



The Forgotten Highway Express

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THE MUSEUM SAFARI

**Notes from a study trip undertaken by Forgotten Highway Route museum
enthusiasts
September 2023**

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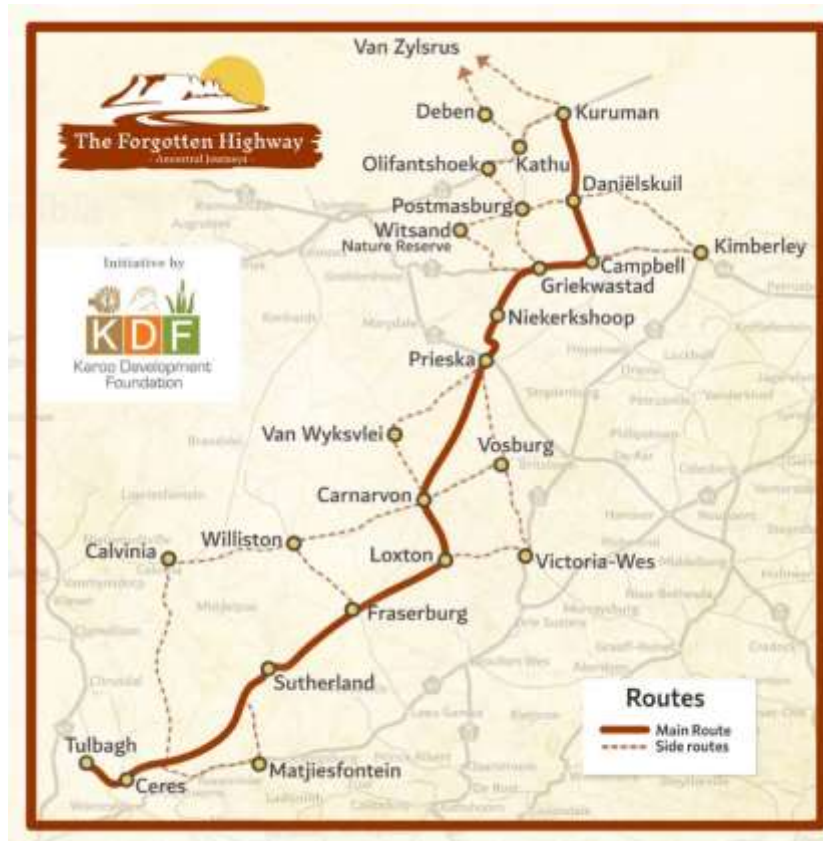
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Why the Safari?

On 25 September 2023, an intrepid group of museum enthusiasts set off by car and bus, from the Northern Cape on an expedition to the Boland. They braved a fierce Cape storm, with high winds and rain making the highways impassable. Miraculously, they all arrived safely at Ceres and Tulbagh, for two days of visits to local museums.

This trip was a key component of the Forgotten Highway Heritage Route. The Route commemorates the early explorers, travelers and indigenous peoples of the period 1780 to 1860. This includes English and Dutch explorers; various missionaries and traders; the San, Khoi, Koranna, Griqua and Tswana.

Museums will be an important window on this forgotten world.



The Forgotten Highway Route stretches from Tulbagh in the south (Western Cape) to Kuruman in the north (Northern Cape). There is also a subsidiary route from Kimberley (Northern Cape) to Philippolis (Free State), because of the Griqua states of the early 19th Century.

Local heritage enthusiasts need to learn about the “forgotten highway story” – i.e. who the travelers were (white people from the south, and indigenous cultures from further north), how they connected with one another, and what happened during this momentous shifting frontier. Even obscure places along the route are often interesting localities, where historic incidents happened. Many stories await rediscovery.

In South Africa, small-town museums have generally been developed as “collections of old artefacts”. Local people donate various objects to local museums, and these are curated and exhibited – often without any real explanation of the social historical context. That needs to change. We need to figure out the key themes which explained what was happening two centuries ago.

Communities also need to become involved in the management of museums, in partnership with municipalities. Local heritage committees can create a “Friends of the Museum” structure to network with the local community, and to harness additional local funds, energies and resources.

The Karoo Development Foundation (KDF), in collaboration with the Towns Action Network (TAN), based in Cape Town, decided to prioritise country museums.¹ The KDF offered to organise a “Museum Safari”, to provide an educational and enriching experience for museum champions on the Route. A total of seven people made the trip. Unfortunately there could not be more participants,, due to budgetary constraints.

The travelers represented Sutherland, Fraserburg, Williston, Carnarvon, Griquatown, Vosburg, and Victoria West.

The Northern Cape Museum Safari team: Herman de Vries (team leader, Fraserburg), Mietjie Olifant (Griquatown), Paula Daniel (Victoria West), Anna van Wyk (Carnarvon), Tina Coombes (Vosburg), Lien Fourie (Sutherland), and Cora Steenkamp (Williston).

Here they enjoy a moment in the winter sunshine with Shurine van Niekerk and Calvin van Wyk, managers of the Oude Kerk Volksmuseum of Tulbagh.



¹ We are grateful to the Finnish Embassy which contributed financially to the Museum Safari.

The team visited two well-appointed museums in the Western Cape – the Tulbagh Oude Kerk Volksmuseum Complex, and the Togrers (Transport Riders) Museum in Ceres. Both of these museums are resourced by skilled staff, supportive municipalities, and a highly capable provincial Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport. Their local municipality (Witzenberg) appears to administer these museums very well. Their exhibits are sophisticated and creative.

These visits provided the up-country travellers with an opportunity for networking, heritage learning, knowledge exchange, and personal growth. They learnt about exhibit design and layout, particularly to find a way of telling the “local story” in a meaningful way. There were discussions about professional museum management and community relationships.

This report also provides additional information which is relevant to the discussions which were held on the Museum Safari. These insights will be useful for the future development of museums on the Forgotten Highway Route.



The team wanders through Tulbagh’s museum precinct

The Tulbagh Oude Kerk Volksmuseum experience

The full name of this remarkable museum is the Oude Kerk Volksmuseum – a name which reflects the rich church history of this old town, dating back to the early 1700s.

The team met with museum managers Ms Shurine van Niekerk and Mr Calvin van Wijk, and had an enjoyable discussion for most of the afternoon.

How the museum works

The museum has permanent and temporary exhibitions. Some items remain permanently, but it can integrate temporary exhibitions. Often these last for three or six months. The temporary exhibitions can be done creatively, for example, different kinds of clothes or chairs. Sometimes the staff roll out a red carpet, and put their special items on it for display.

There are two different storage locations, holding mostly smaller things. Most of the items are on display.



Lively discussions at Tulbagh Museum

The staff arrive at the museum every day at 8 am, to check that everything is clean and in order. The doors open to the public at 9 am, and stays open until 5 pm.

The museum attracts many visitors, particularly during high season and school holidays. Typically, the museum closes at lunchtime, but the church remains open for visitors.

On weekends, the hours are from 10 am to 2pm in the winter, and from 9 am to 2pm in the summer. If visitors arrive just before 2pm, the museum stays open until the visitors have completed their tour of the museum. Sometimes they open for special requests – and once even opened on Christmas Day, to allow descendants of Tulbagh residents to view their ancestors' graves in the church. According to Shurine, “That's the type of stuff you do for the tourists and that's why they keep coming back.”

It is important that the opening hours are there for local people to visit when it is convenient for them.

On weekends, the times are set. But should someone come through with a tour guide, even though we close at two o'clock, they may arrange a visit ahead of time. If they can only make it later in the afternoon, then we open the museum specially. We get people and we open the museum for the time when they are here. Sometimes it's also just that extra step.

Tulbagh is about an hour or half, perhaps a little more than an hour's drive from Cape Town and, on weekends especially, there are a lot of people. And if they come to the museum then they also go to the businesses, which benefit from these customers.

The Earthquake Museum offers fascinating geological insights, as well as the impact of the catastrophe on the local community.

Twelve people died on 29 September, 1969.



The admission price is R30 for adults, which is very economical, especially considering that the complex consists of five museums. The museum also introduced a 'silver bells ticket' (for people older than 60 years) which it is R20. The school-age children pay R5 each.

The museum also offers educational programmes, so if school groups arrange in advance and they come in a group, then they don't pay entrance fees. If a club visits, then the tariff may only be R10 per person. Sometimes groups come from Cape Town, then they are allowed in for free, because petrol is expensive.



A remarkable display of old buildings in Tulbagh.

Each building is analysed architecturally, and old images added to show their changing character.

In the Western Cape, there have been discussions about a South African price and an International price, because the foreign currencies are so much stronger. Many people come from the United Kingdom or Europe, particularly the Dutch and the Germans. After some consideration, the Tulbagh Museum decided that it would also have an international price.

The team

This is a local museum, supported but not owned by the Provincial Government. The museum receives an annual subsidy of just under half a million Rand, as well as a grant of almost R400 000 annually for the EPWPs, i.e. from two different provincial Departments.

The modified Museum Law of the Western Cape prescribes the governance of museums. Some museums have specific provisions. The Tulbagh museum (or the “Oude Kerk Volksmuseum van ‘T Land van Waveren”² consists of the following members, all appointed by the Provincial Minister:

- (a) Three members are appointed by the Provincial Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport due to their experience in corporate governance or special knowledge of matters concerning museums
- (b) One member is nominated by the Council of the Local Municipality, and one member nominated by the Council of the District Municipality
- (c) One member is nominated by the church council of the Dutch Reformed Congregation at Tulbagh
- (d) One member is nominated by subscribers to the museum (i.e. the Friends of the Museum) ; and
- (e) One employee in the Department is designated for the purpose by the Head of the Department.



Team members explore the cemetery.

The museum, together with the streetscape, old buildings and cemetery, creates a “heritage precinct”.

² Section 15 of Ordinance 8 of 1975, as amended by the *Western Cape Museums Ordinance Amendment Act*, 2021.

The annual total budget is therefore about R1 million.

The Amendment Act provides for the Province to pay a subsidy to every museum in the province, as well as additional funding, if available. These funds can be used for salaries as well as maintenance of buildings. The Act therefore gives museum some kind of claim on Provincial funding allocations.

The Tulbagh Museum has very good relations with the Province. Because the Museum spends all the money carefully and wisely, the Museum gets a bit more every year.

The full staff complement is thirteen members, including the Manager. This includes the Front of House Staff (who liaise with the public), Administration, and Financial Management. There are nine EPWP workers (Expansion of Public Works Programme). One of the EPWPS helps the Manager with some of the work that the museum assistant would do, such as Visitor Statistics, EPWP Reports and, if someone has to go on leave, a bit of Human Resource Management.

There are four staff appointed by the Department, and this will be increased to five staff members soon.



Brilliant white paint against a blue sky ... The museum's construction team in action!

The number of EPWPs have increased – from four, at the start, to nine currently. They are funded from the Expanded Public Works Programme.³ This programme has four main sectors: The Infrastructure Sectors (human settlements, health and education), the non-state sector (support to NGOs), the social sector (such as home-based care and early childhood development), and the Environmental and Culture Sector. The Culture sector creates jobs through alien vegetation clearing, wetland rehabilitation, waste management and community tourism – and this is the source of the EPWP funding of Tulbagh’s museum.

The EPWPs are trained at the museum, in specific disciplines, such as maintenance, gardening, guiding and restoration. There is also a section called Audit and Digitization. Three people, including one EPWP, counted each artefact, with description and an assessment of their condition and where they are kept. They take photographs of the items. It also prevents them from getting lost or stolen, which is often a major problem in museums. The training they receive is accredited, so they receive certificates. For example, the horticulturalists are trained at the Kirstenbosch National Botanic garden. The senior staff are prepared to serve as references. This stands them in good stead to get other jobs later.

The horticulturalists planting the museum’s garden with flair



The Tourism Guides receive the visitors and they take the people through the museum. New guides are put through an orientation course through the five buildings. This team now starts at R154 per day, but their rates improve if they stay on the job for longer. In contrast to the Municipality’s EPWPs, who only have year-long contracts, the museum’s EPWPs can work for longer, and therefore get more skilled. The museum also tries to renew the annual municipal EPWP contracts.

³ <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/tpw/department-of-infrastructure/expanded-public-works-programme-epwp>

Some of the EPWPs become highly skilled. It has become a sought-after position for many of these people. They know it is a regular income, where they can increase their skills and boost their CVs. Some of these people are then head-hunted by surrounding farms and businesses.

The staff member who handles 'Front of House' is also the person who manages the ticket sales, and then completes a Daily Report.

In addition to the EPWP person who is Front of House, there are five guides who are EPWPs. There are four maintenance EPWP workers, two of whom also act as guides. The museum found that people apply for a maintenance post, but once he is in that position, it becomes clear that he can talk well with people, and so he may then become a tour guide as well, after some training.

This also helps to increase the language skills available in the museum. One EPWP is a Xhosa speaking person, who can easily guide people in isiXhosa. In fact, there are three members of the staff who can speak isiXhosa, so they can manage the visits from the local isiXhosa school. The museum is very proud of their ability to manage different language groups.

The staff are willing to multi-task. For example, the tour guides look very neat when they do that function, but if maintenance work has to be done, then they arrive with their work clothes until the job is finished. As the Manager explained, "No one says, it's not my job'.

We have a job to do, we get together, we do it, we get it over and out and it saves so much money."



In 2022, a special display was organised on Coloured people's surnames, who were months of the year. People with such surnames usually have an ancestor who had been a slave. The month would typically refer to the date of arrival of a slave at the Cape.

The staff work on a rotation basis on weekends. So some of them work every other weekend so that the museum can stay open. The arrangement is that, if a staff member worked on the weekend, then in the coming week, he or she gets two days off.

The Manager is responsible for Financial Management. She works with the Board of Trustees. The financial records are based on the Pastel financial programme. One of the EPWP workers is trained to use it. He enters the information into Pastel, and then an accountant completes the financial statements. A private company audits the financial statements annually.

Other staff multi-task too, to enable them to be multifunctional within the organization of the museum. The staff who work in the garden are given a very respectable title – “horticulturists”. They are not gardeners. They are given a lot of discretion on how to manage the gardens, and they are proud of it. They know the buildings are important, so they look after them well.

The Northern Cape team poses for a portrait in front of the historic Tulbagh NG Church



The church, before it was restored in 1914.

Managing the money

The museum breaks even every year, with an annual budget of about R1 million.

The Province provides an annual Maintenance and Operational subsidy, which is about R400 000. In addition, there is an audit fee, for the Auditor-General’s office or for private auditors. This can be as high as R150 000 per year. Now the Museum uses accredited private auditors, and this has reduced the costs significantly. The Museum believes that these mandatory audits keep the organization healthy, and keeps its reputation credible.

The Museum is audited by the Auditor General and they require a certain set of procedures. When the museum receives its ticket booklets, the staff have to check them carefully, to ensure that none of the ticket numbers are missing. Each ticket has two parts – one for their financial management, and one for the visitor. The museum's contact details are included, so a visitor will be able to refer to those details in future, or pass it on to friends. So it is a form of marketing.

The Tulbagh Sendingkerk was used by the coloured community, before Group Areas were enforced under *apartheid*. The building is now part of the museum complex.



The first Bible translated into an indigenous language, in 1831. It was translated into Khoi and Nama.

The Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport now insists that a certain type of audit system is utilized. This is called GRAP (Generally Recognised Accounting Practice) 103. This requires a full audit record of heritage assets. This was the basis of the Audit and Digitization system. Each asset has to receive a monetary value. It requires GRAP-efficient auditors or accountants, and this becomes expensive. This requirement is also challenging because it is often very difficult to assess a proper price for an artefact. There are in fact over 7 000 artefacts in the museum, many of them with very high values.

This also needs to be uploaded in the SAHRIS data-base (South African Heritage Information System), so that the Government has a full record of what is owned in different museums.



Engaging with the community: Mr Calvin van Wyk of the Tulbagh Museum interviews an earthquake survivor during the 50-year commemoration of the event (1969-2019)

At the Tulbagh Museum, the staff are very reliable, and have full knowledge of where the exhibits and artefacts are, because they feel a sense of ownership of the museum.

The Museum stretches its resources by receiving donations. The museum has the “Christmas in Winter festival in July. For that weekend, the museums are free. People just pay one price at the gate, and can visit all the museums, and can go to six different wine farms. This supports tourism because it is a quiet time of the year. This event often yields a significant amount of money for the museum.

The museum also gets donations from the municipalities. Recently the Cape Winelands District Municipality made new signs for the museum.

In the current budget, the maintenance of the garden, buildings, tools, the museum amounts to about R160 000.

Another way of fundraising is to offer classical concerts in the church, and ask local guest houses to sponsor accommodation. Local people sometimes make smaller donations in cash. One benefactor provided an expert restorer to the value of R450 000.

Reaching out to the community

It is very important to have close ties to the community. It is hard work maintaining this relationship, but it yields fruit. The museum staff also have to have an affinity with the community's history. It is also important that people should not feel left out. The staff work at making themselves approachable, by speaking different languages and reaching out to children. Then more and more people visit the Museum.



A fun-filled school visit to the Oude Kerk Volksmuseum

Because the church is part of the museum, it also acts as a wedding destination, and that helps to boost accommodation. Of course, the church does baptisms and funerals too! The use of the church also boosts rentals.

The local tourism office also uses premises at the museum, for a nominal rental. The museum and tourism work well together.

The Christmas in Winter Festival has been offered for 21 years. Initially, it was only in Church Street, with different stalls. The restaurants all do typical Christmas dinners with traditional dishes and decorations. The buildings are also decorated, and places have lights and play Christmas carols. The Museum usually offers an opening function on the Friday night. At a later stage, the wine farms also began to participate. So now a single ticket enables visitors to go to wine farms, where they have their own special offerings, wine tastings, musicians, entertainment, kiddies corner, and stalls. It is very creative.



A taste of Christmas
– in winter!



Planning for Christmas in Winter, 2024, is already underway!

It is important to have a museum logo, with big signs to guide people to the museum. There also has to be safe parking nearby.

The oldest Agricultural Show in the country takes place in Tulbagh. There is also a Vintage and Wine Fair in the month of May. Typically it is offered on long weekends, to increase the length of visitors’ stay.

Christmas Carols are held on 16 December, and this includes local people or a guest singer.

On the first Friday in December, there is a Liggiefees (Light Festival) on Witzenberg's sportsgrounds. At the Liggiefees, there are local people, artists people from the community, rappers, dancers, stalls, crafts and Christmas markets.



Celebrating special events, like Slave Emancipation Day, helps to bring the community together

The museum's website is www.tulbaghmuseum.co.za. The webmaster trained one of the EPWP staff to upload information and images, which saves some money. There is also an Instagram account, and a Facebook page ("Tulbagh Dorp van Omgee"), which has more than 12 000 followers.

The Tulbagh Museum manager also serves on the local Heritage Trust. This is affiliated to Heritage Western Cape so if anything happens in the town which may affect historical buildings or monuments, it must be approved by the Heritage Trust. The Western Cape Heritage Agency is an excellent heritage body and watchdog.

The biggest challenge is that people do not always realize the value of heritage and heritage preservation. Often heritage is underfunded because it is not seen as necessary.

It is also sometimes difficult replacing good staff with new people, who may not have the same calibre. When experienced people leave, a great deal of institutional memory is lost. The young people often do not have the same work ethic as the elderly staffers. However, the strong teamwork orientates them into the routine and programmes of the museum.

The Ceres Togyers Museum

The group met the Curator, Ms Bertdene Laubscher and her colleagues.

The main theme of the museum is the momentum created by the discovery of diamonds (1867) and gold (1881). This resulted in a huge rush of diggers, businessmen and transport riders to the diamond fields of Kimberley and the gold fields of the Witwatersrand, some 1000km from the Cape Town harbour, causing an extraordinarily high demand for vehicles. Towns like Ceres were important staging posts for travellers and transport riders.

The museum also celebrates all aspects of the town's history. Special themes include the passes and toll-roads, the meteor shower of 1838, Jewish history, the earthquake of 1969, and forced removals.



The Togyers Museum displays several vintage vehicles

Strategic direction

The museum building is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, which is responsible for maintenance from the museum’s budget.

It is a province-supported museum, and receives an annual subsidy from the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport. According to Ordinance no. 78, the Board includes three “Premier representatives” who are appointed by the Minister. The Department calls for nominations, by placing advertisements. Anyone can nominate any person for the governing board. From these nominations, three people are chosen. The Local Municipality has a representative, and so does the District Municipality. The Friends of the Museum Association appoints a representative, and he/she is usually the chairperson.

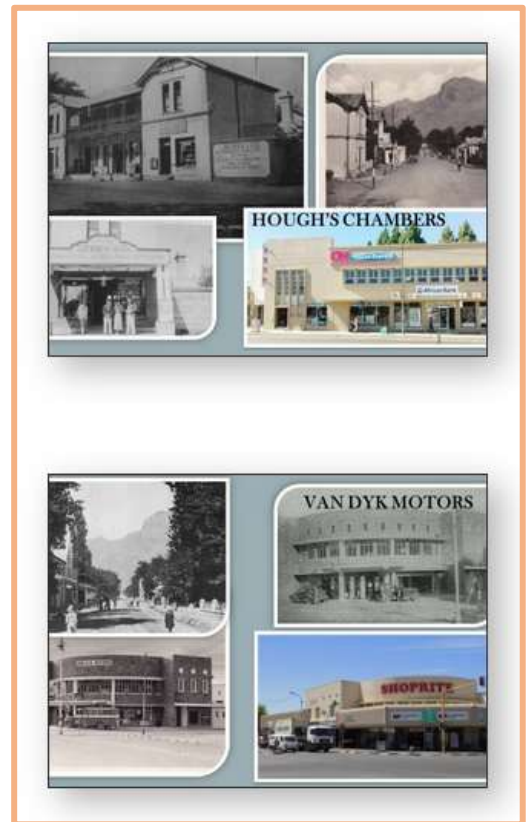
The governing Board, which then consists of five or six persons, determine the strategic path of the museum, and supervise the budget and spending. Every three years or so, there is a strategic session. The staff of the museum then implement that strategy. There are quarterly meetings where the Board is kept updated. As far as implementation goes, the Curator has significant discretion.

Of course, when there are local government elections, then new municipal representatives are usually appointed, for a three-year term.

Designing the displays

In the Western Cape, the Department of Cultural Affairs has a Sub-directorate for Museum Services. The museum service also has a technical department. They assist the museums to design displays.

The museum offers historical information on key local buildings – creating an architectural record of the town



However, the directorate has lost many technical staff in recent times, so much of the work is now outsourced.

If the Board or the staff identify a gap in the collection, then the Museum runs a public participation process where it advertises that it would like to incorporate a specific theme into the museum. The museum holds a small community meeting. This requires the museum to describe the item exactly. What will be included? What is the message that the exhibition will be sending out? Some research must be done, and someone must write the text, and it must also be translated.

A graphic designer is needed who can do lay-out, as well as a printer who can build, print and install it. For additional advice, the museum can approach universities, experts and authors. Prof Nigel Penn of UCT has already been a guest at the Friends of the Museum. There may also be people in the community who have expertise they can offer. There may also be a graphic artist living locally.

The museum focuses on themes, usually with sub-themes. The thematic approach is important for the collection and the exhibits. There are often sub-themes. For example, the theme may be “local history” and its unique aspects and stories. Starting a brand new museum is much easier than re-designing an existing museum. One can then debate the theme before the museum is designed, and then do it purposefully.



The strongest theme at the museum is the story of the long-distance transport riders

Most museums have storerooms. The two storerooms at the Togryers Museum are very full. In earlier days, people used to donate their old things to the museums. Many of these artifacts do not fit into the theme at all, nor to any exhibition, and are not of great historical value to the town. Now the museum does not take in materials, unless it is required for a specific purpose. If it already has an item of that kind, it does not take in a duplicate. The museum just does not have the space for storage.



A key theme: The display about the history of the Nduli township, Ceres

Exhibits should be changed periodically, otherwise it gets static and stale. People won't return.

Some old objects can be re-shaped for another purpose, for example, as display cases.

At the Togryers Museum, there is a special focus every month on a specific item in storage. The item is taken out of storage and described, including the name of the donor. It is also described on the social media, to attract more visitors. One of the staff members is responsible for the exhibition of the month. One example is the cameras, which do not fit in the main exhibitions; the staff member did some research on them, from the internet, and now it is the museum's camera collection. Objects tell a story. A photograph can also be used as an "object of the month". The museum also provides a comments book, so that people can record their experience in it.

The Museum Board must draw up an acquisition or collections policy, which specifies the procedure to be followed in obtaining items. However, it is possible that one museum can enter into a loan agreement with another museum for a certain period. This could potentially take place across provincial boundaries, as long as proper agreements are in place.

According to museum legislation, there is a process that needs to be followed with donations of objects. This is the “acquisition process”. The object receives a number, is photographed, and an acquisition document is completed indicating who the donor is, when it was donated, and any history surrounding it. There must also be a physical description, and it must be measured, and any damage described. Once the object receives a number, it belongs to the Government. You cannot return any object to the donor, even if they want their object back, unless one has written permission from the Department.

An object cannot be sold, under any circumstances. It would be illegal and unethical. The result is that museums have a large number of objects that they cannot really dispose of. If the museum were to do that, it would lose the trust of the community



The numerous objects in museums must be photographed and listed on an inventory

The Togryers Museum has a great deal of security infrastructure, including cameras and beams. There have been no break-ins for a long time. There are now solar panels, a battery, inverter, and gas geysers with gas bottles in a cage under lock and key. If there is an intrusion, and items go missing, it must be reported to the municipality. The museum is now completely off-grid.

The team from the Northern Cape reported several burglaries in their museums. Typically they are local people (even children) who sell the objects to other people in the communities.

There should be at least an inventory list per room, so that one knows exactly what is where. The Togryers Museum takes photos of all the exhibits, so that it is easy to check if there is a break-in. This is called a “visual audit”. There must be a check every day, so that thefts can be uncovered soon.



The concept of a “Museum family” shows clearly the potential and powerful link between museums and social cohesion



The museum has a strong focus on outreach to all communities

The Friends of the Museum Association was re-activated in 2014, after a long period of dormancy. Many other museums’ Friends Associations do fund-raising, but in Ceres, it is mainly about awareness-raising. There is also a good relationship with the ATKV (Afrikaanse Taal en Kultuurvereniging) and the ACVV (Afrikaanse Christelike Vroue-Vereniging).

Any local organization can be a partner. It is important to reach out. A Chamber of Commerce can be very useful for business promotion. “Build network upon network upon network”, because you cannot survive alone. Partnerships are essential. Look out for opportunities to collaborate.



“Every Street Tells a Story”

Members of the community can submit their stories on the museum’s website, related to particular streets in the community

Find creative ways of reaching out to people. For example, in Ceres, the museum invites the local children to come and read poems, or visit the old age home in town and do book readings. “Now, when I get there, they applaud!”.

The Tograyers Museum uses opportunities creatively to network with the community

The Friends may well have talents that you don't have, such as photography, painting, websites, bread-baking, or crocheting – so let them give a workshop! Or arrange a market in front of the museum, and charge a small fee for the stalls – the money then goes to the museum. Or build an outdoor clay oven, bake bread and sell it! This will also attract good publicity. In this way, you also develop the cultural heritage of the community, because the local specialities and products are preserved.



Finding resources

Securing sufficient funding is the main challenge. Any future budget cuts will have to be made up by fund-raising and donations, and by doing externally funded projects. Crowdfunding is also a good option. Some donors can give goods in kind, for example, a hardware store may donate 20 litres of paint.

If there is no budget, one has to find ways and means of getting the job done. One possibility is crowd-funding. But one has to win the community's trust. For that, you have to have the community's stories. Show people that you are interested in what matters to them, and that they are welcome at the museum. For example, open your space as a meeting venue. And continually renew your offerings. Have functions at the museum. Invite speakers. “The place must start breathing and live”.

In the Western Cape, the law provides a legal obligation toward museums. There has to be a support system.⁴

⁴ Note that, according to Schedule 5 of the Constitution, all museums other than national museums are a provincial competency. This would explain why there is such a strong intervention by the Provincial Government of the Western

In the absence of a formal Board, there should at least be a local committee, which functions in partnership with a “Friends of the Museum”. The Friends can also build a relationship with the municipality. It would be important to have some kind of written mandate by the municipality. If the museum receives help from the municipality, it should always send thank-you letters, in order to build the relationship.



Cape. However, in South Africa, many museums developed as municipal museums. Typically, there are now agreements between municipalities; often the municipalities provide the buildings while the Province provides funding support. However, if this relationship is not functioning properly, then the whole system can break down. It implies that museums should build a strong relationship built *with the Provincial Government* (Department of Arts and Culture) in addition to the municipality.

What lessons can we learn?

The museums in Tulbagh and Ceres offer examples of very well managed heritage institutions. This is not just a question of administration or financial management; they also provide inspiration and enrichment to the staff and communities.

The most important lesson is that there needs to be a robust, committed and effective management system in place. Museums need effective Boards or Committees, with a clear process of asking for nominations and appointing suitable candidates.

The Provincial Government needs to have streamlined regulations, and an ethic of support to the outlying museums. The Western Cape has its own museums legislation, having updated a decades-old provincial Ordinance.

At the district and local level, the municipalities need to provide institutional support to the museums, because they are crucial for local economic development and tourism. Ideally, a municipal councillor and official need to serve on the museum Boards, to entrench this relationship.

Fundamentally, the staff of the museums need to be appointed on the basis of competence, expertise and passion.

In the local communities, Friends of the Museum are strategic organisations which can build partnerships with schools, business, artists, and the elderly.

The Northern Cape has a great deal of heritage and tourism potential. Museums can and must play a central role. However, it will need collaboration between key stakeholders, in an atmosphere of respect and innovation. A good place to start would be to organize another learning visit to Ceres and Tulbagh, which would be most enjoyable and interesting.

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