

International Museum Day

Open day at the Museum

International Museum Day, held worldwide every year on 18 May, celebrates the work of museum professionals. The objective of this day is to raise awareness of the importance of museum collections and the research based on these collections. This year the Museum opened its cultural history and anthropology collections and the palaeontology laboratory to the public. The event was attended by 33 members of the public. The Museum is proud of the high standard of its collections management and research.

The cultural history collection portrays mainly the history of the Free State. Although there is material dating back to the seventeenth century, the major part of the collection consists of material from the nineteenth century. It includes ceramics, documents, furniture, photographs, household articles, clothes, coins, toys, weapons and objects used for transportation. The anthropology collection consists of artefacts originating mainly in southern Africa, but there are also selected items from further north, such as masks and musical instruments.

Palaeontological research at the Museum is focused on fossils of mammal ancestors that lived in what is now the Karoo between 260 and 180 million years ago. The Karoo Basin contains the best fossil record of mammal ancestors in the world, allowing scientists the opportunity to study the biology and ecology of these animals and the transition into mammals. The Museum has highly skilled preparators who were seen in action during the open day extracting fossils from surrounding rock.



Elize Butler, research assistant in the Palaeontology Department, discussing the process of fossilisation.



Visitors to the Museum during International Museum Day.

Polly Street exhibition as part of International Museum Day



At Oliewenhuis International Museum day was celebrated in collaboration with Tjhabelang Primary School, Bainsvlei, on 20 May. Educational worksheets were compiled by the Education Officer to correlate with the *Aesthetic Cooperatives: A Polly Street Retrospective* exhibition. Children were taught the basic principles of art in an interactive fun way. The day was concluded with a Sculpture Park treasure hunt and African Carousel ride.



Sudré Havenga, Head of Collections Management, with a painted wooden doll from the Netherlands, also known as a 'Vaderlandspop' (ca. 1670), explaining methods of preserving historical objects.

Heritage day

A Vetkoek Feast

Each year on 24 September South Africans celebrate heritage day in appreciation of our country's diverse heritage. Heritage day is also an important day on the Museum's calendar and for this year's heritage event the Museum focussed on South Africa's culinary heritage.

The 'star' of the event was a delicacy enjoyed by most South Africans, namely *vetkoek*. Staff members were divided into 18 teams and each team prepared a different filling for *vetkoek*. The prize for the tastiest filling was awarded to the team of the Mammalogy and Ornithology departments.

Senior citizens from two old age homes in Bloemfontein, namely Bayswater Village Home for the Aged and Boikhuco Old Age Home in Bochabela, were our guests. Five invited guest speakers presented talks on various topics related to South Africa's food culture, including the origin of *Boerekos*, Sotho food, youth food and current food trends. The Museum choir provided entertainment with a song and dance item.

Afterwards the guests and staff tasted the fillings of their choice on *vetkoek*.



A display of traditional food, delicacies and recipe books during the Heritage Day event.



The judges of the *vetkoek* filling competition, from left: Rick Nuttall (Director of the National Museum), Agnes Sello and Ntombi Nakeng (Central University of Technology), Marlene van Biljon (Fynproewersgilde), Lebohang Nyenye (Assistant Director: Provincial Museum Services) and Loudine Philip (National Museum).



The winning team at the *vetkoek* filling competition, from left: Nico Avenant, Lots Morapedi, Tshediso Putsane, Ronny Nokha and Jurie du Plessis.

Games at Oliewenhuis Art Museum

In celebration of Heritage day, Oliewenhuis arranged special activities for learners of two primary schools, Sentraal and Rutanang. The learners were introduced to various indigenous games, *Volkspede* and traditional African dances.

The aim of this event was to promote social cohesion and nation building through cultural and sporting platforms. The games that the learners engaged in included Afrikaans games such as 'WolfWolf', 'Aartapelreisies' and 'Vroteier' and African games such as 'Dithini' (cans game), 'Legusha' (played with stockings) and 'Morabaraba' (board game).

The staff of Oliewenhuis participated by refereeing at the different games and also performing an Africa-inspired dance for the learners.



Learners at Oliewenhuis during Heritage Day.

Vêrlander exhibition

Vêrlander is a visual event celebrating the cultural heritage of the hitherto largely ignored indigenous communities of Khoekhoe descent in Southern Africa. The project documents the stories of 19th century chiefs Cornelius Kok, Josef Frederick, Dirk Vilander, Frederic Vleermuis and Goliath Yzerbek. They are founding fathers of the Griqua people, Mier Basters, Oorlam Nama and 'Regshande' Korana. The word *Vêrlander* was used by one of the interviewees in the Kalahari to indicate that his forefather came from 'a far away land'. The exhibition comprises of 63 portraits of the descendents of these chiefs and members of their communities.

This exhibition is the outcome of a project undertaken by Mr Geert Snoeijer, a Dutch documentary and portrait photographer with a strong interest in anthropology, and Dr Bart de Graaf, Dutch historian and writer with a vast knowledge of South Africa.

As this exhibition is part of a larger project on the interaction between Dutch colonial rule and indigenous communities during the 17th and 18th centuries, *Vêrlander* will also be exhibited in the Netherlands (Westfries Museum in Hoorn), Australia (Western Australian Museum in Geraldton) and Indonesia (Galeri Jurnalistik Antara, Jakarta).

The exhibition, hosted by the National Museum, was opened by the Netherlands' Ambassador to South Africa, Her Excellency Ms Marisa Gerards, on 24 November 2016.



From left: Mr Geert Snoeijer, Netherlands' Ambassador, Her Excellency Ms Marisa Gerards, Mr Rick Nuttall (Director of the Museum) and Dr Bart de Graaff.



Mr Adam Kok from the House of Cornelius Kok II, and Her Excellency Ms Marisa Gerards cutting the ribbon to the exhibition while Mr Harold Beck (Chairman of the Free State Koranna Cultural Community Council), Councillor Ms Mahase (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality) and Ms Limakatso Koloi (Mayor of the Dawid Kruiper Local Municipality) look on.



Members of the House of Cornelius Kok II Griekwa community from Campbel, Northern Cape, singing Psalm 100 during the opening function.



Members of the 'Regshande' Koranna from Bloemfontein with Her Excellency Ms Gerards and Mr Rick Nuttall.



Geert Snoeijer and Adam Kok admiring his portrait in the exhibition.