

We take hands ...

I was invited by Ms Bonnie Sesenyamotse, Director, Education Management Development Centre Southern Cape & Karoo, to discuss our school's projects and achievements on May 11th in George at a gathering of senior educationalists; civic, religious, and private enthusiasts involved in laudable initiatives to better the lives of our rural peoples.

Diana, our principal, and colleague Sannie, who for thirty years dreamt of one day having "real" classrooms, that night shared the applause as Bonnie took our hands in praise and support of Vlakteplaas School's exciting journey into the future.

Jans Rautenbach, OULAP



Jans & Bonnie

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90

Ons salueer Elisabeth!

Op 10 Junie kom Elisabeth van Nood se familie van oor gans die Nederlandse byeen om haar 90^{ste} Verjaardag te vier. Ons, die kinders, personeel en vriende van Vlakteplaas Skool, bring graag opregte hulde aan hierdie besondere volksmoeder en wens haar veel vreugde en goeie gesondheid toe. Ons is bevoorreg dat haar naam op ons skoolgebou pryk as simbool van die oop harte van Theo en Josefien, haar seun en skoondogter wat vir ons 'n nuwe toekoms bou.



We salute Elisabeth!

On June 10th the family of Elisabeth van Nood will gather from all over the Netherlands to celebrate her 90th Birthday. We, the children, staff, and friends of Vlakteplaas School, pay grateful homage to this venerable mother of a great country, and we wish her much joy and good health to come. We are proud that her name graces our school building as symbol of the generosity of Theo and Josefien, her son and daughter-in-law who are building us a new future.



Theo & Josefien

Ons eer...

Almal van ons op Vlakteplaas, en al ons medewerkers en donateurs in Europa, Britanje en die Skandinawiese lande, bring graag opregte hulde aan hierdie wonderlike egpaar wat met soveel liefde woord by daad plaas om 'n nuwe toekoms vir ons kinders en ons gemeenskap in hierdie "vergete" Karoo vallei te skep. Lank mag hulle leef!

Second wing

A new beginning...

Early March, Theo & Josefien gave "thumbs-up" to Norman Tomé, our Master Builder who erected the first school wing, to begin the second building phase. And Norman began with a bang.

Tens of skilled bricklayers, carpenters, and plasterers as well as local labourers arrive daily to work with vigour and joy under a blazing Karoo sun. Huge trucks with massive loads of brick, sand, stone, cement, roof beams, ceilings, and evermore sand and cement arrive on the hour.



Turning the first sod!

Melvin & Elton



Melvin Bezuidenhout and Elton Sederstroom, two of the bricklayers building the new school wing.

They who are building

Three years ago Elton apprenticed with Norman Tomé who trained him as a professional builder. *"That is why I am so enthusiastic about this project because I myself am the result of decent training and I wish all our children to have the same chance in life. There are never enough schools."*

As a father of three kids, Melvin again, is concerned about their future. He understands the need for schools to not only give the children an education but to provide them with qualifications to face the future. *"The rural people must have more choices than just to labour on farms. And literacy will help eliminate criminality."*

Both men consider it a privilege to be part of this project and knowing they are a small page in a new history being written. *"It is a joy to work together in our team and to receive the fatherly love of oom Jans who visits the building site daily, praising and encouraging us!"*

Electricians and plumbers cut into brick and concrete, laying pipes, tubes and fittings everywhere. Norman and Jans meet, monitor, praise, consult, change a window here or add a door there.

Yes, a Phoenix rises in the landscape, but more important, a new vision for all community aspirations in rural South Africa is coming about. We, all of us, are changing the faded dreams of yesterdays into electrifying tomorrows.



The new wing will house a modern Khanya computer centre for both school and adult education; shower and toilet facilities for scholars and sport participants; locker cubicles; multi functional school/community hall and library with classroom facilities, music room, dressing room, clothes washroom, shaded open-air discussion area, and visitors' toilets. It is intended to benefit the entire community.

Please remember that Theo & Josefien finance the building itself, but that we ourselves, like with the first wing, have to equip and furnish this new structure throughout - electronic & TV equipment; 150 lockers for kids; cupboards; library shelves for 25 000 books; musical instruments; stage lighting, sound, curtains and controls; dressing room tables & mirrors; hall chairs, trestles, etc.

Now, more than ever, we need the support of our friends out there!



A proud master builder, Norman Tomé, in the future school/community hall.

Bursary Student

Simoney Arends



Simoney Arends, ex-Vlakteplaas scholar, studies at the High School in de Rust. The famous Swedish TV entrepreneur, Anna Bråkenhielm, who provides Simoney's bursary, can indeed be proud of her.

Fist reports show Simoney excelling in technology, sciences and English. Her proud mama promises her a track suit for her birthday. She dreams of becoming a teacher.

After our visit she still had to prepare for an English test, and then watch TV which operates on batteries since their home has no electricity. She also loves to dance and play netball at school.



Amoray, Simoney, Justin, Ellie & Johnny

Simoney lives with her three sisters, mother and stepfather. Her eldest sister was not home during our photo session. Amorey was adopted by her mother, and so also baby Justin in Ellie's arms was found ailing and abandoned in a street, and left for dead. Due to the care and love of her "new" family she is now a healthy, happy baby.

Truly a remarkable dedication by a great couple who shares even the little they have to give a destitute soul a future.

Crocodile !



Mother Leen & Ruhan

Hello, I'm Ruhan Pikaan, but everyone calls me Boetie. I am 8 years old and with Miss Thelma in grade 3. I've drawn a picture of our house for the KUDU, but in school I like sums and especially football. Even at home us three brothers play football. I am happy that we get hot food at school. I like potatoes or pasta and today's macaroni was super.



"I was born in Vlakteplaas and have beautiful memories of this picturesque valley at the foot of the Swartberg mountain in the heart of the Klein Karoo."

They who serve

"After my primary school years in Vlakteplaas where my father was a teacher, I went to Mōrester High School in Oudtshoorn, and then to Athlone Training College in Paarl where I obtained my teachers certificate. I started at Ladismith, and later Dyseldorp, but soon returned to Vlakteplaas to the same old church building which served as a school for the past 105 years.

It was divided into classrooms with folding wood partitions, but not sound-proofed. We had no electricity, obsolete sanitation and dilapidated toilet facilities. Drinking water came from a rain storage tank. During dry summer months pupils fetched water in buckets from a nearby furrow. It is a miracle nobody contracted cholera.

Some three years ago I approached oom Jans for help. He and his wife Almeri then started the Oulap School

projects and with the support of friends and overseas tourists the wheels began moving at high speed. Nowadays we boast the most modern farm school in the Western Cape; three spacious classrooms, each equipped with satellite TV & overhead projectors; a reception room; computer room; a large fully equipped kitchen providing hot meals daily for the children. These facilities make teaching a joy. Even the school uniforms are sponsored that the pupils wear with pride, thus encouraging better behaviour, and conscientious, ambitious learners.

A dream has come to us! It is unbelievable to experience so much unselfish love. With a jubilant heart, tears in my eyes and incredible praise on my lips, I humbly thank God for all the showers of blessings on our school and the community of Vlakteplaas. "Thank You God! Thank you Jans, Almeri, Theo, Josefien, and all our wonderful donors."



Diana Wicomb

We praise Rev. Garth Sweetland of the United Congregational Church for his unstinting support in the years past; and his loyalty and devotion to our aspirations today. He is truly a man of God!



Beloved Oom Ampie Wicomb, Diana's father and a previous headmaster of Vlakteplaas



We are proud of our colleagues!

Thelma Agulhas (teacher), Sannie Britz (teacher), Alida Kammies (cook), Diana Wicomb (principal), Susan Wiid (caterer), Berenice Philander (secretary), Andries Snel (factotum)

Thank you

Food for Life!



John Willemse of KarooCare presents the Zeister Schoolvereniging cheque of € 10 000 to Sannie Britz



Ons sê "BAIE DANKIE lieve kinders van Zeist!"



In 2005 the Dutch school Zeister Schoolvereniging celebrated its 75th anniversary. They undertook many special activities for the benefit of our school. The pupils participated eagerly in charity walks, programmes on South Africa and on Vlakteplaas, and other fund

raising actions. They harvested a magnificent amount of € 10 000.- for Vlakteplaas UCC Primêr. A large part of this amount will be used to provide hot meals for our needy children, and the rest to acquire musical instruments for the school hall now being built.

Crocodile !



My name is Lammie Erasmus.
I am twelve years old. I am in grade six at the Vlakteplaas (UCC) Primary school. My first school was Roodevlei Primary. I live on a farm. Roodevlei. My favourite food is pap. I do not like cabbage. I like to watch TV. My favourite program is 7de Laan. Paula is my star. One day I want to be a teacher. I have to play school with my little brothers and sisters. My favourite sport is tennis. I have a lot of friends here.

This great Rainbow country...

One of South Africa's largest retail supermarket chains, SHOPRITE CHECKERS, has become a friend and generous supporter of our school. In the months past they have helped us where, and whenever possible - from shoes for every child; a first fully equipped computer room; the Vlakteplaas UCC Primêr signboard; a full complement of catering plates, mugs and cutlery; and a special EduCard allowing us a considerable discount on all grocery purchases.

Our sincere thanks to the Board of Directors and their Management Team!

You are truly "Big Business with a Heart of Gold".



Yvonne Keuls

Yvonne Keuls is a famous, acclaimed and much honoured Dutch author whose books are translated into many languages. Her 75th birthday in December is to be spectacularly celebrated in The Hague with a Gala performance of one of her milestone plays.

Both she and her husband Robbert work tirelessly for our school. They co-sponsor one of our students to high school; organise special concerts with the proceeds destined for our children's well-being; generate funds for particular Oulap projects; and attend functions as our Ambassadors Extraordinaire to the world!

Robbert and Yvonne recently joined in the Van Dommelin Company's celebrations when a large donation by the guests was presented to Yvonne. Jan and Ria are beloved frequent guests at Oulap and dedicated to help whenever possible.



For a hundred years there were only distant dreams scattered among weather-beaten stones on barren Karoo earth; now the South African and Dutch flags herald the birth of a new future.



Van Dommelin Celebrations: Jan, Arianne, Yvonne & Ria

We are honoured to have the support of so many donors in Europe, Britain and the Scandinavian countries. And we so wish to acknowledge each and everyone in the Kudu. However, be assured that we will document our supporters' activities whenever possible, and we kindly request news and photographs of you.

Hear the drums of the kingdom...

Friends began the process to register a KarooSchool Trust in London, eligible for a 25% quid pro quo UK Government contribution.

Advocates Yves Montangie & Karen Moser are establishing a similar foundation in Antwerpen to channel Belgium donations to our school projects. This project will benefit from government tax concessions.

We are heartened by growing support in the United Kingdom. We receive regular donations from individuals and couples; from investors and professionals; from academics, church congregations, bridge clubs, companies, sport associations, and the like.

Above all, sometimes the singular enthusiasm of one person is so inspiring that we are humbled thereby. Graeme is an established chemist and a large donor.

Caroline Pearson and Graeme Hill



As from April Graeme converted his display windows into a Vlakteplaas School "information centre" generating great interest at Boydell & Keating 87-89 Liverpool Road South Maghull - Cheshire

This is me....

Never a more greater cynic you would meet than me, I see the world as full of "if's" and "but's" and "why not's" and "whys". Charity is a waste of time, money drifts and disappears. The masters do not have the strength to say no and executives fly on private jets. Jans' and his ego are different. He is indeed a dictator, but one with a empty wallet and I suspect that is why we all bind together. Never would I contribute to a project in deepest corrupt Africa but I do now. Furthermore I am proud to do so and be associated with Jans. You all know what I speak of. I saw his school and wanted him to know I was proud of him. That he had done right. Maybe it means nothing to him but it means a lot to us, we the benefactors, although we have never met. Jans, we, we strangers to each other, Salute You. I do not do polite, as much the wife curse me. Regards, Graeme



KUDU

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