

The Group Areas Act and Port Elizabeth's heritage: A Study of Memorial  
Recollection in the South End Museum

by



A mini thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Magister Artium in Public and Visual History, University of the Western Cape

**Supervisor: Prof. Leslie Witz**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is a dedication to my parents, Tsepo and Maria Kadi. To my two brothers, Teboho and Kabelo may you see the value of our parents sacrifice through my achievements and learn from that.

To my supervisor and professional mentor, Prof Leslie Witz, I have seen darker days in writing this thesis and all you did was to give me space to realize my potential. The baby steps I have taken in the History department since 1997 have come to fruition and may many others realize that history is still relevant in the developing South Africa. And hence I say I salute you my Captain!

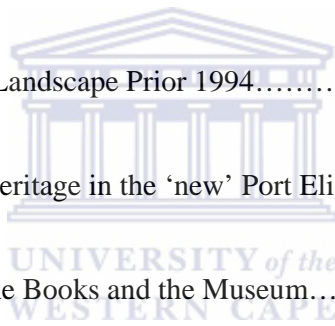
Writing this mini thesis has been a very emotional path for me as I had to deal with my own internal fights of procrastination. This was a very lonely exercise and yet I pulled through.

Since 2004, my professional growth has been inspired by this particular research. My position as Head: Arts Culture and Heritage for the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality came as an 'add on' as the original ideas for this research were conceived whilst working for Public Policy Partnership at the University of the Western Cape. I am able to say that through the assistance of Prof Witz, this research was tailored to give insight to the complexity of the heritage landscape of former Port Elizabeth. With this research I have advised Council and argued in the Municipality from an informed position.

I would also like to thank Fiona Clayton for streamlining my referencing; your intervention has brought me sanity. I salute my captains who made a great impact in my academic growth, Associate Prof Teresa Barnes, Dr Bheki Mngomezulu, Associate Prof Ciraj Rassool, Dr Premesh Lalu, Prof Uma Mesthrie, Associate Prof Patricia Hayes, Prof Martin Legasick and of course Prof Gary Minkley. I am qualified to say that the 12 years of primary and high school history educations were not necessarily meaningful expenditure for the state and my parent's money. The only intellectual emancipation came through UWC, my alma-mater! I can now educate many others about distortions and fabrications in history and help them rewrite their own histories.

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**DECLARATION**

I declare that, 'Group Areas Act and Port Elizabeth's heritage: A Study of Memorial Recollection in the South End Museum' is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicate and acknowledged as complete references.

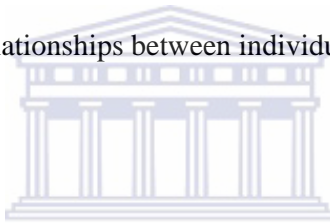
**Palesa Kadi**

**15<sup>th</sup> of November 2007**

**Signed .....**

## Introduction

The second half of the 1990s was marked by a significant reworking of memory and history in South Africa. Whilst the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was involved in its hearings on amnesty applications and gross human rights violations, new museums were emerging and older ones began reshaping their displays. Minkley and Rassool view this period of producing history, particularly as it pertained to the TRC, as “raising issues of relationships between individual testimony, evidence and historical memory”.<sup>1</sup>



This mini-thesis interrogates the changing representations of history, culture, identity and heritage in one South African city, Port Elizabeth, which in 2005 was re-named the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipal area. This discussion examines, at times, the historical era prior to South Africa’s democracy and the period after the first democratic elections of 27<sup>th</sup> April 1994. In both periods key issues and themes pertaining to the heritage sector in Port Elizabeth emerged. These themes are the development of community museums in post-apartheid South Africa, the making of memory in museums and the 1820 Settler heritage in Port Elizabeth.

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<sup>1</sup> Minkley, G. & Rassool, C. (1998) ‘Orality, Memory and Social History in South Africa’. In Nuttall, S. & Coetzee, C (eds) *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press, p.75.

## Community Museums

The history of museum representations in a community museum's activity is a significant element in the current relations between the museums and communities. Kreamer explains that, "History is not just something that happened. It is a living part of people's sense of who they are and how they relate to other elements of civil society."<sup>2</sup>

In 2001, the establishment of the South End Museum located in South End, which was known as a former 'multicultural' area in Port Elizabeth, constitutes a key point of departure for this research. This was followed by the establishment of the South End Heritage Trail in 2004. This research is aligned with work that has been done on the District Six Museum in Cape Town and Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum in Somerset West near Cape Town.

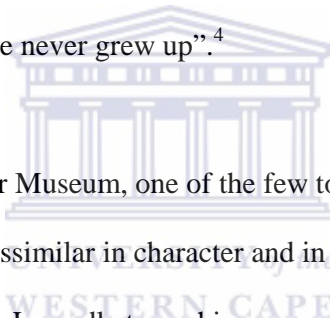
In relation to the above, the Project on Public Pasts (POPP) report for 2002, focused on community museums as its foundation area of research and used this to inform discussions upon the township tourism and cultural sites. This report explains that these "museums ( Lwandle Migrant Labour, South End and District Six) have been established as community spaces in post apartheid South Africa, where histories, forgotten and repressed during the days of colonialism and apartheid would be remembered, recovered, collected and exhibited."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Kreamer, C.M. (1992) "Defining Communities Through Exhibiting and Collecting" in Karp, I. Kreamer C.M. & Lavine S. D. (1992) *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*. Washington and London, Smithsonian Institution Press..p367.

<sup>3</sup> University of the Western Cape, History Department's Project on Public Pasts <http://www.uwc.ac.za/arts/history/popp/report2002> accessed 14 May 2007. 17h45.

South End Museum is in many respects similar to the District Six Museum and follows similar display techniques, such as the use of a floor map, newspaper cuttings on the walls and enlarged photographs. They are also comparable in that both museums speak to a community that is not spatially located at the site of the museum, but that was forcibly removed under the Group Areas Act and other legislation. Both of them are communities of memory. South End was an area in Port Elizabeth, next to the harbour, from which there were large scale removals in the 1960s. The same can also be said about District Six. The museum and the heritage trail have been created to invoke memories of South End and to constitute a community of memory. This community of memory, like that in the District Six Museum is created in the sense that, “the people and the place never grew up”.<sup>4</sup>



The Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, one of the few township museums in South Africa, tends to be slightly dissimilar in character and in location to both the District Six and South End Museums. Lwandle township was an isolated place and treated as a transient entity under apartheid. There is very little known or written about this place. Lwandle surfaced as an area of isolated black single men’s hostel residences, providing cheap labour in the Helderberg Basin for factories like AECL, Gants Canning Company and the local municipality. The lack of cheap labour in the area compelled the Stellenbosch Divisional Council to ignore “the Coloured labour preference policy which barred Africans from a wide range of jobs in the Western Cape if Coloureds were available.”<sup>5</sup> The area was not meant to lodge families but only African single males. Migrant labourers, were accommodated in compounds.

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<sup>4</sup> University of the Western Cape, History Department’s Project on Public Pasts <http://www.uwc.ac.za/arts/history/popp/report2002> accessed 14 May 2007. 18h30

<sup>5</sup> Omond, O. 1985. *The Apartheid Hand Book: A Guide to South African Everyday Racial Policies*, Ontario: Penguin. p96.

Buthelezi explains that, “the hostels were fenced with a single entrance and exit.”<sup>6</sup>

Buthelezi refers to the migrant labour systems as an arrangement that “affected the lives of their (migrant labourers) families tremendously.”<sup>7</sup>

Unlike the memory typified by ‘infantalization’<sup>8</sup> in both the cases of South End and District Six in remembering Lwandle there is an emphasis on recreational activities as “there were contests of music and a variety of traditional dance.”<sup>9</sup> Buthelezi explains this activity as a moment of erasure. “All the hardships endured in daily lives”<sup>10</sup> tend to be forgotten, he maintains. The Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum seeks to tell the story of experiences of ‘Black’ migrant workers through three vehicles. Buthelezi, explains that, “ the first element, is the exhibition which portrays Lwandle’s people as victims of apartheid especially impacting on the Group Areas Act and Separate Development Policy which is linked to pass laws. Secondly, the museum conducts a tour termed to be a “township informative walk”<sup>11</sup>. This walk focuses on juxtaposing the scars of apartheid and the new developments. Finally, the museum incorporates Hostel 33, which forms key part of the walk and meant to depict living conditions of the migrant life.”<sup>12</sup> Thus, although the cultural aspects are still emphasized there is still an attempt to show the harshness of the system and implementation of apartheid in a local community.

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<sup>6</sup> Buthelezi, V. 2005. The Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum and the South African Jewish Museum: Serving Different Publics in Two Community Museums in the Western Cape. MA mini thesis. University of the Western Cape. p64.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Adams, Z. 2002. Memory, Imagination and Renewal: Remembering and Forgetting District Six. MA Mini thesis. University of the Western Cape.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p69.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Mrs Plummer, the former Chairperson of the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum in Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum DocumentaVideo, 2000, Lwandle.

<sup>12</sup> Buthelezi, p78.



These three museums work with communities that attempt to defy apartheid and its systems of control and racial categorization by instituting centers of memory about their own communities in the post apartheid era in South Africa. But, an influential factor in this discussion on the making of community museums is the beginning of “racial classification and categorization of white people as the supreme race which began with the Population Registration Act, promulgated in 1950, and legislated that all inhabitants of South Africa had to be officially identified as belonging to a racial category: ‘white’ or ‘Bantu’ or ‘coloured’ or ‘Asiatic’. Using this legislation as its basis the Group Areas Act was promulgated. The main purpose of the latter was to restricting each population group to specific places of work and residence.”<sup>13</sup>

Buthelezi, acknowledges that, “establishing community museums in post apartheid South Africa automatically implies dealing with extended legacies of racial divisions, where South Africa has a long history of separately organized and structured publics.”<sup>14</sup> The challenge remains that of having a structured method of representing communities that carry legacies of racial discrimination and are characterized by disparity.

The effect of the Group Areas Act is the basis of reconstructing a community of memory in South End. The South End Museum presents its aims as depicting “the tragedy and sorrow that resulted from forced removals, the Group Areas Act and apartheid legislation”<sup>15</sup> This is demonstrated through a visual set up in the museum

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<sup>13</sup> Agherdien, Y., George, A.C. and S. Hendrik. (1997). *South End – As We Knew It* edited by Roy H. Du

Pre. East London: Rahod Publishing Services, p77.

<sup>14</sup> Buthelezi, p2.

<sup>15</sup> South End Museum. <http://www.africam.museum/africom-fr/museums/southafrica-southend.html>.

demonstrating life prior to removals in South End. The museum further enhances the effects of this legislation by the creation of a removals map defining relocation of former South Enders according to racial categories. It should be noted that this map is located in a different room from the floor map outlining South End as a residential area with parks, schools, churches and mosques. In depicting apartheid migrant labour system together with Lwandle Hostel life, the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum displayed an exhibition themed ‘*Unayo Na Imepu?*’ between 2000 – 2005. According to Buthelezi the exhibition themed ‘*Unayo Na Imepu?*’, ‘meaning do you have a map?’ in Nguni Language, was presented in two languages of the three traditionally used by different publics in the Western Cape.”<sup>16</sup> On the other hand the District Six Museum, contains a map “covered with a strong transparent layer to show the locations of homes, shops, add omitted streets and names, and for former residents to leave comments and messages.”<sup>17</sup> This makes this particular map a distinct feature to that of South End Museum. The different maps of the three museums serve as symbols of engaging the different publics in the making of memory for these museums.

One important further aspect to consider in the community museum context is that representing community histories poses a discomfort as there is a challenge in “delegating one representative of a community the authority to tell that community’s

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[Accessed 14 May 2007](#), 17:15.

<sup>16</sup> Buthelezi, p74.

<sup>17</sup> Rassool, C. Community Museums, Memory Politics and Social Transformation in South Africa:

Histories, Possibilities and Limit. In Karp, I., Kratz, A.C, Szwaja, L and Ybarra-Frausto, Buntix, G. and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. (Eds) *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Durham:

Duke University Press (2006), p8.

stories.”<sup>18</sup> The South End Museum is made up of self delegated grouping which receives support of the former South End community scattered in Port Elizabeth’s residential areas. Karp continues to warn that “in a significant degree, it is problematic in the same way as is allowing the traditional curatorial class drawn primarily from among white, middle-or upper class college-educated males to speak for all the minority cultures represented in the museum.”<sup>19</sup> The museum trust representatives remain an elite group that is mainly constituted of former teachers (Uren, Abrahams, Hendricks) and known sportsmen and administrators. The claim of their existence is the institution’s mission of depicting the memories of former South End community through a museum model.



### **The Making of Memory in Museums**

In defining the making of memory in museums, this research focuses on the complexity of the relationship of the making of memory to the making of memory in museums. This is done through the analysis of individual memory, its links to the construction of collective memory and how oral testimonies remain an integral source in the rewriting of people’s histories and exhibiting them. According to Davison, “Museums have often been described as places of collective memory, but selective may be a more accurate description.”<sup>20</sup> Unlike personal memory which is “animated by an individual’s lived experiences, museums give material form to authorized versions of the past which in

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<sup>18</sup> Karp, I. 1992. *Museums and Communities: The politics of public Culture*, Washington: Smithsonian.

p145.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Davison, P. (1998) “Museums and the reshaping of Memory” in Nuttal & Coetzee, *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*. Cape Town, Oxford University Press.p145.

time become institutionalized.”<sup>21</sup> In the Lwandle Museum context, the preservation of Hostel 33 institutionalized the version of the migrant laborer’s past. Based on several visits to this element of the museum, individual experiences are somehow re-lived as residents continue with their lives whilst museum visitors come in and out of their space.

Davison further revisits the selective memory factor by referring to “the process of memory that involves both remembering and forgetting, inclusion and exclusion.”<sup>22</sup>

Keegan reaffirms this argument by concluding that, “individual memory is usually an indispensable source of evidence at the historian’s disposal’ but ‘human memory is given to error, misconception, distortion, elaboration and downright ‘fabrication’.”<sup>23</sup>

The aspects of recollection of memory are further described as challenges that influence the exhibition of the history of South End in the Museum.

The facilitation of the memorial recollections prepared by museums for communities is a complex domain. Fuller explains that “the community needs archival and museological knowledge and skills to identify, preserve and communicate parts of that memory.”<sup>24</sup> This intervention requires consistence and parallel development of both the museum and those participating in building its memory silhouette. Fuller further states that, “The training of those who participate in the process grows as individuals and develop their capabilities and expertise as a result of their

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p145.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p145.

<sup>23</sup> Keegan, T. (1988) *Facing The Storm: Portraits of Black Lives in Rural South Africa*. Cape Town: David Phillip. p159-162.

<sup>24</sup> Fuller, N.J. (1992) “The Museum and Community Empowerment” in Karp, I, Kreamer C.M & Lavine, S.D. (1992) *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*. Washington and London Smithsonian Institution press, p331.

experiences.”<sup>25</sup> This particular aspect is the scenario of South End Museum, as former residents, none of them museum professionals, established themselves as custodians of a museum institution and worked on its development by growing their ‘expertise as a result of their experiences. This experience is perhaps just as important as the technical expertise.

In dealing with the history of removals, as in cases like South End and District Six, it is evident that the memories still abound. For instance, Morphet argues, that while many people were moved in District Six and some of their histories faded with sorrow, for those who retained it the “memory of the removals is still present among the living.”<sup>26</sup> In narrating the tragedy of evictions, Agherdien *et al* arguing about the eviction of South Enders, state that, “A number of the older generation will say ‘we can forgive, but we will never forget’”<sup>27</sup>. The presence of the memories of community and of removals amongst the former residences in South End is used in establishing the museum.

Sarah Nuttall furthermore dwells on “the intricate relation between individual and collective memory.”<sup>28</sup> Collective memory is seen as “the collective meanings that belong to the political field, while individual memory is also seen to be primarily part of this field as it makes sense of historical details in direct relation to political legitimacy. All oral testimony becomes the vehicle for ‘voicing the collective memory

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p331

<sup>26</sup> Morphet, T. (1995). “An Archeology of Memory”, *Weekly Mail*. February 1995.

<sup>27</sup> Agherdien, Y., George, A.C. and S. Hendrick. (1997). *South End – As We Knew It* edited by Roy H. Du

Pre. East London: Rahod Publishing Services, p94.

<sup>28</sup> Nuttall, S. & Coetzee, C. (1998) *Negotiating the Past: The making of Memory in South Africa*. Cape Town  
Oxford University Press, p75.

of consciousness and documenting the collective experience of modernity”<sup>29</sup>. In dealing with the above realities, Delpont discussed the notions of accommodating collective recall by referring to the “limited duration of individual memory.”<sup>30</sup>

The recollection of South End is influenced by the physical location of South End Museum, a feature which is deemed relevant for the remembering process. Peggy Delpont in her contribution in the book, *Recalling Community in Cape Town* wonders in “what spirit and with what intention the term ‘museums’ was first used in the context of District Six, and thinking back on the problematical notion of a ‘museum’ with all the connotations of collections and displays, the term seems at odds with the six year life of the museum project as a living space and place for working with memory.”<sup>31</sup> Delpont further alludes to how “the term of the ‘museum’ may have been evoked as something that suggested solidarity, a continuation and permanence that could with stand even “the force of the bulldozer and the power of a regime committed to the erasure of the place and community.”<sup>32</sup> The theme of making of memory in museums forms an integral part of linking the entire research with related themes listed earlier. This research links the making of memory by further defining the new museums established to deal with the evoking of place and time and revive a sense of continuity and fighting spirit against the effects of the Group Areas Act.

### **Settler history domination in Port Elizabeth**

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<sup>29</sup>Minkley, G. & Rassool, C. (1998) Orality, Memory and Social History in South Africa in *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, edited by Nuttall, S. & Coetzee, C. Cape Town, Oxford University Press.. p99.

<sup>30</sup> Delpont, P. (1997) Limited Duration of Individual memory in Nuttall, S. & Coetzee, C. (1998) *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*. Cape Town. Oxford University Press, p49.

<sup>31</sup> Delpont, P. 1997. p26

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p75.

However, notions of remembering South End as a geographic area in the former Port Elizabeth area are bounded by the 1820 Settler history in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropole. In discussing the heritage landscape of former Port Elizabeth one is always confronted by the domination of 1820 Settler history on the landscape, both prior to and post 1994. As a result there is a specific discussion in this mini-thesis on the domination of 1820 Settler heritage, how it came to be configured in the 1950s and how the settlers are portrayed as the builders, developers, and pioneers of the city.

The permanence of the settler history in the region is portrayed through Donkin Heritage Trail. This trail endorses the settler descendents as traders and pioneers. It was the only heritage trail prior to the establishment of South End Museum's Heritage Trail in 2004. In confirming this, Witz has argued that the dominance of a 1820 settler heritage in the Eastern Cape, and Port Elizabeth, in particular, can be dated back to the inception of the apartheid government in 1948. This was demonstrated through the reconfiguration of settler past – “as the distinct South African nation with their joint past derived out of Europe and Van Riebeeck.”<sup>33</sup> Van Riebeeck, the commander of the refreshment station set up by the Dutch East India Company at the Cape in the mid-seventeenth century, was turned into the founder and the first settler in the 1950s.

Witz has argued that this domination of a settler narrative had large implications for public history in the Eastern Cape. Whereas previously the discourse of the colonial encounter in the Eastern Cape emphasized conquest and ‘civilizing’ the Xhosa, in the 1950s it was the European settlement that became core. In the Eastern Cape, as we shall see, this meant that no other history took center stage other than that of settlers.

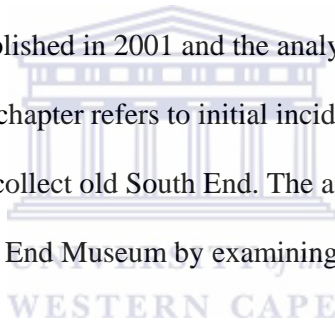
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<sup>33</sup> Witz, L. (2003) *Apartheid's Festival: Contesting South Africa's National Pasts*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p 5.

However, there were various instances where this domination was contested. Some of the contestations are explained in the book authored by Witz, titled, *Apartheid's Festival-Contesting South Africa's National Pasts*. In this book, Witz, “highlights the conflicts and debates that surrounded the 1952 Celebration of the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landing of Van Riebeeck and the founding of Cape Town, South Africa.”<sup>34</sup>

### **The South End Museum in Port Elizabeth**

The creation of community initiated museums, such as the District Six Museum in Cape Town, to South End's South End Museum, is a phenomenon experienced in the past 10 years of the democratic South Africa. Chapter one provides an introduction of the South End Museum established in 2001 and the analysis of the South End Heritage Trail in 2004. This chapter refers to initial incidents that led to the formation of community museum to recollect old South End. The aim of this chapter is to take the reader along to the South End Museum by examining and analyzing it.



The South End Museum model was initiated during a prime era of transforming the heritage and museum sector in South Africa. The ‘new museum’ service products focused on recollecting memory through a representation of those who were affected by the forced removals in South End, an area adjacent to the hub of the central business area and the harbour in Port Elizabeth. The same can be applied to the likes of District Six in Cape Town. The three ‘new’ museums – Lwandle, South End, District Six - used symbols like maps to reconstruct the remembering process.

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<sup>34</sup> Witz, L. Back cover.



This chapter is characterized by the emphasis on infantilization, a concept described by Adams, as the imagination of the past “primarily from the view point of childhood experiences.”<sup>35</sup> In depicting South End other meanings are created such as that they were a ‘harmonious community’, a ‘multicultural community’ and a ‘clean and organized community’.

According to Minkley and Rassool, “the 1980’s emergence of United Democratic Front saw the emergence of the ‘history from below’ as the ‘people’s history’ and was connected to the struggles for the ‘people’s power’. Authentic ‘voices from below’ became those of nationalist leaders. The ‘people’ imagined as an assembled body, were granted collective memory through the accumulation of their leaders’ voices.”<sup>36</sup> In this very same set up the South End Museum’s production of a representation where notions of the community are being created. Instead of seeing the museum that claims to represent the community of South End, the argument remains that the South End Museum creates its own South End.

Chapter two tackles the complex issue of the domination of the 1820 Settler history in former Port Elizabeth heritage landscape. The significant aspect of this domination are illustrated through the Donkin Heritage Trail which is constituted of mainly symbols of settler domination and the certain aspects of settler origins are found in the former Port Elizabeth Museum complex, now Bayworld. The reader is once more taken through the dominant settler discourse in Port Elizabeth’s heritage, through the Donkin Heritage Trail and the former Port Elizabeth Museum. It looks at the

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<sup>35</sup> Adams, Z. 2002, “Memory, Imagination and Removal: Remembering and Forgetting District Six” MA,

Mini Thesis, University of the Western Cape, p10.

<sup>36</sup> Minkley, G & Rassool, C. p92.

relationship between what the South End Museum is trying to do within the dominant existence of this older settler narrative.

Chapter three is predominantly centered on the debates about the emergence of monumental heritage in post apartheid South Africa. Another strong element of this chapter is the parallel illustration of the male biographies with an over emphasis on Nelson Mandela and other male national heroes. Solani, now himself an official of the Nelson Mandela Museum in Umtata, refers to this characterization as 'Mandelaization'<sup>37</sup>. This chapter outlines major shifts that took place in the heritage landscape of the former Port Elizabeth Area. These included the shift in Opera House productions, name change debates and removal of colonial statues, to development of multi million heritage symbols and memorials mainly associated with Nelson Mandela's name. The additive moment remains key as it illustrates a slight change in the setting up of heritage without examining or dealing with the settler domination in the heritage landscape of the Nelson Mandela Bay area. Here, again, as we shall see, the South End Museum is somewhat of an anomaly. On the whole its displays, which in many ways countered the older settler heritage, are also ill at ease with the new heritage that has been added to the landscape.

Chapter four tackles the arguments of the two recent books that have been written about South End by former community members: Yusuf Agherdien, Ambrose George, Shaheed Hendricks for the book titled *South End As We Knew It* and published in 1997. The second book, titled *South End – The Aftermath – Where Are*

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<sup>37</sup> Solani, N. 2000. The Saint of the Struggle: Deconstructing the Mandela Myth', *Kronos* no.26.

*They Now*, published in 2003, is authored by Ambrose George, Shaheed Hendricks and edited by Raymond Uren. It enters into a debate that the museum management puts forward, that there is no alignment between the books and the museum. Through a detailed reading of the books the reader is given an insight to the thematic arrangement of the museum in comparison with the two books. Through this reading it is maintained that although the books and the museum are different types of constructs, there is a very strong association between the two.

Overall, South End area is somewhat 'reinstated' as the vicinity formerly known as South End is currently being rezoned as South End. The main elements which are deemed symbolically significant for this area still exist, although most of the area is now covered by an upscale housing development. These elements are its location in the harbour area, its nearness to central business area, the remaining mosques and an old tree which has come to stand for South End. The South End Museum has become the pillar in remembering the area. The four chapters deal with the South End narrative by assembling aspects which construct the memory of the area. And thus this research is a study based on the construction of memory on South End in Port Elizabeth. This is done through the overall study of the South End Community Museum in the context of the overall development of Port Elizabeth's heritage.

## Chapter One

### South End Community Museum and Heritage Trail

*“The mission of South End museum is to ensure that the historical memory of forced population removals in South Africa endures. Central to its mission is the documentation and imaginative reconstruction of the labouring life and material culture of the South End Community.”<sup>38</sup>*

The process of restoring the heritage and dignity of what has been called by the former residents of South End the ‘colorful cosmopolitan community’ that existed in the former South End began with the opening of the first phase of the South End Museum in 2000. Just like District Six, which has been termed home to “virtually the whole range of contemporary Cape Town society” and later developed a reputation as a “vibrant, cosmopolitan community” which was a “melting pot of class, race and culture”,<sup>39</sup> South End maintains the same image. Within the first year of existence of the Nelson Mandela Metropole, the museum was ceremoniously opened on the Human Rights Day, 21 March 2000.

However, the idea of a South End Museum started more than ten years before the actual realization of a museum in 2000. In 1988 a project with the working name, ‘South End Recall’ was launched by former residents. This project was coordinated by the Port Elizabeth Museum, with a brief to collect photographs and any significant

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<sup>38</sup> Museums in Africa, <http://www.africam.museum/africom-fr/museums/southafrica-southend.html>. (Accessed 14 May 2007 23:45)

<sup>39</sup>Rassool, C. Community Museums, Memory Politics and Social Transformation in South Africa: Histories, Possibilities and Limit. In Karp, I., Kratz, A.C, Szwaja, L and Ybarra-Frausto, Buntix, G. and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. (Eds) *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Durham: Duke University Press (2006), p. 2

memorabilia for an exhibition on old South End. The project was meant to “celebrate the memory of this vibrant but now vanished part of Port Elizabeth.”<sup>40</sup> According to Melunsky (a former resident) “the motivation for ‘South End Recall’ was in no way political”.<sup>41</sup> Melunsky also indicated that the aim was, “to keep alive the memory of a part of the city that is dear to the hearts of many people who were born there and spent a happy childhood there.”<sup>42</sup> This was a collaborative project with the Port Elizabeth Museum and a “local historian [was] appointed to collect material from old residents or interested people.”<sup>43</sup> The entire task of the photo exhibition was referred to the Port Elizabeth Historical Society and there was a “further suggestion that a plaque be erected in South End on July 10, 1988 to commemorate the demolition of the last house there.”<sup>44</sup> Mike Rath, Director of Port Elizabeth Museum indicated that, “an old fig tree in the area has been cited as the most preferred spot.”<sup>45</sup> Reports provided do not reflect the enthusiasm of South Enders for the commemoration planned by the Port Elizabeth Museum and the Historical Society of Port Elizabeth. However, this project is deemed as the foundation of ideas for a museum that represents the South End Community.

It was twelve years later that the South End Community Museum opened in a space opposite the fig tree. The freeway ends right next to the museum. Standing in front of the museum and facing the sea a beautiful beachfront is on the far right and on the far left is Port Elizabeth’s city center. A harbour faces to the north of the museum building. These areas, close to the present day museum, form part of the remembering

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<sup>40</sup> *Evening Post*, March 30, 1988.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

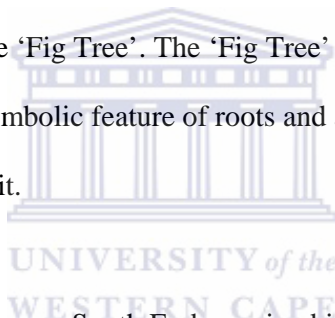
<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Weekend Post*, February 27, 1988.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

process of former South End. As Agherdien, co-author of *South End as We Knew It* and a former resident indicated in an interview, “as youngsters, we used to climb the trees to view the ships arriving and we would walk along the beachfront and town was a few minutes walk away from home.”<sup>46</sup> The city center, the harbour and the ‘fig tree’ remain distinguished traits of former South End. These features are also dominant in the various exhibitions of the South End Museum.

The physical location of South End Museum in the exact area of former South End suburb (now called Humewood and parts of Walmer) consolidates the remembering process. This exactness enables the endeavors of South End Museum to organize a walking trail that includes the ‘Fig Tree’. The ‘Fig Tree’ is said to be more than a hundred years old and is a symbolic feature of roots and attachment for many South Enders who grew up around it.



But while some features of former South End remained in the area and gave space for the museum to be housed, the area today is totally different from the one that existed in the 1960s. In former South End’s space there are rows upon rows of uninspiring townhouses, up market ‘yuppie’ pads, luxury complexes, and renamed streets and a brand new set of residents. Most of these residents have virtually no memory at all of South End and do not have an association with the previous community or the space. “South End’s community is thus a community of memory of people who live

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<sup>46</sup> Interview with Yusuf Agherdien, former South End resident and co author of *South End as We Knew It*, 19 July 2001. South End, Port Elizabeth.

scattered throughout the Nelson Mandela Metropole and in many other places in South Africa and abroad.”<sup>47</sup>

There is very little left in spatial terms of South End that can act as memory aids. Morphet refers to how District Six became “a landscape, which is a national symbol of compulsion, dispossession and plunder-the scar tissue which still hurts.”<sup>49</sup> Unlike District Six, which largely remained unoccupied for a very long time and thus became symbolic for former residents, South End was largely reconstituted as a white suburb in Port Elizabeth. The setting up of the museum therefore acts as the primary vehicle to establish a memory of South End. In addition, “a South End Museum Heritage Trail draws attention to the very few buildings and sites that survived the devastation of the Group Areas Act.”<sup>50</sup>



### **Inside the South End Museum**

According to The South End Museum Trust, “the museum aims to depict the tragedy and sorrow that resulted from forced removals, the Group Areas Act and apartheid legislation that oppressed so many people for so long.”<sup>51</sup> The interior of the museum has three themed symbolic spaces. At what used to be adjacent to the entrance of the museum, but has become the final room furthest from the reception, is what is termed the *Hall of Memories*. This is the most spacious area in the museum and used to be the closest to the first entrance of the museum that was altered into an office space in 2003. It is a large conference type room with a large mural painted by the former

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<sup>47</sup> Agherdien, Y., George, A.C. and S. Hendrick. 1997. *South End – As We Knew It* edited by Roy H. Du Pre. East London: Rahod Publishing Services. Back page.

<sup>48</sup> The South End Museum Heritage Trail Information Brochure.

<sup>49</sup> The South End Museum Heritage Trail Information Brochure.

<sup>50</sup> The South End Museum Heritage Trail Information Brochure.

<sup>51</sup> Agherdien *et al.* South End. Back page.

museum artist Christopher Du Preez, at the back of a stage. It depicts children playing with a soccer ball in Rudolph Street. The hall is intended to serve as a cultural venue for temporary exhibitions and performances. It is also utilized as a community conference center and from time to time it is rented for weddings and other celebrations.

The mural in the hall depicts exuberant youth at play in Rudolph Street. The children are portrayed as full of life, and comfortable with their environment. There are no adults taking care of them. The picture of these school children, dressed in khaki shorts, skirts, running around barefoot and carrying exercise books also appears as a cover in the book *South End as We Knew It*. The mural contains a number of children of different ages with the background of the sea, the pier, an incoming ship and fishing boats. It is in this book cover and mural that the emphasis of South End's livelihood is portrayed. These qualities are continuously part of the story on South End by many South End residents.

This particular mural also reflects the very same assertion made by Adams about on what she calls the 'infantalization' of District Six, a space remembered for its trouble-free childhood. In District Six there are autobiographical memoirs published in mid and late 1990s that recall childhood memories of growing up in District Six.

According to Adams, these autobiographies are not "tales about trials and narratives of pain and torture", but recall, "happy memories of idyllic children under apartheid."<sup>52</sup> Memories of former District Six residents predominantly focus on childlike activities and experiences such as the first day at school, games played in the

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<sup>52</sup> P. Lalu and B. Harries cited by Adams, Z. 2002. Memory, Imagination and Renewal: Remembering and Forgetting District Six. MA mini thesis. University of the Western Cape. p15.



streets, going to the cinema and the festive season. For instance, Nomvuyo Ngcelwane relates to “perfect harmony and tolerance”<sup>53</sup>. Noor Ebrahim remembers ‘games (Cricket) weddings and funerals’.<sup>54</sup> Adams suggests that, “the link between memories of happy childhoods and the triumph over adversity narrative is contained in tales of lost innocence.”<sup>55</sup> She further distinguishes between two narratives derived from memories under apartheid. These narratives contain a personal approach, which is crafted as a ‘happy’ narrative, and the other one is the political narrative, which is deemed as ‘traumatic’. These narratives maintain a larger “triumph over adversity narrative”<sup>56</sup>

In and outside the museum residents of former South End also concentrate on their childhood experiences. In their recollections there is a dominant viewpoint, which incorporates childhood experiences and ‘harmony’ simultaneously. The former residents’ narrative inside the South End Museum consistently includes childhood activities and perspectives on growing up in South End. Agherdien a former resident and the co-author of the book *South End as We Knew It*, throughout his interview with me reflected on the ‘unforgettable’ childhood experience in South End. He explained how he used to “climb the ‘fig tree’, play games, go to school and buy vetkoek and fried fish crumbs at reasonable prices at a corner shop.”<sup>57</sup> All these activities relate to the same context of the mural in the hall and the cover of the book *South End as We Knew It*. A happy childhood emerges as a dominant discourse in remembering South End.

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<sup>53</sup> Ngcelwane, N. 1999. *Sala Kahle District Six: An African Women’s Perspective*. Cape Town: District Six Museum, p14.

<sup>54</sup> Ebrahim, N. 1999. *Noor’s Story: My Life In District Six*. Cape Town: District Six Museum, p23.

<sup>55</sup> Adams. p16.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid,p16.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Y. Agherdien, 27 July 2001, South End Museum.

On the walls of the hall, there are enlarged black and white photographs of life in old South End. Enlarged portraits of gangsters, public transport, weekend activities and families relaxing on their verandas are amongst the visuals. However, some of these images are not labeled in terms of their origin or ownership. Whilst the hall is often used as a conference room, the images that are on the wall give life to the venue and enhance the number of people in the room. Characters in the images are looking downward on the participants of conferences, workshops, weddings and award ceremonies thus portraying an ancestral presence.

Being in South End Museum appropriates a different experience to that of District Six Museum. In the latter “rows of large-scale portraits of former residents, printed on transparent architectural paper and hung from the balconies, gazed upon visitors from the balconies.”<sup>58</sup> The South End Museum experience is presented in a photo album manner, where photographs are enlarged and hung in an orderly sequence. The District Six Museum creates an ambiance of a ‘live in’ community whilst photographs in South End generate a sense of a gallery.

The photograph on the far left from the stage is an image of a group of young people posing on the corner Gardner Street and Walmer Road. The caption below the photograph, affirms that, “the photograph was taken on a Sunday morning on a vacant plot opposite the Prince of Wales hotel in 1964.”<sup>59</sup> This group of young men in the photograph represents a notion of knowing each other. This act also resembles the ‘togetherness’ and ‘oneness’ of South End.

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<sup>58</sup> Rassool, C. Community Museums, Memory Politics and Social Transformation in South Africa: Histories, Possibilities and Limit. In Karp, I., Kratz, A.C, Szwaja, L and Ybarra-Frausto, Buntix, G. and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. (Eds) *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Durham: Duke University Press (2006), p 8.

<sup>59</sup> South End Museum group picture illustration in Hall of Memories section.

Following this picture is a an aerial photo of South End looking towards the harbour with a view of old Walmer Road to the right end of the Baakens River to the left. The picture was taken in 1958. This picture to a certain extent reiterates the relevance of the harbour in sustaining the livelihood of South End. The harbour forms one of the stand alone features of South End with the fishing activities and employment prospects.

The third picture from the right portrays a funeral procession in Walmer Road. This road was well known for its shops and hotels by many South Enders. The sea remains an integral part of South End as it can be observed from the picture as well.

Homestead Furnishers and the Collins Hotel can be viewed from this visual. This is the only picture that specifically refers to death. One way of reading this image is that it could allude to the Group Areas Act leading to the ‘death’ of a supposedly ‘harmonious’ South End community. Both ‘deaths’ translates to sadness and leads to the conclusion of a point of no return. It is predominantly good things that come to an end.

The fourth picture, linking it to the theme of death, is that of a ruined building “depicting the beginning of the ‘end’ of South End”<sup>60</sup>. In this picture the children are presented in a jolly mood and are enjoying the picture taking exercise as they are all facing the camera. The adults in the photograph portray some form of disillusionment as they appear as hopeless dwellers in the streets of South End. The streets are full of rubble with heaps of dirt nearby. This is one photograph that contains a major contrast

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<sup>60</sup> South End picture. Hall of Memories, South End Museum.

in the dominant view of South End's representation by the museum. The rubble is not from the removal process; it originates from the same South End that is characterized as 'clean' and not a 'slum'. The sense of disillusionment portrayed is undoing the over-emphasized notion of 'cleanliness', 'equity', 'multiculturalism' and 'brotherhood'. For a museum that depicts the 'harmonious' South End, the display of this particular picture remains a misfit and contributes to the contrast I had alluded to earlier. The selection of this picture tends to justify the removals of a 'slum' area and causes a level of confusion in the dominant narrative of 'harmony' and 'cleanliness'.

The fifth picture contains people in town who are taking care of their daily routines. There is a caption: "Eric Clothing Stores which was but one of the many well known names along South Union Street."<sup>61</sup> Facing the stage there is a picture taken in South Union Street with many residents in front of the shops *Makan Bhana and Sons* and *V.M.N. Pillay and Son*. The residents appear eagerly waiting for the opening of the store. These two pictures represent the entrepreneurship trends of South End as a "bustling suburb, brimming with activity"<sup>62</sup> and a normal urban life. In this scene, shopping is taken as a representation of normality. The representation of normative experiences continues with themes like education and religion and I will discuss these themes later.

On the far right there is a scene at the shop *Fish Hooks* on the corner of South Union and Walmer Roads. The illustration indicates that fresh fish was sold outside the Tyrone Hotel daily. Two people who are hugging each other with their parcels of fish

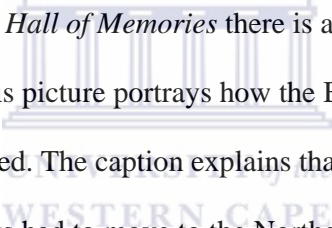
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<sup>61</sup> Illustration below the picture in the Hall of Memories, South End Museum.

<sup>62</sup> Agherdien *et al.* Back cover.

are in the picture as well. Images of fishing are predominant and key to the memories of South End.

Just below the entrance to the *Hall of Memories* is the horizontal picture portraying bulldozers demolishing homes and businesses at the top of Walmer Road. The picture was taken in 1971. In the picture there are virtually no residents. One can only observe one lonely person walking in the opposite direction. Above this picture there is a photograph of *Mentone Clothes* factory building with two figures walking outside. These two pictures are meant to emphasize the memory of the destruction of the working life in South End and the end of access to the sea.

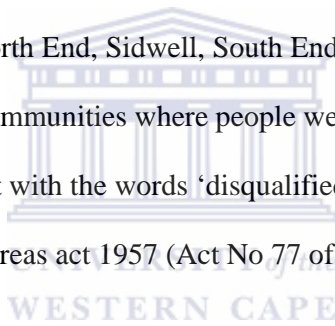


Below the second door to the *Hall of Memories* there is a picture of the Baakens River taken in September 1968. This picture portrays how the Baakens River came down in flood and its banks overflowed. The caption explains that, “this was the very same weekend when many residents had to move to the Northern areas.” Above this picture there is a photograph of one black person walking in the street. With no caption provided it is not clear where it was taken in South End, whether they were residents and the declaration of the donor’s name is not acknowledged. To some extent the representation of black people in South End Museum is limited and this restricts South End’s narrative of ‘oneness.’ This is a further disjoint in portraying a ‘multicultural community’ where people lived in ‘harmony’.

Closer to the stage is a photograph of a busy North Union Road running into South Union Street in the Baakens River Bridge. Clustered on the hill are the buildings of South End and in the bottom right is the bus terminus. This is once more a

characterization of South End as a place ‘bustling with activity’. The picture from the hall stage contains a tram at the top end of Walmer Road. This resembles some form of urbanization and can be linked to the former Port Elizabeth Museum’s emphasis on this form of transport. The tram is portrayed as a symbol of industrialization developed after the arrival of 1820 Settlers in the city. It is displayed in a cabinet with an illustration of “trams in Port Elizabeth with a single decker horse tramways of Port Elizabeth built in 1897-1948.”<sup>63</sup>

On both sides of the hall there are large panels on a blue wall paper listing the names of Port Elizabeth’s residential areas. Listed are Fairview, Bethersdorp, Central Hill, Kosrsten, Salisbury Park, North End, Sidwell, South End, Neave Township, all areas in Port Elizabeth’s former communities where people were removed by force. Below the panel there is a bold print with the words ‘disqualified’ Notice in terms of Section 20 (1) bis (b) of the Group Areas act 1957 (Act No 77 of 1957).



On the far left and closer to the stage, a two meter long wall paper panel is inscribed Sophiatown, District Six Cato Manor, North End, Phoenix, Fordsburg, Windermere, Schotse Kloof. Below are again the words “disqualified” Notice in terms of section 20 (1) bis (b) of the Group Areas Act 1957 (Act No 77 of 1957). This grouping together of forcibly removed communities represents South End Museum as a legitimate space to portray other communities that were removed. These panels portray the intensity of the forced removals. The notion of listing the removed communities serves to emphasize a linkage between all forced removals, and may be a justification for using features borrowed from the District Six Museum in the South End Museum.

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<sup>63</sup> Bayworld Museums exhibition on early beginnings of Port Elizabeth, first floor.

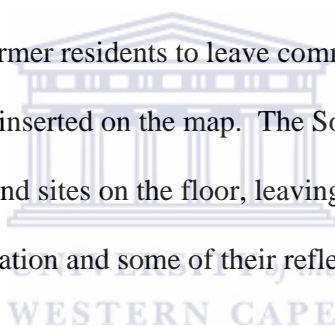
One of these borrowed features is in the middle of the hall. Painted on the wooden floor is a map of former South End. The caption on the far right of the entrance door states that “You are invited to step on this map of South End as it was in the 1950’s and travel back into the times when it was a vibrant multi cultural community.”<sup>64</sup>

This is a giant map with traces of original street names, churches and sport grounds.

In the District Six Museum, there is also a map on the floor where buildings, monuments and sports fields are indicated next to the exact street names. The

difference between the two maps is that the District Six Museum map is “covered with a strong transparent layer to show the locations of homes, shops, add omitted streets and names, and for former residents to leave comments and messages”<sup>65</sup> The

comments and messages are inserted on the map. The South End Museum map has only inscribed street names and sites on the floor, leaving no space for the former residents to add more information and some of their reflections of a particular site on the map.



On the other hand, as a former intern of the South End Museum, I observed this street map as a very symbolic design. After viewing the map, the former residents knelt down seeking playgrounds, houses and famous shops. In this process of exploring the map, former residents expressed both delight and sadness. Their children,

grandchildren and friends are told stories immediately, therefore filling the gap of the absence of a museum guide. According to Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton,

“artifacts possess an undeniable power to elicit responses from people. Objects serve as

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<sup>64</sup> Caption in the museum pasted on the entrance door of the hall area.

<sup>65</sup> Rassool, C. Community Museums, Memory Politics and Social Transformation in South Africa: Histories, Possibilities and Limit. In Karp, I., Kratz, A.C, Szwaja, L and Ybarra-Frausto, Buntix, G. and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. (Eds) *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Durham: Duke University Press (2006), p 8.

symbols of us, our relationships and our lives.”<sup>66</sup> This map is represented as a symbol that can accomplish these responses.

When referring to both South End and District Six, “the map becomes a fitting memorial space since in an attempt to erase the memory of District Six from the map of local history, many of the street names, even the grid itself were changed to make way for the white suburb of Zonnebloem and the development of the Technikon.”<sup>67</sup> In this very same space memories are evoked even in South End, where rows of townhouses were developed to build a whites only suburb.

From the *Hall of Memories* one moves into the middle room downstairs labeled the *Hall of Shame*. A notice indicates ‘Dispersal (1965-1975)’ and a large map on the wall depicts the dispersal of the various communities from South End to where they were resettled. There are photographs on the walls showing schools, churches, people, sports teams and social life. Newspaper cuttings, plastered neatly on the wall, depict aspects of life in South End and announcements relating to the removals. These are all plastered on the wall in no order of events and some of the dates are not visible.

The relocation map is hung on the wall facing the harbour area and the sea. It contains different colors aligned to different areas allocated by the Group Areas Act to which different racial groups were removed. Orange in the map is used to represent Africans, red for Coloureds, yellow for the Indians and green for the Chinese. Blue represents some of the people who chose to live overseas. Despite the fact that South End is

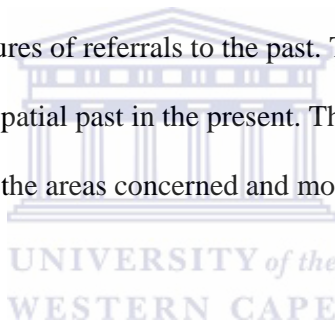
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<sup>66</sup> Csikszentmihalyi, M. and Rochberg-Halton, E. 1981. *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self*. Cambridge: New York Cambridge University Press. p. 77

<sup>67</sup> Prosandalis, S. Marot, J. Soudien, C and Nagia, A. In Rassool, C and Prosandalis, S. 2001. *Recalling the Community in Cape Town: Creating and Curating the District Six Museum*. Cape Town: District Six Museum.p75.



represented as an area of a ‘multicultural’ community in the museum on the South End Museum’s dispersal map there is no trace for the dispersal of white people or where they remained. Maps are distinct features of many new community museums. There is the floor map in District Six, a floor map in the ‘hall of shame’ of South End Museum, a wall map in the ‘hall of fame’ of the South End Museum and, between 2002 and 2005, the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum (LMLM) showcased an exhibition themed “*Unayo Na Imepu?*” meaning “Do You Have A Map?” According to Buthelezi, this exhibition, “related the apartheid migrant labour system with Lwandle Hostel life and through this exhibition the LMLM endeavored to claim an identity as a museum that speaks to the local community.”<sup>68</sup> All the maps mentioned above contain structural features of referrals to the past. Their design is based upon the notions of revisiting the spatial past in the present. These maps also tend to encourage discussions about the areas concerned and most significantly invoke memories and emotions.



Next to the map on the wall there is a wooden board with the South End Museum logo with symbols and their meanings. The symbols and their meanings are interpreted on the board as follows:

1. A representation of Dower Primary school at the top of the logo signifies; “the important role of education played in the ‘old’ South End and is intended to play in this ‘living’ museum. It also resembles the architectural beauty of the many buildings that were torn down in the area.”<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Buthelezi, V. 2005. The Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum and the South African Jewish Museum: Serving Different Publics in Two Community Museums in the Western Cape. MA mini thesis. University of the Western Cape. p. 74

<sup>69</sup> Interpretation of the logo brochure, in Hall of Fame, South End Museum.

2. Two fishing hooks appear in the stylized shape of two whales; this represents “the importance of the whaling and fishing industries in the working life of South Enders.”<sup>70</sup>
3. The wooden structure represents; “an old fishing jetty in the harbour and the bridge across the Baakens River.”<sup>71</sup>
4. The sailing ship symbolizes; “the arrival of the 1820 Settlers and the early development of Port Elizabeth as a harbour town city.”<sup>72</sup>
5. “The Tram as an early mode of public transport represents the daily commuting between South End, the city centre and the factories.”<sup>73</sup>
6. The Wild Fig Tree which is over a hundred years old and is interpreted as the “sole silent witness to and survivor of the destruction of South End. It is a living symbol of persistent growth and endurance under enormous hardship.”<sup>74</sup>
7. The roots signify “our anchor in the soil of South End which has nourished us with the values of tolerance, non racialism and perseverance, the coming together of diverse cultural heritage in a common humanity, the indigenous people of the Eastern Cape.”<sup>75</sup>
8. The ‘Katonkel’, a highly prized game fish resembles “the energy and sporting spirit of the South End community and the fighting spirit of the people against the injustices and oppression of apartheid.”<sup>76</sup>

The features presented in the logo were identified to represent the narrative that the South End Museum Trust is consistently engaging the visitors with. This narratives

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<sup>70</sup> Interpretation of the logo brochure, in Hall of Fame, South End Museum .

<sup>71</sup> Ibid

<sup>72</sup> Ibid

<sup>73</sup> Ibid

<sup>74</sup> Ibid

<sup>75</sup> Ibid

<sup>76</sup> Ibid

links the sea facing area as an definitive space for fishing, residing, trading and traces its 'heritage' from the arrival of the 1820 Settlers. It is not clear whether there was a broad interaction with former residents in defining the 'community' through the designed logo. What is prevailing is that through out Port Elizabeth, the 'heritage' of Port Elizabeth is dominated by the 1820 Settler history ranging from museums to memorials. It is a confirmation thereof that the 1820 Settler history remains a defining marker of Port Elizabeth's 'heritage' even in new histories in the public domain.

Below the logo board there is a plan of the entire museum building designed by Richardson Svensson in the late 1990's. Below it are various photographs of the South End museum trust members in a planning session. On the right hand corner of the map there is a notice of the South End Museum Oral History Project. This notice is claiming the role of South End history and that of the forced removals as an 'unrecorded' history.

In an effort to accelerate the recording of the political, economic and social history of South End, the museum has established an oral history team that interviews ex residents to tell their stories of life in South End. The team plans to have an archive of recorded voices of the experiences of the former residents and many others with fond memories of South End. This display serves as a call to former residents to participate in the project. The team members' names and contact details are listed.

The notification of the oral history project counters the museum's reliance on newspaper reports that are available from the *Eastern Province Herald* archives. The oral history project of South End museum is represented as an appropriation of the research component of the museum and the validation of the content displayed. This

is presented by giving a sense of ownership of the research and thereby also validates the notion of the 'community' the museum is trying to construct.

Also in dealing with the practicalities of a museum established on a notion of experience and oral history, it becomes difficult not to value the experiences if they are deemed to be primarily tangible evidence. Through this evidence the museum materials grow into exhibitions and traveling materials. Some parts of the data are also published (see Agherdien *et al.* 1997). Experience is explored as a yardstick for all the museum material. It is through the interpretations and narrations received from former resident's experience that the museum validates itself as an institution with its own collection.



In this very same room there are eight exhibition themes. The first one reflects on the 'Early days' with black and white framed pictures of old South End buildings dating back to 1905. There is no clear indication of the source of these visuals and there are no captions explaining the nine neatly framed pictures. In these pictures the trams, the shops and the harbour are predominantly visible. These confirm Hall's explanation about the role of photographs in museum exhibitions: "they enhance the representation of exhibition; they substitute for the physical presence of ethnographic 'objects' and 'subjects'; they ease the work of representation by providing a 'real' context which either contextualize the object or allows a blueprint for the display design."<sup>77</sup> These effects are traceable in the South End Museum as most of the photographs on exhibition represent social life in the area.

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<sup>77</sup> Hall, S. 1997. *Representation*. London: Sage. p. 177

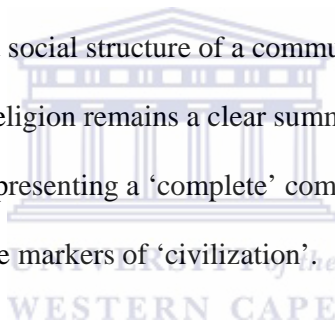
As a dividing feature of the first theme to the second theme, one can view plastered old newspapers in black and white print with bold headline banners about the forced removals. These cuttings are predominantly from the *Eastern Province Herald*. Some headlines refer to a seemingly harmonious era before the removals: “Golden Days in South End ‘Meester’ recalls carefree days in old Port Elizabeth”, “Old Trams and friendly faces filled streets”. These are all presented as articles with headlines and sub-headlines and there are no dates clearly noticeable.

The second theme is categorized as ‘Worship’. This contains framed pictures of all the churches, temples and mosques in the old South End with illustrations attached stipulating the name of the building and the year it was built. Below is the synopsis of explaining that there were many churches, mosques and temples in the old South End. The outstanding characteristic of the South End community is presented as a community of tolerance and mutual respect for each other’s religion and culture. The emphasis therefore is on the mission of South End being portrayed as a legitimate space for spiritual fulfillment. Thus entrenching a notion of both eastern (mosques and temples) and western (churches) biblical culture. The religious heritage remains one of the dominant features in retelling the story of South End and can be paralleled with the Donkin trail, referred to earlier, where cenotaphs and cathedrals are features of the trail.

Again there is a dividing panel of plastered newspapers containing banners with headlines of developments around South End and the birth of the idea of the museum. Headlines include “PE’s own District Six,” South End’; “History is set to come back

to life.” These headlines are not necessarily periodized as they are plastered in a disorderly fashion to create an impression of information over load for the reader.

There is also a theme of “Education”. This contains pictures of school buildings, social clubs, teachers and learners. The summary below the photographs indicates that during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century various religious bodies began schools in South End. The education aspect to many families is presented as having successive generations who attended the same schools and strong bonds of tradition were said to be built up over the years. The presence of Dower Primary School in South End Museum’s logo is representative of this emphasis on scholastic affiliations and is meant to depict an integrated social structure of a community. The consistency in representing education and religion remains a clear summation in stating the South End Museum’s context of representing a ‘complete’ community that should not have been removed as it had all the markers of ‘civilization’.



The fourth panel is on ‘work’ and contains framed pictures of factories and business premises. The synopsis below states that, “South End people took pride in their industriousness, reliability and enterprising spirit. They earned a living through various fields of work. Dairies, green groceries, fishermen, barbers, dressmakers, priests and factory workers lived side by side.”<sup>78</sup> These features are consistent with the life that South End Museum aims to represent, placing the community as an integral part of Port Elizabeth’s industrialization. The South End community is presented as also participating in these industries by selling the labour or consuming

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<sup>78</sup> Panel illustration.

services and products. This economic cycle presents an outlook of an economically sustainable community.

Theme five embodies people and places with pictures of men's clubs and children's groups and family portraits. Wedding pictures are also displayed and hence the culture of a 'harmonious community' that is emphasized through the narrative of old South End. This is a representation of an 'organized', 'ordinary' community that once existed.

In theme six the Pier Street Mosque that was officially opened in 27 July 1901, is a dominant site. When South End was declared a white suburb, there was a pandemonium from the Malay<sup>79</sup> community because of the envisaged destruction of the mosque. The matter went as far as the United Nations where the "Moslem nations stated unequivocally that a mosque could never be demolished."<sup>80</sup> The mosque survived the Group Areas Act bulldozers. Another controversy erupted over the Pier Street Mosque when the Port Elizabeth Municipality wanted to build a freeway. Given the intervention of the United Nations in rescuing the mosque, the Municipality ordered the removal of the dome. The remaining mosque is used to represent the fighting spirit of the South End community. It resembles the attachment to religious spaces, thus authenticating South End as a place of tradition.

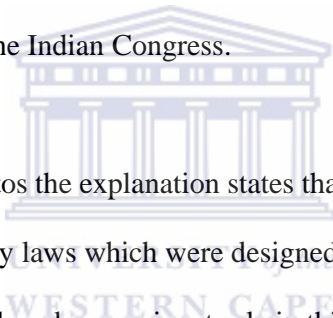
Labeled 'Resistance,' the seventh theme is a series of photographic portraits: Dennis Brutus who was imprisoned in Robben Island in 1963, Molly Blackburn a member of

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<sup>79</sup> Malay, a group that settled in South End since 1846. They built a mosque in Grace street with financial assistance from the Turkish sultan. A second mosque was built for the Malays in 1866 in Strand Street.

<sup>80</sup> Agherdien *et al.* p. 15

the Black Sash, the Cape Provincial Council and was also a leading anti apartheid campaigner in the 1970s and 1980s, Govan Mbeki, a Rivonia trialist and the father of the South African President Thabo Mbeki, Frank Landman chairman of the Anti coloured affairs department, D.S. Pillay, active in the trade union movement, Nceba Faku former Mayor of the Port Elizabeth Municipality, Raymond Mhlaba who was the first premier of the Eastern Cape, Eddie Heynes a sports man and Anti coloured affairs activist, Omar Frank Cassem a founder of South African Non Racial Olympic Committee, Raymond Uren, Chairman of the Port Elizabeth Land Claims Restitution Association, George Botha, an educator who died in detention under mysterious circumstances, B.B. Ramjee, who challenged the Group Areas Act in supreme court and was also a chairman of the Indian Congress.



In the caption below the photos the explanation states that “many organizations were started to resist discriminatory laws which were designed to oppress the black people. ... some of the people who played a prominent role in this resistance movement are listed”. This listing and the artifacts and portraits of these political leaders create some degree of confusion regarding the curatorial intention of this space. The association of these leaders to South End is not entirely explained. Most of these political icons and many others were not residents at South End and in this room there is no account for their selection. However, there is an intentional political connotation that South End Museum wishes to be associated with the South African struggle for democracy. Tunbridge’s assessment of heritage as a political resource is relevant here. “Heritage is based on a deliberate encouragement of support for particular political entities and



the strengthening of the identification of individuals with specific state supporting ideologies.<sup>81</sup>

When questioned about the context of this display, Colin Abrahams, the museum administrator, indicated that the museum is currently conducting research on political leaders and their focus is not only on South End and removals.<sup>82</sup> For Adams, memories of life under apartheid whether political or personal have almost always been concerned with inserting lives into a heroic narrative of the struggle, survival and triumph.<sup>83</sup> This discussion coincides with the common feature of biographies which are used to portray ‘triumph over adversity’. The political icons displayed in the museum, are former prisoners and detainees from Port Elizabeth. They have risen to be in position of the executive mayors, senior government officials and thus ‘triumph over adversity’ emerges as a dominant theme.

In the middle of this room there is a display in a glass cabinet. Inside of this display there is a T-shirt of a four-year-old boy who was caught in cross fire and fatally wounded by security police in New Brighton June 1985. The caption in the box states: ‘Molly Blackburn confronted the then Minister of Safety and Security Louis le Grange and showed the displayed blood stained T-shirt to him. This act caused uproar and was followed up by heated debates in the Cape Provincial Council. The holes on the back on the T-shirt are bullet holes.’ The Black Sash is portrayed in the museum as a major role player in organizing communities on civic, political and legal matters in the country. The sunlight lands on the second display case in this room. In the

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<sup>81</sup> Turnbridge, J.E. and Ashworth, G.J. 1996. *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict*. New York: Chichester. p. 45

<sup>82</sup> Interview with C. Abrahams, a former South End resident and a museum administrator. 12 August 2003, South End Museum.

<sup>83</sup> Adams. p. 16

case, there are handwritten notes of Molly Blackburn organizing her daily life and reflections on her daily work. Due to the sun's exposure the Blackburn's notes are faint and some are unreadable. In the middle are Blackburn's suede boots and a file case that she used for her work. The program of her funeral is displayed as well. In the continuum of representing the people's struggles for democracy, South End Museum identified Molly Blackburn's contribution and placed the exhibition right in the center of the museum building.

The association of Molly Blackburn to South End is not necessarily clear. The emphasis is once more given to the museum's association with a particular context in the South African political landscape. These linkages are haphazard and not necessarily explained. There is no understandable structure of selecting individuals that are linked to the South End narratives. It seems that the choice of figures in the museum is either those who were political figures in the anti-apartheid struggle in Port Elizabeth or those presented as victims of forced removals. The former are presented as distinct individuals while the latter are presented as a cluster or a community. It is not so much that the leaders on display are or were directly part of South End – although some were – but that they come to represent an association that the museum is making in the present with these biographic narratives.

Moving into the third room, which is closest to the new entrance, there are examples of lives in people's homes in South End. Using donated and leased furniture, this room illustrates examples of South End dwellings and is labeled *Home Life*. This room is portrayed as a space to reinvent interior spaces in the lives of South Enders. A gramophone, five velvet covered chairs, a dresser with display items, a wardrobe, a

kitchen, an eating space, a four-seater dining room suite, a fireplace, mirrors and pictures are all visible.

The room is compartmentalized into three sections. The first is a bathroom with two enamel basins, a towel and a soap dish. These items are bright and clean and aim to depict an organized way of life. The second compartment is the dining room with four chairs and a small table with a sideboard decorated with dinner sets. This part resembles a strong family unit and the sustainability of families in providing food. This particular room contains a single bed with a ribbed bed spread, a pillow and an enamel potty. In this same room there are antique wardrobes, heavy curtains, a dressing table and an oval mirror. In the middle of the *Home Life* space one finds a vintage lounge with rocking chairs and a sideboard. This whole arrangement is depicted as a normal South End home and there are no illustrations of which families had access to such resources. All in all the room is organized to depict high hygienic standards and is made to appear orderly.

To a limited extent this room is a replica of Nomvuyo's room in the District Six Museum. However, Nomvuyo's room was meant to draw on life history research to convey a sense of a lived environment of the multipurpose room, which was the base of survival for many of the poor.<sup>84</sup> This particular room is congested with all the elements of a home in a one compartment, therefore called 'multipurpose room', a structure known in most backrooms of the townships. This exhibition forms part of

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<sup>84</sup> Delport, P. "Digging Deeper in District Six Museum". A Guide to the District Six Museum and the "Digging Deeper" Exhibition.

the *Digging Deeper* Exhibition which seeks to examine the private and interior spaces of people's lives.<sup>85</sup>

The replica of interior spaces in the South End Museum, together with the use of maps, the large photographs and the emphasis on children and social scenes suggests that key features of the District Six museum have been used to construct the South End Museum. A fourth room, on the upper level, is used for temporary exhibitions. At the time of writing there was an exhibition on the history of the non-racial sports movement in Port Elizabeth. As the exhibits in this room are constantly changing this part of the museum will not be analysed in this mini-thesis.

### **The South End Museum Heritage Trail**

The South End Museum Trust has also incorporated the South End Museum Heritage Trail into its activities. It is unlike the Donkin Heritage Trail whose objective is to predominantly represent the history of European settlement in the area. The Donkin Heritage Trail contains sites which were mainly declared monuments by the old South African National Monuments Council. The sites are under the custodianship of the Port Elizabeth Historical Society. In chapter two, I have illustrated the origin and meanings of some of the sites in the Donkin Trail. The South End Museum Heritage Trail was initiated in 2004 by the Trustees of the South End Museum to draw attention to the buildings and other sites in the area that survived the devastation of the Group Areas Act. The intention of initiating this trail is for “remembering the travesty of the Apartheid era as well as to observe the remaining historical sites”.<sup>86</sup>

There are guided tours that are organized from the South End Museum on request or

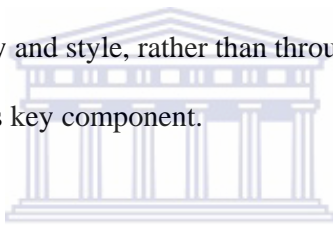
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<sup>85</sup> Cited in Goodman, D. 1997. Cape Town's District Six Rises Again. *The Ford Foundation Report* 28(2): 17.

<sup>86</sup> The South End Museum Heritage Trail Information Brochure.

one can take a self guided tour utilizing the maps in the brochure available from the museum. I will take the reader through a short route of the South End Heritage Trail.<sup>87</sup>

The South End Museum Heritage Trail begins with the South End Museum structure which is presented in the brochure as a “large building of Victorian origin and had its foundation stone laid in 1897.”<sup>88</sup> This building was primarily used as a shelter for sailors from many countries of the world. In emphasizing the architecture of the building and its style the South End trail almost inadvertently recalls the discourse of the Donkin trail and its emphasis on the significance of buildings. History is made through reference to antiquity and style, rather than through memories, which is supposed to be the museum’s key component.



One striking feature in the South End trail is that the museum remains a point of entry to the memory of South End. Just like in Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, the tour begins in the Museum mapping the museum as a center for information and visitors are lured to the sites they can see in the photographs. A similar operation occurs in the District Six Museum where a photograph of arches in Richmond Street before removal is compared on tours with the remaining fabric of District Six today..

Along the freeway, near the South Union Street and Walmer Road intersection stands the old fig tree referred to in the brochure as “an immovable and living memorial to the people who used to stay in old South End.”<sup>89</sup> This “Wild Fig Tree” is the second

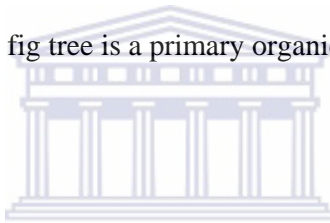
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<sup>87</sup> The South End Museum Heritage Trail is divided into a ‘short’ route and a ‘long’ route. The short route consists of nine former South End sites and the long route contains fifteen sites.

<sup>88</sup> The South End Museum Heritage Trail Information Brochure. Site One.

<sup>89</sup> Agherdien *et al.* p. 67

feature of this trail and is situated approximately a hundred meters from the museum. The fig tree was found in the then Chase Street, South Beach Terrace, lower South End and belonged to a Mr. Isaacs. Its age is unknown but an aerial photograph, found in the Africana section of the Port Elizabeth Library, shows a fully grown tree. It is therefore assumed to be over a hundred years old. A reporter, who wrote an article on the fig tree in 1970, doubted if the authorities would leave the relic of old South End standing. He stated that, “what the wind was unable to do man and his bulldozers would most certainly do when the last remains of old South End were razed.”<sup>90</sup> This was never the case with the fig tree as it firmly stands. The fig tree is meant to represent the life prior to the removals even though the South End community no longer exists. In addition, the fig tree is a primary organic feature of the infantilization narrative.



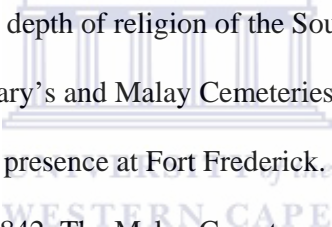
As we have seen, former residents refer to it as the most famous playground and continue to tell childhood stories about the tree. However, the tree also contains a metaphoric nuance of firm roots based on the age and this also can be referred to the strength of remaining grounded and steadfast. It is one remaining unrefined symbol that contains multiple narratives especially the one of immovability. It subtly articulates the notion that removals could not erase the memory of South End.

Situated on the left of the freeway leading into Humewood is the third site, Pier Street Mosque (Masjied-UI-Aziz). It is a representation of the continuous religious inferences made about South End. This mosque was officially opened in July 1901. The Strand Street mosque was registered and held in trust for the Malay community

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<sup>90</sup> Michaels, J. *Weekend Evening Post*. 7 September 1970.

by its first Imam, Abdul Wahab Salie. The mosque was designed by the architect J.A. Holland and was built by Messrs Trunnick and Curtiss for the amount of 1345 pound sterling. It was doomed to be destroyed by the Group Areas Act, but the matter was taken to the United Nations where Islamic Countries prevented its destruction. As the mosque could not be demolished the Municipality decided to build the freeway over the mosque, however the dome was too high and the municipality ordered the removal of the dome. This matter was taken to Parliament which decided not to build the freeway over the mosque but to change the routing. However, by then the mosque had already lost its dome. The mosque survived the Group Areas Act bulldozers and remains in daily use as a place of worship for the Moslem community of the NMMM.



Another representation of the depth of religion of the South End community is the fourth site, which is the St Mary's and Malay Cemeteries. This space was used as early as 1799 for the military presence at Fort Frederick. It was granted to the St Mary's Anglican Church in 1842. The Malay Cemetery, adjacent to St Mary's was granted to the Mohammedan community in 1895. The church remains a religious institution whilst the cemetery reflects the ancestral lineage that former residents are depicted as being connected to.

The fifth site is the Baakens Street Tramway Bus Sheds. The Port Elizabeth's Electric Tramway Building was built in 1897 to serve the town's tram transport system. The building was later used as sheds for the many buses in Port Elizabeth and is not in use for this purpose anymore. The rail, buses and taxis are used as modes of transport for the city. This serves as another representation of the link to Port Elizabeth as a site of industry with South End as a component of this.

The Shri Siva Subramanier Aulayan Temple is the sixth site which was built between 1893 and 1901 at Rufane Vale (Upper Valley Road) by the Hindu Community. The Temple was consecrated in 1901 and is still used by the community. The seventh site found next to the St Mary's and Malay cemeteries are the Black Steps which were used as a short cut for many residents between South End, the City Center and the bus terminus. According to the brochure "many ghost stories were related because of the proximity of the cemeteries and this route was avoided at night."<sup>91</sup> The inclusion of the cemetery in the trail is a common trend as in the post apartheid South Africa cemeteries are gradually forming part of tours as original sites of narrating South African histories. For instance, there are plans to create a heroes acre at Avalon cemetery in Johannesburg. This is a project of "taking in some freedom struggle heroes who are already buried in Avalon – South African Communist Party leader Joe Slovo, 1976 Soweto Uprising hero Hector Peterson, Human Rights stalwart Helen Joseph, Rivonia trialist Elias Motsoaledi and Andrew Mlangeni."<sup>92</sup> In the Port Elizabeth area, the Emlotheni Memorial is also one form of a tour site where struggle heroes are buried. The mapping of grave sites therefore remain as one form of routing the past to formulate representations.

Presented at the eighth site of the trail are the St. Peter's Church and School ruins. The Rev. William Greenstock established an Anglican Church and school, a daughter church of St. Mary's, on these temporary premises in 1871. The church was "opened on 29 July 1877 and the school was the first church school in South End to produce

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<sup>91</sup> The South End Museum Heritage Trail Information Brochure. Site Seven.

<sup>92</sup> Joburg: Official website of the City of Johannesburg. [http://www.joburg.org.za/aug\\_2002/Avalon.stm](http://www.joburg.org.za/aug_2002/Avalon.stm) (last accessed 19 February 2007).



pupils to the highest standards for people designated as ‘coloureds’ then, namely standard six.”<sup>93</sup> In the trail brochure, the school is described as a building that served communities of “all race groups and improved the education of many people.”<sup>94</sup> The Group Areas Act forced the community to move to other areas and the church was deconsecrated in 1972. The ruins of church and school remain. The ruins of St. Peter’s Church stand above St Mary’s cemetery whose history dates back to the 1820 settlers. Churches and schools form an integral part of representing South End. Schooling and going to church are depicted as activities that portray the typical South End life. This is also one representation of normalizing urban life.

Standing in Walmer Boulevard, on the road leading to the airport and the suburb of Walmer is the ninth site, the Rudolph Street Mosque (Masjied-UI-Abraar) built by Imam Jalaludien Abrahams with his trustees in the early 1890’s. In 1893 the land was transferred to the Trust and the Mosque was completed in 1894. The original mihrab, a fine artistry is found in the centre of the masjid. Mosques and churches form an integral part of remembering South End. They remain symbols that escaped the bulldozer destroying homes; they remain statements of the struggle against apartheid’s process of social engineering. And they are spaces of worship and celebration of surviving removals; hence they are viewed by the museum as key elements in the heritage trail.

Unlike the Donkin Heritage Trail which is predominately a presentation of settlement and domination of the time in the region, the South End Trail contains different features which are predominantly religious. The South End Trail contains an

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<sup>93</sup> The South End Museum Heritage Trail Information Brochure. Site Eight.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

assortment of churches and mosques whilst the Donkin Trail has forts and soldiers in their presentation. In the trail, South End is represented as a place with notions of religious sites and schools, whilst the Donkin trail claims some of its existence through war fare and conquest figures. There is an emergence of ‘heroes’ and ‘heroines’ in the Donkin trail and South End remains a geographic and a ‘cultural’ trail. This trail contains a representation of memory of a community and uses the remaining fabric to claim that memory. A lot of ‘cultural’ sites are used as the basis of this memorialization. This represents South End community as a highly ‘cultural’ society, with religion taken to represent culture.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has shown distinct features of former South End depicted in the museum and the trail that the museum created in the area. Much emphasis is given on how the museum is utilized as a tool to remember South End, how similar or dissimilar it is to museums like District Six and Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum which are both formed on almost the same principles of remembering and re-living the life of non existing communities.

The features in the museum’s layout seemingly manage to bring into play a sense of recollection and amusement in the activities of the past and partially overlooking the activities that makes every community diverse. Activities ranging from gangsters, street fighters, marking of territorial boundaries, gambling, beer halls and prostitutes are not part of the discourse of a South end community as represented in the museum and on the trail.

A new South End is created in the museum. The meanings that are created refer to the distinct features of infantilization of South End, over emphasis on ‘harmony’ and ‘multiculturalism’, a glance into a ‘clean and organized’ South End ‘interior,’ and an unaccounted link with political figures. This is the community that is being created. Instead of seeing the museum that claims to represent the community of South End, the argument remains that the South End Museum creates a South End of its own in a museum which Hall regards as a place of representation. Hall further argues that, “a museum does not deal solely with objects, but more importantly, with... ideas - notions of what the world is or should be. Museums do not simply issue objective descriptions or form logical assemblages; they generate representations and attribute value and meaning in line with certain perspectives or classificatory schemas which are historically specific.”<sup>95</sup>



Given the presentation of South End Museum and other similar museums, it should be realized that community museums would never be able to replace the lifestyles and cultures of the dynamic people of the likes of South End in Port Elizabeth, District Six in Cape Town, Sophiatown in Johannesburg and North End in East London. South End Museum will however, facilitate means of constructing the notion of remembering, thus the notion of memory remains a significant aspect in the community museum prospects.

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<sup>95</sup> Hall. *Representation*.p76

## Chapter Two

### The Heritage Landscape Prior 1994

The South End museum was established in a city in which the arrival of settlers from Britain in the 1820s (henceforth referred to as the 1820 settlers) dominates the heritage landscape. Settlers are represented as financiers, builders and pioneers, and their origins, their ‘achievements’, how they built and developed ‘culture’ are portrayed as significant parts of the heritage of Port Elizabeth, and of the broader Eastern Cape region. The focus in this chapter will be on two institutions that depicted this heritage in the city prior to the advent of a democratically elected government in South Africa in 1994: the Donkin Heritage Trail and the Port Elizabeth Museum complex. These two contain a consistent trend of representing the history of settlement, portraying the line of settler history dominance in the region.

Witz has argued that the dominance of an 1820 settler heritage in the Eastern Cape, and Port Elizabeth, in particular, can be dated back to the inception of the apartheid government in 1948. Prior to this, he argues, the discourse of the colonial encounter in the Eastern Cape emphasized conquest and ‘civilizing’ the Xhosa. The central focus of events and representations referred to a history of colonization and conquest. This was a history where “the lives of blacks and whites...had become inextricable and inequitably intertwined”, where the British governor, Harry Smith, was presented as the “great [British] Chief” who ordered the Xhosa chief Makoma “to kneel and set his foot on the Chief’s neck”.<sup>96</sup> He maintains that this began to change in 1948 as “one major imperative of the apartheid state was to establish a sense of legitimacy

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<sup>96</sup> Witz, L. 2003. *Apartheid’s Festival: Contesting South Africa’s National Pasts*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. p 227.

among those who racially designated themselves as white and a sense of white identity and history based on European founding.”<sup>97</sup> In constructing a history of whites, “confident assertions of whiteness and a history containing selected personalities and events of European settlement were key features in creating a racialised South African citizenry.”<sup>98</sup> According to Witz, instead of emphasizing frontier wars and colonial conflicts, it was the European settlement that became core. This occurred through institutionalizing and entrenching European culture and classifying certain ‘great’ men and women as the founders of the cities and its spaces.

There were many festivals which promoted settler history, like the 1952 celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of the landing of Jan Van Riebeeck. This festival’s theme was to portray “South Africa after 300 Years – The Building of a Nation.”<sup>99</sup> Witz explains the problem of finding “an appropriate method in attempting to make the festival national, the narrative where white Afrikaners were cast as the anti imperial bearers of “civilization” did not fit into the national framework being established for Van Riebeeck.”<sup>100</sup> Witz also explains how the national past which was negotiated, had “denied race.”<sup>101</sup> For this festival each locality had to “acquire moments of founding and then show how “events of great importance” in “the development of the settler nation occurred there for the first time.”<sup>102</sup> This was not a festival without difficulties as “cities defined as “coastal” by the organizers of the tercentenary showed a marked lack of enthusiasm for the festival. Local authorities in

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid

<sup>98</sup> Witz, L. (n.d.) Denial, Suppression and Substitution in the making of history: Preparing for the arrival of Bartolomeu Dias in 1988. History Department, University of the Western Cape. A paper based on research for the National Research Foundation funded Project on Public Pasts. p.5

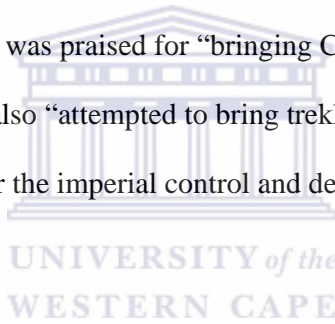
<sup>99</sup> Witz. *Apartheid's Festival*, p 222.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid

<sup>101</sup> Ibid

<sup>102</sup> Ibid

major cities like Durban, Port Elizabeth and East London were all in different ways erecting obstacles to participation in the manner the organizers required.”<sup>103</sup> Reasons for this non-cooperation arose from “deep suspicion, based on the involvement of Afrikaner nationalist organizations and that the festival in Cape Town could easily become a eulogy for Afrikaner nationalism.”<sup>104</sup> To allay fears over the content of the festival Jacque Pauw, the organizing secretary and Anna Neethling–Pohl, the pageant mistress, had to make special visits to “coastal” areas.<sup>105</sup> In the area known as the Eastern Cape a “narrative that stressed colonial battles, mostly fought by British imperial forces against indigenous inhabitants dominated the local settler histories.”<sup>106</sup> On this frontier past, the colonel and later Governor Harry Smith was the key figure and not Van Riebeeck.<sup>107</sup> He was praised for “bringing Chief Macoma and Tyali to swear allegiance.”<sup>108</sup> Smith also “attempted to bring trekkers into the area between the Orange and Vaal River under the imperial control and defeating in the process the trek leader Andries Pretorius.”<sup>109</sup>



Smith’s legacy in 1952 was diluted through a negotiated settlement and intervention by the likes of Neethling–Pohl by naming a reconstructed mail coach which travelled to Cape Town from the eastern Cape for the festival the name of “Settlers”. This defined the region as that which “Afrikaner Boers ....British Settler... and German immigrants” inhabited after Van Riebeeck had landed.<sup>110</sup> Some level of conformity was found. On 4 March 1952 at 9:30 am, the mail coach “Settlers” reached the

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, p 225.

<sup>105</sup> *Evening Post*, 6 July 1951 in Witz. *Apartheid’s Festival*

<sup>106</sup> Witz. *Apartheid’s Festival* .p 225.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid p 226

<sup>108</sup> Fairbridge cited by Witz. 2003. *Apartheid’s Festival*. p226.

<sup>109</sup> Skinner, *Geskiedenisles vir die Laer Skool*, 74, 104 in Witz. 2003. *Apartheid’s Festival* .p226.

<sup>110</sup> Minutes, Mail Coach Organizing Committee, 25 May 1951, NCH, PV 379, A11/13/1 in Witz. *Apartheid’s Festival*. p226.

Zwartkops Bridge on the outskirts of Port Elizabeth. It was welcomed by a principal of a local school who “called for more festivals to be held in South Africa to help resolve the conflict because people would develop political amnesia and work together.”<sup>111</sup> To welcome the coach a local festival was held in Port Elizabeth depicting the landing of the British settlers in 1820. The 1820 settlers, along with Van Riebeeck, were represented as the bearers of “civilization” from Europe and provided a crucial component as the “English” builders of the nation.”<sup>112</sup> The notion of ‘race and unity’ became a common denominator and a point of convergence in depicting settler history.

In appropriating the compromise of depicting the ‘1820 settlers’ the *Evening Post* newspaper maintained that “Port Elizabeth was one of the “only two cities on the coast of South Africa where settlers landed” and therefore they saw it almost as the city’s duty to ensure that the 1820 settlers were present to greet Van Riebeeck when he arrived aboard the mail coach.<sup>113</sup> Local festivities were arranged to “coincide with the arrival of “Settlers” in Port Elizabeth.”<sup>114</sup> The day’s proceeding closed with a torchlight tableau where the landing of the 1820 settlers and that of Van Riebeeck were cast on the same stage, both leading to the moment of proclaimed settler nationhood in 1952.<sup>115</sup> After the festival, in the 1950s, the Baakens Nature Reserve was renamed “Settlers Park” and the city adopted a coat of arms to reflect its newly

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<sup>111</sup> Witz. *Apartheid’s Festival*. p237.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid pg 238.

<sup>113</sup> *Evening Post*, 5 March 1952 in Witz. *Apartheid’s Festival*. p238.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid pg 238.

<sup>115</sup> *Evening Post*, 8 April 1952 in Witz. *Apartheid’s Festival*. p238.

established “settlers” heritage.”<sup>116</sup> Port Elizabeth was now portrayed as the breeding ground of the “talented” 1820 settlers and not the battlefield of the past.<sup>117</sup>

Museums and memorials were also utilized in setting up this discourse. In the Port Elizabeth region, institutions such as the Port Elizabeth Historical Society and the Port Elizabeth Ratepayers Association appropriated this aspect of history, emphasizing the founding and the settlement of the Europeans on African soil. The frontier wars between the colonial troops and local, indigenous communities were sidelined in this new settler past<sup>118</sup> and started disappearing from museums of the Eastern Cape. The emphasis therefore became settlement as a core feature of the regions history and, according to Witz, “from the 1950’s museums in the Eastern Cape on a large scale began to incorporate a history of settlement from Europe”<sup>119</sup>, as did the Port Elizabeth Museum.



Although these heritage sites and spaces, which emphasized European settlement, are not part of the South End Museum displays or narratives, it is imperative to consider them in this mini-thesis as it was this heritage landscape that the museum had to encounter in its claims to present a new and different heritage in Port Elizabeth. What was distinctly different from the settler heritage that, as we shall see, was based upon the construction of landmarks and edifices, was that the landscape South End became a place of ‘heritage’ only after it was destroyed, with the removals marking it as a site of historical significance and a space of remembrance in post-apartheid South Africa.

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<sup>116</sup> *Evening Post*, 6 March 1952, in Witz. *Apartheid’s Festival*. p238

<sup>117</sup> *Evening Post*, 7 March 1952, in Witz. *Apartheid’s Festival*.p238

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid* 222.

<sup>119</sup> Witz, L. (n.d.) ‘From Huberta and the coelacanth to *Sandelia bainsii*: Containing the Frontier in the “National History Museums” of the Eastern Cape. History Department, University of the Western Cape.



## The Donkin Trail

In Port Elizabeth the dominance of a narrative of settler heritage is most evident in the Donkin<sup>120</sup> ‘Heritage’ Trail, which revolves around the Victorian landscape and symbols like the statue of Queen Victoria towards the end of the city centre of Port Elizabeth and the stone pyramid in the Donkin Reserve. This trail is named after Sir Rufane Donkin Acting Governor of the Cape who in 1820 named the port after his late wife, Elizabeth<sup>121</sup> and further erected a pyramid in her honour as the “most perfect person.”<sup>122</sup>

The Donkin Heritage Trail is regarded by those who claim to be part of the settler community and its custodians; the Historical Society of Port Elizabeth, as the only ‘heritage’ trail in the city. The Donkin heritage trail is a five kilometer trail that links up to 47 places of ‘historical’ interest in the old hill area of Port Elizabeth. This particular trail is an established mapping of the settler structures and sites in the central area of Port Elizabeth. All the sites are depicted as universal, homogeneous and are linked to the ‘great’ settlers that are portrayed as founders and governors of the city.

The Historical Society of Port Elizabeth remains custodians of this ‘heritage’. The organization is based at No. 7 Castle Hill Museum and has produced a publication titled *The Donkin Heritage Trail-A Walking Tour of Port Elizabeth*. The primary focus is on the greatness of European architectural designs and stands as a tribute to

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<sup>120</sup> Elizabeth Donkin Pyramid engraved message.

the 'western way of life'. This will be illustrated through the mapping of some of the 47 Donkin Trail sites.

The Donkin 'Heritage' Trail (see map attached annexure (i)) begins at the library building which is owned by the municipality and is the biggest of the 22 libraries of the metro. The library building is situated in the north western corner of Market Square and is deemed imperative in the settlement history as land for this building was granted by Sir Benjamin D'Urban<sup>123</sup> in 1835.<sup>124</sup> The present library building was opened in 1902 and according to O'Brian it is regarded as an excellent example of Victorian Gothic architecture.<sup>125</sup> The library building was proclaimed a National Monument in 1973 and forms part of the public spaces used for educational support in the municipality. In portraying the library an educational support institution of settler origin and heritage is one of the assumptions in the settler discourse. Beginning the trail at this space appropriates the perception that knowledge is centered and has its origins with the arrival of Europeans in the region. The library forms part of the centerpiece of municipal administration and thus located closer to 'governance' as well. It remains a crucial element for research and contains a repository of settler history volumes and pictorials.

Directly in front of the library is a statue of Queen Victoria that was erected and unveiled in 1903. According to O'Brian the statue is one of many that were sculptured

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<sup>123</sup> Sir Benjamin d'Urban was a British General and a colonial administrator who is best known for his frontier policy when he was governor in the Cape Colony, see

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benjamin\\_d'Urban](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benjamin_d'Urban) (last accessed on the 24/01/2007. 10:40pm)

<sup>124</sup> O'Brien, R. and Curtis, C. *The Donkin Heritage Trail – A Walking Tour of Port Elizabeth*. Historical Society of Port Elizabeth, June 1979

<sup>125</sup> Ibid, p4

in Britain at the time of the Queen's death and distributed throughout the empire.<sup>126</sup> Its purpose is metaphorically explained as “Keeping a watchful eye on those who enter the Main Street (renamed Govan Mbeki) and stroll down the city centre.”<sup>127</sup> The notion of ‘watching’ is linked to the idea of uncontested ownership of space and thus authority is entrenched through symbols and statues.

According to Homans the Victorian reign was “a blazing global sign of Great Britain’s imperial reach and strength.”<sup>128</sup> At the time of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee in 1897 a movement to raise funds for the statue was started. R. Roscoe Mullins of London was the sculptor and the stone is Sicilian marble. The statue was restored in 1992. This is yet another depiction of the memory and dominance of settlement. It was also a space that asserted imperial rule in the city as Queen Victoria has never visited the city. In tours themed as the “Historic Eastern Cape and 1820 Settler Country” the Queen Victoria statue in front of the Public Library in Main Street is taken as a landmark represented as offering interpretations of imperial legacy in the region. The imposed presence of British governance in the form of a statue remains one element of legitimizing British expansion. The Victoria reign was characterized by notions of expansion of the empire and the dominant presence of the British in those empires. Queen Victoria remains the most commemorated British monarch with statues erected throughout former territories of the British Empire. In the context of legitimization of settlement together with the notion of imperialism, the Queen Victoria statue is one of the symbols that appropriate the presence of the British and the validity of white superiority. This statement is not meant to undermine the white

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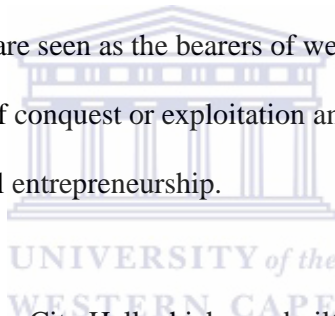
<sup>126</sup> Ibid, p5

<sup>127</sup> [www.donkinstreet.co.za/trail.html](http://www.donkinstreet.co.za/trail.html) (last accessed 25 April 2007)

<sup>128</sup> Homans, M. 1998. *Royal Representations: Queen Victoria and British Culture, 1837-1876*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pxiii.

Afrikaans speakers, who have a public history of anti-imperialism, for instance, Boer War, Great Trek etc. Therefore, the argument concerning the representation of a discourse of settlement is entrenched and is represented as the coming together of whites under a common history through the heritage of landscape.

In the same precinct with the Queen Victoria Statue and the library building there is the Market Square. Originally it was the landing place for ships and goods. The b b square became a focus point of buying and selling of goods by the local and district farmers. Through this depiction the settler discourse refers to pioneers, merchants and traders. In all representations of settlers these abilities are closely linked as qualities of this particular grouping that are seen as the bearers of wealth. Thus pioneering is dissociated from any sense of conquest or exploitation and made into almost an inherent sense of commercial entrepreneurship.



In the Market Square there is a City Hall which was built between 1858 and 1862. The Clock Tower was added in 1883. The City Hall served as a Council chamber as well as the concert hall. After 1994 it was changed into an administrative center for the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality and houses the Mayors office and the Municipal Managers office. The City Hall is also used as a venue for weddings and gala functions. This space was proclaimed a National Monument in 1973. The Victorian architecture in the square confirms the spatial resemblance of imperialist imposed in most of the cities of the Eastern Cape. The consistency in planning and design resembles the creation of imperialist presence in all spaces of the city. This relates to two aspect of settler discourse with one representation of governance thus putting an emphasis on the settler community as one that is able to establish its own

forms of governance. The other, is the emphasis on the architecture as a defining feature of settlement. Buildings come to represent claims to status and such status is claimed from the arrival of settlers in the region.



As described on the Donkin Houses website: “Looking eastwards from Market Square the Campanile is a 51 metre high brick structure completed in 1923 to commemorate the landing of the 1820 Settlers. It is known for posing a challenge to the fit and healthy with a spiral staircase of 204 steps, which once conquered, offers spectacular views of Algoa Bay”<sup>129</sup> The Settlers Memorial Association, established in 1920, raised funds to build the Campanile and the foundation stone was laid on April 9<sup>th</sup> 1920 by Prince Arthur of Connaught. It has a carillon of 23 bells and each bell is inscribed according to the wishes of the donor and these inscriptions are visible in the closed Campanile.<sup>130</sup> According to O’Brian, the location of the Campanile is just to the north of the spot where 4000 British settlers landed in small boats on what was then a beach.<sup>131</sup> One can also view the Campanile from South End. This is yet another manifestation of the fixed structures that asserts a monumental claim to a settler heritage.

Across the Main Street is the Feather Market Centre that was built in 1883 for auction sales of ostrich feathers, wool, hides, skin and fruit. In 1885-1886 it was the venue for the South African Exhibition. Built in 1885 the Feather Market Center is represented as the hub of the ostrich feather trade during the last century.<sup>132</sup> Various websites

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<sup>129</sup> The Donkin Houses. 1999. Donkin Trail. [www.donkinstreet.co.za/trail.htm](http://www.donkinstreet.co.za/trail.htm) (last accessed 25 April 2007).

<sup>130</sup> Hift, R. and Hill, A. 2001. *Port Elizabeth and the Nelson Mandela Metropole*. South Africa: Repro House. p20.

<sup>131</sup> O’Brian, p6.

<sup>132</sup> Roots. 1998. Port Elizabeth. [www.aspworks.com/abp/roots/city5.htm](http://www.aspworks.com/abp/roots/city5.htm) American Broadband

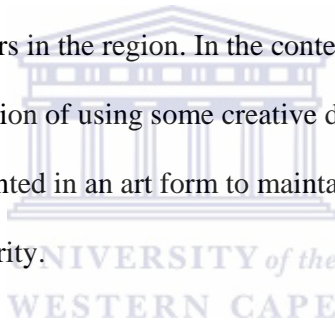
issue different dates for the construction of the building. As one of the emphasized trends, trading is depicted as a central activity of the Settler groups that landed in South Africa. Amongst all forms of development a secure trading space like the Feather Market Hall was built to create an environment of trade for settlers in exclusion of others. Trading is portrayed as a normative trait for settlers.

Known as one of the oldest buildings still remaining in Port Elizabeth, the Castle Hill is a local history museum that exhibits British Settler artifacts. In 1985 it came to be part of the Port Elizabeth Museum. The building was opened as a museum in 1965 with its interior portraying the domestic life of the English middle class in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in Port Elizabeth. This particular house constitutes a hall, which is a point of entry, the dining room with a mahogany table and balloon backed chairs, the study which is said to have been the ‘father’s domain’ where he wrote, reckoned and read.<sup>133</sup> There is also a parlor, which was meant to entertain the guests, the kitchen and the pantry. The entire house structure is supposed to resemble the homes that the British Settlers of 1820 left in Europe. The descendents of local settler families have donated most of the exhibits found in the museum. They are of English origin from the period of 1850s-1870s as per the museum’s collections register. The museum is also known for its collection of Victorian and Edwardian dolls and toys. The visitors’ book reflects that it is mainly local and foreign tourists that visit the museum. The house, proclaimed a National Monument in 1962, depicts both a sense of continuance in settler way of life and a positioning as a way of life that had to be conserved.

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Publications, LLC. (accessed 25 April 2007)  
<sup>132</sup> No. 7 Castle Hill Museum Brochure.

The King George VI Art Gallery, currently known as the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum and the Eastern Province Society of Fine Arts Hall, was started as the Eastern Province Society of Arts and Crafts in 1918. The art gallery was built in 1956 and according to O' Brian contains fine examples of both the British and South African schools of painting.<sup>134</sup> It was established to honour the visit to the city in 1947 by King George VI. The collections consist of South African art (particularly that of the Eastern Cape), British Art, International printmaking and Oriental art including miniatures and Chinese textiles. The elaborated European art flair and scenery forms part of the representation of the settler lifestyle and gaze. This depiction mode remains a strong element as visuals form part of portraying the permanent lifestyles of settlers in the region. In the context of the gallery dedicated to King George VI, the impression of using some creative demonstrations refer to the preservation of history presented in an art form to maintain the status quo of settlement and white superiority.



East of the Art Gallery is St Georges Park which was established on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1861. A number of trees were planted and these were to be known as the Prince Alfred Grove. The park was closely associated with sport. According to O'Brian several firsts in the sphere of sport are linked to the park.<sup>135</sup> A cricket club was established in 1843 and in 1859 the PE Cricket Club was granted land which it still occupies till today. In 1889 the first cricket match against England took place there and in 1891 the first rugby test. Coupled with British education, cricket became an integral part of settler history and leisure. In portraying St Georges Park as a base for sport, cricket as

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<sup>134</sup> O'Brien, R. and Curtis, C. The Donkin Heritage Trail – A Walking Tour of Port Elizabeth. Historical Society of Port Elizabeth, June 1979.p4.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.p4.

a white's only sport tend to be stressed. This is observed through the displays found in the Eastern Province Cricket Board's meeting rooms. However, according to Odendaal, "Port Elizabeth provides a good case study to show how cricket became an integral part of the black community life by the 1880's. By this period the number of African cricket clubs in Port Elizabeth had grown to include the Fear Not CC, the Fight CC etc."<sup>136</sup> The representation of St Georges Park excludes this history. In the region the English settlers tried to recreate "Little England on the veld"<sup>137</sup> and portraying it as the best culture.

Facing north from the park there is the Opera House which was designed by G.W. Smith and opened in 1892 to stage plays. Attwell in his book titled, *Port Elizabeth Opera House – The First Hundred Years* maintains that the first hundred and fifty years after Van Riebeeck's arrival at the Cape in 1652 cultural life seems to have been non existent in the region, there was no opera, no concerts, theatre or any other form of entertainment in the town. When Captain Cook visited the Cape in 1771 on his historic voyage of discovery he commented on the almost total lack of entertainment in town.<sup>138</sup> According to Attwell, in Port Elizabeth the development of music, like theatre centered to a large extent around the predominantly merchant class, English and German, who provided most of the musicians and the actors, and most of the support for concerts and theatre.<sup>139</sup> The Opera House is represented as the cultural hub for the city and is often termed the oldest theatre<sup>140</sup> in Africa. These claims assert a perception that culture that is largely of the West and from Europe in derivation and

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<sup>136</sup> J. Hodgson, Princess Emma, p51-52 in A. Odendaal. 2003. *The Story of an Africa Game, Black Cricketers and the Unmasking of one of Cricket's Greatest Myths, South Africa, 1850-2003*. David Phillip. Cape Town. p 42.

<sup>137</sup> Odendaal. 2003. *The Story of an Africa Game*. p39.

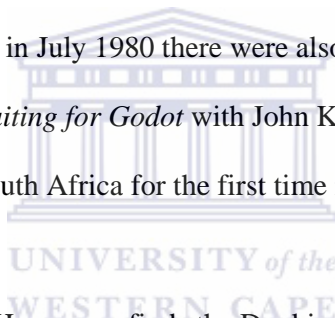
<sup>138</sup> Attwell, E. *Port Elizabeth – Opera House, The First Hundred Years*. Cape Performing Arts Board.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid. p12.

<sup>140</sup> *Eastern Cape Herald*, 2 December 2004.



that then needs to be brought to Africa. This also depicts the demarcation of spaces for settler culture and their exclusive use. The Opera house was declared a National Monument in 1980 with the National Monument Councils plaque declaring the building and the ground it stood on a monument. The assumption that there was 'no cultural life' in Africa before the arrival of whites is instilled and the establishment of the opera house is deemed as a 'symbolic start', thus confirming the settlers as 'pioneers' in all aspects of life in the region. But the productions at the Opera Theatre sometimes challenged this image that is conveyed around it on the heritage trail. In the early 1980s, Peggy Calata<sup>141</sup> explains how a play *Die Verminktes* produced by Bartho Smit which portrayed the Immorality Act as one of human tragedy was banned and she further explains how in July 1980 there were also two notable theatrical events: Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* with John Kani, Winston Ntshona and Pieter-Dirk Uys played in South Africa for the first time in ten years.



On the far east of the Opera House one finds the Donkin Street Houses that were built in 1870. The Donkin houses have a history dating back to the 1850s when the local authority started a land fill program resulting in the terraced Donkin Street. "The street was originally a 'kloof' which was filled in using convict labour and was named Donkin Street in 1851."<sup>142</sup> The row of terraced houses, each lower than the preceding, is integrated in a single unit. According to Hift and Hift, "The majority of the early owners of these houses were part of the influx of British settlers."<sup>143</sup> The whole terrace was declared a National Monument in 1967. Hift explains how "the Donkin

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<sup>141</sup> Interview with Peggy Calata, Director Public Programmes for the Port Elizabeth Opera House in Opera House, Port Elizabeth, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2006.

<sup>142</sup> Hift and Hift. 2001. p43

<sup>143</sup> Ibid

houses themselves have changed very little in one and a half centuries.”<sup>144</sup> The setting up of “little English villages dotted the landscape of what is today the Eastern Cape”<sup>145</sup> and the terraced houses in Port Elizabeth were part of the idea of establishing a ‘little England’.

Facing west from the terraces, Donkin Reserve, located off Belmont Terrace Central, and overlooking the city, was proclaimed an open space in perpetuity by Sir Rufane Donkin in 1820. It includes a Stone Pyramid Monument erected by Sir Rufane Donkin in memory of his late wife, Elizabeth, after whom the city was named, as well as palm-lined walkways and benches. The Lighthouse, which was built in 1861, also houses Tourism Port Elizabeth, the official Tourist Information Centre.<sup>146</sup> The pyramid bears two commemorative plaques. The first one states that, “Here lies one of the most perfect human beings who has given her name to the town”<sup>147</sup>. The other states that “The husband whose heart is till wrung by undiminished grief.”<sup>148</sup> This naming process was applied to honour a death that occurred in India and had not much significance for the area except to one person and close encounters. However, Margaret Herradine<sup>149</sup> explains that, “It was Donkin who realized that a port was going to be needed on this part of the coast and took the first steps to establish one, naming this prospective village after his wife.”<sup>150</sup> The settlers are cast as ‘pioneers’ with continuous disregard for the indigenous people in this narrative. For many, ‘civilization’ came with the arrivals of settlers and Donkin is portrayed as the

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid

<sup>145</sup> Odendaal. *Story of an Africa Game*. p31.

<sup>146</sup> Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism. Attractions. <http://www.tourismpe.co.za/attractions/attractions.asp> (accessed 25 April 2007)

<sup>147</sup> Donkin Trail brochure, Port Elizabeth Main Library.

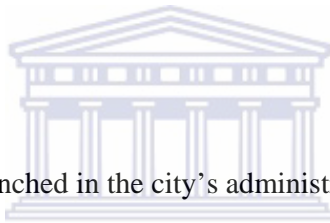
<sup>148</sup> Ibid

<sup>149</sup> Margaret Herradine is an author and custodian of settler history in the Nelson Mandela Bay region.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid

biographical figure that self - imposed his authority in defining the city and its surroundings.

The trail ends with the pyramid expressing the monumental approach taken by the settlers of the area and how they remain part of the city's heritage. Herradine commented that, "His (Donkin) choice of a pyramid is not at all unusual for the time and the proportions are those of the memorial to Gaius Cestius in Rome and the architect Hawksmoors pyramid in the grounds of Castle Howard in Yorkshire and have nothing to do with Egypt."<sup>151</sup> The permanence of the structure as both a memorial and a tourists attractions forms part of many other representations of settler history in the region.



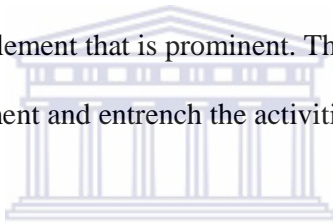
Settler history was also entrenched in the city's administration and identity. The coat of arms of Port Elizabeth was based closely on the identity and wishes of Sir Rufane Donkin, the Acting Governor of the Cape Colony in 1820 and 1821. The whole of the shield is taken from the Donkin family arms except for the two anchors, which were added as a necessary difference and as reference to the port. These arms were formally approved by the City Council in May 1958 and formally granted by Letters Patent from the College of Arms in August 1958. The arms were subsequently registered, unchanged, with the South African Bureau of Heraldry. This reflects the authorization of the settler heritage in an administrative set up. It is also a representation on how systems like the South African Bureau of Heraldry were established to appropriate such measures. What is also notable is the date of 1958, when the coat of arms formally approved and this very same period Baakens Valley

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid

was changed into Settlers Park after the 1952 Van Riebeeck festival. In doing so, a trend of name change was initiated and settler identity entrenched in the city's identity.

Given the above landscaping of the 'heritage' of former Port Elizabeth, descriptions given contain a deliberate bias to the settler history. It is narrated in a manner that overshadows the primary inhabitants of the area and tends to obscure their history when mentioned. The settler related history is mapped in one area that is at close to the harbour view of the space and also South End Museum. The 'heritage' presented is that of British descendants as pioneers. In this trail, it is not a history of colonial conquest but a history of settlement that is prominent. Thus the point of the trail is to depict the 'virtues' of settlement and entrench the activities of settlers as 'civilized'.



### **The Port Elizabeth Museum (PEM)**

The Port Elizabeth Museum was established in 1856. In 1919 the Africa's first ever snake park was added and a seal pool was opened in 1933. In 1958 the foundation stone at the present museum building in Summerstrand was laid and in 1968 the dolphin lake was opened to the public. The Port Elizabeth Museum is one of the oldest museums in South Africa and is a parent unit of what is now known as the Bayworld complex. It is situated in a three storey building; the lower floor contains a library, administration offices, storerooms and workshops. The ground and first floors contain the Marine and Birds Halls, Historical costume Hall, History Hall, Curiosity corner and many exhibits of natural science. There are skeletons of whales, dolphins, sharks and models of dinosaurs that populated the prehistoric landscape of Algoa

Bay.<sup>152</sup> The education center is reported to provide tours and gives lessons to more than 60 000 children of all ages and cultures annually on marine and mammal life, plants and reptiles, fish and the history of the city.<sup>153</sup> In 1969 the Castle Hill, referred to earlier as part of the Donkin heritage trail, was brought under the control of the museum.<sup>154</sup>

A study of PEM's development has been conducted through consultation of the Annual reports from 1966 to 1994 and through a reading of its displays. Many of these displays were put in place in the 1980s and still remain on show today. This study was influenced by the fact that Port Elizabeth Museum is the oldest museum in the area. It is also in the same locality with South End Museum (SEM). A guide book compiled by the South African Museums Association (SAMA) in 1969 indicated that the museum contained both 'natural' and 'cultural' materials. The category of natural referred to "the vast and exciting zoological, botanical, mineralogical and ethnological material with which the Europeans were confronted here"<sup>155</sup>, while culture referred to the "sub-culture'.... of its European population."<sup>156</sup> The materials often classified as 'natural' included a 'Bushman' Diorama and some of the human remains formally stored in the museum for anthropological research.

In the museum displays settler culture is predominant, through shipwreck remains and other exhibitions. The shipwrecks display form part of the 'authentic' exhibits of the

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<sup>152</sup> Hift and Hift. p76.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid, p77.

<sup>154</sup> Motor Car Rental. 2002. About South Africa.

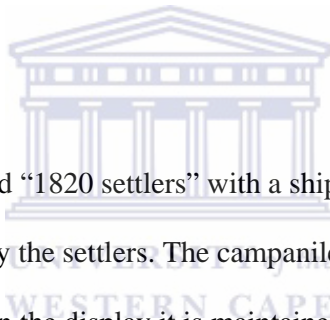
[http://www.motorcarrental.com/about\\_south\\_africa/port\\_elizabeth](http://www.motorcarrental.com/about_south_africa/port_elizabeth) Felix Car Rental. (accessed 28 January 2007)

<sup>155</sup> H. Franssen. 1969. *Guide to the Museums of Southern Africa*. Cape Town: South African Museums Association, p5.

<sup>156</sup> Franssen. 1969. *Guide to the Museums*, p5.

museum. In one of the displays on Fort Fredrick, Captain Francis Evatt, who was the commander of the fort, is referred to as the contact which welcomed the 1820 settlers on their arrival.

In the same hall there a display containing information about Sir Rufane Donkin and the naming of Port Elizabeth. The classification of Rufane Donkin with the naming of Port Elizabeth solidifies the inserted pressure of control and power to legitimize settlement. In the possession of the museum there is a campaign sword and a stall plate bearing the arms of Donkin.<sup>157</sup> The presence of the Donkin feature in the museum links the museum to the many spaces which appropriated settler unity discourse.



There is also a display labeled “1820 settlers” with a ship, a yoke and other implements reputedly used by the settlers. The campanile is also a symbol displayed in this setup. In the caption on the display it is maintained that the settlers were welcomed by the Dutch farmers who conveyed the settlers to their allotments. This is another affirmation of supposed settler unity. A map attached to the display of the ‘1820 settlers’ has no indication of early inhabitants of the area.

In entrenching the economic activity of the settlers, a display themed as the ‘19<sup>th</sup> century commerce and industry 1850 1900’ is put on view. Ostrich feathers soaps, candles wool, a show of market square “a gang loading a cargo of ivory, skin hides ready for shipping to North end jetty” are also on show. This depiction in many ways appropriates the ‘entrepreneurial’ spirit of the settlers and endorses the subsistence of

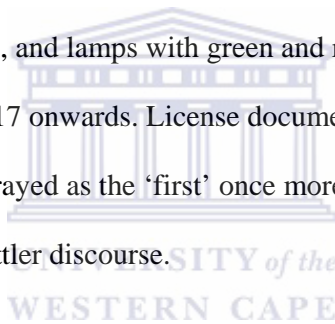
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<sup>157</sup> Ibid.p19.

the spaces such as the Feather market square, the wool board building and the ‘market square’ in Port Elizabeth.

The latter display is followed by an elaboration of the 20<sup>th</sup> century commerce and industry display. This particular one ranges from the establishments of tyre companies to motor factories, glass manufacturing and biscuits. These are depicted as products of the 20<sup>th</sup> century manufacturers, with the settlers overwhelmingly portrayed as almost sole participants in this commercial activity.

Together with pictures of “Trams in Port Elizabeth” the 1875 Railways with oil cans, coal shovel, ticket examiners, and lamps with green and red shades are exhibited. Air transport is covered from 1917 onwards. License documents are also exhibited. These transport forms are also portrayed as the ‘first’ once more complying with the ‘pioneering’ notion of the settler discourse.



What is evident is that the Port Elizabeth museum not only was involved in collecting and displaying settler culture as history. It also gained much satisfaction on their physical anthropology research and collections. As far as 1942 Wells wrote that, “The PEM sent much of its collection of human remains to the University of Witwatersrand ‘for specialist study’ ...where they would be studied for defining physical characteristics and placed with racial types.<sup>158</sup> In this instance, the curiosity about the ‘other’ confirmed the settler discourse of portraying the white race as absolute and a unified race, whilst others were subjected to classification according to physical attributes and various forms of scrutiny. The annual report of PEM, now Bayworld,

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<sup>158</sup> Wells, L.H. 1942. The Port Elizabeth Museum and South African Physical Anthropology. *South African Museums Association Bulletin* 11(14): 349-351.

also confirms that prior to being sent to the University of Witwatersrand several human skulls were displayed in the Port Elizabeth Museum.<sup>159</sup> The PEM report in 1982 further referred to “an outstanding traveling exhibition on the Bushmen peoples of the Northern Kalahari and South West Africa was on in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. The life size cast from living Bushmen presented an open display and created a wonderful feeling of intimacy with these fascinating people.<sup>160</sup> James Drury was portrayed as “finest taxidermist in the country whose famous work at the South African Museum was the plaster models of the ‘bushmen’.<sup>161</sup> The display of human organs and the ‘Bushmen’ diorama were presented correspondingly and were also common features of this museum. This representation became one strong element of defining the ‘other’, through institutions of culture and heritage. What was strong was the sampling of the finest detail to prove that the ‘other’ is less significant and his or her culture is meaningless compared to the known and preferred settler culture and heritage. Seeing the ‘other’ as different and inferior is a primary force in appropriating the settler as ‘civilized.’ This aspect is an interpretation on how settler dominance was enforced in relation to the existing cultures and heritage of the pre-settlement communities.

Towards the end of the particular exhibition space that I referred to earlier on the history of Port Elizabeth, a temporary exhibition can be viewed. It contains beadwork in glass stand-alone cubicles. The bead work varies from Amampondo to Mfengu accessories as per illustrations attached. Ostrich eggs and shells also from part of the display with spears and other ornaments like beer strainers. These were meant to be temporary exhibitions which, were utilized for convenience of a creating a space of

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<sup>159</sup> The Port Elizabeth Museum Annual Report, 1982

<sup>160</sup> Ibid

<sup>161</sup> Witz. From Huberta. p8



add - ons. Many other ‘add-ons’ were gradually effected in the PEM from the early 1990s (see chapter four). But the entire museum set up was remained dominated by a consistence and conformity in portraying the settler history. Settler history was portrayed as the ultimate form of ‘civilization’ in the museum parallel to those that were not accorded the same status.

As mentioned earlier, one important component of the PE Museum is No.7 Castle Hill, with most of the exhibits in this ‘home’ having been donated by the settler descendants. The museum is also known for its collection of Victorian and Edwardian dolls and toys. One of the latest additions to the collection at No. 7 Castle Hill has been a black doll donated by Mrs. Lydia Taylor. It was given to her when she lived in the Transkei. Mrs. Taylor’s mother aided by a Xhosa woman dressed the doll in the traditional Xhosa clothing of a married woman. As a ‘black’ doll it had not been seen in permanent display for lack of context.<sup>162</sup> This particular reason displays the unwillingness to undertake research for certain themes which fall outside the scope of the Victorian times and the settler narrative.

The annual reports that I have studied contain various inputs from sections of the museum ranging from the anthropology department to the snake park section. In 1966 the Director J. Grindley reported on historical acquisitions, which included a governess Corset of 1862, a Smith clothing (settler clothing referred to as ‘historical’ acquisitions) belonging to settlers.<sup>163</sup> In this report these items were regarded as a major display and are found in the museum’s permanent exhibition. The identification of settler clothing as ‘historical’ acquisitions and the location of these items in this

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid

<sup>163</sup> See Port Elizabeth Museum, 1966 annual Report.p5

museum refers to the element of creating a continuous discourse of portraying settler culture as permanent history of the region. In the discussed period, within the museum items, there are no clothing items of the pre settler arrival and yet a collection of beadwork from the Transkei was displayed. In depicting this bead work within the Port Elizabeth Museum complex as temporary exhibition demonstrates a lack of interrogation in dealing with the non settler history.

The 1975 Annual Report contained a strong element of museum 'outreach' towards the 'other' races. The so called 'coloured' school service for the PEM started that year. The children were encouraged to return with their parents in their own time and the museum staff reported that, "It has been rewarding to witness the enthusiasm shown by our coloured visitors and it is obvious that this current venture between the Department of Coloured Affairs, the Port Elizabeth passenger transport company and the museum is proving to be a great success."<sup>164</sup> In 1975 September a school service for coloured children was started in cooperation with Port Elizabeth Passenger Train Company and 'coloured' administration. The 'outreach' was designed to expose the 'other' of an 'impressive' culture. This was done by engaging educational institutions which, were spaces created for instilling lifelong learning.

In the 1982 Annual report, the Education section reported that, "A day seldom passes when museum complex does not throng with children of all ages and races participating in a unique learning experience."<sup>165</sup> Regular museum school classes were attended by a total of 29 557 white and coloured children, standard three and standard seven children were given specific lesson on plants, 'Bushmen' and reptiles.

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<sup>164</sup> Wallace, J.H. 1975. Port Elizabeth Museum Director's Annual Report.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid, Education section report

Thus the ‘Bushmen’ diorama became core in educating learners about the ‘other’ or formerly referred to as ‘extinct’ beings. The notion of ‘civilization’ brought by settlers in the region was therefore entrenched when the ‘other’ was portrayed as ‘extinct’.

This chapter has discussed the manner in which the settler history has strived for permanence and continuity in the Port Elizabeth area. This was elaborated through a closer look at the Donkin ‘Heritage’ Trail and the former Port Elizabeth Museum complex’s interpretation and the sustenance of the settler narrative. The dominance of this narrative in institutions and spaces of ‘history’ like the museum and sites in the Donkin Trail confirms the bottomless caveat of ‘founding’, ‘civilization’ and ‘unity’ amongst settlers. The history of the ‘other’ was not afforded much prominence and thus its historical path was deemed insignificant and regarded as the past which is interpreted as “all that happened” and settler history as “the according of significance to certain events in that past”.<sup>166</sup>

In describing sites of the trail and contents of the museum one has observed the consistent manner in which the settler discourse is represented and interpreted. The periodization of settler history narrative is on three elements; the historicization of individual lives, the dominance of the settlement culture in lives of all who lived around them and the prescribed ‘unity’ of settlers in pursuing life in a foreign land. This was the heritage of Port Elizabeth that was dominant when the idea of a different type of museum in South End was conceived.

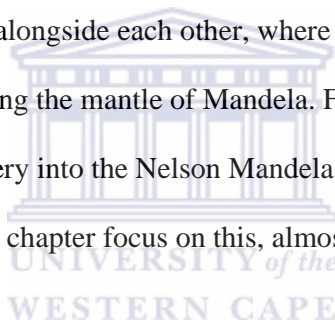
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<sup>166</sup> Witz. *Apartheid's Festival*. p31.

## Chapter Three

### Contesting heritage in the 'new' Port Elizabeth

The argument in chapter two reflected on the dominance of the settler history in Port Elizabeth prior to 1994. Given that scope, this chapter will be a discussion on the shift from settler heritage to a monumental heritage in post apartheid South Africa, in Port Elizabeth. This particular heritage is characterized by the “great man” theory of history, isolating Nelson Mandela and other male figures to define the struggle for freedom. Port Elizabeth’s new heritage in post 1994 is also being refracted through a male centered history of national heroes and their biographies. This notion permits the old and the new to sit easily alongside each other, where the old can easily adopt an ‘add on’ approach by assuming the mantle of Mandela. For instance, the name change of the King George Art Gallery into the Nelson Mandela Art Museum and many other occurrences discussed in this chapter focus on this, almost seamless, adaptation.



Within this context the South End Museum appears as a museum that does not conform to this new heritage practice, speaking more to notions of community and notions of ‘ordinariness’. Yet, as we shall see, there are moments when the South End Museum also uses the ‘great men’ as a means to establish its credentials.

The move to a monumental past did not happen immediately in Port Elizabeth post-1994. This chapter identifies two distinct phases. One was between 1994 and 1999 when democratic South Africa provided space for a dialogue of the formerly excluded communities to assume a role in the heritage sector. This though initially was somewhat hesitant in Port Elizabeth in the period up until 2000, an 1820 settler history remained largely in place in the public domain. Since 2000 there have been

some dramatic changes with the institutionalization of a monumental past through the figure of Nelson Mandela. The core argument in this chapter overall however is the existence of the 'new' histories parallel to 'old' histories and the existence of South End museum faced with domination of the monumental and biographic as the key characteristics of heritage reconstruction in the city.

### **1994-2000: The additive moment**

Within the heritage context of Port Elizabeth the first five years of democracy can be classified as the transition period where community initiatives and 'add-ons' to 'old' museums took center stage. In this period very little change could be traced in the municipality with an exception of the conceptualization of a museum in Red Location in 1998, the naming of Olof Palme Street in Red Location and the renaming of the Main Street to Govan Mbeki Street in 2000. In this same period the city witnessed the construction of monuments in the townships beginning with Emlotheni Memorial in 1998 and Langa Memorial in 2000. It was also in this period that the South End Museum was opened.

During 1994-1995 museums in South Africa were faced with major challenges that required a frequent use of the word 'transformation'. There were also high expectations from old museums' staff and management as well as some negative perception and skepticism about the democratic government from within the museum sector. The latter is evident in the report for 1994/5 by the director of the Port Elizabeth Museum, Mike Reath. He stated: "I am qualified and entitled to comment on what amounts to an exploitative attitude on the part of the government towards the people who staff its museums. This is unquestionable through that of the former Cape

Province, but one would have hoped for a very different and more equitable attitude on the part of the new ‘people’s government’.”<sup>167</sup> Reath continued to indicate his regret by stating that, “though a full year after the election of the new government, there is as yet little sign of any improvement in the museum.”<sup>168</sup> This was the first time, since 1966, where salaries and museum staff matters were explored in the museum report.

In this very same report (1994/95) there is acknowledgement of the launch of the Arts and Culture task group set up by Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology to make recommendations on arts and culture policy at a national level for the new South Africa.<sup>169</sup> Reath reveals that he was appointed to the Eastern Cape Provincial Arts and Culture Task Group (PACTAG) by Nosimo Balindlela, member of the executive committee (MEC) for Sports, Arts and Culture. One of its aims was to find effective ways to redress past imbalances while at the same time utilizing existing services to the public. Reath submitted to PACTAG that, “the problem of redress in formerly marginalized areas should be addressed by the implementation of a mobile museum services into the remotest areas of the province by means of specifically equipped mobile units staffed by trained staff”.<sup>170</sup> He was thus calling for broadening the use of museums in the province and not tackling the need for altering existing museums systems and narratives.

Sylvia van Zyl, Public Program Manager of PEM explained in the 1994/95 report that although the review period fell in the post election period where amalgamation of the

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<sup>167</sup> Reath. M. 1994/1995 Directors Review. Port Elizabeth Museum.

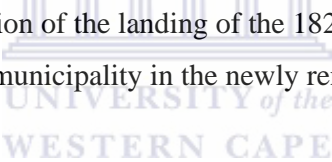
<sup>168</sup> Ibid

<sup>169</sup> Ibid

<sup>170</sup> Ibid

many education departments was foremost on the program for change, the museum schools continued to be operated much the same as before.<sup>171</sup> Outreach was implemented to meet the needs of pupils in townships and northern areas of Port Elizabeth. The program comprised both on site and off site presentations coupled with a presentation to teachers to motivate them to bring pupils to the museum complex. By this small scale intervention through the education departments, the museum's continued existence and claim to importance was validated. However it seems that the same content and operations were utilized and the museum's dominant narrative remained firmly in place.

In the Display Department, Nielen Schaefer described the exhibitions in the following manner:

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1. A graphic representation of the landing of the 1820 Settlers set up in cooperation with the municipality in the newly renovated campanile in downtown PE.
  2. A temporary presentation for International museum Day promoting museum in general.
  3. A photograph exhibition collated by the ANC depicting the history of that organization.

Given the dominance of the 1820 Settler history in the Port Elizabeth Museum, the exhibition on the history of the ANC might be seen as constituting a drastic change in the display content of the museum. Curator Jenny Bennie explained that, “ an exhibition of photographs depicting the history of the African National Congress was

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid, Public Program Manager's Report.

borrowed for two months period from Mayibuye Centre at University of the Western Cape. It proved to be one of interest to local and overseas visitors alike”.<sup>172</sup>

Witz, however, refers to such type of changes as ‘add on effects’, which is an approach that leaves those who have been categorized as black and gendered as women as marginal in exhibitionary spaces in museums. Witz was commenting specifically on the ‘add on’ methods of the McGregor Museum in Kimberley and the South African Museum in Cape Town. These museums responded to the cry for transformation and in Witz’s opinion the transformation took place only by enforcing the ‘add on’ method. For instance in McGregor Museum for the Heritage Day of 1997, the museum made a series of posters for schools which was titled *Forgotten Histories*. The McGregor museum added snippets of information and occasional portraits of Kimberly’s blacks into existing displays. The existing paradigms and old classificatory categories still remained firmly in place. Within the Port Elizabeth Museum it was still settler history that provided the major categories.

In addition to changes at old museums, ideas for new museums were placed on the planning table. In June 1998, the Municipality of Port Elizabeth decided to launch a national architectural competition for the transformation of Red Location. The project formed part of the City Council’s strategy of upgrading previously disadvantaged communities. Red Location was chosen as the site for this project because it bears major political significance and has an interesting architectural legacy of corrugated iron houses which were remains of the Uitenhage barracks of the Anglo Boer War in 1899-1902. Erected in 1903 as a ‘model township’, the original structures in Red

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid, History Curator’s report.



Location had never been upgraded. Essentially, the concept was to develop the site into a major tourist attraction that would focus attention on life in the township by restoring the corrugated iron houses and erecting a museum. A competition with a prize of R400 000 was opened to architects with the jury of Gawie Fagan, Anya Miszewski van der Merwe, Gus Gerneke – all architects - a late African National Congress (ANC) veteran, Govan Mbeki, and Dr Jeff Peires, an historian. The competition started on 10 August 1998 and the winner, Joe Noero, was announced on 10 December 1998.<sup>173</sup>

For budgetary reasons no progress was made with the Red Location Museum until 2004, when building was started. Nonetheless, a small shift in the heritage landscape of Red Location began in 1998. A letter to the Ambassador of Sweden written by Mr. Richards, Chief Executive Officer of Port Elizabeth stipulated that, “one of the SIDA<sup>174</sup> supported projects is the development of the Red Location Apartheid Museum which is likely to be a focal point for tourists’ visits and cultural activities. The unnamed street, which provides principal access to this institution, will be renamed Olof Palme Avenue.”<sup>175</sup> Subsequent to that, the Council’s Engineering and Safety Service Committee convened in 30 August 1999 and resolved, in terms of section 129 (b) of the Municipal Ordinance, 1974, and subject to the approval of the Surveyor General, that Fourteenth Street, New Brighton, Ibhayi, be renamed Olof Palme. Sven Olof Joachim Palme was a Social Democratic Party leader and a Prime Minister from Sweden from 1946 – 1969, 1969 – 1976 and 1982 to 1986. He was

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<sup>173</sup> Herholdt, A. Competition Coordinator, *South African Architect*, June 1999.

<sup>174</sup> Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency is a government agency of Sweden providing technical assistance and funding through out the world.

<sup>175</sup> A letter written Deputy Mayor of former Port Elizabeth Municipality, Errol Haynes to the Ambassador of Sweden dated 8 July 1999.

murdered coming out of a subway station in Stockholm in 1986. Palme was a vocal and active opponent of South Africa's apartheid policy.<sup>176</sup>

This road was intended to be adjacent to the Red Location Museum. This constitutes one of the very first renaming processes in the township of New Brighton and it remains the only one thus far.

There were also other heritage changes through the beginnings of street –renaming. The name change of Main Street to Govan Mbeki Avenue was one of the first name change processes in the former Port Elizabeth Municipality and therefore, a challenging process. There are always political contestations and some residents refused to acknowledge the processes of grafting new names onto the heritage landscape. There were claims that these are predominantly linked to the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC). For many residents in the Port Elizabeth, particularly those affected by apartheid crimes, the meaning of name changes in the municipality symbolized a means to reinstate histories of all the people residing in the region, reinforcing recognition of local people who were exiled, imprisoned or executed. The entrenchment of ANC struggles in South African history narratives and also in Port Elizabeth is embraced by also a domination of exile politics. These politics are portrayed to pursue a “heroic history of the ANC which was created tracing a progress of political development, of growth leading to greater maturity and militancy.”<sup>177</sup> Wildman contends that, “the new narrative projected the ANC as the

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<sup>176</sup> Thefreedictionary.com. <http://www.Columbia.thefreedictionary.com/palme.+olof> (accessed on 3 December 2006).

<sup>177</sup> Rassool, C. 1997. The Individual, Biography and Resistance in South African Public History. A paper prepared for the South African and Contemporary History seminar, University of the Western Cape, presented October 7, 1997, p12.

universal protagonists of the struggle.”<sup>178</sup> These arguments are encompassed in the appropriation of history in Port Elizabeth as well, ranging from instances of renaming to that of the biographic narrative and monumentalization. Those who are associated with other liberation movements, such as the Pan-Africanist Congress, are almost entirely excluded from this new heritage landscape.

Govan Archibald Mvuyelwa Mbeki was a South African politician who studied at Fort Hare University and became a leader of the ANC and the South African Communist Party. In 1997, during the renaming of the Main Street to Govan Mbeki Avenue, Mbeki was also given the freedom of the city in a special council meeting at the Great Centenary Hall in New Brighton near Port Elizabeth. The plaque erected in the middle of the former main street and closer to the off ramp to Summerstrand and Grahamstown Road is engraved, “In recognition of the city’s highest esteem for his role in struggle for liberation in South Africa.” Mbeki expressed that the honour that was bestowed on him was for all the freedom fighters that had fought with him over the years. Mbeki also called for the Great Centenary Hall to be renamed after Nongoza Njebe who was one of the first ANC volunteers to be shot in the townships in the 1950s after the government of the day banned all political meetings in Port Elizabeth. Raymond Mhlaba, then Premier of the Eastern Cape (1994-1998) said that the decision to honour his fellow Rivonia Trialist and Robben Island prisoner was long over due.<sup>179</sup> The city of Port Elizabeth was billed R121 222, 54 for the renaming activity. This amount included R18 406, 94 for the stone cairn and signage cost of

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<sup>178</sup> Wildman, K. 2004. African Renewal, African Renaissance: New Perspectives on African Past and Africa’s Present. The African Studies Association of Australia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) Annual Conference, 26 November 2004, University of Western Australia.

<sup>179</sup> *Eastern Province Herald*, 11 August 1997.

R21 088, 00.<sup>180</sup> On the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 1998 the sign was defaced together with the board facing motorists traveling towards the city centre along the freeway system. As the very first name change event in the city center, this was a representation of an expression of intolerance by some for changing the heritage depictions the area.

In the first five years of democracy, it was also on the city's agenda to establish Emlotheni Memorial Park. This memorial park was intended to accommodate the remains of Umkhonto weSizwe cadres Vuyisile Mini, Samuel Jonas, Nolali Mpentse, Siphon Ndongeni, Zinakele Mkaba, and Diliza Kayingo. They were convicted and hanged in Pretoria in 1964 for the murder of alleged security police informer Siphon Mange in 1963. They were reburied in corner Mendi and Limba Road on June 27, 1998, after they were exhumed from graves in Gauteng.

The opening of South End Museum in March 2000 can be observed as a mid term intervention in the museum landscape of Port Elizabeth. Given the existence of museum with dominant narratives of settlement and white history, the former community of South End focused on the history of the removals with the museum in the exact space of former South End residence. This was in effect a major change in the museum landscape in the metropole, long dominated by settler history and the Port Elizabeth Museum. With the Red Location museum not proceeding because of a lack of funds, this community based initiative could be said to be the significant shift in Port Elizabeth's heritage in the 1990s. As a community museum, very much following the example set by the District Six museum in Cape Town; it aimed to draw upon local memories and histories as its foundation. It also was to emphasize what was deemed to be apartheid's heritage, a heritage that had seen communities uprooted

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid

and destroyed. In effect, like the District Six museum, this was to be a museum that reconstituted community through memory. But it also had very little funding, receiving very limited government subsidy and relying on ad-hoc grants from the National Lottery. Thus, it was not supported by the new Port Elizabeth authorities, despite the fact that it constituted a significant community initiative in the city. Here, as mentioned above, it was ANC history that was starting to dominate and the South End Museum did not fit into this narrative. Indeed, over the next few years, as this narrative took hold, and the biographies of leaders became the prevailing theme of the heritage landscape the South End Museum would find itself remaining on the margins of the city's heritage.

Subsequently, with the realization of this phenomenon the South End Museum began to focus on the biographic discourse of predominantly ANC male leaders. For instance, key figures of the ANC in the region, like Raymond Mhlaba, Govan Mbeki, and Nceba Faku are displayed in the 'Hall of Shame' on a themed wall inscribed 'Resistance' with no context or association to the South End narrative of removals. But these are not only of ANC figures as Dennis Brutus is included.

## **2000-2006**

In the post 2000 period, there were major modifications with regards to the identity of the city of Port Elizabeth. As part of the larger metropole it was named the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM) on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August 2005. In this very same period in the heritage sector, the South End Museum was opened in March, 2001 as the first community museum in the region. This was followed by the renaming of the King George VI Art Gallery to the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum, Port Elizabeth Museum became Bayworld, the University of Port Elizabeth into Nelson

Mandela Metropolitan University and Market Square facing City Hall was re-named Vuyisile Mini<sup>181</sup> Market Square. These are prominent spaces in the NMBM that are utilized by both business and the public sector. The Red Location Museum project finally bore fruit and the museum was opened on 10 November 2006.

It is apparent that the major trend since 2000 has been the Mandelaisation of Port Elizabeth. The city of Port Elizabeth has no special association with Nelson Mandela whatsoever, but the city ‘seized’ this prime icon of the struggle for liberation and equality. Nelson Mandela’s name has grown into an indispensable character used for heritage, tourism and commercial agendas both by the municipality and nationally.

Nelson Mandela as a struggle figure and a liberation icon has become branded as a commodity. The NMMM has done so with the integration of Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, and Despatch as the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality. This was followed with projects like a planned statue of freedom in the bay that was meant to have Mandela as a full statuette. The creation of the statue of freedom forms part of what Rassool, refers to as a “discourse of monumentalizing the lives of individual resistance leaders and heroes of the liberation struggle.”<sup>182</sup> Whilst looking at the discourse of biography and resistance in South Africa Rassool views the life of Nelson Mandela, “whose ‘long walk’ came to symbolize the new nation’s past as the centre of this ‘biographic activity’”.<sup>183</sup>

Sam Radithalo, a lecturer in English at the University of Cape Town, whose thesis focused on the South African autobiographical writings, including Mandela’s,

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<sup>181</sup> Vuyisile Mini is the first Umkhonto Wesizwe cadre to be convicted by Mr. Justice O’ Hagan in Port Alfred 1963 and hanged with six others.

<sup>182</sup> Rassool. Individual, Biography and Resistance. p20.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid, p1.

explained that “the medium of television has played a big role in constructing Mandela as ‘Tata’”<sup>184</sup>. In an interview with the *Sunday Times* he elaborated by quoting Mandela’s biographer Anthony Sampson pointing out that “Mandela watched his iconic status being formulated while still in Robben Island prison”<sup>185</sup>. Raditlhalo confirmed that Mandela, “knows the pitfalls of believing in the myth of himself, and is aware of the changes of personality cult, opting for ‘We’ kind of discursiveness rather than ‘I’ mindful of the fact that he rushed to be seen as a regular person, which of course he was not.”<sup>186</sup> Raditlhalo reasons that, “it is history and myth that are conflated so that Mandela becomes a sort of a messianic figure.”<sup>187</sup> Rassool alludes to this reasoning when stating that, “While Mandela had acquired near messianic status during his imprisonment, it is the cultural production of the Messianic Mandela that became a fundamental feature of South Africa after his release.”<sup>188</sup> Rassool confirms that the late 1980s and early 1990s saw a veritable ‘scramble for Nelson Mandela’s life as biographies in virtually every medium were produced.’<sup>189</sup> As Solani points out the post apartheid era has seen “many attempts to reconstruct narratives of heroes, with Nelson Mandela’s life as central to this.”<sup>190</sup>

Marschall locates the veritable explosion of Mandela’s biography within what she sees as the ‘requirements of a tourist economy’. She explains that, “one way of solving the tourist’s problems of access and security is to conveniently bring the

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<sup>184</sup> Raditlhalo, S. Interview with *Sunday Times Lifestyle Magazine*, 8 May 2005.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid

<sup>186</sup> Ibid

<sup>187</sup> Ibid

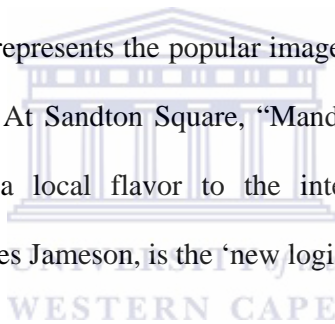
<sup>188</sup> Rassool. *Individual, Biography and Resistance*. p28. See also Rob Nixon, (1994) ‘Mandela, Messianism, and the Media’, in his book *Homelands, Harlem and Hollywood: South African Culture and the World Beyond*. London: Routledge. pp 175 – 192.

<sup>189</sup> Rassool. *Individual*. p28.

<sup>153</sup> Solani, N. 2000. The Saint of the Struggle: Deconstructing the Mandela Myth’, *Kronos* no.26.

heritage to the tourist and this may involve erecting monuments that are primarily addressed to tourists, set up in places designed for tourists.”<sup>191</sup> Mandela statues, such as the one in Hammanskraal near Pretoria, are referred to by her as post colonial symbols which are responding to differing packaging needs of the cities.<sup>192</sup> Mandela, in her opinion, becomes a socio economical ‘commodity’.

Marschall views the flashing of the Mandela card as a way to attract foreign investment and by projecting Mandela as an image of peace and stability to an international investor community.<sup>193</sup> This is one of the functions of the latest Mandela statue, unveiled in April 2004 in Sandton Square, and later renamed Nelson Mandela Square. The Sandton statue represents the popular image of the relaxed, laughing and dancing man of the people. At Sandton Square, “Mandela has essentially become a kind of décor that lends a local flavor to the international-standard shopping experience. Culture, concludes Jameson, is the ‘new logic’ of capitalism.”<sup>194</sup>



An even more gigantic statue of Mandela with his arm raised was envisaged for the coastline at Port Elizabeth. Newspaper reports included preliminary sketches in which the monument was seen “to imitate the Statue of Liberty in New York, exceeding this model in height by almost 20 metres.”<sup>195</sup> Intended to become South Africa’s foremost tourist attraction, the statue was meant to rotate and be equipped with all the trappings of a successful, commercial tourist enterprise according to western standards,

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<sup>191</sup> Marschall, S. *Commodifying Heritage in South Africa: Post Apartheid Monuments and Cultural Tourism*. In Hall, C.M. 2004. *Tourism and Postcolonialism: Contested Discourses, Identities and Representations*. London: Routledge.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid

<sup>194</sup> Jameson, F. 1991. *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of late Capitalism*. London: Verso; Durham: Duke University Press.

<sup>195</sup> Van Heerden, D 2001 ‘Mandela – beeld kry getalte’, *Oos Kaap Rapport*, 3 June; Van Niekerk, L. 2001. ‘Oorsee hulp stroom in vir beeld.’ *Burger*, 10 July; Philp, R. 2002. ‘Giant Mandela Statue Planned.’ *Sunday Times*. 20 October.



including a restaurant and conference center and a wax museum à la Madame Tussauds in London. These particulars might not apply to the implemented project, as it was been decided (after the positive outcome of the feasibility study) that the design should be solicited through an international competition.

On Friday the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2005, The Freedom Enterprise, a private group that initiated the statue project, displayed about one hundred designs at South End Museum for public viewing and adjudication. The winning design was that of Equilibrium Studios and in form of a 122 metre tower. The monument was meant to be higher than the statue of Liberty's 96 meters and was meant to be the prestigious symbol of freedom for South Africa. The design concept owners explained that "the strength of the design was its ability to portray an icon visible from land, sea and air – a distinctive feature of Nelson Mandela Bay."<sup>196</sup> The winning design was explained as "a tower like structure, with the base depicting the start of Nelson Mandela's journey leading up to freedom platform representing South Africa's first democratic election."<sup>197</sup>

The Freedom Enterprise began talks with the statues architects to "change the design but did not inform the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, prompting an outrage from local authority."<sup>198</sup> The Enterprise spokesman, Mandla Madwara explained that, "the Tower did not incorporate 'the man himself' and so should be 're-modified'."<sup>199</sup> He further indicated that, "we are looking at various options which include a statue of Mandela with Raymond Mhlaba on top of the tower, or Mandela casting his vote

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<sup>196</sup> South Africa's Official Gateway. 2007. A Freedom Tower for Mandela, 20 July 2005. [www.southafrica.info/mandela/freedomstatue.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/mandela/freedomstatue.htm) International Marketing Council of South Africa. (accessed 08/02/07 at 12:41am)

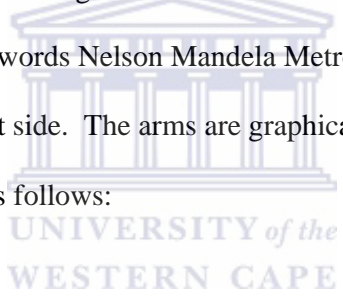
<sup>197</sup> Equilibrium Studios design and illustrations displayed in South End Museum for public viewing, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2005, Port Elizabeth.

<sup>198</sup> *Eastern Province Herald*, 17 October 2006

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid*

during the first democratic elections in 1994 or that of the long queue of South Africa's lining up to vote in the 1994 elections. We want poses of Mandela on different occasions and we want something which represent actual freedom", said Madwara.<sup>200</sup> So, although the winning design moved away from using the image of Mandela, it has been forced into this schematic

While the plans for the Freedom Statue have not yet been implemented, Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage and Despatch have worked towards establishing the brand of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality (NMMM). 20 June 2002 saw the official launch of the coat of arms and flag of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality. The metropolitan flag is white with the new arms placed in the centre with a light blue outline and words Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality written vertically on the hoist side. The arms are graphically designed with the symbolism were explained as follows:



*The elephant tusks and beadwork allude to the diverse cultural heritage of the region;*

*The blue wavy lines represent water, both the rivers within the metropolitan area and the sea. The repetitive pattern down the centre of the arms represents a backbone;*

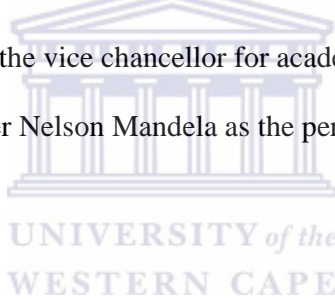
*The three silhouetted human figures represent a family and also the values of nurturing a new generation. The cogwheel, hammer and ship symbolise industry, commerce and trade in the metropole and progress in all these fields of activity. The elephant is part of the indigenous wildlife of the area. The world famous Addo Elephant Park is located adjacent to the metropole and house descendants of the elephants that once roamed freely in the area. In traditional folklore the elephant, with its strong family ties, has come to*

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid

*symbolise leadership, intelligence and wisdom. The natural environment of the metro is jointly represented by the elephant and the aloe. The rising sun, in both African and Western traditions, represents the birth or dawn of a new era; and the combination of the knobkerrie and spear represents authority, as well as protection of all the people and assets in the region. The fact that they are more horizontal rather than vertical is a sign of peace. The motto is “Working together for Ubuntu.”<sup>201</sup>*

The naming of the metropole and the design of its insignia in the Mandela framework has been accompanied by name changes of institutions of higher education and cultural institutions. The University of Port Elizabeth merged with Vista University and Port Elizabeth Technikon to form the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). Professor Ogude, the vice chancellor for academic affairs explained that, “NMMU was not named after Nelson Mandela as the person, but was named after the NMM.”<sup>202</sup>



In the merger update brochure of the NMMU there is a statement, which explains the association with Nelson Mandela. It states that, “We are very proud of the name of our new university because it links us to the Metropole where we are situated and because Mr. Mandela is a statesman and a humanitarian of world stature. Our new institution will be strongly linked to the values associated with his name such as unity, reconciliation and transformation. Graduates will go out into the world with a degree certificate bearing the name that is instantly recognizable and associated with quality and the highest moral standards.”<sup>203</sup> So, despite the claims that it is merely referring

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<sup>201</sup> Flags of the World. 2004. Nelson Mandela City (South Africa) [www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/za-ec-nm.html](http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/za-ec-nm.html) CRW Flags Incorporated. (accessed 30 April 2007)

<sup>202</sup> Input by Prof Ogude of NMMU in a Mission and Vision workshop held by Red Location Museum on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 2005.

<sup>203</sup> NMMU Brochure, more information about the merger of the three institutions, UPE, PE Technikon

to a particular geographic status there is undoubtedly, as the brochure indicates, a focus on the identity of this particular individual, through the use of the name.

Museum name changes take place for various reasons. For instance the name change for Africana Museum in Johannesburg was based on market research commissioned by the museum which showed 'Africana' to have negative connotations linked to 'Afrikaner'. Thus it became 'Museum Africa'.<sup>204</sup> In Port Elizabeth, the King George VI Art Gallery became the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum. A bulletin was released by the gallery explaining the name change. According to the Director of the museum, Hillebrand, the name change was initiated by the Gallery Staff who wanted "a narration for the institution which would describe who we are".<sup>205</sup> The Art Gallery staff saw the museum not as a national monument, nor as a memorial to the British monarch despite its proximity to the cenotaph and the St George's Park Cemetery. It also could not be deemed as a tombstone marking the burial place of King George VI. According to the bulletin the staff and Board of Trustees were responsible for setting in motion a process that would re-identify the institution as an entity, which collect and promote art in the City. Hillebrand explained that, "the name change would be the first change which, would turn the museum into a place that the citizens of the NMMM value and take pride in and that can be utilized to promote the metropole nationally and internally."<sup>206</sup>

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and Vista University.

<sup>204</sup> Joannides, H. 2003. The museum meets the classroom : an exploration of the interface between MuseumAfrica and a grade six classroom. Thesis M.A. Faculty of Humanities, School of Social Sciences and Education, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

<sup>205</sup> King George IV Art Gallery News Newsletter Vol 19, No3, Nov 2002, - March 2003

<sup>206</sup> M, Hillebrand, interview in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Arts Museum, 2004, November 16.

A name of George Pemba was suggested but the Board opted for an “all inclusive” name. The Board anticipated that a name such as “George” would cause further confusion from King George. The name had to be derived from other changes in the metro, as the Art gallery is a municipal entity.<sup>207</sup> According to Hillebrand, “the strong recommendation for name change was based on the institutions requirement to be given a name more than keeping with its professional and geographic identity.”<sup>208</sup> Hillebrand expressed the view that “NMMM Art Museum would simultaneously acknowledge the municipal authority that supports us; pay honor to former President Mandela and accurately describes our role as Art Museum functioning in the new SA.”<sup>209</sup>

But Mandela was not the only male ‘hero’ to be accorded significant heritage status in Port Elizabeth. The renaming of the market square to Vuyisile Mini Market Square remains one of the contentious matters in redefining the heritage landscape of the NMBM. A renaming process began when the NMMM Municipal Manager, Mzimasi Mangcotywa issued a notice for the consultative processes of renaming the square into Vuyisile Mini Market Square. Vuyisile Mini was one of the first amongst the first Umkhonto Wesizwe members to be executed by apartheid state in the early 1960’s. The process of renaming Market Square began with the invitation to the public for a public participation process through media adverts dated 31 March 2005. This process was meant for comments on the renaming of Market Square to ‘Vuyisile Mini Market Square’. The NMMM established a task team to draw up a list of names and buildings, places and streets that should be renamed. The NMMM Council was then

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<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Hillebrand, Director Of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum, Interview held at NMMAM, 16 November 2004.

meant to make a decision based on public inputs. Several response boxes were set up in all of the 22 NMMM libraries and letters to churches were written by the Task team on Renaming of Market Square established on 11 March 2005.

The boxes were assessed and responses compiled by the Principal Officer for Heritage and Museums in the Recreation and Cultural Services Business Unit of NMBM, Nonceba Shoba. Many respondents grouped themselves and submitted comments which were constituted of petitions with signatures. Scores of responses had no addresses or point of reference except for signatures and names. There were many respondents who were against the name change arguing that it destroyed history and settler heritage. Typical was this one: “Market Square aptly describes a part of the history of Port Elizabeth. It describes the reason for the origin of the Square. Renaming Market Square after a political figure will not in any way assist in reconciling all of the people of South Africa. History will remain history; changing the names of places that tell that history does not undo the history. This area of the city is a non political one, it belongs to all the people of the city, thus to name it after any person would be detrimental to the oneness we are striving for.” Others pointed to the need to maintain the settler heritage of the city, that Mini had no connection with the specific site, and that it should not be a decision made on political grounds. There were no responses with township addresses and none were positive from the pool of responses received from the public. According to Shoba, the Chairperson of Standing Committee on Recreation and Cultural Services, instructed that, “a task team to be constituted of councilors, community leaders, non governmental organizations and officials to craft an intense campaign to receive the buy in for the name change

process.”<sup>210</sup> The task team has not met since its inception and no new interventions were formulated to engage the township community.

This renaming process is linked to the political set up and the evident need to both honour figures that are deemed by residents and the municipality relevant for the freedom of the city and to transform the settler dominated make up of the city and the broader region. Unlike Britain, the conservation project in South Africa is thwarted by a considerable obstacle: the fact that monuments of the colonial and apartheid era represent ‘white heritage’, the preservation of which the population majority may not only consider unnecessary, but in fact undesirable. In confronting heritage policy challenges, the Recreation and Cultural Services Portfolio Committee, nominated a task team to deal with the name change process of the metro and a conservation management plan for the heritage resources of the metro.<sup>211</sup> This particular task team is “instrumental in balancing the effects of the past and can be deemed as a practical solution to the exclusionist tendency of colonial rule,” said Councillor Charmaine Williams.<sup>212</sup>

Debates on the transformation of cultural spaces in the city have continued unabated. The NMBM Recreation and Cultural Services Standing Committee for instance, recommended to the Housing committee that the 99 year lease of the Athenaeum Club<sup>213</sup> be cancelled immediately for the provision of equitable distribution of

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<sup>210</sup> Interview with Nonceba Shoba, Principal Heritage officer, 28 August 2006, Grahamstown.

<sup>211</sup> Recreation and Cultural Services Portfolio Committee Minutes, meeting held at City Hall, Council Chambers in 28 June 2004.

<sup>212</sup> Councillor Williams, chairperson of portfolio committee on Recreation and Culture in a meeting held in 12 August 2004.

<sup>213</sup> The Athenaeum Club dates back from the 1800s and consist of the PE Technikon (Arts Department), the Shakespearean Society, the Port Elizabeth Camera Club and the Port Elizabeth Amateur Music and Dramatic Society

cultural infrastructure in the city.<sup>214</sup> The committee further suggested a call for public proposals from the arts sector to allow previously disadvantaged performing arts groups' access to the facility.<sup>215</sup> In response to this, the Athenaeum Council described the metro's intentions as "ridiculous"<sup>216</sup> and vowed to take legal action for destroying the 'heritage' of the city. This reflects the challenges of the NMMM in redefining the heritage space's utilization for the inclusive use by all communities of the municipality.

In this contest over the use of space, the South End Museum acquires greater significance. It accommodates some of the cultural activities organized by communities in the space dedicated for training and showcasing of different forms of art. The 'Hall of Memory' remains one of the very few spaces closer to town. For instance, the public viewing of the statue of freedom competition took place in this venue and the Mapsetta's Arts Administration learnership awards and experiential learning took place in 2005 in the same venue.

One of the most vigorous public debates has been around the colonial statues in the metropole. The ANC Regional Deputy Chairperson and Mayoral Committee member Mike Xego in 2004 called on Council to remove all colonial statues in the city and replace them with those reflecting the African struggle. Xego gave as an example the Queen Victoria statue at the municipal library in Govan Mbeki Avenue. He said, "It must be dug out, the more I pass it, the more I feel like pulling it down as the

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<sup>214</sup> Recreation and Cultural Services Standing Committee Minutes, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality. October 2004

<sup>215</sup> *Eastern Province Herald*, 03 November 2004

<sup>216</sup> Ibid



American and British soldiers did to the Saddam Hussein statue in Iraq.”<sup>217</sup> He further indicated that the metro should evaluate all racist statues and see whether they are needed or not. Xego asked how a colonial statue could stand in a street named after an African hero who spent most of his life fighting that system (Govan Mbeki) and added that it annoyed him that the statue was even facing the metro’s administrative headquarters, the City Hall and the Pleinhuis. Xego explained that, “it is only my hatred of that stone representing the Queen of England that it should be removed.”<sup>218</sup> He said, “in the place of the statue at the library, there should be one representing African kings and queens.”<sup>219</sup>

In engaging with this matter, the ANC regional secretary, Vuyo Toto called Xego “arrogant” for his call to uproot all colonial statues and replace them with those reflecting the African struggle. Xego remained adamant and said that the statue was ‘offensive’ and honored colonialism which caused mayhem for the African people.<sup>220</sup> Toto indicated that the ANC has always sought to handle with care and sensitivity.<sup>221</sup> Pumla Madiba, then Chief Executive Officer of SAHRA’s responded that her “office dealt with such applications every day, adding that there was nothing wrong in expressing that ‘desire’ to rename and remove statues.”<sup>222</sup>

There were various debates in the media regarding Xego’s statement. Steve Taylor a resident in the metro, responded by arguing that, “if Xego was offended by the colonial past, “Why stop at statues? Why do you wear a suit, ties and shoes and why

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<sup>217</sup> *Eastern Province Herald*, ‘Pull down all colonial statues in the Metro demands Mike Xego, 19 April 2004

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>220</sup> *Eastern Province Herald*, 22 April 2004

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>222</sup> *Eastern Province Herald*, 22 April 2004

not wear some African king's attire?"<sup>223</sup> He continued to say, "For that matter switch off the electricity and pull down the telephone lines."<sup>224</sup> Rob Spendley arguing against Xego responded that, "seeing all these things as evil, the library, the railway line and St Georges Park Cricket grounds should be destroyed as well."<sup>225</sup> The fierce debate about the colonial statue existed parallel to the renaming processes of the municipality's institutions. Both these processes were contested and the definition of 'local' identities was challenged.

The largest heritage project which has been developed in the period since 2000 is the Red Location Museum (RLM) which is an imposing architectural design located in Red Location known as Elalini Ebomvu, in New Brighton Port Elizabeth. In its aerial view, factories and tracks of railway lines are visible. The museum concept was meant to portray a comprehensive narrative of a struggle against apartheid. However, as further discussed later on, the male biography and a single narrative in portraying the struggle is observed in the museum building. The structure is supposed to be the cultural, resistance, and socio economic hub for histories of the people of the NMMM and the broader Eastern Cape. Noero, the architect, maintains that the museum was "an attempt to understand the politics of remembering and forgetting"<sup>226</sup> through an institution which is located at a door-step of the communities concerned.

Sod turning at the Red Location Museum complex took place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April in 2003 with the Executive Mayor and the Portfolio Councillor referring to the erection of the Freedom Struggle Museum and the restoration of old corrugated iron houses.

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<sup>223</sup> *Eastern Province Herald*, 23 April 2004

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>226</sup> Noero, J in a meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2004, Recreation and Cultural Services Business Unit, NMMM

The Executive Mayor said that, on completion, “the Red Locations museum would comprise an art gallery, a creative art center, a market, a library, a hall, conference centre and the visitors’ accommodation”<sup>227</sup>.

The large concrete and brick structure includes a hall of columns honouring apartheid heroes. In Noero’s planning, large scale stand alone memory boxes are meant to “illustrate the complexities of apartheid and the country’s institutionalized forgetfulness of racism.”<sup>228</sup> The 17 themed exhibitions ranges from the, ‘The Struggle: Underground’ to ‘Music and the Struggle’, ‘Sport and the Struggle’, ‘Siyaya Children’s Explorations in Art’, ‘David Goldblatt’s Photographic Exhibition’, ‘Vuyisile Mini Exhibition’, ‘Peter Magubane’s Photographic Exhibition – Madiba Man of Destiny’, ‘Workers and trade unions’ and many others. All of these exhibitions contain a strong emphasis on the biography of the male hero or martyr. This would not be at odds with the assertion of Chris Du Preez, the curator of the RLM and former South End Museum Curator that “the RLM honours the people involved in the struggle by telling their stories to visitors from the community and internationally.”<sup>229</sup>

In 2005 the Executive Mayor, Nceba Faku, instructed that the remains of the two politicians, Govan Mbeki and Raymond Mhlaba were to be reburied in a mausoleum within the museum complex. The same contractors, Noero and Wolff Architects, who built the R40 million museum building, were instructed to design the mausoleum at a projected cost of R1, 2 million.

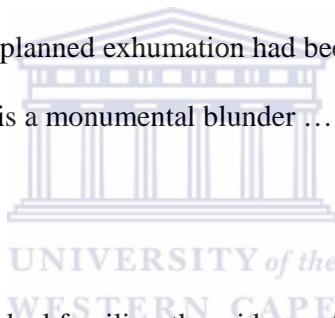
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<sup>227</sup> Executive Mayor Nceba Faku. 2003. Sod turning function of the Red Location Precinct, 2 April.

<sup>228</sup> *Eastern Province Herald*, 16 February 2005

<sup>229</sup> Interview with C. Du Preez, 27 July 2005, Red Location Museum.

But, just before the reburial of Govan Mbeki was about to take place, it was slammed as illegal and immoral by one his sons, Moeletsi Mbeki who is the co executor of Govan Mbeki's estate. Moeletsi Mbeki said "my father would never be moved from his grave and any reburial would be illegal in terms of his will. And it was my father's will to be buried in Zwide cemetery and the only way the city can change that is by going through the High Court to overturn my father's will and I will oppose that application if they do that."<sup>230</sup> In 2005 the Sport and Recreation Minister Makhenkisi Stofile and chairperson of the ANC provincial committee, wrote to the ANC's Nelson Mandela Bay region committee, "warning against the plan to move the remains of Mbeki and Mhlaba to RLM."<sup>231</sup> Faku was also criticized by former political activist Mkhuseleli Jack who said, the planned exhumation had been one of Faku's worst decisions and stated that, "it is a monumental blunder ... a stubborn decision by Faku for economic interest."<sup>232</sup>



In a meeting held with individual families, the widows of both Mhlaba and Mbeki had initially given permission for the reburial. However, Faku was described by Moeletsi Mbeki as a Mayor who "took advantage of the 89 year old widow".<sup>233</sup> Mbeki further stated that, "my mother will turn 90 and they are taking advantage of a very old women to do things they know they shouldn't".<sup>234</sup> In response to this refusal, the municipal spokesperson Kupido Baron issued a statement that, "Mbeki's mausoleum

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<sup>230</sup> Feeds2Read.Net. 2005. <http://www.feeds2read.net/rss-view/4699/SABingo> (accessed 21 January 2006, 22:25)

<sup>231</sup> News24.com. Govan Mbeki reburial called off. [http://www.news24.com/News24/South\\_Africa/News/0,,2-7-1442\\_1868179,00.html](http://www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/News/0,,2-7-1442_1868179,00.html) 23 January 2006 22:21 Online Publications Association.

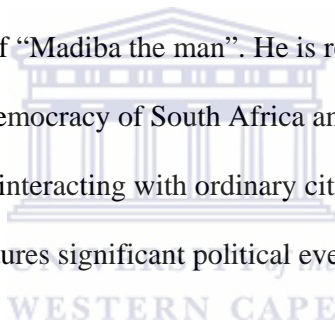
<sup>232</sup> *Dispatch* 23 January 2006.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*

at the museum would be used for an exhibition about his life.”<sup>235</sup> Baron also confirmed that, “the President (Thabo Mbeki) expressly refused the request and the mayor respects the wishes of the Mbeki family and will fulfill them.”<sup>236</sup>

Even though this reburial did not take place it does indicate once again the way that it is the biographic narrative which is the driving force behind heritage projects in the museum, which was officially opened on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2006. This opening took place eight years after its conceptual inception. One of the key exhibitions was that of Peter Magubane titled ‘Madiba- Man of Destiny’ and the prison archive exhibition was on show. Magubane’s ‘Madiba – Man of Destiny’ is a photographic exhibition which encapsulates the life of “Madiba the man”. He is represented as a man who played a crucial role in the democracy of South Africa and also captures “a glimpse of Madiba as a man of destiny, interacting with ordinary citizens, his family, high profile political figures and also features significant political events.”<sup>237</sup>



As its vision, the Red Location Museum of struggle is meant to “focus on the memorialization and depiction of the apartheid narrative and portraying the heroic struggles of the anti apartheid movement aimed at liberating the oppressed people. The museum will be an integral component of initiatives and programmes associated with the empowerment, education and redress of the local community at large.”<sup>238</sup>

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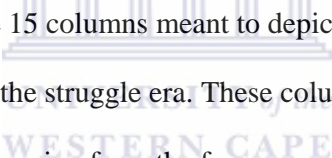
<sup>235</sup> News24.com. Govan Mbeki reburial called off.  
[http://www.news24.com/News24/South\\_Africa/News/0,,2-7-1442\\_1868179,00.html](http://www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/News/0,,2-7-1442_1868179,00.html) 23 January 2006 22:21. Online Publications Association.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Red Location Museum Opening Brochure, 10 Nov 2006. p13-14.

<sup>201</sup> Red Location Museum brochure: Vision and Mission statement.

Whilst, entering the museum building there is a broad reception area for queries and admission fee processing. In the far right there is an enlarged photograph of unidentified community members and children posing in front of the door of the corrugated iron home. In the far left one is faced with 10 meter wide and 15 meter length quilt, a project initiated and designed by 14 local crafters. This quilt is a scenic artwork depicting the complex Red Location community life ranging from the significance of the railway to poor housing conditions. The quilt is strategically installed to serve as a shadow for what was supposed to be the reburial space of Mbeki and Mhlaba. This reburial space has now been configured as an exhibition space for the life of Govan Mbeki, confirming once more the ascendancy of what Rassool has called the 'biographic order'.



Facing the entrance, there are 15 columns meant to depict the heroic figures from the community and to memorize the struggle era. These columns contain biographic information of these leaders ranging from the former mayors to civic organization leaders. These leaders were not necessarily residents of Red Location. However, in the biographic testimonies, Red Location remains a central space in their political activism. Once again a strong sense of male biography emerges availing very limited space for a gender balance perspective of community struggles in Red location. Ivy Gcina and Lily Dedericks of the ANC Women's league are the few heroines displayed in the museum.

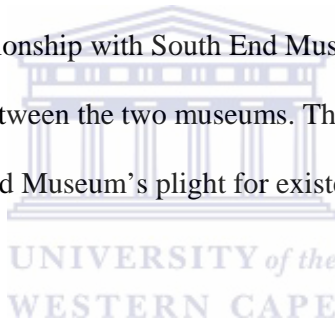
Adjacent to the 'Hall of Columns' there are "12 memory boxes which constitutes a major feature in form of multifunctional spaces designed as places of discovery."<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid

Viewing the boxes there is an art gallery which houses the George Pemba Exhibition and ceramics of local artists. In the center, and next door to the mausoleum, an auditorium is a space for educational rendezvous to take place and community activities.

The RLM layout and architecture can be viewed as distinct to that of the South End Museum. It is an entirely new building, whilst the latter is located and makes effective use of space in an old building. However, the challenge of working with memory and working towards a more inclusive past remains the same for these museums. Even though the two museums are instruments of reconstructing the memory of apartheid, the RLM has no formal relationship with South End Museum. There are no shared concepts and partnerships between the two museums. This Red Location museum operates parallel to South End Museum's plight for existence as a museum of memory on removals.



Overall, since 1994, in the representations of an inclusive past for Port Elizabeth, and the renamed broader Nelson Mandela Metro, a narrative focusing on the male biography exists alongside the settler heritage which is still maintained and furthered by the institutions like the Historical Society of Port Elizabeth.

The key issue is then where does South End fit in with this new order. Its expertise has gone into developing Red Location Museum – notably through Chris du Preez, the current curator of the museum. But, South End Museum has also appropriated bits of the biographic order where, as mentioned earlier, Raymond Mhlaba, Nceba Faku, and Dennis Brutus are figures displayed in the hall of shame in the museum. Yet, the

projects are distinct from each other and the South End Museum does not occupy much space in the development of an envisaged Freedom trail. One is very much a state project, with huge funding and support. The other remains a local initiative with very limited state support. The question is whether in the new heritage dispensation, which NMBM is claiming, does a local, community initiative remain sidelined in favor of more grandiose, highly visible projects. So South End, neither settler heritage, nor the new heritage, sits very uneasily on the heritage landscape that is being built around Nelson Mandela and the narratives of other male leaders.

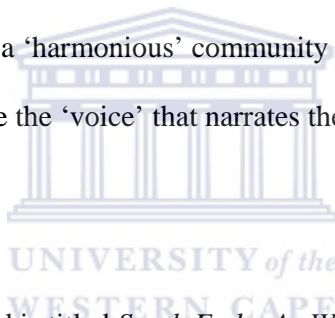




## Chapter Four

### South End: The books and the museum

The aim of this chapter is to examine the existing link between material from South End as a former residential area and the South End Museum (SEM) as an institution established to remember South End. There are two books written by former residents of South End and this chapter examines how the books relate to what is in the museum deliberately or instinctively. This chapter also unpacks claims that are made by the museum manager, Collin Abrahams who stated clearly that, ‘the museum is not the book *South End - As We Knew It*’.<sup>240</sup> In this chapter, the use of the categories of race, ethnicities and nationalities is discussed. Furthermore, the depiction of South End as a ‘cosmopolitan’ and a ‘harmonious’ community is interrogated. What is core in this chapter is to determine the ‘voice’ that narrates the story of South End and the authority thereof.



The first book to be published is titled *South End – As We Knew It*. This book was produced in 1997, at the same time ideas of establishing the museum were developed by former residents and interested stakeholders. The second publication on South End is titled *South End The Aftermath- Where Are They Now* and was published in 2003, three years after the establishment of the museum and in the context of the establishment of other projects in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality (NMMM) like the Red Location Museum and the Statue of Freedom.

In the latter book, the editor, Raymond Uren, Chairperson of the South End Museum Trust refers to “the previous book, *South End – As We Knew It* which generated much

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<sup>240</sup> Interview with C. Abrahams, South End Museum administrator since its inception and a former resident of South End, 18 July 2001, South End Museum, Port Elizabeth.

comment and that led directly to the founding of the South End Museum by a small group of dedicated ex South Enders inspired by the book.”<sup>241</sup> Uren continues to say that, “ It is hardly surprising that the first objective of the South End Museum is “to save, for posterity, the historical and cultural heritage of South End and other similarly affected communities in the Metropole.”<sup>242</sup> Therefore the co existence of the existing relationship between the book *South End as We Knew It* and the material in the South End Museum is well-defined. A connection between the latter book and the museum displays is further discussed in this chapter.

Another interesting feature in this chapter is the use of the materials from the museum to sustain some of the arguments entailed in the two books. Some of these materials include the visuals like the one in the front cover of the book *South End As We Knew It*. This particular picture is developed into a mural for the hall of the museum – ‘Hall of Remembrance’ and the one in *South End The Aftermath: Where Are They Now* forms part of the pictures portraying removals in the ‘Hall of Shame’ of the museum. The mural is found in the museum’s ‘*Hall of Remembrance*’ which, as has been seen in the previous chapter, is a space that is largely furnished with visuals of life in South End. However, one needs to clearly differentiate between the books which are read and the displays which are viewed. The intention of this differentiation is to measure the strengths and challenges of each feature in defining and redefining South End.

This chapter also focuses at the disassociation of the book *South End As We Knew It* with the South End Museum, emphasized by the authors and the museum management. This argument is measured against the context of the publication

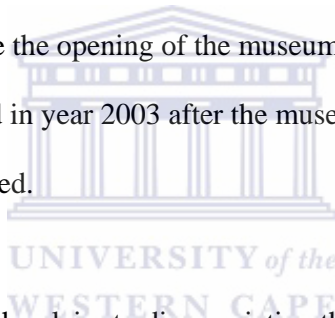
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<sup>241</sup> George, C.A., Hendricks, S. and Uren, R. (eds). 2003. *South End The Aftermath: Where Are They Now?* Port Elizabeth: Express Litho. Preface.

<sup>242</sup> George *et al.* 2003. *South End The Aftermath*. Preface.

periods for the two books (1997 and 2003), the frameworks of interpretation, images, texts and representations and the opening of the museum in year 2000. This chapter is therefore a critical investigation of the relationship between two different types of genres representing the history of South End – the two books and the museum and the manner in which they relate to each other.

It is important to note that the periods of these two materials are not necessarily different as the museum was opened in year 2000 five years after South African democratically elected government and at the height of a major shift on policy and transformation of government owned museums, the book *South End As We Knew It* was published in 1997 before the opening of the museum and the book, *South End The Aftermath* was published in year 2003 after the museum's establishment and yet the interconnection is observed.



My argument is that despite the claim to disassociation there is a clear and a consistent relationship between the two books about South End and the South End Museum. This argument is based on the South End narrative by the museum, which is consistent with the narrative found in the two books concerned. What is core in both books is the continuous reference to the “Group Areas Act of 1950 as the law, which signaled the destruction of South End.”<sup>243</sup> In despising the Act, the authors emphasize that the, “Group Areas Act and its effects on the non white residents of South End will remain a shame and indictment on the perpetrators of the Act and those who benefited from it.”<sup>244</sup> In most exhibition spaces in the museum, the Group Areas Act is the key feature of display. This phenomenon is also observed in the book, *South End As We*

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<sup>243</sup> Agherdien *et al.* *South End*. Introduction.

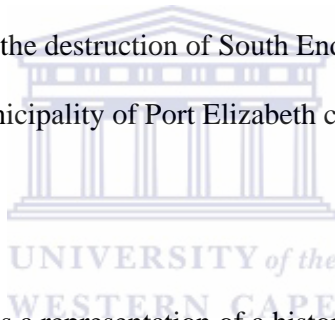
<sup>244</sup> *Ibid*, Epilogue.

*Knew It* in which chapter six of this book is dedicated to the Group Areas Act, the Proclamation and Implementation. Once more the book *South End The Aftermath: Where are They Now?* contains a chapter dedicated to dealing with the Overview of other areas affected by the Group Areas. Thus, the implementation of the Group Areas Act almost inadvertently becomes the way to define South End as a community in both the museum and the two books.

The book titled *South End – As We Knew It* is written by Yusuf Agherdien who was born in South End in the 1950s, and a keen photographer whose photographs are found in the book and in the museum. He is also part of the South End Museum Foundation. Ambrose George is a co author. He was also born in South End and is a product of the University of the Western Cape. Another co author is Shaheed Hendricks who was born in South End, a trustee of the museum and is also an executive member of the Eastern Cape Islamic Congress. Roy Du Pre who, at the time, was a history Professor at the University of Transkei edits the book.

The book titled *South End the Aftermath – Where Are They Now* is also written by former residents of South End. Shaheed Hendricks, who wrote the previous book, is one of the authors of the second volume. Ambrose George is once again a co author of *South End The Aftermath* and Raymond Uren is a new author and editor. He was born in South End, Chairman of the Port Elizabeth Land and Community Restoration Association (PELCRA) and a trustee of the South End Museum. Museum trustees were thus key to the writing of the books on South End.

The book *South End – As We Knew It* is one of the first books about South End to represent the memoirs of the people in this area. There is absolutely no trace of writing published about South End prior the production of the two books except for the newspaper articles found in the *Eastern Province Herald* Archives. The extensive and thorough investigation has made the book titled *South End: As We Knew It* very valuable as an introduction and a reference point, particularly as it contains narratives of voices from former residents. However, there is claim from authors that “*South End: The Aftermath* has never been intended to be an exhaustive account of the resettlement process.”<sup>245</sup> This is due to the “paucity of literature on the resettlement process, in South End and the book is said to cover uncharted territory.”<sup>246</sup> The authors refer to the story of “the destruction of South End as the story of the ‘Shame of Port Elizabeth’ as the Municipality of Port Elizabeth closely conspired with the National Party”.<sup>247</sup>



The two books are narrated as a representation of a history which the authors were part of – therefore creating unclear roles of both the book and the authors as former residents. This indistinctness is based on the fact that the authors’ presentation of the book contains various elements of subjectivity and the story is told with influences of their personal narrations which are not easily traceable due to the consistent reference to ‘they’ therefore defining their role as writers and not as insiders. For instance in narrating the ‘agony’ of removals in *South End As We Knew It*, the authors state that, “they (meaning residents) knew that they were not going to get much for their houses...they would probably be compensated for the land only....that meant they

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<sup>245</sup> George *et al.* *South End*. Introduction

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> Agherdien *et al.* *South End As We Knew It*. Introduction.

would not have enough money to buy property in another (group) area.”<sup>248</sup> This distinct manner of narrating this history leaves the reader unclear of what the meaning of South End ‘*As We Knew It*’ signifies.

However, in both books, there is an unaccounted contribution of facts that are not attributed to any source. For instance, in the chapter on education, the authors state that, “the schools were attended by successive generations and strong bonds of tradition were built up and most of the schools for ‘Coloureds and Indians’ were also linked to certain churches. The principal and the teachers were invariably members of the church.”<sup>249</sup> All of these facts are narrated with no reference to sources or acknowledgements.

On the other hand, the first page in *South End As We Knew It* also instills the authority of the authors by proclaiming that the book is, ‘The Story of South End, as Told By South Enders: Yusuf Agherdien, Ambrose George and Shaheed Hendricks.’<sup>250</sup> And in *South End The Aftermath*, the first page asserts the book by stating that, “The Story Of The Forced Removals As Told By Those Who Were Affected By It: George, Hendricks and editor Uren.”<sup>251</sup> There thus appears to be a contradiction when residents are referred to as ‘they’ instead of ‘We’.

The book *South End as We Knew It* also contains a vigorous emphasis on the notion of a ‘multicultural’ and a ‘harmonious community’. This is reiterated continuously in the book as it states that,

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<sup>248</sup> George *et al.* *South End* Introduction

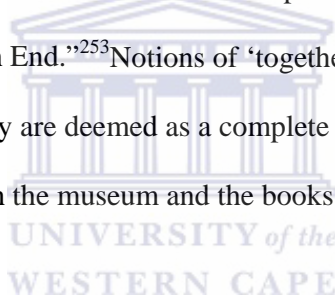
<sup>249</sup> Ibid, p24.

<sup>250</sup> Agherdien *et al.* *South End As We Knew It*.

<sup>251</sup> George, *et al.* *South End The Aftermath*.

“Thirty years ago South End was a bustling suburb, brimming with activity, and populated by a very cosmopolitan community. For more than a century a variety of nationalities and religions had lived in harmony .... Respecting each other’s culture, language and way of life. In 1950 that picture of peace and harmony was shattered with the passing of the Group Areas Act which decreed that people of different cultures could not live together any longer.”<sup>252</sup>

Also in the interviews conducted, Armien Abrahams when asked, “What emotions did you experience at having to leave South End?” The response was, “The family was a close knit one and we lived in harmony with other races. Further we were not moved as a group, thus we did not have the same neighbours. It was difficult to explain apartheid to the children .... I curse the inventor of apartheid, because we were really a League of Nations in South End.”<sup>253</sup> Notions of ‘togetherness’ are inseparable with the South End narrative. They are deemed as a complete element in defining what used to be South End by both the museum and the books on South End.



In the book, *South End as we knew it*, there is generalization made that education was obtained from “multicultural schools mixing peers from different backgrounds, which enriched their lives.”<sup>254</sup> “Attendance of separate schools meant for a specific population group: Coloured, Indian, Chinese, African and Whites caused great devastation to their moral.”<sup>255</sup> The book is however not reflecting on the separate schooling system in South End, the separate sports teams reflected at South End Museum and the use of English and Afrikaans with no other language in schools. The book claims that relocation is the responsible factor for the separate education system.

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<sup>252</sup> Agherdien *et al.* *South End*. Back cover.

<sup>253</sup> Interview conducted with Mr. Armien Abrahams, 03 May 1997, 84 Liebenberg Road, Gelvandale.

<sup>254</sup> George *et al.* Introduction.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid

It gives no reference to the introduction of Coloured<sup>256</sup> Education System and Bantu<sup>257</sup> Education System.

Whilst the South End Museum narrative depicts a specific line of representation of the South End Community as a ‘harmonious community’, which unmistakably is the line that the two books follow, there is also a claim and association of South End as the forebear of ‘rainbow’ nation in South Africa. This is a concept which surfaced in 1994 with the emergence of democracy in South Africa. Referring to the above, in *South End As We Knew It* the authors refers to, “South End as the forerunner of the ‘Rainbow Nation’ as it had a variety of nationalities such as, the Indians, Malays, English, Afrikaners, Chinese, Greeks lived in harmony with one another respecting one another’s culture, language and way of life.”<sup>258</sup> In the “Introduction” of the book *South End the Aftermath* the very same paragraph is repeated with no reference or acknowledgement from the previous book. This then serves to emphasize the notion of a community characterized by racial harmony that was destroyed by the Group Areas Act. This emphasis leads the reader to believe that the South End written narrative contains a common factor, which is that of positioning oneness irrespective of background. The book, *South End as We Knew* represents South End as a geographic space whose existence is depicted as a “cosmopolitan community”.<sup>259</sup> The book further refers to South End as a, “bustling suburb, brimming with activity and populated by a very cosmopolitan community.”<sup>260</sup> This is a continuous reference

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<sup>256</sup> The term Coloured was a creation of the Population Registration Act of 1950 and used in reference to all South Africans not classified as ‘European’ (white) or ‘Native’, ‘Bantu’ (African). At that time Chinese and Indian were also classified as Coloured. The former were allowed to classify to White and the latter were placed in the ‘Asiatic’ Population Group.

<sup>257</sup> See above.

<sup>258</sup> Agherdien *et al.* *South End*.

<sup>259</sup> Agherdien *et al.* *South End*, Introduction.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.* backcover.



contained in the literature, the museum and personal interviews of South End and was further discussed in the introduction of this thesis.

In both books one finds a consistent tendency of inserting authority in the South End narrative. This is employed by portraying authors as insiders and historians doing research on South End. In reference to museums Karp has cautioned that “there is a risk in delegating one representative of a community the authority to tell that community’s stories and to a significant degree it is problematic in the same way as allowing the traditional curatorial class drawn primarily from among white, middle class, and college educated males to speak for all minority cultures representing the museum.”<sup>261</sup> Minkley and Rassool also insist that “social historians have seen their work as characterized by the attempt to ‘give voice’ to the experience of the previously marginalized groups and to recover the agency of the ordinary people.”<sup>262</sup> For instance, the authors in *South End as We Knew It* claimed for themselves, the part of ‘giving voice’ as both insiders and social historians. In assessing the removals the authors of *South End as We Knew It* state, for instance, that, “As the axe dangled over their heads, the people of South End became obsessed with the impending removals.”<sup>263</sup> This summative opinion entrenches a notion of telling a story from an informed position. It emphasizes the supposition of power by disallowing contestations.

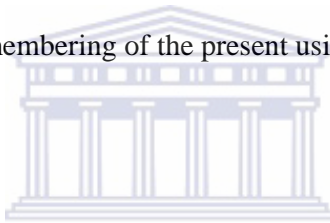
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<sup>261</sup> Karp, I. 1992. *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*. Washington: Smithsonian.p43.

<sup>262</sup> Minkley, G and Rassool, C. 1998. Orality, Memory and Social History in South Africa. In *Negotiating the Past: The Making Of Memory In South Africa*. Nuttall, S. and Coetzee, C. (eds.) Oxford University Press.p76.

<sup>263</sup> Agherdien *et al.* *South End*. Introduction.

In the book *South End: as We Knew It*, Agherdien *et al* use, amongst other sources, direct narratives, which are deemed symbolic as they come from former residents themselves. On the other hand, Agherdien's major contribution is observed as the author's narrative represented as a collective with no clear indications of his individual experience. The authors' personal voice is in fact, almost non-existent, despite the claim on the front cover and in the title of the book. What is dominant in this representation activity is the production of collective voices by the authors. Thus some level of objectivity in the book writing exercise is projected together with a claim to be insiders. In this argument I want to maintain that both these levels of authority exist. What is core in this discussion is therefore the translation of personal memory into a collective remembering of the present using the claims to objectivity of the historian as researcher.



Both authors of the book *South End: as We Knew It* and *South End the Aftermath: Where Are They Now* present particular themes in a dogmatic narrative where detail is given in form of event or occurrence. For example in *South End as We Knew It*, authors affirm that, “The Group Areas Act did not just move people from South End – it destroyed a community; scattered families and friends”<sup>264</sup> and in *South End the Aftermath*, “neighbors of many years standing were now scattered as far from each other.”<sup>265</sup> The strength of this argument lies in the repetitive manner which South End narrative is presented. The fixed approach of assembling arguments of dislocation by apartheid legislation and redirecting them to a common out put, that of dislocating ‘a community of friends and families’.

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<sup>264</sup> Agherdien *et al*. *South End* Introduction.

<sup>265</sup> George, *et al*. p25.

## Race, ethnic and culture

Of special interest is how the concept of race is simultaneously used in the two books with 'ethnic' and 'national' differences. In some instances the authors refer to 'non Europeans' as 'St Helenians,' 'Coloureds', 'Malay' and list the KhoiKhoi, Fingoes and Xhosa separately. These classifications are also defined by the authors with reference to the Population Registration Act of 1950. The term 'coloured' is described as a word used by the Population Registration Act "in reference to all South Africans not classified as 'Europeans'"<sup>266</sup>. For instance both books are using the terms 'coloured', 'non European', 'European', 'White', 'Native', 'African', 'Black' respectively.

Whilst apartheid, according to the authors remains the most responsible system that institutionalized racism and hastened the removals, the apartheid government is presented as unique and homogenous. The only attempt at some sort of complexity is the articulation of Afrikaners is as being "traced to 1834 trekkers who came to settle in the vicinity of South End"<sup>267</sup>, which they are not, and the "'English' as 'pioneering white families in South End which were mainly 1820 British Settlers and most of the streets were named after them.'"<sup>268</sup> Within the context of the given claims to a 'multicultural community' only a history of the Khoi and the early settlement history of the bay is referred to by authors with no fundamental vagueness as in the representation of Afrikaners. According to the authors of *South End as We Knew It*, "The Eastern Cape was originally inhabited by the Khoi Khoi and they established

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<sup>266</sup> Agherdien *et al.* p2

<sup>267</sup> Agherdien *et al.* p8

<sup>268</sup> Ibid

themselves in Port Elizabeth and South End.”<sup>269</sup> However, the latter is discussed with no particular reference to a particular period.

*South End the Aftermath – Where Are They Now* is the second book published on the history of South End. The book is said to be literally not part of the museum as it focuses on removals and relocation, while the museum deals specifically with South End as a community prior to removals. The authors of *South End the Aftermath*, emphasize “the story of the diverse people of South End after they had been so cruelly uprooted from their homes and removed to box like homes of depressing sameness in bleak ghettos.”<sup>270</sup> This forms a noticeable contrast as the museum’s core mission is about remembering South End and not the relocation spaces they were sent to.

However, the authors issue disclaimers of any influence or association with the museum content in *South End the Aftermath-Where Are They Now*. This is emphasized by the book editor and South End Museum trustee, Raymond Uren. Uren insists that, “the book *South End as We Knew It*, the co authors generated much interest and comment. This led to the founding of the South End Museum by a small group of dedicated ex South Enders inspired by the book.”<sup>271</sup> The objective of the museum is that of an institution “to save, for posterity, the historical and cultural heritage of South End and other similarly affected communities in the Metropole.”<sup>272</sup>

Whilst in the book *South End the Aftermath: Where Are They Now?* “tells the story of the diverse people of South End after they had been so cruelly uprooted from their

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<sup>269</sup> George *et al.* p8.

<sup>270</sup> Agherdien *et al.* Preface.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

homes and heritage removed.”<sup>273</sup> Yet, despite this disclaimer, in the museum the visuals in the room classified as the wall of ‘shame’ contains the same pictorial line up placed in both books starting from the cover of the books.

From a nearer outlook the two books “*South End – as We Knew It*” and *South End the Aftermath – Where Are They Now* are represented by authors as playing no significant role in complementing the existence of the South End museum. Each of the books does not refer to museum exhibitions on themes of sport, recreation, religion and education whilst they utilize the same thematic framework and visual materials in dealing with these themes.

The book *South End as We Knew It* gives a descriptive narrative of the voices of the former residents and brings in a light manner the applications of the apartheid laws with very limited debate or contestation, both parliamentary and by those who had a franchise. The narrative given is generally on life in South End, ranging from fishermen to dressmakers and “well known practices of home deliveries for groceries.”<sup>274</sup> Further more the book covers a vast amount of materials from the newspapers which were censored, and to a limited extent, South African community contestations and no international reactions towards the Group Areas Act of 1950 and other apartheid laws are published.

Both books are in a form of a listing. The authors therefore deal with each topic and tend not to assist the reader in synthesizing information. For instance removals are dealt with primarily as an instance of the arrival of trucks to relocate furniture.

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<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid. p64.

Religion, sport and education are presented as predominant factors in the way of life in South End that ceased to exist subsequent to removals. In *South End the Aftermath*, authors reflect that, “sports and recreation played an important role in the socializing process in South End.”<sup>275</sup> One finds no comprehensive debates of apartheid laws that were affecting South End prior to the removals. For instance all eight chapters of *South End As We Knew It* like, chapter two, on Cultural Diversity, the essence of this chapter is strictly religious referring to the significance of religion, “Feast days such as Eid (Muslims), Diwali (Hindus and Tamils) and Christmas (Christians) were celebrated by all the inhabitants in a sense that they shared in the joy of the respective cultural groups.”<sup>276</sup> In this chapter there is a listing of all the churches of South End and their principals. Chapter three on education refers to the mission schools and lists all the schools that were in South End. Also chapter four on sport and recreation activities contains a list of sports clubs and club members and their achievements. In this chapter there is no assessment of any challenges in sporting fraternity and the racially based legislation that affected sporting institutions and sportspeople of South End.

### **Laws of separation**

This book is also used as a platform to ‘talk back’ to apartheid laws and experiences. As the means to illustrate the significance of the book written in the context of ‘talking back’ the authors in *South End The Aftermath* relate to the scatteredness and isolated areas that former residences were relocated to and all of this is attributed to the “Group Areas Act enacted by a despotic Apartheid government.”<sup>277</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> George *et al.* Introduction.

<sup>276</sup> Agherdien *et al.* p11.

<sup>277</sup> Agherdien *et al.* Back cover.

According to the authors *South End Where Are They Now?* , “Africans were the first to be affected by the segregating laws passed by successive colonial governments and the National Party after 1948 engineered their exit from South End in 1950.”<sup>278</sup> This begins to explain the unaccounted history of 1913 Land Act<sup>279</sup> removals, the unclear resistance strategies and the silent voice of Africans in the two books. The book *South End – As We Knew It* give an account of the story of South End by merely referring to the “Act that was part of clutch of apartheid laws passed soon after the National Party came to power in 1948.”<sup>280</sup> This is also repudiation to the multicultural claim that is continuously emphasized in the two books. The book *South End – as We Knew It* refers to the fact that “the first sign of the South End Community to be earmarked for the removal was the proclamation in 1963 which declared South End a Group Area.”<sup>281</sup> There is thus a significant difference in the representation of the Group Areas Act implementation by the two books. The museum in this instance gives no historic background, however it deals with the Group Areas Act as an isolated incident.

The authors of *South End the Aftermath: Where Are They Now?* indicate that there is no literature available on New Brighton except Gary Baines’ work; therefore Baines’ account is used to give some detail and a sense of authority about the history of the area. However, Jimmy Matyu, a former reporter of local and commercial newspapers from New Brighton and a former resident of Korsten has written a book titled *Shadows of the Past: Memories of Jabavu Road, New Brighton*, this is a

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<sup>278</sup> George *et al.* Introduction

<sup>279</sup> As part of territorial separation the Natives Land Act of 1913 was introduced to regulate the purchasing and leasing of land by dividing South Africa into European and African areas.

<sup>280</sup> Agherdien *et al.* p77.

<sup>281</sup> Agherdien *et al.* Introduction

comprehensive account of life and livelihood of New Brighton and has a version on isolation and social activities of the area.

In this very same book titled, there are also no wide-ranging interviews as the only source for New Brighton is Mr. Dan Qeqe, a community leader and a sportsman born in Fort Beaufort who came to Port Elizabeth for higher education at Newell High School New Brighton. This limitation also occurs in the museum where no African<sup>282</sup> voice is represented in the narrative prior and post removals.

In *South End The Aftermath: Where Are They Now* it is worth noting that the co authors have included the moving stories of New Brighton and Walmer location where many Africans were compelled to move to these townships. The book is portrayed as dealing “with new perspectives and reinforcing ‘untold’ histories as it aimed to ‘dispel the myths that whites were not forced to move from South End and did not suffer as a result of apartheid.”<sup>283</sup> However, the account of white residents in both books ceases to exist and the museums also lacks a narrative from this community. This begins to explain the oneness that South Enders wanted to portray whilst excluding individual groupings in the story of the community known to be ‘homogenous’.

Some account of old South Ender’s resistance of the Group Areas Act is outlined as authors stipulate that, although in the end they were forced to move they (residents) did not go without protestation via meetings, letters to the local press and petitions to

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<sup>282</sup> The term African is used in this narrative in reference to those South Africans who were labeled and described as ‘Blacks’, ‘natives’ and indigenous people.

<sup>283</sup> George *et al.* Introduction



the government. There is no clear trace of resistance history in the museum and in the book *South End As We Knew It*.

PW Botha, the then Minister of Coloured Affairs on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1965 announced that the destruction of South End was to make way for urban renewal. What the book is not accounting for is the counter action of the 15 years the residents spent ‘agonizing’. The removal process is referred to as traumatic because of the ‘scattered desolate, cold, and isolated’ areas. The removal of whites is portrayed in a moderate approach as they were “‘dispersed all over the city’.”<sup>284</sup> There is no structural emphasis in addressing the South End removals in its entirety.

One of the shortfalls in the book *South End As We Knew It* and *South End The Aftermath* is the limited account of Africans in the area. Reflecting on the establishment of New Brighton as a township, there is an article in the *Eastern Province Herald* (03 October 2003) on news from the week ending October 1903. This article gives an account of how a government official (Sir Gordon Sprigg) tried to bribe local people to move to the new township of New Brighton and yet the authors claim that there is no literature available on the establishment of New Brighton except for Baines account. This gives unlimited legitimization of Baines account of this African township and limits the scope for further research. The popular discourse of multiculturalism in South End overshadows the claims of the books regarding the production of a genuine history about the area and how the South End museum can play a role of a historical reference.

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<sup>284</sup> George *et al.* Introduction

*South End The Aftermath – Where Are They Now* is certainly not a comprehensive account of relocation as authors declared that, “it has never been intended to be an exhaustive account of the resettlement process.”<sup>285</sup> There is consensus that comprehensive research needs to be done about the topic as well as related aspects. This should be the case in both books or any new material developed to represent the history of South End. The link between the two books and the museums clearly exists. The need to disclose this link can enhance South End Museum as an institution with research back up. The books also may pose of resources that deal with the history depicted in the museum.



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<sup>285</sup> George, C.A., Hendricks, S. and Uren, R. (eds). 2003. *South End The Aftermath: Where Are They Now?* Port Elizabeth: Express Litho.

## **Conclusion**

This thesis has attempted to build on the growing literature around the emergence of ‘new’ community museums in post-apartheid South Africa. These institutions are primarily based on the generation of individual memories and the constitution of collective memories. The sifting of the two is a complex exercise that is interrogated through this work. This mini thesis has attempted to outline some of these difficulties. It has done so by focusing on the use of memory in remembering South End as a geographic space in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

At the same time, there have been comparisons made at times, with the two other community museums, the District Six Museum and the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum. The first is in many respects comparable to the South End Museum. The foundation of both museums is the memory of removals initiated by formerly removed communities. Through the Group Areas Act, and other planning and segregation legislation, these communities were removed and placed in racially categorized communities.

Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum is the second museum that is slightly similar to the two museums by its character of community memory and serving of different kinds of publics in post apartheid South Africa. Yet it is different as it is situated forty kilometers from the city center of Cape Town and is about the place that people moved to. Each museum’s uniqueness assists the various narratives on memory making in their respective spaces. But, overall, these three museums have to deal

with the “extended legacies of racial divisions”<sup>286</sup> in South Africa. Buthelezi’s point about the Lwandle Museum could apply to the other two just as readily. Rather than working within these racial categories that were specified under apartheid, “the museum thus becomes a space utilized for values rather than belonging to a racial or ethnic group.”<sup>287</sup> One could say that these values that are espoused are those that claim a community based upon ideas of harmony, tolerance and good-neighborliness.

The South End Museum is introduced in chapter one, as an institution developed to recollect memory in the context of Group Areas Act and that in many respects is similar to the District Six Museum. In this establishment, forced removals form a greater part of the museum’s content and design. The symbolism of utilizing a floor map is one of the main similarities in the two museums. The overall historical engagement of this work rotates around Adams’ idea of ‘infantilization’<sup>288</sup>. This notion, which she utilizes in relation to the District Six Museum, is emphasized in relation to the South End Museum. The wrapping up of this chapter refers to those that are custodians of the museum establishment as people who are creating their own South End.

In chapter two, this thesis has demonstrated the evident domination of the 1820 Settler history in the region of the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality. In addressing the settler discourse, this chapter focused on the Donkin Heritage Trail and the former

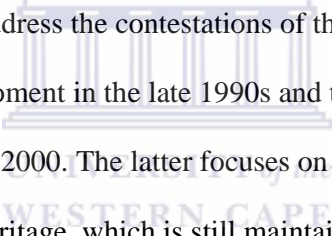
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<sup>286</sup> Buthelezi, V. 2005. *The Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum and the South African Jewish Museum: Serving Different Publics in Two Community Museums in the Western Cape*. MA mini thesis. University of the Western Cape.

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.* p4.

<sup>288</sup> Adams, Z. 2002, “Memory, Imagination and Removal: Remembering and Forgetting District Six” MA, Mini Thesis, University of the Western Cape, p10.

Port Elizabeth Museum. This activity managed to draw a conclusion that in analyzing the sites of the trail and contents of the museum, there is consistency in the ways that a settler discourse is represented and interpreted. The periodization of settler history narrative is one of the three elements identified. The others are the historicization of individual lives as founders and pioneers and the apparent 'unity' of settlers in pursuing life in a foreign land. The establishment of the 'new' South End Community Museum has not explicitly attempted to tackle the discussed settler dominance, but its presence does mark a challenge to this domination. But, as we have seen there are some instances in which it may be said that traces of 'settler heritage' can even be seen within the South End Museum and its heritage trail.

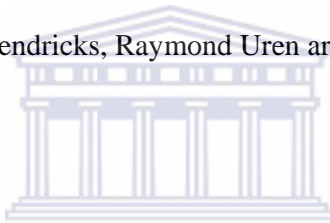


Chapter three attempted to address the contestations of the dominant settler narrative, firstly through an additive moment in the late 1990s and then through a process of 'Mandelaization' from about 2000. The latter focuses on the male biographies that exists alongside the settler heritage, which is still maintained and have its custodians in the like of the Historical Society of Port Elizabeth.

The implications for the South End Museum on these shifts in the heritage landscape are significant as it still finds itself sidelined. Most of the municipal efforts are going into the harbour development with its freedom (Mandela) statues and the Red Location museum, a flamboyant and a special state aided entity. South End history finds no comfort zone in the new heritage being built around Nelson Mandela and the narratives of other male leaders. The issue is still whether in the new heritage dispensation, which NMBM is claiming, is there still a space for a local community

initiative such as South End Museum. At the moment the prospects are tilted against it in favour of highly visible, capital intensive, projects.

Chapter four, focuses on how South End has been written about and how these writings relate to the museum. This is done through the experience of reading the two books; *South End As We Knew It* and *South End Where Are They Now?* One can conclude that the link between the two books and the museums undoubtedly exist. The museum uses the same pictures published in the two books. Due to an influx of various museum donations, most of these pictures are owned by the museum. The two books are also shelved and sold at the museum's front counter. The three authors, Yusuf Agherdien, Shahied Hendricks, Raymond Uren are trustees of the South End Museum.



This thesis concludes that memory forms an integral part of remembering South End through the South End Museum. This museum's narrative is fixed on childhood memories and demonstrates little of the changes that took place in South End, other than the 'moment' of removals. This unchanging approach in representing South End is also linked to the emphasis on positive display of a 'multicultural' South End. The making of South End Museum and the South End Heritage Trail is ultimately, a construct of the Group Areas Act and forced removals. In the broader context of Port Elizabeth's heritage though the settler narrative is still dominant in a space that has been renamed the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropole. Thus, the production of memory in the South End Museum takes place within the effects of the Group Areas Act and the making and re-making of Port Elizabeth's heritage.

## Appendice

### MAP INDEX

1. The Library Building
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15. The Moorings
16. Annerley House
17. 5 Bird Street
18. Pembridge House
19. 8 & 10 Bird Street
20. Port Elizabeth Club
21. Trinder Square
22. Fleming House
- 22a. Hillside House
23. Cora Terrace
24. Old Museum Building
25. The Cenotaph
26. Art Gallery and Arts Hall
27. Knockfierna
28. St. George's Park
29. Mannville Open Air Theatre
30. The Pearson Conservatory
31. Prince Alfred's Guard Memorial
- 31a. Sharley Cribb Nursing College
32. The Horse Memorial
33. Pearson St. Congregational Church
34. St. John's Methodist Church
35. Holy Trinity Church
36. Restored Houses
37. Donkin Street House
38. Victoria House
39. Presbyterian Church
40. Grey Institute
41. 15 Pearson Street
42. Edward Hotel
43. Donkin Reserve, Pyramid & Lighthouse
44. The Grand Hotel
45. Opera House
46. St. Augustine's Cathedral
47. St. Mary's Church

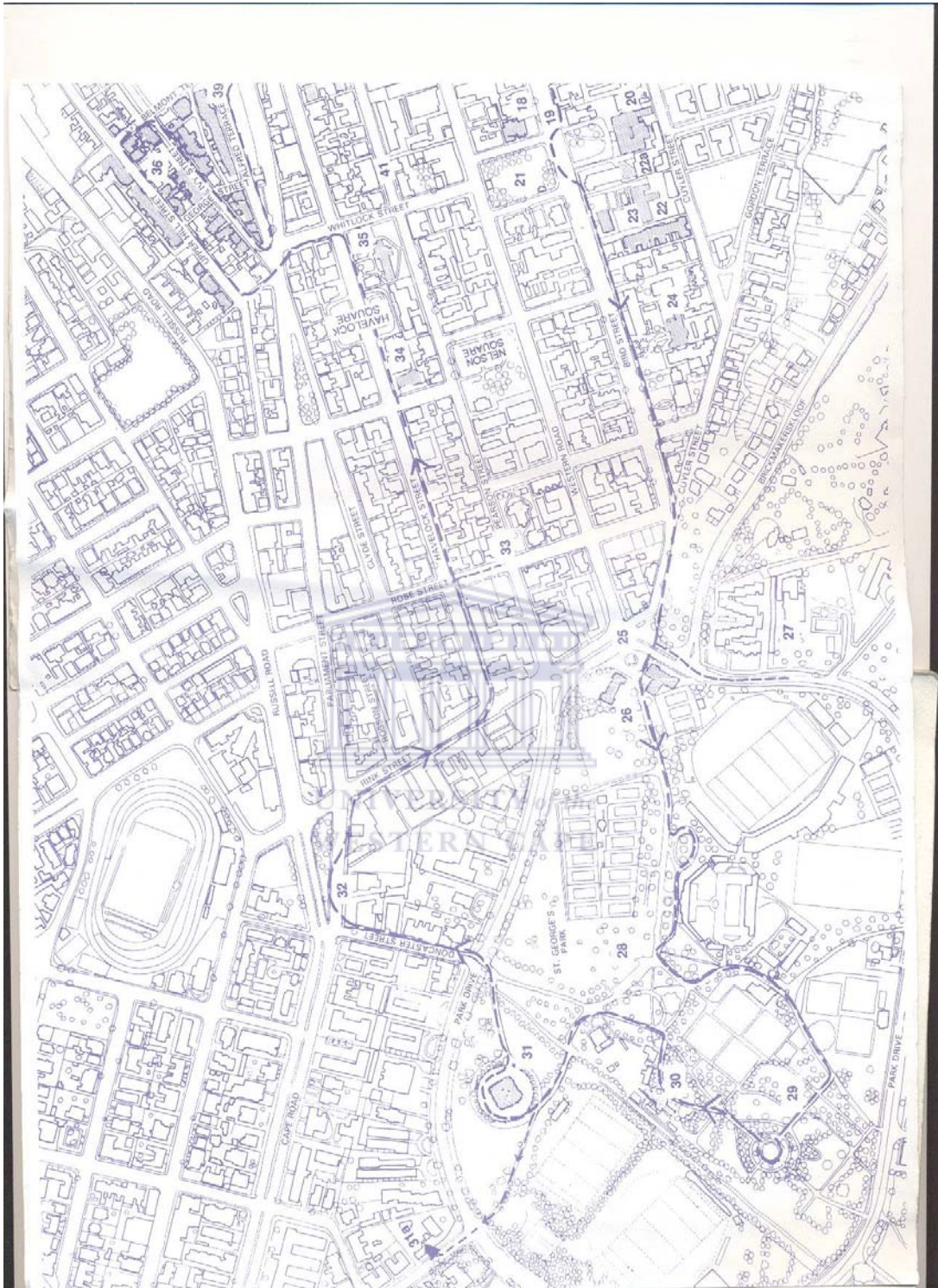




**THE DONKIN  
HERITAGE TRAIL**







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