

Roberts to the Rescue



Mr Hannes Els, foreman of Roberts Construction, Welkom, explains how the drilling into the rock face was undertaken to ensure the safe removal of the painting.



Close-up of the lion.

Mr J. D. Roberts, founder of the company (left), listens attentively while Mr Bert Woodhouse explains certain facets of another group of paintings found in the vicinity of the lion.



DURING July the well-known firm of Roberts Construction undertook a miniature Temple of Rameses operation to save a lion from drowning. On the farm Tienfontein, a part of which is to be inundated by the waters of the Welbedacht Dam, a unique rock painting of a lion was rescued after five days of painstaking drilling into the hard cliff face.

During 1972 Mr Bert Woodhouse, Group Training and Communications Manager of Roberts Construction, who is also a well-known amateur archaeologist and author, visited the dam area at request of the director of the Museum who was worried about the possibility that the unique paintings and archaeological sites would be inundated. Mr Woodhouse remembered this particular lion with its cross-hatched mane which he had seen years earlier, re-visited the site, and afterwards persuaded the company to undertake the rescue operation.

After the National Museum had obtained the necessary permits from the Monument Council a foreman of the company, Mr Hannes Els and his team set to work to remove a 500 kg block of sandstone with the painting on it. Mr J. D. Roberts founder and chairman, as well as top officials of the company were present when the rock was removed for transportation to the Museum.

We herewith wish to express our sincerest thanks to Roberts Construction for this magnificent contribution towards the saving and preservation of a wonderful example of South Africa's cultural heritage.

Gedenkplaat Onthul

Op Saterdag 16 Junie 1973 het mev. Anna Walker, oudste dogter van Suid-Afrika se beroemde lugvaartpionier John Weston, voor die woning te Brandfort waar die gesin 21 jaar lank gewoon het, 'n gedenkplaat onthul. Hierdie plaat is deur die stadsraad aangebring om hulde te bring aan Weston met die honderdste herdenking van sy geboortedag naamlik 17 Junie 1873.

Op die foto verskyn mev. Walker, oud-Staatspresident C. R. Swart, die burgemeester van Brandfort, Raadslid Potgieter en mnr. Hannes Oberholzer, Direkteur van die Nasionale Museum. 'n Lywige publikasie oor die lewe van John Weston en ander pioniere van die lugvaart in Suid-Afrika word eersdaags deur die Museum uitgegee.