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VASSA NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026

EVENTS IN MARCH

The **March AGM** took a slightly different turn from the usual meeting format. As part of the administrative business, Marion Ellis presented an illustrated summary of our outings and excursions during the past year. This is an engaging way of show-casing and celebrating our activities. We are pleased to report that the whole Committee has been re-elected and a new member stepped up to consider joining— a big welcome to Shelley Broad! Then, instead of a talk, we had plenty of time to meet, greet and chat to each other over delicious refreshments, until the caretaker said it was time to go home.

Those of you who were not there, note that Avis Fisher has new name badges for all paid up members so we don't have to fiddle with those little bits of coloured paper.

The **Outing** was to False Bay, based on an idea from Alex Dodge, organised by Pat Kramer and led by Anton Roux. We met up at the Hotel Glencairn built in 1904 by John Parker, the annex was added in 1918 and further additions were done in the 1950s. It was recently renovated and now sports a coat of pink and white.



Left: Hotel Glencairn in its early days. Right: The view across False Bay from the hotel terrace (Alex Dodge).

Welcome Farm, a little way further up the valley, was one of four farms grants situated along the Else River. The U-shaped house was built in about 1812/15 by Christoffel Brand whose family was associated with the establishment of Simon's Town as the Dutch East India Company fleet's winter anchorage. The De Villiers family owned it from 1871 to 1970 when the house and immediate surrounds was acquired by the South African Navy. After 1993 it was neglected to such an extent that a local community stepped in to save the State-owned property, persuading the SA Heritage Agency

to give them a lease and three years to adapt and reuse it. There is much work to be done, though the remaining fabric inside the old house is intact and authentic. The Welcome Glen volunteers run a café and sell locally-made goods. It is a delightful and quirky place, well away from the crowded beach strip, and pensioners can enjoy a Special Thursday Tea / Coffee & Scones for R60. We warmly recommend a visit. (<https://www.facebook.com/WelcomeGlenFarmhouse>)



Left: Welcome Farm (Michael Walker 2016). Right: Stairs from the kitchen to the attic (John Kramer).

If you do stop there on the way to Simon's Town, after tea take the road that leads even further up the valley and ends up in Dido Valley. Drop down to the Main Road and turn towards Simon's Town. If you are heading beyond the town and want to avoid the traffic, go right to Runciman Drive and turn down to the coast past the Old Seaforth Burial Ground, which was our next stop. From there you get a panoramic view of the port.

The **Old Seaforth Burial Ground** (1813) consists of several portions, allocated to the Muslim community and different Christian denominations but overall serving the naval personnel of Simon's Town. A Garden of Remembrance (concrete courtesy of Roelof Uytenbogaardt) runs down the centre. There are individual graves, a kramat and group memorials, such as World War victims, Russian seamen, Boer PoWs and the *Kroomen* from Ghana.

(<https://www.theheritageportal.co.za/article/visiting-historic-simons-town-old-burying-ground>)



Left: Anton tells the story of Seaforth Burial Ground. Right: Antonia tells the story of Sayers Lane burials under a cedar tree from Lebanon (photos © Alex Dodge).

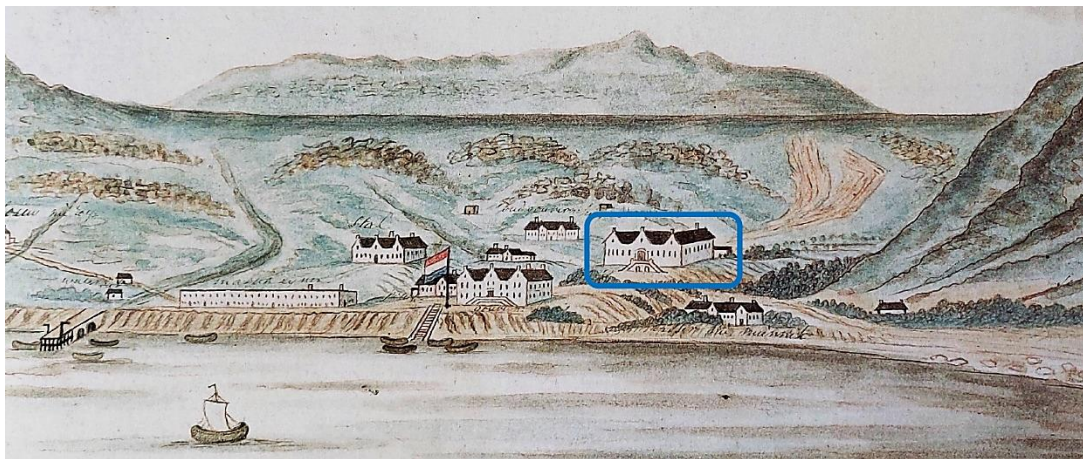
However, it is not actually the oldest burial ground in Simon's Town. Human remains uncovered on a building site at the other end of town, off Waterfall Road (**Sayers Lane**), turned out to be men who

died in the nearby VOC hospital between 1765 and 1795. The remains are reburied in the DRC portion of Seaforth. Both the hospital (converted to barracks) and burial ground were forgotten beneath later buildings. Conditions in those days were tough. Lady Anne Barnard was horrified, writing in 1797 that:

... there is sadly little room for the poor sick fellows the honest Tars, multitudes of whom have been lost for want of air & wholesome accommodations they having been so close packd in their Hospital with scurvey – ulcers &c, that it was certain death going into it ...

In 1810 Johannes Brand recommended that a new piece of ground should be acquired behind Mr Cloete's market garden because:

It has been a constant practice to inter the bodies of all civilians and all persons either the Military or Sea Service behind the barracks, there having been no other locality in the neighbourhood and the consequence is that the spot which has hitherto been appropriated to that purpose is overcrowded. The graves are so near to each other that it is scarcely possible to dig a new one, without opening an old one, exclusive of which it must be an unpleasant sensation for invalids to have the view of this last horn from their rooms.



Johannes Schumacher drawing of Simon's Town c.1777 (4. TOPO 15.120E) showing the hospital (blue) and bushes to the right where burials took place.



Oatlands 'Commandants House' restored 1975 after being gutted by a mountain fire on Christmas Day 1972 (photo © John Kramer 2026).

Die Groot Tuin (now **Oatlands**), set above the coast road south of Simon's Town, was a market garden to supply the harbour and ships. It served as a residence for harbour officials from the later 18th century and after 1806 was refurbished and upgraded for use as accommodation for top military commanders. It was another local example of a U-shaped house with hipped thatched roof but without a front gable, in a picturesque setting. The house was badly damaged by fire in 1972 and rebuilt by the Navy, losing its patina. We were not able to go inside, but took advantage of the view from the stoep across False Bay.

Rocklands, a little further along and up to the right, is set close to the rockface of the Swartkop, with plenty of water. It was granted in 1815 to the Naval chaplain and thereafter housed officials and mayors of Simon's Town. The homestead was probably the same local type of U-shaped thatched style but later had a hipped slate roof and after another fire this was replaced with a flat roof. The extra-deep stoep in front serves as an outdoor living room with an outstanding sea-view. It was a productive farm, supplying consumables to the town and is still busy with goats, chickens and vegetables. The organic Barefoot Café in informal surrounds is ideal for children.



Rocklands homestead in its stunning setting with the Swartkop as backdrop, overlooking False Bay, is well captured in this photograph by John Kramer.



Left: Rocklands in 1950, owned by Herbert Beard, when it had a pitched slate roof (Michael Walker 2016.) Right: Rocklands is now flat-roofed (Alex Dodge).

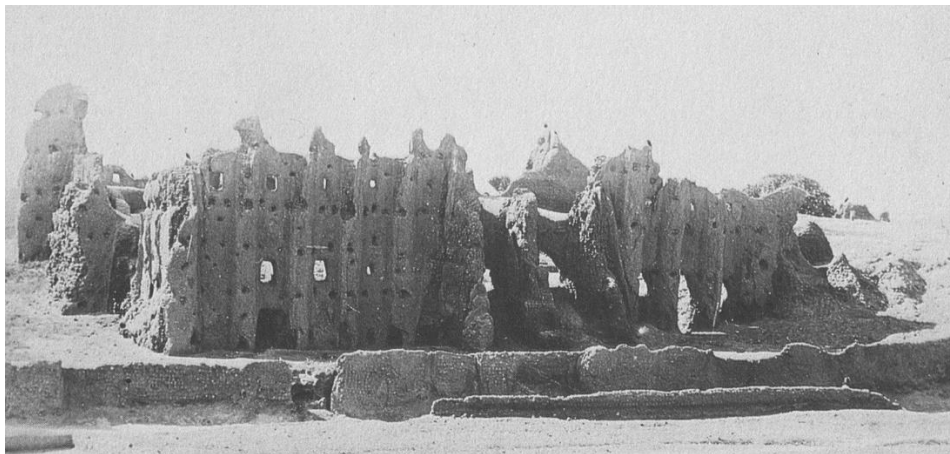
Michael Walker. 2016. *The Families and Farms of the South Peninsula and Cape Point*. Kalk Bay Historical Association.

REBUILDING THE GREAT MOSQUE OF DJENNE: Now *this* is vernacular on a huge scale

Each year, the residents of central Mali work together to preserve one of the most iconic structures in both Islamic and African architectural history: The Great Mosque of Djenné, the world's largest mud-brick structure. This epic one-day event is called the Crépissage. Not only is the Crépissage an act of maintenance to protect the mosque from crumbling, it's also a festival to celebrate community, faith and heritage.

Located in southern Mali, the Great Mosque of Djenné is nearly 20m high and built on a 91m-long platform, it's the finest example of Sudano-Sahelian architecture. This is the third version of the Great Mosque. By the early 1900s the building was a ruin and in 1906, the town arranged for the original mosque to be rebuilt. The rebuilding was completed in 1907 using forced labour under the direction of Ismaila Traoré, head of Djenné's guild of masons.

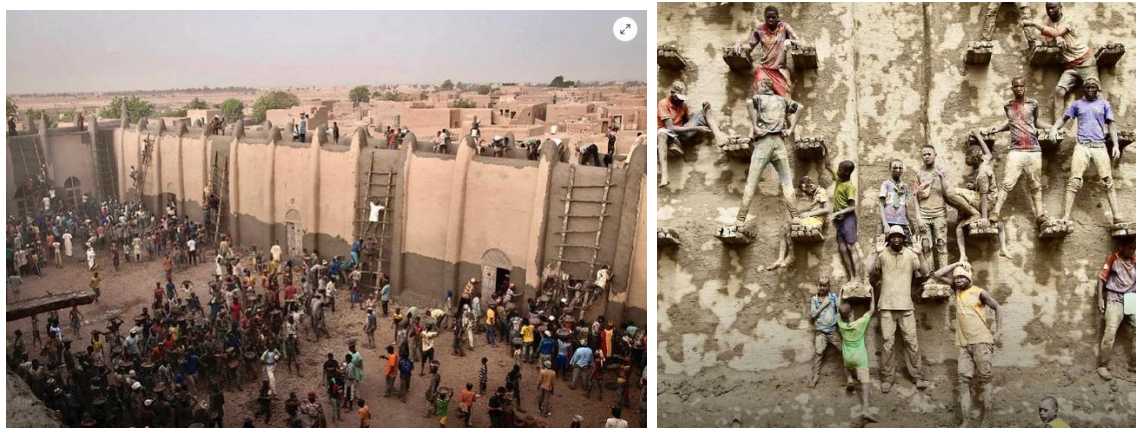
[Not everyone was enamoured of the final result, however. Frenchman Félix Dubois revisited Djenné in 1910 and was shocked by the reconstructed mosque. He believed that the French colonial administration was responsible for the design and wrote that it looked like a cross between a hedgehog and a church organ. He thought that the cones made the building resemble a baroque temple dedicated to the god of suppositories.]



Albert Rousseau, 1893.



Martha de Jong-Lantink, 2008.,



Scenes from the Crépissage (MUNISMA Sophie Ravier, 2025).

Djenné was founded between 800 and 1250 and it flourished as a great centre of commerce, learning, and Islam, which had been practiced from the beginning of the 13th century. The entire city is built from mud, which is a material well-suited to the extreme weather conditions in that the thick walls of the buildings retain the cool from the earth and the relatively chilly nights. The mosque has three distinctive minarets with hundreds of sticks of rodier palm, known as 'toron' jutting out from the walls. A lattice of 90 internal wooden columns supports the roof made of palm branches that are woven together and the walls which provide insulation from the sun's heat. The roof is then covered with a layer of mud, which helps to insulate the building from the sun's heat.

The structure requires annual reinforcement - as do the town's tradition adobe homes before Mali's rainy season which occurs in July and August. This immense undertaking of reconstruction ensures that the mosque will survive the rainy season, despite altering in shape ever so slightly each year. The bricks are formed from banco, a term for the mixture of clay, water, shea butter, baobab tree powder and rice husks that form this mud. The mud is first collected from the river and brought into town where it is left to mature in great mounds in the streets in front of the houses or in special large vats in front of the mosque. After three weeks of fermentation, the mud is mature and ready for plastering onto the walls - this is always done directly by hand.

The night before the rebuilding, the villagers take part in a carnival of singing and dancing known as La Nuit de Veille, or The Waking Night. A race is held at the start of the festival to determine who will be the first to deliver the plaster to the mosque. Once the Crépissage is underway, teams from each neighbourhood in Djenné race to replaster the mosque, albeit carefully and precisely. Under the supervision of a guild of 80 senior masons, a highly revered profession in Djenné, young men scramble up the building's facade carrying wicker baskets dripping with wet clay to smear in thick layers onto the walls, using the toron like ladder rungs.

Djenne is characterised by "exceptional architecture and its urban framework of unusual harmony," according to UNESCO, and the Great Mosque exemplifies this. Despite its centuries-long history, the mosque continues to play an important role in modern culture. Today, the Great Mosque of Djenné is a remarkable testament to the ingenuity of Mali's mud architecture and the remarkable preservation of its traditional building techniques. The citizens aim for this beautiful and unique structure to be kept as traditional as possible, resisting modernisation. Consequently, the only added modern aspect of the mosque since its creation is a loudspeaker system, for the adhaan to be heard from a distance.

Go to <https://www.zamaniproject.org/site-mali-djenne-great-mosque.html> for a 3-d look at the mosque.

TOBACCO FARMING RETURNS

A key feature of the vernacular architecture of the Oudtshoorn/De Rust area are the tobacco drying sheds. For years these were left to slowly decay, but it appears that tobacco farming is on the upswing again, fields of tobacco range far and wide, and these sheds are once again being used.

Information from an article which appeared in 1926 in the *Journal of the Department of Agriculture*, written by V.F. Olivier, B.Sc.Agr., Tobacco and Cotton Expert (below), has been blended with an Al composite history of tobacco farming in Oudtshoorn.

Tobacco has become the main cash agricultural produce in these districts [in 1926] ever since the slump in the ostrich feather industry. Of the leaf produced in these areas about 60 per cent is manufactured into roll tobacco. As the roll industry is of considerable importance to this area, and as there is no literature dealing with this industry, it seems propitious to briefly deal with this subject.

GILLIS BROS.
Tobacco Growers & Manufacturers,
St. George's St., OUDTSHOORN,
CAPE PROVINCE.

Manufacturers of the "BELL" BRAND Medium Twist Roll Tobacco.	ROLL & CUT TOBACCO. TRADE ONLY. CORRESPONDENCE INVITED.	Manufacturers of the "TIP-TOP" BRAND Extra Thin Twist Roll Tobacco.
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QUOTATIONS AND SAMPLES ON APPLICATION.

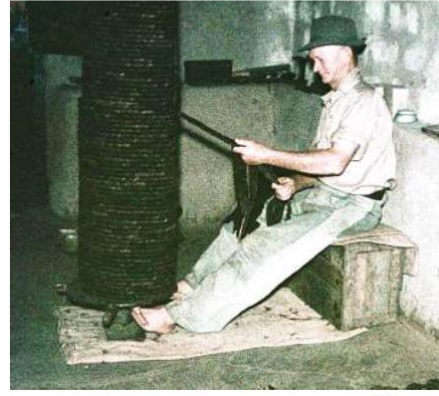


Left: Newspaper advert. Right: How to prepare rope (roll) tobacco (Andrew Wike, Smoking Pipes.com, April 2014).

Although the origin of tobacco growing in this district is hidden in obscurity, it is certain that tobacco was grown here as early as 1845. In those days there were no factories, and farmers manufactured their leaf into rolls, with which they traded in other parts of the country. The first attempt to establish some sort of factory was made in 1882 by Alfred Agard Pocock, who established a small cut and roll business in Oudtshoorn. About 1886 the Cango Tobacco Factory was established, with Mr Pocock as secretary, and this was actually the first attempt to manufacture tobacco on a large scale in Oudtshoorn. This factory also made cigars, for which purpose cigarmakers from Holland were procured, and at one time cigar-making played an important part in the Oudtshoorn tobacco industry. The influence of cigar-making remains here, for there are still two or three firms in Oudtshoorn making cigars.

Today [1926] thirty-four factories are registered with about 1,500 employees-including men, woman, and children - Europeans and Coloured. In spite of the establishment of factories. the bulk of the farmers continued to roll their tobacco and traded with this in other sections of the country. This method remained in vogue to a certain extent up to the imposition of the tobacco excise in 1920, and now that the tax has been abolished, there is no doubt that some farmers will again revert to manufacture and trade.

The types of tobacco firmly established in the district (from the roll tobacco manufacturer's point of view) are Virginian types, locally known as "Reg-op" and "Blinkblaar". The origin of these tobaccos is not known, but it appears that the seed was originally procured from Amersfoort, in Holland. The influence of Holland and cigar-manufacturing are clearly seen, as the so-called "Blinkblaar" is identical to a "Sumatra" tobacco introduced by the writer in his variety tests. The "Reg-op" as its name indicates, is a tobacco with leaves growing straight up against the stem.



A series of photographs taken by a boy with a box brownie camera, recording the Huysamer brothers twisting 'twak' rolls in Kapteinskloof, Piketberg district (courtesy of Elsa Naude and family).

See <https://www.vassa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Tobacco-poster-and-texts.pdf>

A Golden Leaf in the Klein Karoo: The history of tobacco in Oudtshoorn

The history of tobacco cultivation in Oudtshoorn is a narrative of agricultural resilience and economic adaptation, often overshadowed by the more flamboyant ostrich feather booms of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. While ostriches brought the "feather palaces" and grand wealth to the Klein Karoo, tobacco provided a stable, bedrock industry that sustained the valley through the volatile cycles of the ostrich market. The fertile alluvial soils along the Olifants and Grobbelaars Rivers, combined with the region's intense heat and access to mountain water, created a microclimate perfectly suited for producing a unique, pungent variety of dark tobacco that would eventually gain international recognition.

A key feature of this was the vernacular tobacco drying sheds, scattered across the landscape. These were allowed to fall into disrepair when tobacco growing lost its lustre, but are once again back in use as tobacco growing in the district has become popular once again. The curing process was a delicate science; the leaves were hung on sticks across horizontal poles, where they would slowly change from vibrant green to a rich, chocolate brown as the moisture evaporated and the sugars fermented.

Tobacco was one of the earliest commercial crops in the Oudtshoorn district, dating back to the arrival of the first trekboers in the mid-1700s. These early settlers found that the deep, lime-rich soil of the Cango Valley produced a leaf with exceptional strength and aroma. By the mid-19th century, well before the first ostrich boom of the 1860s, Oudtshoorn was already established as a primary supplier of "roll tobacco" or *boeretoebak*. This was a heavy, dark, air-cured leaf that was fermented and twisted into tight ropes or rolls. It was highly prized across the Cape Colony and the interior, used both for pipe smoking and as a popular chewing tobacco among travelers and farmers.

The real transformation of the industry occurred in the late 1800s as irrigation systems became more sophisticated. The construction of intricate furrow systems allowed farmers to harness the runoff from the Swartberg Mountains, turning the arid valley floor into a lush tapestry of green tobacco fields. Unlike the ostrich industry, which required vast tracts of grazing land, tobacco was an intensive crop that could be grown successfully on smaller sub-divided farms. This led to a dense population of "tabakboere" in areas like the Congo Valley and Wynandsrivier. The labor-intensive nature of the crop—requiring precise seedling management, constant weeding, manual harvesting of individual leaves, and the skillful art of air-curing in tall, thatched sheds—defined the social and economic rhythm of the rural Oudtshoorn community for generations.

In the early 20th century, the industry shifted from traditional roll tobacco toward the production of Piet Retief and later Orinoco varieties, which were more suitable for the growing cigarette and pipe tobacco markets. In 1925, the Kango Tabakkoöperasie (Kango Tobacco Co-operative) was formed in Oudtshoorn. This was a pivotal moment in the town's history, as it centralized the grading, processing, and marketing of the leaf. The Co-op's massive brick warehouses became landmarks in the town, and its presence ensured that even when the ostrich market collapsed after World War I, Oudtshoorn remained a significant agricultural hub. The "Kango" brand became synonymous with high-quality, dark air-cured tobacco, and at its peak, the Oudtshoorn district was the largest producer of this specific type of tobacco in South Africa.

The architecture of the region still bears the marks of this heritage. Scattered throughout the Klein Karoo landscape are the characteristic tobacco drying sheds—long, narrow structures with high roofs and ventilated sides. While many have fallen into disrepair or been converted for other uses, they remain silent witnesses to an era when the scent of curing tobacco hung heavy in the evening air.

By the latter half of the 20th century, the industry faced increasing pressure from changing consumer habits and the rise of light, flue-cured Virginian tobaccos grown in other provinces. The global shift toward health awareness and stricter regulations on tobacco products also contributed to a gradual decline. Many farmers in the Oudtshoorn district eventually diversified into seed production, lucerne, and the revived ostrich industry. Today, after commercial tobacco farming largely disappeared from the valley, it appears to be making a comeback judging from the many tobacco fields now dotting the landscape. Long abandoned drying sheds are now back in action. An essential chapter in the history of the Klein Karoo. It was the "black gold" that built the foundations of the town, providing the steady income that allowed the community to survive the whims of fashion and the harsh realities of the South African interior.

Photographs of tobacco in the field and a large drying barns taken by John Kramer in April 2026.





WHAT'S HAPPENING (AGAIN) IN MAMRE?

Toni Eberhardt reported on Cape Historical Society's Facebook (3 April 2026) that the mission station complex at Mamre has once again fallen into disrepair. This seems to be a perpetual cycle, repeating itself each decade. The last major restoration was in 2008. One of VASSA's visits was in 2010 when John Kramer took these photographs. They are contrasted to those posted on FB.



The water mill at Mamre in 2010 (John Kramer).



Left: The mill wheel has bits missing. Right: The old shop is falling apart (photos Toni Eberhardt).

These snippets are from the Comments posted on FB. *Graham Jacobs*: This is a very unfortunate case of sheer neglect and vandalism. Many of the locals are also very concerned. Fortunately, help is on the way, once more through the Rupert Foundation. I'll be posting on my FB page once work starts. *April Makes*: The repairs will mean nothing unless the youth get training and a community that will look after it for years to come. *Graham Jacobs*: It does underline the importance of having a proper use for the building once the work is completed. That is up to the local community. This time round, there are hopefully plans in place to avoid a repeat. There was in fact a running restaurant in the Old Shop on the werf until it was inexplicably closed. It has since suffered a partial wall collapse to the front facade which will be one of the main priorities to repair.

111 HARRINGTON STREET, CAPE TOWN

This article appeared in *Cape Townscape* in August 1993 which was the newsletter of the Cape Town Heritage Trust.

"The restoration of SAHRA headquarters and unveiling of a beautiful heritage building."

The formal opening of 111 Harrington Street by the State President on 24 May 1993 was a grand affair and the culmination of much interest and concern for this most significant property. The occasion also marked the handover of the refurbished building following a twelve-month building contract.

111 Harrington Street includes conservation philosophy and strategy ranging from specific restoration (the c1834 Granite Lodge) to selective recycling and rehabilitation (the adjoining 1917 corner extension by architect John Parker) and to the inserting and integration of new entrances, council chamber and all necessary ancillary spaces and modern services. The project firmly upholds the maxim that built fabric can be adapted and successfully gain a new, useful and architecturally delightful lease of life.

Granite Lodge, the stone-fronted Georgian house, has been labelled the finest surviving town house of its kind in the country. It was built for Anthony Oliphant the first Attorney General of the Cape and was also the home for many years of Otto Landsberg well-known nineteenth-century merchant and

artist. The house and adjoining buildings were the St George's Orphanage from the mid 1860's until well into the twentieth century. Subsequent uses have included various welfare and light industrial activities. Despite the wear and tear of 150 or more years much of the 1830's typically British Occupation fabric and detail have survived.



Granite | Lodge (John Kramer).

The missing delicate canted balcony was restored from historical photographs and by tracking down an extant example of the casting in Sydney for detail patternmaking and local replication. Extensive repair and restoration of the numerous doors and windows was undertaken, fragile lath and plaster ceilings were restored with re-cast centre rosettes, new matching flooring replaced worn through boarding and an interpretation of the earliest colour scheme was pursued throughout.



The modified extension by John Parker in 1917.

The recycled 1917 extension was modified to provide a central entrance and to enclose a generous reception foyer and new council chamber. Control and administration are facilitated by the newly planned levels and ease of access from the foyer. An old lofty side wall within the foyer was cleared

of the most recent layers of paint and plaster to reveal old pointed stone and brickwork. General prominence of the new registry and library on the Canterbury and Roeland Street frontages gave an opportunity for deliberate architectural expression as a contrast to the older fabric and to avoid unduly slavish imitation.

The National Monuments Council employed an experienced professional consultant team for all the design and co-ordination and project architect Michael Scurr (Rennie & Goddard Architects) was delegated full time to the task of supervising the work. Much was achieved on time and within demanding cost constraints. The end result has drawn praise from the NMC who are most happy to be in their first permanent home. They are, moreover, pleased to be surrounded by fine building fabric setting an example of standards for conservation generally. [See also *VASSA Journal* 24, 2011.]

[Ed. Antonia Malan was commissioned to make a display of selected artefacts excavated from the old Capel Sluit at the back of the complex by UCT's Archaeology Contracts Office. They are still there, in the passage to the right off the entrance lobby. The theme is a domestic household of the 1860s.]

THE UNION CASTLE BUILDING

[Extracts from an article by Gareth Griffiths which appeared on the KMH website: kmh.co.za.]

The V&A Waterfront's Union Castle building is a landmark building steeped in Cape Town's history, dating back to 1919 and the days of passenger and mail ship travel between Southampton and Cape Town. It was designed by the architectural firm of Baker, Kendall & Morris. Its adaptive reuse into a contemporary social hub, while retaining its heritage envelope, is the stuff of architectural and engineering dreams.

Early in 2025, the reimagined building reopened in the heart of the Waterfront with newly designed public squares to its sides. These serve as meeting points, turning what was a crowded location into a vibrant social hub. "The core goal was to restore and celebrate the building's legacy and historical value, ensuring its preservation. The project demonstrates how architectural heritage and digital transformation can coexist and thrive, honouring the past while embracing the future", says Niaz Ahmed, Development Director on the project.



The Union Castle Building reimagined (kmk.h.za).



Left: Union Castle Building June 2016 (Heritage Portal). Right: September 2022 (Sunday Times).

[Ed.] My personal observations during this project filled me with some unease. The building appeared to be totally gutted and stripped of its authentic fabric. However, I imagine this 'reimagination' was done in compliance with approved heritage processes. Maybe there is room for discussion about retaining authenticity?

TRADITIONAL BASKET WEAVING USED IN NEW BUILDING IN RWANDA

[Edited from article in *Dezeen* magazine, August 2023 - Text and photos: Jon Astbury.]

There is some amazing architecture coming out of Africa, much of which integrates vernacular architecture into modern designs. The Komera Leadership Centre in Rwanda's eastern province was designed by BE Design and incorporates the angular woven forms typical of the area. The Centre provides spaces for health, education and mentorship programs for young women as well as community areas.



Comprised of a cluster of blocks, the Centre is focused around a large, flexible space at its heart, where a set of hinged, translucent panels allow it to be subdivided into individual classrooms or opened up into a large community space. Each of the centre's blocks is topped by an angular, zig-zagging roof informed by local Imigongo art, creating a geometric form that is reflected on the exterior envelope

with a mixture of herringbone brick walls and woven eucalyptus screens. Inside, narrow wooden planks line the undersides of the angular roofs, with the triangular forms used to create high windows between rooms.



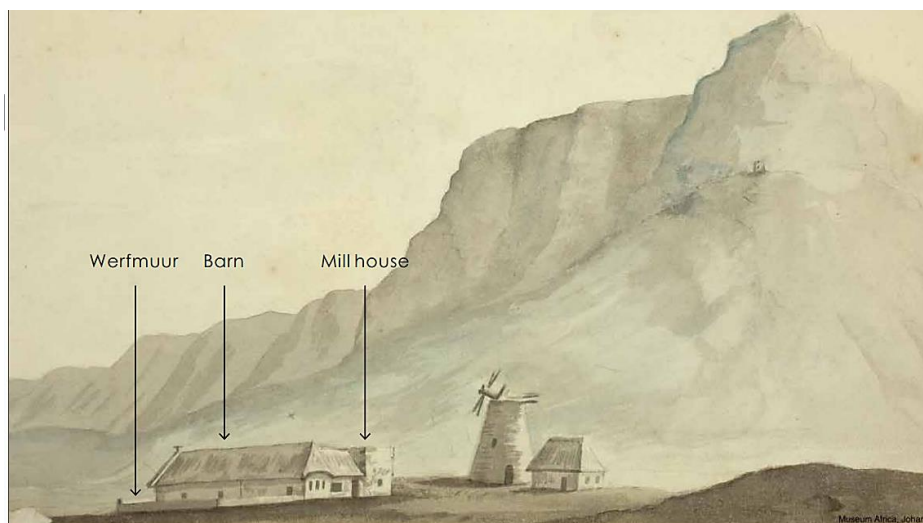
"Imigongo art, as well as the tradition of basket weaving, are rich and present art forms seen all around the country and encountered in daily life", BE Design founder Bruce Engel told *Dezeen*. Most of the work, apart from the management team, was undertaken by local people.

See <https://www.dezeen.com/2023/08/04/be-design-angular-woven-screens-komera-leadership-centre-rwanda/> to read the full article.

A GLIMPSE OF OUDE MOLEN IN 2012

Alex Dodge has visited Oude Molen over several decades and took these photographs in 2012. The large 'eco-village' site is currently proposed for redevelopment but the plan has encountered much controversy and is still in the heritage impact assessment and approval stage. There is plenty of information online if you wish to follow the debates.

VASSA members Trevor Thorold and Lita Webley are currently involved in emergency work on the old house, while others are part of the heritage impact assessment team. The drawing below, sourced by Jim Hislop in his research, comes from the Archaeological Impact Assessment, February 2025.)



1803 depiction of the mill, and adjacent structure, the mill house, the barn and the *werfmuur* painted by Louis Vidal or Cecilia Ross (Museum Africa, MA2106).



The main historic building in 2012, since partially collapsed.



Interior of the dwelling.



Left: View across the valley and wetlands towards Valkenburg Hospital and Devil's Peak. Horses and ponies live on the site, some are rescue animals and others privately owned. Right: You can ride or walk down the grassy slope to the river and it feels as if there are no highways around.



THE SYMBOLIC STRUCTURE THAT WAS NEVER BUILT

Brian Davy, VASSA member and inveterate explorer and Facebook poster, found this plaque commemorating the 1952 Van Riebeeck Festival in the Founder's Garden next to the Artscape. The metal lettering has all been prised off, unfortunately. According to artefacts.co.za, a proposed symbolic structure of which the foundation stone was laid as part of the Tercentenary (Van Riebeeck) Festival by the then

Nationalist Prime Minister, Dr D.F. Malan on 1952 04 05, but the structure was never erected

Coincidentally, there were two researchers from Holland recently In Cape Town who were working on a project on the Van Riebeeck Festival. They were looking for baby boomers who could still remember the festival! John Kramer connected with them and told them his memories. Look at John's page on Facebook to read the story of his visit to the Van Riebeeck Festival.

ANYONE FOR COFFEE?

Copper coffee percolator with chafing dish used by the Queen's Hotel, Oudtshoorn from 1886 to 1910. Imagine all those ostrich feather hustlers sitting in the hotel sipping a cup of coffee from this impressive "automatic coffee extractor" made in London! It is now in the Oudtshoorn Museum.



Left: Postcard of the Queen's Hotel, Oudtshoorn (Erika Janse FB 2019). Right: The feather market (Oudtshoorn Info).

*Compiled by Pat Kramer & edited by Antonia Malan - publications@vassa.org.za.
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