multiple facets of the library's current activities are, however, perhaps captured best in the sight that greeted us when we entered the library some ten years ago: a very colourful character (pictured left), shoes kicked off, using one of the workstations.

Wim Els is a book lover and Executive: Governance and Outreach at the Actuarial Society of South Africa



In gesprek met Johan Myburg

deur Jo Prins

Hier sal ek tot niet gaan.
'Nie omdat ek aan dié grond verknog is nie, gewoon omdat die buiteland anders dalk maar nie noodwendig beter is nie. Oorsee verlep alles dalk net meer beteueld.

'Hier sal ek my gat sien: 'n klein voorval dalk, 'n vinnige skoot by my tuinhek...'

Só skryf Johan Myburg, die pas bekroonde en mees onlangse wenner van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns se gesogte Hertzogprys vir poësie, in een van sy eerste gedigte in sy oorspronklike bundel **Uittogboek**.

Maar moenie 'n fout maak nie, hierdie skryf, hierdie neerpen van 'n baie bekende Suid-Afrikaanse aktualiteit eindig nie in 'n tipe boedeloorgawe nie. Allermens.

'Dat ek sal gaan dit weet ek wel — dilemma is ek kan dalk tien dalk honderd soortgelyke insidente oorleef want die lyf is taaiër as wat jy vermoed.'

En dis dié einste lang lyf wat die gryskop 25 jaar gelede óók onder die soeklig van die Akademie gebring het toe hy in 1995 met die Eugène Maraisprys bekroon is vir sy tweede bundel, **Kontrafak**.

Benedens die uitgelese geselskap waarin Johan hom bevind wat betref die Hertzogprys, is die groepie wat sowel die Marais- as die Hertzogprys kon wen, netsoveel uitsoekgeselskap: dink maar aan mense soos Antjie Krog, Marlene van Niekerk, Petra Miller en Henning Pieterse.

Vir Johan, wat binnekort sy 63ste winter binnegaan, is dié jongste eerbewys nog onwerklik.

'Op skool (Gimmies in Potchefstroom) was daar 'n Afrikaans-klas waar daar sulke swart-wit portrette gehang het van "die digters". As ek dit reg onthou, was daar die twee Louws, daar was Eybers — jy weet daai ene van haar...' en hy hou sy handpalm teen sy wang om die ikoniese foto van Eybers na te boots.

'Daar is baie goed wat ek nie wil weet nie, ek wil nie alles weet nie. Ek wil my verwonder oor goed.'

'Die jonges was Fanie Olivier en Lina Spies... en daar was Opperman. Nou sit jy mos so in die klas en ek het die hele tyd gedink: Dit is die digters.

'Daar is 'n klomp goed, lyk dit my, wat ek nooit was nie... of sal wees nie. Soos in betrekkings, ek dink nie ek het 'n loopbaan van betrekkings agter my rug nie. Maar wat ek graag sou wou wees, is 'n digter. Ek dink dit het van daar af gekom... die prys is as't ware 'n bevestiging van die gedagtes wat ek daar gehad het van dalk, dalk kan jy daaraan begin dink om jouself 'n digter te noem.'



Oor pryse, sê Johan droogweg, kan 'n mens baie praat. Dat dit arbitrêr en tydsgebonde is, 'maar dit is tog soortvan 'n bevestiging van dat jy 'n pen dalk kan vashou...'

Net duskant die ringpad van die N1 in die Johannesburgse buurt Quellerina sit ons en praat in die lieflike ruim huis van Johan en sy lewensmaat, Marten van Wyk, 'n musikonderwyser by 'n private skool in die stad.

Hulle het sowat twee en 'n half jaar gelede die groot trek van Westdene hierheen, na *suburbia*, aangepak, en is intussen goed ingeburger.

Marten bring vir ons koffie waar ons by 'n eetkamertafel aansit met Johan aan die hoof. Agter hom eggo 'n kunswerk, *Broken text*, van die Johannesburgse kunstenaar Stephan Erasmus, die digter perfek in swart en wit.

Onder die tafel skop hy sy blou Converse All Stars heen en weer soos die kop die woorde gaan haal.

Ek por Johan oor die literator en digter TT Cloete en aarsel eers met die woord 'invloed' op hom en veral sy vroeëre werk en sy debuut **Vlugskrif** in 1984.

'Ja, invloed,' beaam hy. 'Ek het Cloete geken voor **Angelliera** (sy debuut in 1980). Ek het nie geweet hy dig nie. Hy het 'n ongelooflike teenwoordigheid gehad as literator... jy't 'n ander klas gebank om sy klas by te woon.'

Dit was nooit 'n *performance* nie, sê Johan, maar studente het aan Cloete se lippe gehang.

'Ons het langs mekaar gewoon, my ouers en die Cloetes, en ek het hom op skool reeds geken. Ek het hulle huis opgepas wanneer hulle met vakansie gaan... daardie tipe van ding. En toe kom Cloete met sy digbundel en dit was net 'n nuwe wêreld.'

Johan sê hoewel 'n mens dit natuurlik kon vermoed het, het 'n mens nie werklik geweet hy skryf ook nie.

'As 'n mens so woorde kan strengel...' proe-proe die digter aan 'n beskrywing vir sy eertydse mentor.

'Op 'n manier, dink ek, die poel waaruit Cloete drink, is dalk ook die poel waaruit ek sou wou drink — dalk nie op dieselfde plek nie. Dit lê verder terug as net "ek lees die man se werk en word beïnvloed deur hom".

'Ek dink ons is beïnvloed deur soortvan 'n oerbron. Ons drink dalk op twee heel verskillende plekke... hy vat ongelooflike teue en ek *sip-sip*.'

Oor die ooreenkomste tussen sy en Cloete se benadering tot die aftakeling van die lyf en die proses van ouer word en die religieuse, sê Johan hy het nooit werklik aan Cloete gedink as 'n 'religieuse digter' nie.

'Soos wat ek aan myself nie dink as 'n religieuse digter nie, dink ek ook nie so oor Cloete nie. Daar is 'n religiositeit.

'En die aftakeling van die lyf? Ja, inderdaad, ek dink dis soos 'n koei...'

Ten opsigte van die 'uittog' en die bundel **Uittogboek** meen Johan 'n mens kan nooit werklik sinvol oor jou eie werk praat nie.

'Jy maak dit en dit moet daar staan... maar uittog beteken tog om te vertrek. Maar die **Uittogboek** dink ek is 'n manier om juis die verval te fnuik.

'Ek hoop dis 'n *device*, soortvan 'n gebruiksvoorwerp, om juis die dood te fnuik. Om te kan voortbestaan. En ek dink dis wat woorde is, en dis my ding met goed op papier — goed wat geskryf staan — dis dalk 'n moontlikheid om hierdie verval te kan oorleef.'

Maar, sê Johan, sy verstaan van **Uittogboek** is waarskynlik 'n vertaling van **The book of the dead** wat 'n gids word vir 'n nuwe lewe, vir 'n soort alternatief, 'iets wat kan voortbestaan'.

Telkens wanneer die digter nadink, is daar lang stiltes soos hy die woorde oorweeg. Die lig van die tuin se kant dans oor sy gesig. Dan kom soek Marten ons op met nog koffie.



UIT TOG BOEK

JOHAN MYBURG

gedigte

'n Groot deel van dig lê in wonder, soos in die Engelse *marvel*.

Om te wonder oor dinge is die digter se werktuig. Die vermoede dat die vastheid of juistheid van dinge juis nie só is nie... en dat daar net hier, dus- of oorkant die membraan, 'n ander moontlikheid, 'n ánder sin en sein lê.

Die Hertzogspryswenner knik.

'Dis die ding van nie weet nie... dit stel jou in staat om te wonder. Daar is baie goed wat ek nie wil weet nie, ek wil nie alles weet nie. Ek wil my verwonder oor goed.

'Hieroor (oor skryf) ook, ek hoop nie om iets ooit vas te skryf nie, maar die uitdaging is juis om dit los te skryf.'

Wonder, meen Johan, is 'n ongemaklike ding, want ons hele samelewing noop ons om seker te wees van goed.

'Jy wil sekerheid hê, jy wil wêét. Ons stel onself nie altyd bloot daaraan om te wonder nie.'

Dan bring hy dié wonder terug na waar ons onself op die oomblik bevind, midde-in die staat van inperking.

'Die voordele van 'n grendelstaat is dat jy op jouself aangewese is... wat 'n wonderlike ding is. Jy word gekonfronteer om met jouself saam te leef, jy't nie eksterne stimulerings nie. Jy moet sin maak van wat in jou kop aangaan. Ek dink die hele pandemie-saak kan 'n wonderlike uitwerking hê.'

Hy meen mense gaan voortaan waarskynlik snoeper wees



met kontak, want skielik besef jy jy't nie al daardie kontak nodig wat jy gedink het jy't nodig nie.

'En ek dink as jy praat oor wonder, is dit daardie ou ding van twee ore en een mond.'

Ja, dalk leer ons om meer te luister...

Tydens die inperking het hy nooit werklik sy huis verlaat nie, behalwe een keer met 'n rekenaarprobleem. Maar dan, sê hy, hy is ook nie altyd werklik tuis nie, want hy's gedurig op virtuele toere by kunsuitstallings in plekke soos Florence.

Dit blyk die aanloop tot die 'rekenaarprobleem' was juis 'n paar dae voor die aankondiging van die grendelstaat toe daar 'n ongewenste besoeker in hul huis was en dié met sy rekenaar vort is.

'Ek het vroegoggend opgestaan om te gaan water drink, toe sien ek net 'n beweging hier in die gang en by die trappe af,' beduie Johan.

Dan skerts hy: 'Ek het hom byna met 'n tossel van my japon bygekom.'

En soos die wonder dit had, het die digter juis die vorige aand 'n weergawe van 'n nuwe manuskrip vir 'n volgende bundel 'net vir ingeval' vir homself ge-e-pos.

Gaan daar weer tien jaar of so verloop voor ons dié bundel te siene kry?

'Ek is verder na drie jaar as wat ek ooit na drie jaar was.

Dis waar ek is.

'Of ek sekerder is van elke woord wat ek skryf?

'Nee.

'Of dit nou makliker kom?

'Nee.

'Daar het niks verander nie...'

Uittogboek, skryf Hennie van Coller in sy commendatio vir die Akademie, is naas Marlene van Niekerk se bundels die indringendste peiling van aftakeling, eensaamheid en die aard van kuns.

'Na my gevoel is dit een van die heel beste bundels van die afgelope jare,' skryf Van Coller.

Ja, Johan Myburg is 'n man van vele hoede. 'n Bekende in kunskringe as kurator, die rustige stem op RSG wat ander skrywers en hul werk na ons toe bring en ontsluit.

Hy takseer, resenseer en bepeins... dikwels met 'n trek om die mond wanneer hy op iets besluit het.

Maar vir eers, vir nou, kan ons hom die jongste waardige wenner van die Hertzogprys noem.

En bo alles: digter.

Hierdie artikel verskyn oorspronklik op netwerk24.com op 24 Mei 2020



Van Wyk Louw veel meer as net 'n digter

deur AJ Opperman

Die digter NP Van Wyk Louw, wat vanjaar 50 jaar gelede dood is, word nie net vir sy digkuns onthou nie, maar ook vir sy klavierspel, tennis en sy nederigheid. Mense het hul herinneringe aan Louw met AJ Opperman gedeel.

NP Van Wyk Louw het baie van gruwelverhale gehou. Sy jongste dogter, Reinet Kemp, onthou hy het in die 1950's na Andre DeToth se gruwelflik *House of wax* gaan kyk.

'Ek wou saamgaan, maar my ma het botweg geweier,' sê Kemp. 'Hy het my agterna alles vertel en hy het dit so lewendig beskryf dat ek oplaas vrek bang was.'

Dit was in die tyd toe Louw hoogleraar aan die Universiteit van Amsterdam was. Kemp en haar pa het graag daar in die middestad rondgestap. 'Dan doen ons aan by winkeltjies en so. Hy was mal oor tweedehandse boekwinkeltjies. En oudhede-winkels. Hy was nie vreeslik lief vir feeste nie,' sê sy.

'Hy het vir my twee kosbare boeke present gegee: Die versamelde werke van William Shakespeare en die versamelde werke van William Butler Yeats.

'My pa het gereken dat Yeats een van die grotes is. As ek 'n derde geskenk kan noem: Hy het vir my 'n kruisie gegee wat hy nogal deur 'n priester laat seën het.'

Kemp is die oudste van Louw se twee kinders by sy tweede vrou, die regisseur Truida Louw (gebore Pohl). Sy het 'n jonger

broer, Peter. Louw was voorheen met Joan Wessels getroud en hulle het twee dogters, Ria en Nakkie (Anna), gehad. Louw het sy laaste digbundel, **Tristia**, aan Reinet en Peter opgedra.

Louw, een van die Dertigers, het 'n paar keer die Hertzog-prys gewen. Hy was ook 'n dramaturg en prosaskrywer.

Kemp onthou ander talente van haar pa. Hy was 'n goeie pianis. 'Hy het eksamens geslaag. Moenie vir my vra wat nie. Lisensiaat? Is dit die woord? En hy was 'n knap tennisspeler. Jy weet, hy was nie op universiteit baie begaan oor sy punte nie. Hy sou kyk hoeveel punte nodig is, en dan gaan speel hy weer tennis.'

Louw is op 11 Junie 1906 op Sutherland in die Noord-Kaap gebore. Die omgewing het 'n invloed op sy werk gehad as 'n mens dink aan gedigte soos *Karoo-dorp: someraand*.

Hy het sy skoolopleiding aan die South African College School (SACS) in Kaapstad voltooi.

Volgens Kemp het hy 'nie juis' na Sutherland teruggekeer nie. 'Maar hy het wel oor sy herbesoek geskryf. Hy het weer een van sy onderwysers gesien. Ek en Franz (Kemp, haar man, wat intussen dood is, en 'n voormalige joernalis by *Huisgenoot*) en my ma het Sutherland jare gelede besoek.'

Louw was by tye menssku. 'Mense sou my ouers in hul houthuisie in Clifton besoek, dan sit my pa eenkant met 'n sakdoek oor sy oë. Hy was baie lief vir kinders.'

Louw is op 18 Junie 1970 in Johannesburg dood.

Ian Raper, uitgewer van Rosslyn Press, het Louw die dag voor sy dood in sy kantoor aan die Universiteit van die Witwatersrand oor sy verhandeling besoek.

‘Die gesin het toe onlangs Linden toe getrek. Hy het met ’n rooi Bic-pen op ’n eksamenblok vir my ’n kaart geteken van hoe ’n mens by die nuwe huis uitkom. Dit was reeds skemer. Ons het deur die leë hoofgebou saam na sy motor gestap en gesels. Die volgende oggend het ek gehoor hy is dood. Toe ek, sy vrou, dogter en huiswerker by sy netjiese kantoor by Wits instap, het die rooi Bic en die eksamenblok nog op die lessenaar gelê.’

Raper, wat ook die biografie **’n Stem vir Suid-Afrika** oor die operasangeres Mimi Coertse geskryf het, was in daardie stadium besig met sy meestersgraad.

‘Ek dink my afspraak was 14:00 en toe ons weer sien, was dit skemer.’

Louw was hoof van die departement Afrikaans en Nederlands by Wits, ’n pos waarin hy die skrywer CM van den Heever opgevolg het.

Raper was gereeld by Louw aan huis. Voordat hy na Linden verhuis het, het hy en sy gesin in Parkview gewoon.

‘Ek het Woensdae by hulle in die tuin gaan werk. Dit was eintlik net ’n verskoning — ons het gewoonlik onder die boom gesit en gesels. Sondagaande het ek altyd ’n broodjie by hulle gaan eet. Op een van daardie aande was my motorfiets se voorwiel pap en ek moes dit afhaal. Louw bring toe ’n emmer sodat ons die fiets kon lig. Ons het op ons knieë onder die lamp van die voorportaal se stoepie gewerk.’

Raper het hulle dikwels na die teater vergesel. Hulle het ook saam na ’n produksie van sy epos **Raka** gaan kyk.

‘Van Wyk Louw het die palms van sy hande teen mekaar gesit en langsaam vinger ná vinger afgetel terwyl hy sê (met elke woord beklemtoon): “Ek is nie ’n professor nie. Ek is ook maar net ’n nederige skrywer.”’

‘Wyk, soos mense hom genoem het, het baie wyd gelees, onder meer in Duits, Latyn en natuurlik Nederlands. Hy het gesê (die Walliese digter) Dylan Thomas en William Butler Yeats het tot sy aanvoeling vir versnitte bygedra. Hy het ook opgemerk: “Ek het al hoe meer sin in Leipoldt.” Maar hy was die ultramodernis.’

Die akteurspaar Carel Trichardt en Petru Wessels het in Truida Pohl se produksie van Louw se toneelstuk *Die pluimsaad waai ver* opgetree. Trichardt onthou die dag toe Louw ’n repetisie bygewoon het.

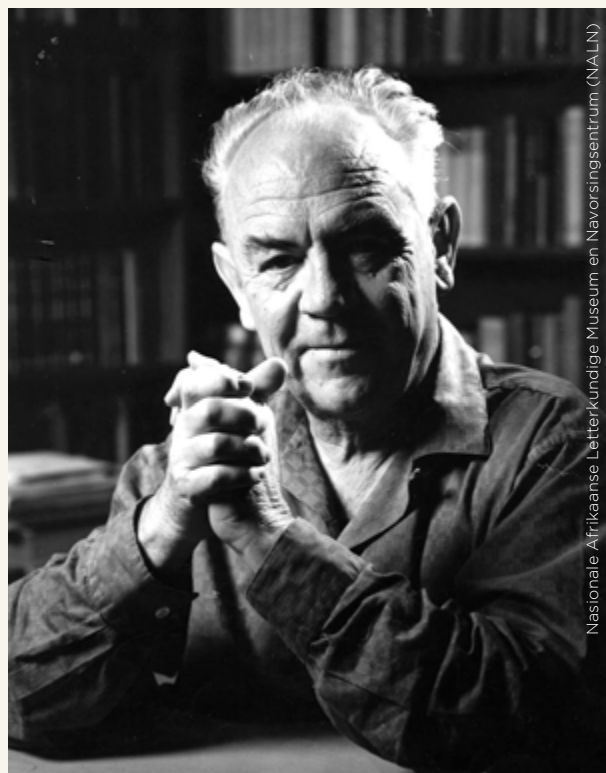
‘Dit het stil geword toe hy daar inkom. Hy het altyd sag en stadig gepraat. En ná een van die vertonings het Truida ons huis toe genooi. Die geselskap het ’n program vir hom geteken. Hy het ons welkom geheet en ons het die program oorhandig en vir hom “Lank sal hy lewe” gesing.’

En Louw het reageer.

‘Hy sê toe: “Ek voel vanaand nes Pollie.” Dit was hul papegaai toe hy ’n kind was. Hulle het Pollie soms begrawe dat net haar kop uitsteek en dan het hy en sy broers vir haar psalms en gesange gesing.’

In 2001 het Truida ’n getekende eksemplaar van **Raka** aan Trichardt en Wessels present gegee.

‘Hy het voorin geskryf “aan Bokkie 25 Julie 1941”. Hy het haar Bokkie genoem. Sy het vir ons ’n boodskap voorin geskryf en toe val ’n klomp papiere en kwitansies uit. Ek wou dit aan Truida gee, maar sy sê toe dit moet in die boek bly, dis deel daarvan. Dit is nou nog een van my kosbaarste besittings.’



Nasionale Afrikaanse Letterkundige Museum en Navorsingsentrum (NALN)

NP Van Wyk Louw is op 18 Junie 1970 dood



Truida Pohl en NP Van Wyk Louw



Louw en Truida saam met Reinet, Nakkie en Ria



Die digter Lina Spies het Louw net een keer ontmoet.

'Op 'n aand het (die skrywer) Etienne Leroux in 'n stampvol saal by die Universiteit van die Vrystaat oor sy roman **Sewe dae by die Silbersteins** kom praat. Ek en 'n vriendin, Felicity Watson, was in die gehoor en by die ingang van die saal herken ons toe vir Van Wyk Louw.

'Ons het albei omtrent 'n "toeval gekry" en was vasbeslote om Van Wyk Louw te ontmoet. En so beland ons toe by die bediening van verversings ná die lesing berekend saam met die skrywer Stephen le Roux (Etienne Leroux se regte naam) en Van Wyk Louw aan dieselfde tafel.

'Die een groot herinnering aan dié aand is toe die bombastiese professor in Nederlandse letterkunde, ene Badenhorst, hom by ons aansluit en sê: "Is die professor besig om vir die skrywer 'n lesing te gee?" Van Wyk Louw het die palms van sy hande teen mekaar gesit en langsaam vinger ná vinger afgetel terwyl hy sê (met elke woord beklemtoon): "Ek is nie 'n professor nie. Ek is ook maar net 'n nederige skrywer."

Joernalis Amanda Botha onthou 'n skramse ontmoeting met Louw op 'n Saterdagmiddag in Johannesburg.

'Ek en sy dogter, Reinet, was op die redaksie van die destydse Sondagkoerant *Die Beeld* toe ons in Junie 1968 na 'n stoeiwedstryd gaan kyk het. Dit het ons groot plesier besorg. Die stoeiers was Die Wilde Man van die Kalahari teen die Gemaskerde Wonder. Bull Hefner was die promotor van die wedstryd en ons het ons kaartjies as gaste van hom ontvang. Hy (Louw) was buite om Reinet te kom haal en toe hy hoor waar ons was, sê hy droogweg: "Ek kan sien julle meisies het dit geniet!"

Hierdie artikel verskyn oorspronklik op netwerk24.com op 24 Junie 2020

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Briewe

Ek ken jou goed genoeg — die briefwisseling tussen NP Van Wyk Louw en WEG Louw, 1936–1939.
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Drama

Die dieper reg: 'n spel van die oordeel oor 'n volk,
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Germanicus, Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1956
Die held, Afrikaanse Pers Boekhandel, 1962
Koning-Eenoog, of, Nie vir geleerdes: 'n spel van anachronismes en 'n anachronisme, Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1963
Asterion: libretto vir 'n radiofoniese opera, Human & Rousseau, 1965
Berei in die woestyn: Jesaja 40:3; 'n sinne- en wa-spel,
Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1968
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Hoorspele

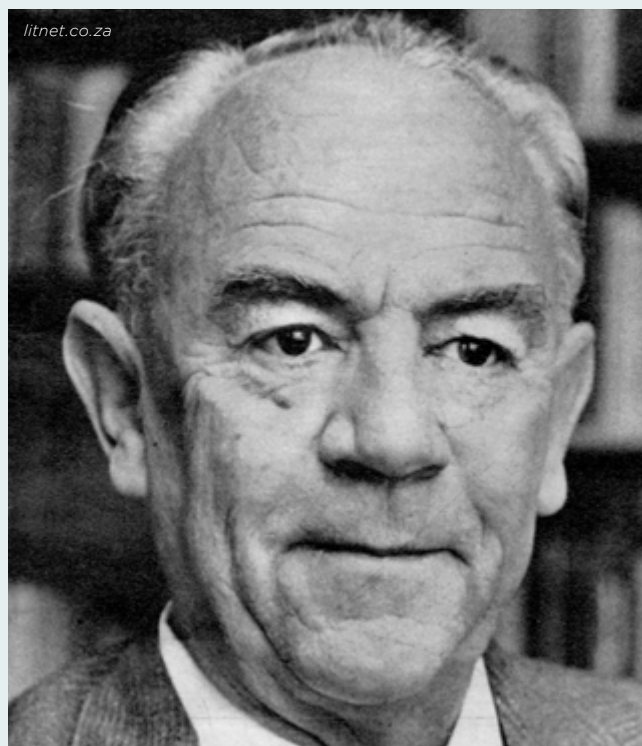
Dias, Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1952
Dagboek van 'n soldaat, Afrikaanse Persboekhandel, 1961
Lewenslyn, Simondium, 1962
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Blomme vir die winter, Human & Rousseau, 1974
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Weegskaal, Human & Rousseau, 1982
Versamelde prosa I, Tafelberg, 1986
Versamelde prosa II, Tafelberg, 1986
Gedagtes vir ons tyd: uit die prosa van NP Van Wyk Louw.
Saamgestel deur PA Joubert, Tafelberg, 1986



Opstelle

Die 'mens' agter die boek. (Uitgegee by geleentheid van die digter se 50ste verjaardag), Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1956
Skietlood, Human & Rousseau, 1982

Poësie

Alleenspraak, Nasionale Pers Boekhandel, 1935
Die halwe kring, Nasionale Pers Boekhandel, 1937
Raka, Nasionale Pers Boekhandel, 1941
Gestaltes en diere, Nasionale Pers Boekhandel, 1942
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Tristia en ander verse, voorspele en vlugte 1950–1957, Human & Rousseau, 1962
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Oh wide and sad land: Afrikaans poetry of NP Van Wyk Louw. Vertaal deur Adam Small, Maskew Miller, 1975
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Die mooiste van Van Wyk Louw. Saamgestel deur Peter Louw, Human & Rousseau en Tafelberg, 1994

Radiopraatjies

Rondom eie werk. Saamgestel deur Truida Louw, Tafelberg, 1970

(Erika Terblanche, *litnet.co.za*, 10/04/2017)



Remembering Achmat Dangor

by Ronit Frenkel

In his 71 years, Achmat Dangor was many things to many people, both in South Africa and across the world. He was a lifelong activist and social justice advocate. He was once banned for his political activities in resistance to apartheid. He was a cultural leader at the centre of the Congress of South African Writers, a tireless development organiser and, for six years, the chief executive of the Nelson Mandela Foundation. For me, he was above all an extraordinary novelist and poet who expanded how I think.

I was a graduate student when, quite by chance, I picked up a copy of Dangor's 1997 novel **Kafka's curse** in Exclusive Books in Johannesburg. It was 2001 and I was starting to write my dissertation proposal. I read **Kafka's curse** and realised that I had to change topics, such was the impact of the novella on my intellectual life.

It remains a formative novel in my understanding of South African culture, and a favourite novel due to the sheer pleasure to be found in its writing, in its gorgeous prose and magical, mythical landscape.

The complexity of culture

In **Kafka's curse** the characters shift and transform. The protagonist Oscar Kahn is revealed to be Omar Khan, both coloured and Muslim, who has passed as Jewish and white by changing two letters of his name. His wife leaves him as his illness progresses, an illness which poisons his lungs and

turns his skin into bark just as Nelson Mandela becomes South Africa's first democratically elected president.

In many ways, Dangor's fiction represented the shifts that South African literature and culture underwent in the early days of the country's transition to democracy. His was a focus on the relationship between race, memory and apartheid constructions.

Both the form and the content of his novels highlight the ambiguous character of identity and history. They offer a complex and nuanced alternative to dominant understandings of South Africa, ones that moved away from a logic of black and white, good and bad, past and present, and into a textured and intricate conception of the country's culture.

They certainly changed my own understandings of my world. **Kafka's curse** showed me that South Africans were not always one thing or another, but had to deny the complexities of identity in order to fit into apartheid's system of racial categorisation.

In a post-apartheid context, Dangor's characters reveal the irrepressible mix of South African identities. In **Kafka's curse** he applied the legend of Majnoen to South African culture in a short novel written of rich prose that is often described as magical realist in terms of genre. In an interview with *Bold Type* magazine, he himself described it as follows:

The ancient Arabic legend of Leila and Majnoen ('a name as well as a madness') is a cautionary moral tale: tamper with the hierarchy of a society's structure and you threaten its orderliness, and hence its very existence.



Ask the Caliph who caused his daughter Leila and her lover Majnoen so much suffering: his caliphate probably did not endure as long as their legend.

The legend of Majnoen in South Africa becomes a story of enduring love that defies despotic rule. Apartheid meanings are interrogated from the points that it denied existed — the ambiguities or overlaps between its lines of racial categorisation. This is embodied by the figure of Oscar/Omar.

Like when I first read it, these ambiguities unravel what my own graduate students think they know when I teach this book today. **Kafka's curse** muddies the line between the imagined and the lived reality of racial constructions.

The uncertainty of the past

In his internationally acclaimed 2001 novel **Bitter fruit**, Dangor continued his investigation of ambiguity by exploring the line between silence and speaking up. He did this by looking at the impact of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), set up by the Mandela government to deal with the atrocities of apartheid. While **Kafka's curse** explored these issues around South Africa's first democratic election in 1994, **Bitter fruit** dealt with similar issues around the second election in 1999. Its focus was the uncertainties of history and memory.

Bitter fruit was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 2004 and is probably Dangor's best-known work. Set in urban Johannesburg, the narrative focuses on Silas and Lydia Ali

and their son Mikey. As their relationships begin to unravel at the end of the Mandela presidency, silence surrounds the characters' pasts as a counterpoint against which to examine the impact of the TRC as a form of cultural articulation.

How do we deal with our past and the uncertainties of history, Dangor asks, in a novel that floats back and forth between present and past, speech and silence, public and private.

Bitter fruit's three sections — memory, confession and retribution — act as counterpoints against which the TRC's processes of speak, grieve and heal are situated. He doesn't offer any neat solutions, but traces different ways of dealing with our past. In much the same way that the TRC could not construct a unified idea of South African history but merely offered one piece of a fragmentary story, Dangor illustrated the ambiguity inherent in the various ways we synthesise that past as individuals and as a society as a whole.

In each of his books, he explored questions that shifted these sorts of cultural debates. Dangor's last novel, **Dikeledi** (2017), sits on my bedside table and I wonder what new knowledge lies within its pages for me to discover, what questions will be explored that I cannot articulate myself.

Rest in peace Achmat Dangor, my teacher in novelistic form.

Ronit Frenkel receives funding from the National Research Foundation. She is a professor of English at the University of Johannesburg and the editor of The thinker. This article was first published by theconversation.com on 16 September 2020



Book reviews

Boekresensies

compiled by book selectors

ADULT FICTION

VOLWASSE VERHALENDE LEKTUUR



PAUL, Chanette

Mirre.- LAPA, 2019.

Mirre is die tweede boek in die gewilde skrywer Chanette Paul se *Vywerfrau*-trilogie (Die eerste was **Lira** en die derde **Coral**). **Mirre** se man is 'n befaamde huweliksberader met sy eie TV-program. Hy kom egter uit 'n disfunksionele gesin en mishandel haar vir jare al — eers emosioneel en toe fisies. Toe hy haar ernstig aanrand, gaan soek sy hulp en skuiling op Vywerbaai, waar haar jarelange vriendin, Coral, haar jeugliefde, Boeta; asook Lira en Marilyn woon. **Mirre** sien nie kans om 'n saak teen haar man te maak nie, want dit sal sy

loopbaan vernietig en hom rede gee om haar lewe nog meer hel te maak. Op Vywerbaai help haar vriende haar om weer die stukke van haar lewe op te tel en op te bou. Louise Viljoen (*litnet.co.za*, 14/07/2020) skryf: 'Die reeks handel oor vroue wat harde lewenslesse leer, maar bo hulle omstandighede uitstyg en hulle nie laat onderkry nie, al is die pad ook hóé swaar en uitdagend. Dit vier dus die universele vrou se reis vanaf weerloos na weerbaar. Die sentrale boodskap is dan ook dat die mishandelde vrou wél haar kop kan oplig en daarop kan aandring om menswaardig behandel te word. Sy kán wegbreek uit 'n skadelike verhouding, al lyk dit aanvanklik hóé ontmoontlik. Hierdie boek wil aan mishandelde vroue wys dat daar wel uitkoms is.' **SJ**

MURATA, Sayaka

Convenience store woman.- Granta, 2019.

'In nursery school, Keiko pragmatically suggested that the dead bird in the park could become a grilled treat for her father. In primary school, she ended a forbidden brawl by hitting a boy on the head with a spade. She stopped a teacher's hysterics by yanking down her skirt and knickers. Despite having a normal family, Keiko was a rather strange child who learned quiet detachment to avoid further trouble. At 18, she is reborn as a convenience store worker at a newly opened Smile Mart. Donning a uniform, learning the manual, and mimicking her co-workers enable Keiko to become a normal cog in society. Eighteen years later, she remains a top-performing employee, comfortably aware that being a part-time convenience worker is the only way she can be a normal person. At 36, however, her being a single woman in a dead-end job elicits worry and judgment from family and acquaintances. To deflect unwanted meddling, Keiko adopts an arrogant wastrel with both comical and bittersweet



results. The prestigious Akutagawa Prize-winning Murata, herself a part-time convenience store woman, makes a dazzling English-language debut in a crisp translation by Takemori, rich in scathingly entertaining observations on identity, perspective, and the suffocating hypocrisy of normal society.' (*booklistonline.com*, Terry Hong)

WILKINS, Susan

It should have been me. - Pan, 2019.

'DC Jo Boden joined the police because of the close bond she formed with a family liaison officer after her elder sister was murdered at university. She intervenes, in a terrifyingly violent confrontation, with organised criminals to protect her vulnerable CHIS (Covert Human Intelligence Source) and so comes to the attention of a senior officer with the clout to get her promoted. But her professional advancement is threatened when the man who has served sixteen years for her sister's murder is released from prison on licence. Jo is an excellent character, brave, good-hearted, intelligent and bothered by all sorts of problems that are familiar to most women, such as the primary responsibility for looking after her depressed and difficult mother (her father has remarried a younger woman and her brother has escaped to live in Canada). Jo also deals in a realistic way with amorous colleagues and superiors, as well as with memories of her starry sister and the new light thrown on those memories by the discovery of her long-hidden



diaries. This is a very female novel that shows absolutely no sign of the humiliating silliness typical of so much domestic noir. The plot works well, the characters are credible and the research is good and used judiciously.' (*literaryreview.co.uk*, Natasha Cooper)

ADULT NON-FICTION VOLWASSE VAKLEKTUUR

CAPOSTAGNO, Andy

Beast. - Pan MacMillan, 2019.

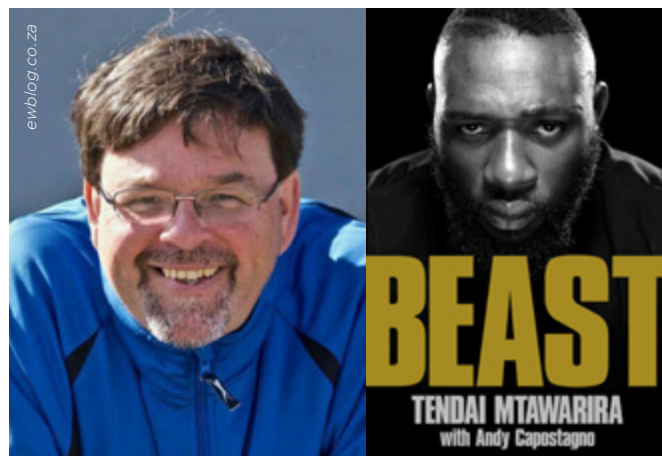
Written by journalist and *Supersport* commentator, Andy Capostagno, **Beast** is a local biography of rugby player Tendai Mtawarira, the most capped prop in Springbok history.

'The 2019 Rugby World Cup winner takes us back to his home in Zimbabwe. Beast was introduced to rugby at primary school. He was always bigger than his peers and he had a huge appetite. He went to Churchill Boys' High School and that's where he fell in love with rugby. He played on the flank and at age 15, he played for the school's first team. He weighed 102 kg and was 1,79 metres tall. He later moved to Peterhouse. How he got into the school is testament to the Beast's strong-will. His father could not afford the school's tuition and they did not offer sport scholarships. This did not deter the Beast. He went to the school to explain his situation. The board decided to take him in. From there, he went on to join the Sharks academy in 2005.

At his first season for the Sharks under-21 team, he was moved to lock. This frustrated him. The following year, Sharks coach Dick Muir basically told him that he would never become a Springbok as a flank. He suggested that he switch to loosehead prop. Beast was crushed. But he decided to give it a try. Balie Swart worked with Beast to help with his transition. Dick was right because the Beast made it into the Springboks as a loosehead.

Former Springbok coach Peter de Villiers was the one who gave the Beast his break. Despite this, the Beast believes that Peter was not the right man to lead the Springboks. He believes [Peter] was out of his depth. Then the nationality saga happened. This came after he'd played 19 tests for the Springboks. Beast opens up about the toll it took on him.

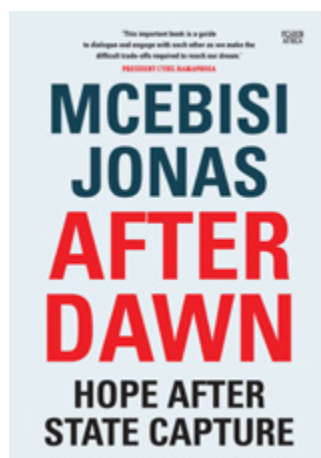
The book details his highs and lows, family life, friendships and his strong Christian beliefs. It's an inspirational story that everyone will enjoy.' (*plainsman.co.za*, Lindiwe Mlandu)



CHARLES, Julia

The flexitarian cookbook: adaptable recipes for part-time vegetarians and vegans. - Struik Lifestyle, 2019.

This local cookbook aimed at 'part-time vegetarians and vegans' is a collection of modern recipes and comfort food classics, all of which feature simple adaptations that can make them suitable for vegans, vegetarians, pescatarians and meat-eaters. Many people today try to eat less dairy, meat and fish, because of environmental, ethical and health-related reasons. The author says, 'the concept of not centring every meal around an animal-based protein is well on its way to settling into mainstream society but out there is a whole middle-ground of home-cooks, somewhere between carnivore and vegan, who are doing their best to reduce meat and fish consumption, but enjoying it on occasion when the urge strikes. For these so-called flexitarians, choices are less about adopting a rigid regime, and more about an organic attempt to eat a mainly plant-based diet.' That is what this recipe book caters for. Chapters include breakfast and brunch; snacks and lighter plates; salads and sides; soups and stews; pasta, noodles and rice; oven bakes and sheet pans. A timely, useful book with attractive colour illustrations. **SJ**



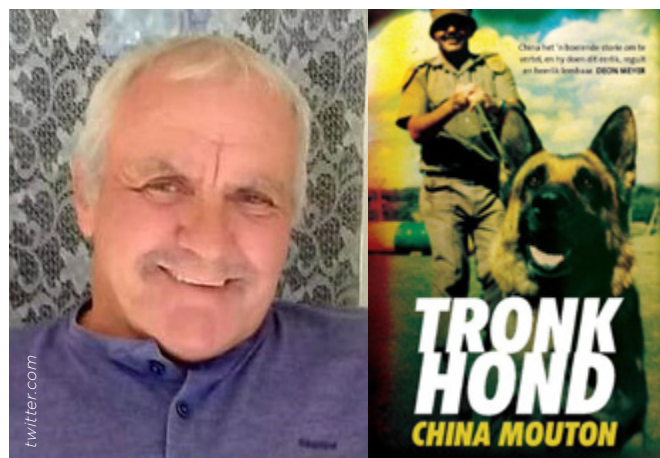
JONAS, Mcebisi

After dawn: hope after state capture. - Picador, 2019.

'[The book]... details the reasons behind the country's current travails while at the same time offering a set of solutions to lift it out of the rut... Jonas, who sat very near the top of the totem pole at National Treasury's headquarters on Church Square in Pretoria, knows very well how the structure and systems of politics and government work. And his experience has shown him precisely how things should not work. He's a systems and process guy, and what we have now is not working and it's constraining Ramaphosa from doing what must be done... Jonas is critical of the political system in general, and the

ANC in particular. He argues that our parliamentary system is losing its legitimacy because of the increased voter apathy, a pattern which has ensured that election outcomes since 1994 have remained largely stable and unchanged...'

(news24.co.za, Pieter du Toit)



MOUTON, China

Tronkhond. - Protea Boekhuis, 2019.

'Tronkhond' deur China Mouton is 'n tydsdokument wat afspeel teen die agtergrond van die ontstuijende politieke veranderinge in Suid-Afrika; en op die keper beskou, die rol van hondemeesters binne die maksimumsekuriteitgevangnisse dwarsoor die land. Die teks is andersyds geskryf as 'n outobiografiese illusie, 'n oorsig oor die outeur se lewe en loopbaan as werknemer van die departement van korrektiewe dienste. Die verhaal begin wanneer die 16-jarige China, nog nat agter die ore, diens op Robbeneiland aanvaar en met Nelson Mandela kennis maak. Mouton beskryf dié gevangene as 'n lang, breedgeskouerde man wat uitstekend kon skermboкс — die leier van die politieke gevangenes, maar ook 'n vaderlike vertroeling wat saans vir die jong bewaarder hardgekookte eiers afgedop en deur die tralies aangegee het. Mandela het die seun by herhaling aangemoedig om verder te studeer. Die verteller was drie dekades lank by die honde-eenheid betrokke, en **Tronkhond** lewer verslag oor die bloedige en lewensgevaarlike omstandighede waarin bewaarders hulle daaglik bevind. China, bewapen met net 'n knuppel en 'n dienshond, was dikwels op die voorfront van tronkgevegte of phakamas. Die dienshonde word karakters in eie reg: heroïese en gevalle helde, wat inderwaarheid ook lede van die Mag was, maar nooit die erkenning wat hulle verdien het, gekry het nie. In teenstelling met die afgryse en brutaliteit van die tronklewe word hierdie opgeleide honde met liefde en deernis geskets. Mouton behou sy saaklike dokumentêre styl maar dis duidelik dat die enigste emosionele anker wat hy dekades lank gehad het, sy hond was. En telkens was die dood van dié geharde bewaarder se beskermers opnuut vir hom 'n slag.' (litnet.co.za, Nini Bennett)

MTHEMBU-SALTER, Gregory

Wanted dead and alive. - Face2Face, 2019.

'With the crisis of climate change, should we still be raising and eating cattle? Despite their cultural and economic value,



can we justify current practices? This lively and easily readable book brings history, science, economics and popular culture to engage in this discussion. [The author] became familiar with cattle during lobola negotiations. To find out more, he draws from sources ranging from politicians involved in land reform, history, braai-side interviews with cattle farmers and abattoir owners, conversations with his mother-in-law, and an analysis of cutting-edge science.' (*Sunday Tribune*)

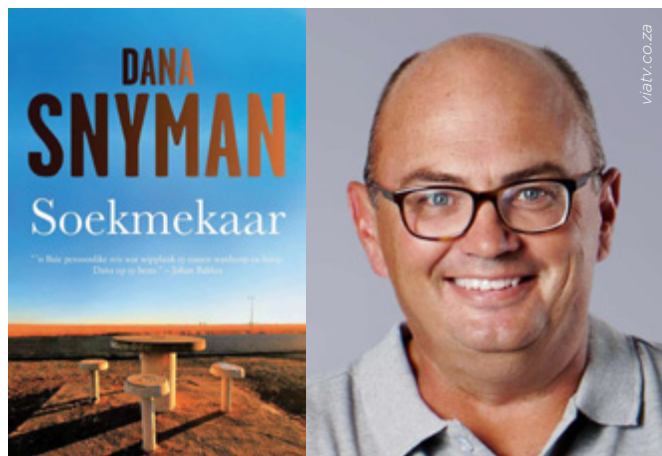
SNYMAN, DANA

SOEKMEKAAR. - Tafelberg, 2019.

Die gewilde skrywer Dana Snyman se boek, **Soekmekaar**, bevat ongeveer vyftig stories waarin hy nadink oor 'n uiteenlopende verskeidenheid onderwerpe en mense.

NB-Uitgewers bemark dit só: 'Snyman besin oor enigiets van Donald Trump tot 'n veertigste skoolreunie. Hy vertel van sy kennismaking met Eugène Terre'Blanche en van die Bogosigesin van Ventersdorp wat by hom op Jacobsbaai gewoon het. Hy gesels met Jemina Meko oor Karel Schoelman se laaste dae. Hy beskryf hoe mense oor grense na mekaar probeer uitreik. Hoe ons mekaar soek en nie altyd vind nie. Menslik, roerend, harsteer én snaaks, soos net Dana Snyman kan.'

Alta Cloete skryf: 'Dana Snyman het lank reeds volksbesit geword, op grond van sy boeke en sy TV-reeks *Op pad*. Hy is uiteraard 'n hoogs talentvolle skrywer en is al talle kere



daarvoor vereer. Wat sy werk uniek maak, is die manier waarop hy die hart van ons volk kan verwoord. Hy ry met sy ou bakkie deur hierdie wye en droewe land en hy soek na dit wat ons maak wat ons is. Hy hemel nie Afrikanerskap op nie. Hy swaai nie die ou vlag rond nie, sing nie patriotiese liedjies oor dapper Boerekrygers nie. Hy trap sy spore in die Suid-Afrikaanse stof saam met die gewone mense wat hy op sy reise raakloop. Hy het klaarblyklik die vermoë om vir enige mens enige vraag te vra — en 'n eerlike antwoord te kry. Hy het definitief die vermoë om joernalistieke vaardigheid met fyn, evokatiewe skryfwerk te kombineer. **Soekmekaar** is weer eens 'n reis na nie alleen die hart van die volk nie, maar ook na sy eie hart.' (*litnet.co.za*, Alta Cloete)

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

JONG VOLWASSE VERHALENDE LEKTUUR



JACKSON, Tiffany D

Monday's not coming: a novel. - Katherine Tegen Books, 2019.

'Galvanised by real-life accounts of black girls whose disappearances went unnoticed, the author depicts a young African American teen unwilling to let her best friend fall through the cracks. Claudia frets when Monday misses the first day of eighth grade, and her worries increase when weeks, and then months, go by with no sign of the girl. Both outsiders, the two have always tried to protect each other: academically gifted Monday keeps teachers from realising that Claudia has learning disabilities, and Claudia's stable family gives Monday a respite from her often erratic home life. Monday's mother and older sister offer conflicting stories about where she is, and even sympathetic adults are little help — Claudia alone becomes Monday's champion. Just as Jackson's suspenseful debut, **Allegedly**, explored the corrupt justice system, this thought-provoking thriller examines issues such as abuse, gentrification, and the marginalisation of people of colour with nuance and sensitivity. The narrative deftly moves back and forth between past and present, building to a devastating conclusion. The Washington, DC, setting is superbly rendered, and the author presents a rich portrayal of the girls' bond, displaying an intuitive understanding of adolescent friendship. Verdict: A spellbinding, profoundly moving choice for YA collections.' (*slj.com*, Mahnaz Dar)

JUVENILE FICTION JEUGLEKTUUR

JACOBS, Jaco

Blou Maandag/illustrasies deur Karen Lilje.- LAPA, 2019.

Hierdie vermaaklike, kleur geïllustreerde kinderboek is gemik op jong lesers wat beginner leesboeke baasgeraak het en nou eenvoudige verhale met kort hoofstukke wil aanpak. Die 64 bladsye met teks is op goeie kwaliteit papier gedruk en geskik vir ses tot nege-jariges. Graffiti Boeke se span som die verhaal soos volg op: 'Maandag is so blou, nie eens roomys kan dit beter maak nie. Toe Jana haar oë oopmaak, weet sy sommer, vandag gaan 'n Blou Maandag wees! Dit lyk asof 'n tornado haar hare getref het. Die hamster het haar huiswerk opgeëet. Daar is aspersies in haar kosblik. En dit is hâar skuld dat die hele skool glo haar beste vriendin se kop is vol grillerige goggas! Boonop is vanaand die groot talentaand waarna Jana al weke lank uitsien. Sy werk al so lank aan 'n liedjie vir die talentaand, maar sê nou dinge loop skeef op die verhoog? Hoe erg kan een Maandag wees? 'n Prettige holderstebolder-avontuur vol skaterlag-humor, oor daardie dae wanneer dit voel asof alles skeefloop! 'n Snaakse, aksiebelaaide storie vir beginner- en intermediaêre lesers met temas soos vriendskap, gesinsverhoudings, boelies en musiek. Jaco Jacobs se kenmerkende humor sal jong lesers laat skaterlag in hierdie rampspoedige komedie.'



MAARTENS, Wendy

Sylvester, ramkat van die Groot-Karoo, en nog 21 lekkerlees-legendes, ware verhale & staaltjies/illustrasies deur Linki Brand.- LAPA, 2019.

'n Wonderlike boek wat onlangs by LAPA Uitgewers verskyn het, is **Sylvester, ramkat van die Groot-Karoo, en nog 21 lekkerlees-legendes, ware verhale & staaltjies**. Die titelverhaal in hierdie bundel is die verhaal van die leeu wat in Junie 2015 uit die Karoo Nasionale Park buite Beaufort-Wes ontsnap het en 24 dae lank op vrye voet was. Nadat hy 'n tweede keer ontsnap het, is hy van 'n gewisse dood gered toe Kuzuko Lodge se Gerhard de Lange voorgestel het dat hy op Kuzuko kom woon. Van die ander stories in hierdie lieflike bundel vertel onder meer die verhaal van Kaptein Seeley, die hond wat uit Kimberley se Groot Gat gered is en hoe Tyl Uilspieël 'n touloper geword het. Daar is ook 'n storie van die dag toe Mens en Vuur ontmoet het. Wendy het nog altyd 'n belangstelling in ou legendes gehad, maar hierdie bundel is 'n



vermenging van ouer legendes en nuwe verhale. Sy het beslis 'n oog vir nuwe verhale soos dié van Sylvester en Kaptein Seeley wat die potensiaal het om eendag as legendes onthou en oorvertel te word.' (*Vrouekeur*, Alita Steenkamp)

PATTERSON, Rebecca

A moon girl stole my friend.- Andersen Press, 2019.

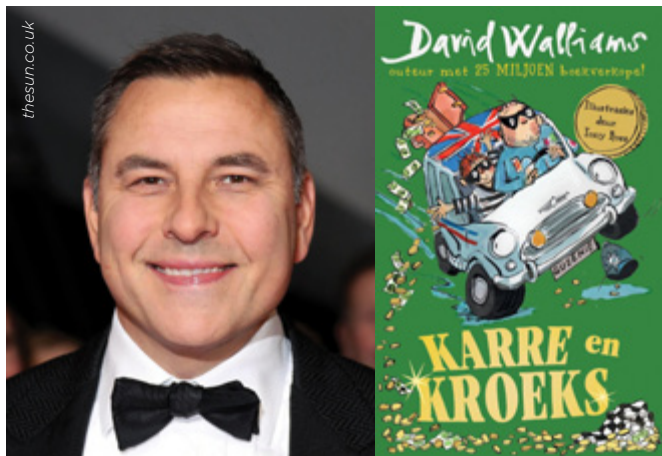
'For slightly older kids, especially those navigating friendship challenges, Rebecca Patterson's **A moon girl stole my friend** is superb. In a gently down-at-heel future, complete with robot teaching assistants, cyber pets and flying cars, Lyla's best friend, Bianca, falls under the spell of mean girl Petra Lumen. Newly arrived from the Moon, Petra is sleek, fashionable and everything Lyla isn't. Will Bianca ever see Lyla in the same way again? This is the first in a series: Patterson's deft illustrations and keen understanding of playground dynamics give it considerable child-appeal.' (*theguardian.com*, Imogen Russell Williams)



WALLIAMS, David

Karre en kroeks/vertaal deur Kobus Geldenhuys; illustrasies deur Tony Ross.- Protea Boekhuis, 2019.

'As daar nou een skrywer van jeugboeke is wat lesers op 'n mallemeule-vaart kan neem is dit ongetwyfeld Walliams. Daar het reeds 11 vertaalde werke van hom in Afrikaans verskyn by Protea Uitgewers, en elke boek is net een groot plesier om te



lees. Frank is tog te trots op sy pa wat 'n kampioen renjaer met stampkarre is in sy ou Mini Queenie. Maar met 'n ongeluk verloor hy sy been, sy vrou Rita verlaat die twee en finansiël gaan dinge ook maar broekskeur. So raak hy betrokke by gevaarlike boewe. Hy leen geld by Meneer Groot, sy vrou se nuwe man, en beland in die tronk toe hy Frank teen die boewe wou beskerm. Frank is egter 'n seun met groot planne. Hy dink 'n meesterplan uit om sy pa uit die tronk te kry en die geld wat uit die bank gesteel is weer terug te plaas. Die verhaal word uitmuntend aangevul met Tony Ross se sketse; verskeie letterfonte word gebruik om dinge nog lewendiger te maak, en afgesien van al die jaende motors is daar interessante karakters soos pastoor Judith, tannie Flip en Raj die winkelier wat hom help om sy pa uit die tronk te laat ontsnap. Walliams gee vrye teuels aan sy verbeelding, en kyk met 'n soms siniese blik na die karakters in sy verhaal. Veral seuns sal **Karre en kroeks** baie geniet; en ongetwyfeld word die pa-seun verhouding positief en met waardering uitgebeeld. Hoogs aanbeveel.'

(lonareviews.blogspot.com, Lona Gericke)



WILLIAMS, Margery

Die hasie van fluiweel/vertaal en verwerk deur Linda Rode; illustrasies deur Theodore Key.- Human & Rousseau, 2019.

'Margery Williams se klassieke kinderboek **The velveteen rabbit** het in 1922 verskyn en is nou deur Linda Rode verwerk

en in Afrikaans vertaal. In hierdie sjarmante weergawe leer 'n fluweelhasie by 'n hobbelperd dat die liefde wat hy van sy eienaar, 'n klein seun, ontvang, hom lewendig kan maak. Wanneer die seuntjie baie siek word en by die dood omdraai, beveel die dokter dat sy kamer ontsmet en die inhoud — ook die speelgoed — verbrand word. Die towerfeë gryp egter in en die fluweelhasie word lewendig omdat die seuntjie hom waarlik lief het. **Die hasie van fluweel** is die perfekte voorleesverhaal wat ewe veel deur die voorleeser as die jong gehoor geniet sal word.' (*Rapport*, Magdel Vorster)

JUVENILE NON-FICTION JEUGVAKLEKTUUR

LABUSCAGNE, Cobi

Explore! awesome South African artists/illustrated by Lauren Mulligan.- Jacana Media, 2019.

Cobi Labuscagne has been a participant in the art world for most of her adult life. She was also part of the founding team of Africa's first art fair, the Joburg Art Fair (now FNB Art Joburg). She holds advanced degrees in painting and animation from Michaelis School of Fine Art and Wits University. **Explore!** is a local title that introduces kids to the world of South African contemporary art. 'With profiles of a wide range of South African artists — among them William Kentridge, Nandipha Mntambo, Billie Zangewa, Blessing Ngobeni and the late David Koloane who were all interviewed by Cobi — and accompanying illustrations by Lauren Mulligan, the book delves into what it is to be an artist. It's a subject that opens up a universe of thoughts and experiences, looking at how individual artistic lives have been shaped and in many cases, the challenges that a career in art brings and the bravery it often calls for.' (*inyourpocket.com*).



Note: At the time of going to press some of these titles were still on order.

SJ Stanley Jonck



Homeschooling 101

compiled by Nomonde Ngqoba

If necessity is the mother of invention (or improvisation) — then the past few months have forced parents who would never previously have considered homeschooling to become doers out of circumstance instead of being dreamers because of luxury.

The list of daily occurrences turned on their heads by the corona virus-enforced lockdown is simply too long to break down. But right at the top has been the need for parents, however unprepared for the task at hand, to continue our children's education in the safety, but also often the chaos — of our own homes.

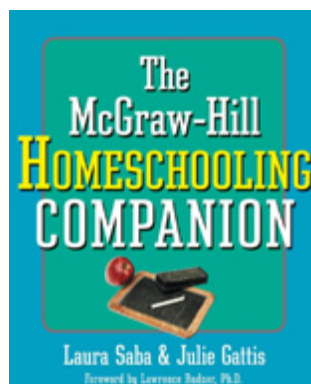
Overnight, parents were forced to familiarise themselves with the curriculum and take on the parallel mindset of educators while juggling cooking, cleaning, parenting responsibilities, and working; only to find that while under such circumstances, homeschooling is seldom easy, often frustrating and almost always time-consuming, but when done right — also immensely rewarding.

With the subsequent diminishing risk following the peak of infections some time ago, most parents have sent their kids back to school. However, what has happened cannot be undone and while previously there was precious little time in preparing for the challenge of homeschooling, should it happen again, the list of books below will better prepare parents for any similar eventuality.

SABA, Laura and GATTIS, Julie
The McGraw-Hill homeschooling companion.

- McGraw-Hill, 2002.

This book is packed with useful information for parents who are homeschooling their children or are considering this education option. The authors, having homeschooling experience, provide parents with a complete balanced guide to every aspect of homeschooling — from primary years through high school: what to consider before starting out, how to balance home and school life and how to handle criticism. It also covers the different approaches to homeschooling and specific methods for setting up the home learning environment. Individual chapters examine the stages of homeschooling, what curriculum planning involves, the indispensable tools for the





home classroom, tips and techniques on teaching all the core curriculum requirements. Though the book is American there is a lot of information that South Africans can use.

LINSENBACH, Sherri

The everything homeschooling book: all you need to create the best curriculum and learning environment for your child. - Adams Media, 2010.

An accessible guide for fun and stress-free homeschooling. The author is an education writer, lesson plan creator and homeschool parent. The book provides all the information, inspiration and encouragement needed to easily and successfully homeschool one's children. The book contains information such as: the common core standards and their impact on families; creating plans for typical homeschool days, including schedules and activities; utilising curriculum resources, strategies and



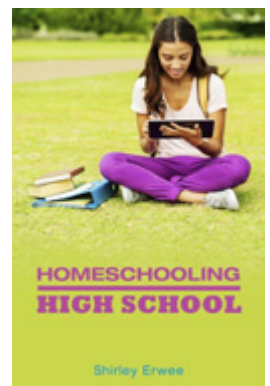
methods; managing specific learning styles; and special needs. There are also comments from adults who were once homeschooled and are now in their chosen careers; or planning to homeschool their own children.

ERWEE, Shirley

Homeschooling high school: plotting your path.

- Struik Lifestyle, 2014.

Local author, Shirley Erwee, is a former English teacher and has been homeschooling her six children since 1997. An active leader in her local homeschool support group, and well known in the South African homeschooling community, she offers support, advice and encouragement to homeschooling parents via e-groups, forums and online support groups, parent workshops, a monthly newsletter and her websites: www.south-african-homeschool-curriculum.com and www.shirleys-preschool-activities.com. This book deals with the practicalities of homeschooling, providing advice, guidance and support





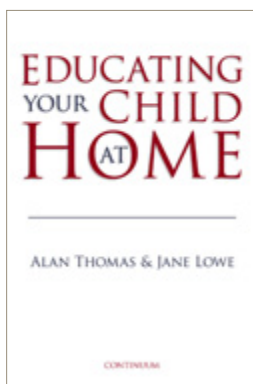
Local author, Shirley Erwee, is a former English teacher and has been homeschooling her six children since 1997

for homeschooling families. The book is intended for new homeschoolers who have tasted the realities of homeschooling and are now wondering how to cope with homeschooling until the end of high school; experienced homeschoolers, prospective homeschool parents who are considering the possibility of removing their children from the school system; and students or prospective students who would like to complete high school education and get a qualification for a future job or career and beyond.

LOWE, Jane and THOMAS, Alan

Educating your child at home. - Continuum, 2002.

This practical self-help book for parents provides a one-stop resource for parents contemplating or embarking on home education with their children. This book helps parents to decide if home education will work for their family, as well as provides information on the first steps to home education and answers the most common questions. Furthermore, it provides guidance as to subjects and curriculum, methods of teaching and how to deal with special circumstances and acts as parenting guide to parents with children in school to help support their children's learning outside

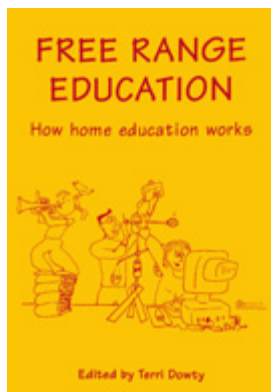


of school. Finally, it also demonstrates to more experienced home educators how to refine their own approaches to their children's learning. Some information only applies to British and USA schools.

DOWTY, Terri **Free range education: how home education works.-**

Howthorn, 2000.

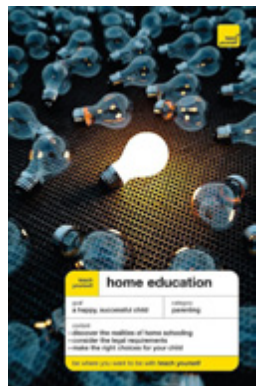
In this book a number of British parents recount their personal experiences of home educating their children. The book is intended as a 'handbook for families considering or starting out in home education', but while it does answer the usual questions and offers some tips and advice, this is not a how-to manual. Information on resources and legal aspects relate specifically to the UK. There are also cartoons about educating Archie for light relief.



DURBIN, Deborah

Home education.- Hodder, 2009.

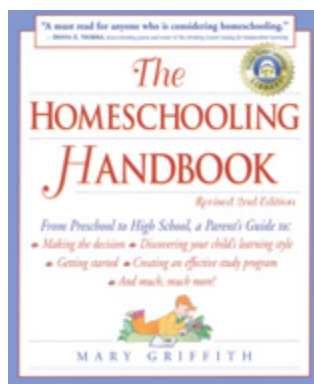
The book serves as a guide for anyone who wants to home educate their children. It tells everything one needs to know, from the benefits, the learning process, to socialization and adapting to change as well as frequently asked questions. It includes some case studies from parents who have chosen to educate their children from home. The book also contains some famous people that have been home educated, such as author Beatrix Potter, actor Whoopi Goldberg, the composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and astronomer Patrick Moore.



GRIFFITH, Mary

The homeschooling handbook: from preschool to high school, a parent's guide.- Rocklin, 1997.

This American publication is a guide for parents who want to teach their children at home. The author covers aspects such as how to structure learning sessions, evaluation and record-keeping, financial matters, finding learning resources and support, coping with problems, theories of education, the challenges of home schooling different age groups, strategies to survive burnout and strengthen family relationships. The book is filled with real-life experiences of parents who teach children at home and there is an extensive list of resources available to Americans. The legal aspect



is also covered. Although there is much in this book which will not be applicable here in SA, there may well be tips which local parents who decide to teach their children at home, will find useful. (Johanna de Beer)

OTHER READINGS

8 Reasons why I plan to homeschool even after the pandemic

'One mom explains why she prefers homeschooling her daughter and will continue to do so even after the pandemic.'

<https://www.familyeducation.com/coronavirus-resource-center/8-reasons-why-i-plan-to-homeschool-even-after-the-pandemic>

The African homeschooling model

'The goal in African homeschooling is not just to provide an education adequate to pass exams, but to fully develop the potential of every student to find their passion and make a positive and unique contribution to society.'

<https://www.cambrilearn.com/blog/the-african-homeschooling-model-4ec43739-12ce-40af-99b8-f178e29bae88>

Dear Homeschooling Parents: Please Cut Yourself Some Slack

'Because perfect isn't possible during a pandemic.'

<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/dear-homeschooling-parents-please-cut-yourself-some-slack/>

Home-schooling tweens and teens during Coronavirus closings

'Advice from experts and home-schoolers on what to do with your children if their schools are closed.'

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/12/well/family/coronavirus-school-closings-homeschooling-tweens-teens.html>

Homeschooling your child with ADHD in a Lockdown

Sensory processing strategies to maximise learning.'

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/za/blog/lifespan-psychology/202006/homeschooling-your-child-adhd-in-lockdown>

Trust me, homeschooling and quarantine schooling are not the same thing

'For both homeschooling and stay-at-home schooling, caregivers need to let go of their expectations about what traditional classroom schooling looks like.'

<https://projectforeverfree.org/trust-me-homeschooling-and-quarantine-schooling-are-not-the-same-thing/>

Nomonde Ngqoba is a book selector at the Western Cape Library Service



Active listening skills

by Leonard Fortuin

Whether we are communicating on a personal or professional basis, to individuals or groups: we all seek to be understood. Good listening enables us to make speakers feel understood by and meaningfully connected to their audience. It is therefore not surprising that the Prayer of St Francis Assisi states, among others, '...Grant that I may not so much seek to be understood, as to understand...'

Advantages of effective communication and listening

Substantial benefits can be derived from effective communication, with specific reference to our listening skills. The ability to effectively and actively listen makes us more approachable, builds trust easier and enables us to improve interpersonal relationships, both at work and at home. It increases positive contributions to teamwork, increases problem-solving abilities, minimises the potential for conflict and better facilitates persuasion during negotiations.

The ability to communicate also increases a person's self-confidence, thereby allowing them to exert greater influence, receive information and in turn broaden their knowledge base and life perspective. Professional support services are greatly enhanced because customer needs are better understood.

Communication

Mechanical and linear communication models typically reflect a message: the sender (talker/writer), a medium (verbal/

electronic), a receiver (listener/reader), interspersed with noise. Models such as these do not do justice to the highly complex, mutually interactive, and organic nature of the communication processes. If we consider that:

1. 70-80% of our time is spent performing some form of communication
2. 45% of communication consists of listening, and
3. the average person only remembers 25-50% of what they hear,

it is advisable that far more attention should be given to how we communicate, and in particular how we listen.

Types of listening

Listening is a soft skill that is done either actively or passively. Passive listening is merely hearing, which is an automatic, subconscious function of the brain. This is when information is absorbed in an uncritical, effortless fashion. Bearing in mind that the brain has a tendency to filter out large parts of what it considers not to be relevant, it is not surprising that approximately only 25-50% is remembered.

Active listening, on the other hand, is purposeful and focused; and requires large doses of self-motivation and sustained concentration and mental effort. During this type of listening process, data is accepted in a neutral, non-judgmental way and certain behavioral characteristics exhibited in response to the speaker.



Indicators of active listening

When we engage in active listening, the following behavioral traits can be observed:

Non-verbal

The listener pays attention to their own and the body language of the speaker. They are aware that their body language conveys a considerable amount of information which is easy to read by the expert listener and observer.

Good active listening is characterised by leaning toward and facing the speaker, smiling at them, making encouraging sounds or nodding, and maintaining eye contact. It is about being in the moment and using all of one's senses. (It is interesting to note that we have more than six senses.) Listeners that excel in these areas are process-orientated individuals such as politicians or mediators.

Such behaviour conveys to the speaker that the listener is interested in what is being said; shows respect, relaxes and encourages them.

Conversely, actions that convey a message that the listener is not interested in what the speaker has to say include fidgeting, looking at distractions such as watches or phones, picking nails, interrupting, avoiding eye contact, and engaging in parallel conversations.

In some cultures avoiding eye contact is a sign of respect.

Curious and sensitive individuals are usually good active listeners as they are more self-aware and are interested in people and in new ideas. They make good interviewers and trainers.

Mental states

When somebody is actively listening, they are in a state of concentrated focus and receptive to information. Such listeners are predominantly outcome time- (when), content- (what), and action- (where) orientated. This perhaps goes some way towards explaining the Afrikaans saying *'n goeie begrip het 'n halwe woord nodig*.

Active listeners are not judgmental and do not impose their ideas or only listens for their own convictions. They are able to construct a mental map of what the speaker is trying to convey which will assist with subsequent clarifying questions.

Awareness of oneself and what type of listener you are is extremely beneficial. Some listeners are more process orientated, while others are more outcome orientated. One should also be sensitive towards the potential impact of different cultural orientations in the communication and listening processes.

It is often surprising how personal biases, ideological convictions and preconceived notions act as psychological filters to what is absorbed during the listening process. When this happens, listeners tend to filter out that which does not fit into their view of the world, instead of just focusing on what conforms to their world view. This is known as biased listening.

These preconceived notions are more visible in cultures steeped in oral communication, and when detected, act as powerful deterrents to effective communication.

Feedback/Reflection

Feedback actions convey to the speaker that the listener has felt and understood the message. Positive verbal feedback can be provided during an interval or at the end of the session.

Positive reinforcing techniques that can be applied:

1. Clarifying questions
2. Repetition of content to ensure complete understanding
3. Paraphrasing
4. Summarising.

For their part, good speakers are sensitive to all feedback indicators and adapt their communication strategy accordingly.

Conclusion

Active listening is critical in building an integrated society that exists within a multi-cultural context. We must learn to listen outside our boundaries of comfort to find one another and build a better social fabric. Effective communication — especially listening — is an essential building tool towards shaping effective individuals, families, communities and societies; not to mention the workplace environment, where we spend approximately a third of our working life.

We can only be better together if we join hands and direct our collective efforts towards tolerance and understanding. Active listening is a key component of the lifelong learning and continuous development process. The outcomes and the associated benefits are in our own hands.

Leonard Fortuin is the assistant director of the Metropole Region at the Western Cape Library Service



Why emojis and #hashtags should be part of language learning

by Heather Lotherington

Learning a language after one's early childhood home language is often referred to as second language learning (despite the fact people may in fact be learning their third or fourth languages). In Canada, an officially bilingual country, both English and French are widely taught in superdiverse urban centres.

Increasingly, a popular avenue for adult language learners is mobile language learning via free or cheap downloaded apps. A number of apps for mobile language learning claim top-market share: Duolingo claims to teach 200 million language learners worldwide; Busuu, 90 million learners; Babbel and Memrise are also major players.

I analysed these four apps for their approach to and treatment of language and language learning. I found that they relied problematically on past models of what language is and what language does.

How the apps teach grammar

None of these four top-selling apps are capitalising on how language is changing in online communication where features such as emojis or hashtags — conventions used in texting and tweeting — are fundamentally altering how people communicate.

Rather, these apps tended to teach by testing, drilling vocabulary and simple phrases. Thus, 'I read a book' is

presented for memorisation and contrasted with 'she reads a book,' with little if any grammatical explanation.

Grammar is the backbone of a language; it's the structure that words fit into so they make sense for users of the language. Online grammars have diverged from standard 'sentence' grammars, which typified printed texts, in myriad ways.

Language structures meaning

Grammatical study involves chiefly two levels of language structure: elements added to a word (morphology), and the organisation of words in a sentence (syntax).

Languages that are organised predominantly according to the order of words in a sentence, such as English, are described as analytic. Languages that put more information on word formation, such as Russian, are described as synthetic.

Some languages are extremely synthetic or polysynthetic, using what's called 'agglutination' to create long sentence-type words that would in an analytic language require many words in a sentence. Agglutination builds meaning by gluing word parts together. An excellent example is the Ojibwe (or Anishinaabe) language (Anishinaabemowin).

For example, in **The Mishomis book: the voice of the Ojibway**, spiritual leader and teacher Edward Benton-Banai breaks down the word Anishinaabe rooted in the people's creation story: *ani* (from whence) *nishina* (lowered) *abe* (the male of the species).



Ojibwe scholar and historian Alan Corbiere, who developed the Anishinaabemowin Revival Program, explains that adding the final morpheme ‘-mo’ to the word Anishinaabe refers to vocalisation and speaking the language.

Adding ‘-win’ to Anishinaabemo, Corbiere explains, renders the verb back to a noun meaning Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) language. Saying the single word Anishinaabemo in English requires an entire phrase (‘speaking the Ojibwe language’)!

This grammatical lesson is particularly interesting because digital word-like conventions, such as *#OscarsSoWhite*, follow the rules of agglutination. These rules are different from the grammatical patterning of print-era English, which would require something like: ‘The Oscars are biased towards whites.’

Digital shifts

Word-like forms such as *#topic* or *@onlinehandle* are instantly understood as typical communication in their respective digital genres. Moreover, these digital forms are crossing over from online platforms into paper media: see *#MeToo* headlines in the *New York Times*, the *Telegraph* and the *Globe and Mail*.

Circulating *#hashtags* carry coherent packages of information, such as *#nolitetebastardescarborundorum*. This feminist rallying cry hashtag agglutinates (nonsense) words that reference a fake Latin phrase that came to pop culture prominence with the popularity of Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s tale*.

On Twitter, users learn the forms and boundaries of tweet grammar, limited by characters (280), not words. Tweets, like texts, use abbreviations in grammatically systematic ways, such as RT for retweet or DM for direct message.

Texting functions as a conversation that is typed at the speed of speech — otherwise it would not work as a quick, unedited speech bubble. Emojis in texts suggest the way digital users can share pictorial and graphic information alone

or with words to show instantly readable emotional nuances: consider OMG 😂 (with a laughing-face emoji) versus OMG 😡 (with an angry-face emoji).

Impact on language learning

Most second-language teaching, even that in mobile apps, continues to focus on old-school grammar according to print, not digital, conventions. Grammar instruction, which has faded considerably in formal grade school education, is still alive and well in second-language teaching and particularly testing.

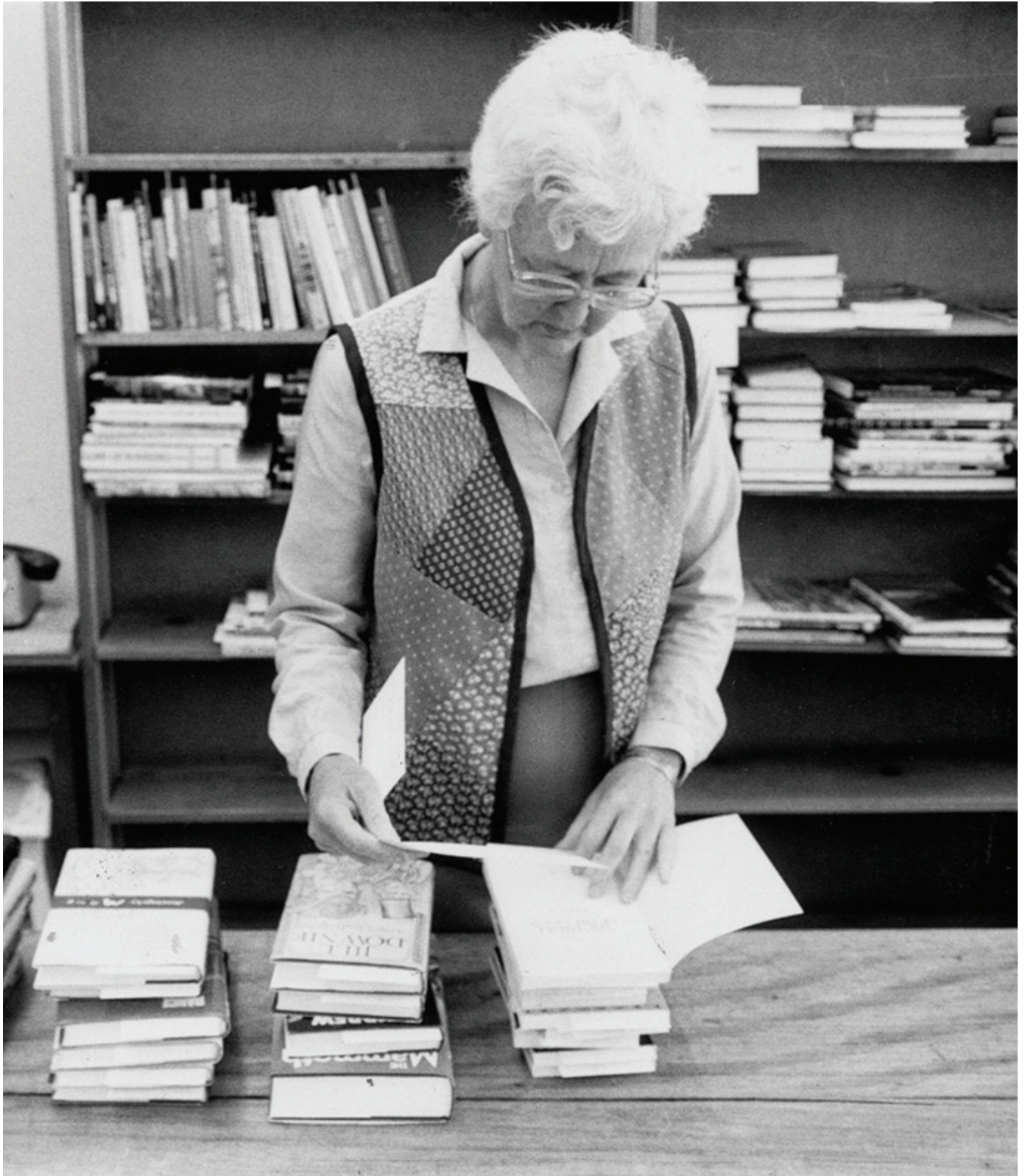
Such instruction ignores the creative interactive language that happens in digital exchange, which is breaking the old mould describing how English grammar works. Language instruction programmes need to acknowledge that new word shapes and grammar forms are here to stay and use them in language teaching and learning. Language learners would then be able to lean on cross-linguistic elements such as: *#*, *@* and 😊 (happy face).

All grammars adjust with changing language use over time and through usage in particular contexts. We may not use English quite the way that Shakespeare did, *methinks*, but we can look to his early modern update on Chaucer’s *me thinketh* as evidence that language change is constant.

The *#hashtag*’s emergence as a new kind of word shape with its own form and spelling conventions is actually restructuring how we build words and meaning in a new way. Why not teach languages the way we actually use them?

Heather Lotherington is Professor, Multilingual Education and Associate Dean, Research at York University, Canada. This article first appeared on theconversation.com on 18 February 2020

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