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Western Cape
Government

FOR YOU

Cultural Affairs and Sport

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ON THE COVER

The solitary landmark of Clifton

by Gustav Hendrich, WCARS

With its white sands and granite boulders sheltered from the blustery Southeaster, contemporary Clifton enjoys worldwide recognition as one of the finest beaches on the Atlantic seaboard. Situated between Sea Point and Camps Bay, this picturesque stretch comprises four beaches separated by rocks extending steeply towards the sea.

Initially christened Schoemansgat (or 'Cobblers' hole' in Dutch) owing to a shoemaker residing in one of the caves, the area was remote. In 1802, a small piece of land below Lion's Head was granted by the then-Cape Governor to Major McNab, its house being named Kloof Cottage. Over time, this double-storey house became a landmark, as the hotel known as Clifton-on-Sea. The area's name was derived from the inn's first manager, Bess Clifton, and gained its reputation as a prime holiday destination. It was

told that the famous road engineer, Thomas Bain, was headquartered there during the construction of the Kloof and Victoria Roads, while shanties were erected on the perilous slopes for convict labourers.

Ideally located on Victoria Road, then serving as the coastal road as indicated on the photograph, dating to 1902, a tramway was built above the hotel. This caused an influx of visitors, pedestrians and cyclists flocking to Clifton after their shopping at Sea Point for an outing.

Although Clifton-on-Sea Hotel was easily accessible, carts approaching from Sea Point were required to pay an access fee at a toll-house and refreshment shop with a rather eerie-looking wood-and-iron edifice called The Rest. By 1913, Clifton had evolved as a holiday destination away from the bustling city life, with its bungalows and huts on its shore-facing slopes. Popular amongst visitors, those camping sites only permitted summer rentals until 1929, when all restrictions were lifted.

Clifton retained something of a rural atmosphere for much of the

past century. When author René Juta visited Clifton, she described her memories as 'a little kraal of houses and bungalows. The slopes of the cliff down to the sea were covered with brilliant green shrubs and purple flowers.'

The area surrounding the once-solitary hotel has developed into an ultra-luxurious suburb, with Victoria Road becoming almost unrecognisable, though the serenity of its beaches remains as much of an attraction to visitors today, as in days gone by.

The **Cape Librarian** extends its gratitude to the Western Cape Archives and Records Service (WCARS) for making available its rare collection of vintage photographs for the cover images of the magazine in 2024.

Picture credit: S90 Clifton and Camps Bay, circa 1902

So the sky didn't fall on the day after the election. And neither did load-shedding immediately return. Post-election South Africa has since entered the uncharted waters of power-sharing by former political rivals, both on a national level, and in some instances, provincially. As it has been said before, some of the old had to die before the new could flourish. And never was that need for change voiced more unequivocally than on 29 May.

On the other hand, as a handbrake on the cautious optimism of a new political dispensation, threats remain in place for the building of a better tomorrow, especially for the youth.

First, the bad news. An article published in *Business Day* in June, titled *Smartphones undermine cognitive development*, underlined just how harmful such devices are in the classroom (where they reduce attention spans) as much as they are when hogging a desk during homework or study time at home. Fact-finding by the University of Texas revealed that students concentrate better when separated from their phones, or even when the latter are switched off.

The distractive, attention-sapping ability of phones in the classroom was found to wreak sheer destruction on the ability to focus, leading to so-called 'cognitive impairment', or simply a 'brain drain.'

It gets worse. Prolonged smartphone use is said to be able to reshape brain anatomy and physiology. The sections of the brain controlling executive functioning and cognitive control are the most vulnerable to excessive usage, which in turn determines academic and learning ability.

Predictably, research in the *Journal of Behavioural Addictions* found that tertiary students with excessive dependence on electronics displayed limited intellectual control and academic atrophy.

First, there was FOMO (*fear of missing out*) — a casual, indeterminate addiction to social media manifested as an unscratchable itch over always being in the know about what's happening. However, that has been superseded by NOMOPHOBIA (*no mobile phone phobia*), or the fear of being without one's phone entirely. Today, this has tainted nearly an entire generation of schoolchildren, who now suffer from depression and anxiety at the mere thought of separation from their phones, which, unsurprisingly to exactly no one, has once again impaired educational potential.

(Although you knew much of this already.)

Now for the good news. Where children have limited or no access to screens, caregivers are encouraged to expand their horizons through outdoor play and stimulating environments that stimulate cerebral and emotional development.

It is hard to think of a healthier alternative to reaching this goal than by means of books. From the promotion of literacy to the fertility of cognitive development, diverse learning opportunities, and social interaction, libraries are the safe spaces and communal hubs that present and future generations of digital natives deserve most.

We voted for — and achieved — change in parliament. Now it's time to do the same in our communities with some, uh, smart parenting.



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libraries | biblioteke | amathala eencwadi

Genadendal library's 200-year birthday

On Friday 28 June, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport celebrated the 200-year birthday of the **Genadendal Public Library**, in partnership with the Theewaterskloof municipality. Genadendal Public library, founded in June 1824, holds the distinction of being the oldest public library in the Western Cape and the second oldest in the country.

This historical event was marked by a gathering attended by the Premier of the Western Cape, Alan Winde, Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Ricardo Mackenzie, DCAS staff, municipal officials, community stakeholders and dignitaries.

Minister Mackenzie highlighted that 'we cannot live without books, and libraries are where it all starts. As the second oldest public library in South Africa, Genadendal Public Library is a beacon of knowledge, culture, and community spirit.'

Premier Winde highlighted the fact that 8 out of 10 of our children in grade 4 cannot read for meaning and encouraged everyone to read to a child. 'Read to someone and keep pushing the boundaries of reading for meaning,' he said.

The event highlighted how libraries play a crucial role in our communities, offering access to knowledge, fostering literacy, and providing a safe space for learning and personal growth.

Cecilia Sani, Director: Western Cape Library Service



Premier Alan Winde (middle) with library staff and councillors

New books and more smiles at Abbotsdale



The Saldanha Region visited **Abbotsdale Library** in Malmesbury for the CPL Returns on Tuesday, 11 June. Chad May (Librarian-in-charge) and Yolanda Thyssen (Assistant Librarian) were excited to receive new library materials and choose their own lovely new books for the library

Delft's digital cloud gets global recognition



Under the leadership of Senior Librarian, Ashley Lewis, **Delft Library** was honoured with a special mention for innovation at the 2024 IFLA PressReader International Marketing Awards. The library received its award for its Digital Cloud project, which was initiated and created by Ashley. (The article was published in the September/October 2022 edition of the **Cape Librarian**). Congratulations, Ashley!

Bathandi, babhali, bafundi besiXhosa, sihlaba ikhwelo kuba ikhwelo lityala. Sicela nithumela amabalana, amangaku, nako nakuphi okunokuphucula, kufundise, kwazise, kukhulise, konwabise kuphinde kukhuthaza ukubhalwa nokufundwa kolwimi lwesiXhosa. Sikhuthaza ooSozilwimi ukuba imisebenzi yabo yophando eshankathelweyo ngesiXhosa ingangeniswa nayo ukuze ipapashwe njengenqaku eliyakufundwa luninzi lwabantetho isisiXhosa nabanqwenela ukusifunda.

Moorreesburg Biblioteek vier sy 20ste verjaarsdag

En so begin 'n nuwe hoofstuk in **Moorreesburg Biblioteek**, wat onlangs sy 20ste verjaarsdag gevier het, se lewensverhaal. Sy geskiedenis strek egter veel verder as 20 jaar terug.

Soos enige goeie bibliotekaresse het ek bietjie in die verlede gaan delf. Regoor Suid Afrika is daar 12 Carnegie Biblioteke opgerig, onder andere in Hoopstad, Vryheid, Benoni en dan natuurlik in ons eie dorp, Moorreesburg.

Deur die wedywing en vasberadenheid van mej. D Koch van die plaas *Biesjesfontein*, word die biblioteek in 1911 vir die bedrag van £1,500 gebou. Die geld word deur Andrew Carnegie van Skotland bewillig. Dit open in 1913 en staan bekend as die 'Moorreesburg Carnegie Biblioteek.'

In die Staatskoerant van 17 Augustus 1984, Nommer 9384, verkry die oorspronklike gebou erfenisstatus. Die Transport Akte 7228/1913, gedateer 27 Augustus 1913, word as bewys ingelewer en voorgelê.

Van die oorspronklike 12 Carnegie Biblioteke in Suid-Afrika, bly daar vandag slegs sewe oor. En wil ek met trots noem dat ons Moorreesburg Carnegie Biblioteek een van hulle is. Die gebou is in 'n baie goeie toestand en huisves tans die dorp se toerismeburo.

Op 28 Maart 2024 het Moorreesburg se boekwurms behoorlik feesgevier. Die gebou het die afgelope 20 jaar vele leesvreugdes en -genot gebring; 'n rits uitreikprogramme die lig laat sien en heelparty boekfamilies gevorm.

Die voormalige bibliotekaresse van die Moorreesburg Carnegie Biblioteek, Retha Kellerman, was die gasspreker by dié geleentheid. Sy het vermaaklik vertel van die tipe leesstof wat die lesers destyds uitgeneem het; dat die publiek die biblioteek as 'n oase met die wonderlikste boeke beskou het; hoe aanstellings gedoen is en nog vele meer staaltjies oor die personeel. Net soos vandag was die aflewering van nuwe boeke destyds iets waarna almal uitgesien het.



Moorreesburg Biblioteek



Sy was ook betrokke by die opleiding van personeel. Van die personeel, soos Cecelia Larey (bibliotekaresse) en Belinda Saunders (bibliotekassistente) wat saam met haar daar gewerk het, is vandag nog werksaam by die Moorreesburg Biblioteek.

Dit is lankal nie meer net 'n gebou waar boeke gehuisves en uitgeneem word nie. Daar is nou fasiliteite soos gratis internettoegang en rekenaargebruik, 'n fotostaatmasjien en internet-afdrukdien. Kompetisies word gereeld aangebied, asook leeshulp aan die kinders wat dit nodig het.

Ons ontvang ook gereelde besoeke van skole en kleuterskole om die wonderwêreld wat net in biblioteke gevind word, met hulle te kan deel. Seniors word ook bederf met spesiale uitreike en ouetehuisbesoeke.

En natuurlik is daar geen meer stilmakery nie, of die tannie met die bolla wat kwaai oor haar bril loer as jy dit durf waag om nie 'n boek op die rak terug te sit of té hard praat nie.

Moorreesburg Biblioteek lééf behoorlik.

Dit is ook 'n gemeenskapsentrum waar die publiek byeenkom om idees uit te ruil; waar hulle kan leer en hulself bemagtig; waar daar 'n oor geleen word aan dié wat dit nodig het, en kinders gehelp word met geletterdheid en rekenaargebruik.

Ons sien uit na die volgende 20 jaar.

Isabel Young, Biblioteekbestuurder: Swartland

Otterry makes magic on World Book Day



Staff from **Otterry Library** celebrated World Book Day on 23 April by dressing up as kids' favourite fairytale characters and visiting the nearby Starlight Nursery School for a fun-filled day of reading and excitement

Wynberg's mega marathon readathon



The Western Cape Library Service, in partnership with **Wynberg Public Library**, celebrated World Book Day with a readathon at Voortrekker High School on 23 April. More than 100 learners read in 30-minute slots from 06:00 to 18:00, after which prizes were handed out for participation in ten different categories

Huguenot Square employment programme

On 15 May, **Huguenot Square Library** hosted a transformative employment programme in collaboration with the Expanded Public Works Programme, the Department of Labour, Snipper House of Beauty, the Open Door Community Foundation, SAPS, and Our Grounds. The event attracted 69 community members eager to explore employment opportunities and gain valuable insights into career development. This programme marked an essential step towards addressing unemployment and empowering local residents to become economically active. Each of the abovementioned organisations played a pivotal role in the initiative. They presented the public with information on the current job market, important tips when applying for a job, how to start your own business, as well as the various resources available for job seekers. EPWP and the Department of Labour also assisted the participants with registering on the respective databases. The employment programme left a lasting impact on the community. Attendees left with newfound knowledge, improved job-seeking skills, and a sense of empowerment. Many expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to learn and connect with potential employers and mentors.

Cheryl Petersen, Assistant Librarian: Huguenot Square Library



EPWP presentation

Hermanus hits a high note with Chanette Paul book launch



On Saturday, 25 May, **Hermanus Library** hosted the launch of Chanette Paul's new book, **Anoniem**. Chanette was joined by well-known author Bettina Wyngaard, who led the discussion and questions. It was a wonderful morning spent with 52 local guests enjoying an unforgettable experience.

Back (ltr): Fadilah May, Ano Nondala, Lize Richter, Avuyile Matikinca, Meghan Robertson, Bettina Wyngaard and Chanette Paul
Front (ltr): Belinda May, Zintle Ngwendu, Verlene Gibson and Deidre April

Huguenot Square empowers its youth

On 13 June **Huguenot Square Library** hosted a Youth Day programme for the youth in the Belhar area. The collaborators included the mobile health service KeReady, Matrix, the UWC HIV & AIDS Unit, and St Vincent Clinic, presenting information to 50 attendees on health, sexual, and drug abuse matters.

KeReady was on hand with tips on how to properly wash their hands; Matrix delivered encouraging testimonies on drug-related issues within the community; and the UWC HIV & AIDS Unit gave detailed demonstrations on safe sex and additional services they offer. The St Vincent Clinic provided health screenings for the learners in attendance. The various institutions expertly presented themselves to the students and interacted with them in an educational context.

Each contributor played a pivotal role in making this initiative a success. We'd also like to extend a special thank you to our Yboneers for playing their part in the facilitation of the event. This programme left a lasting impression on the students.



The KeReady team with Huguenot Square Library staff and friends

Attendees left with newfound knowledge, life skills, and a sense of empowerment. Many expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to learn and connect.

Cheryl Petersen, Assistant Librarian: Huguenot Square Library

Durbanville Library Career Expo: a resounding success

Durbanville Library was abuzz with excitement and activity as it hosted a highly successful Career Expo on 23 May. The event, aimed at helping students and job seekers explore various career options, attracted a large crowd and received overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees.

The expo featured a unique 'speed dating' format that allowed participants to interact with professionals from diverse fields. This innovative approach enabled attendees to have one-on-one conversations with different industry experts, gaining valuable insights and personalised advice in a short amount of time. The professionals represented careers ranging from education and healthcare to finance, the arts, and technology.

The gathering was inaugurated by the Principal Librarian, René Schoombee, who welcomed the attendees and emphasised the importance of such initiatives in guiding individuals towards their future career paths. In her opening speech, Schoombee highlighted the library's commitment to supporting the community through educational and career-oriented showcases. The expo also featured exhibitions from various higher education institutions. These provided attendees with information about courses, admission requirements, and scholarship opportunities. Representatives from universities, colleges, and technical institutes were present to answer questions and offer guidance on further education options.

The Career Expo is part of Durbanville Library's broader *Raise a Village* project. This initiative aims to empower the local community through education, skills development, and career support. By hosting functions like the Career Expo, the library is actively contributing to the project's mission of fostering growth and development within the community.

'We are thrilled with the turnout and enthusiasm shown by both the attendees and the professionals,' said Schoombee. 'The goal was to create an engaging platform



Librarians Gianni Brinkhuys and Chantelle Conradie

where people could explore different careers and make informed decisions about their futures. Judging by the feedback we've received, we've certainly achieved that.'

Participants praised the convention for its organisation and the quality of interactions they had with the professionals. 'I found it incredibly helpful to speak directly with someone working in the field I'm interested in,' said one attendee. 'The advice and insights I received were invaluable, and it has given me a clearer idea of what steps to take next.'

Durbanville Library Career Expo has set a new standard for career guidance events, combining innovative formats with practical, hands-on information. The success of this year's run has already sparked discussions about making it an annual fixture in the library's calendar.

René Schoombee, Principal Librarian: Durbanville Library

Gender-based violence mural artwork transforms Delft Library



Earlier this year, the City of Cape Town's LIS department was approached by the Arts & Culture Branch to paint a mural at **Delft Library**.

The theme of the mural focused on gender-based violence (GBV) and was executed through a collaborative approach with participants as part of the Men's Programme run by the City Social Development and Early Childhood Development Directorate.

The area manager of Area Central, June Swartz, as well as the area head, Thandiwe Mtshengu, and the librarian-in-charge, Ashley Lewis, liaised with the City Arts & Culture Branch to facilitate the artwork to be painted. Upon agreement, painting commenced on 13 May and was completed four days later.

The GBV-themed artwork on the library wall plays a significant role in creating awareness of the subject in the community of Delft, which is plagued by one of the Western Cape's highest GBV statistics.

Ashley Lewis, Senior Librarian: Delft Library

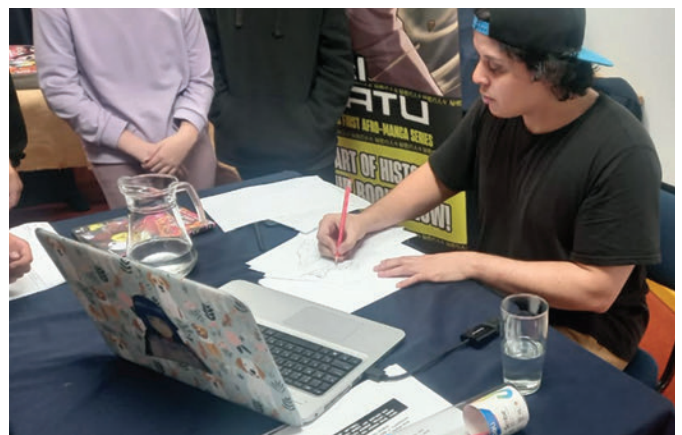
Manga and Comic Creators Clubs take off at Fish Hoek Library

The introduction of Manga to **Fish Hoek Library** has revitalised our teen section, sparking increased interest and activity. Manga, a popular form of Japanese comics, has been a favourite among teens and young adults for years. Recently, it experienced a surge in popularity, with US sales soaring by 400% since 2020, and it is the highest circulating item in the teen section at Fish Hoek Library.

To keep up with the excitement surrounding the genre, we launched a monthly Manga Madness book club at Fish Hoek Library. Though initial attendance was limited, it was nonetheless clear that we had a dedicated group of readers. To elevate our programme, we partnered with the Friends of Fish Hoek Library to host special events featuring local manga and comic artists as part of our 70th birthday celebrations, which were held in April this year.

One of our highlights was an interactive workshop led by Subi Bosa, a celebrated illustrator and author of children's picture books. Twenty-seven children participated, using Bosa's worksheets to create their own comic characters in a lively and engaging session. Parents subsequently demanded that we invite him back for a follow-up session.

For our teen audience, we brought in Ziyaad Rahman (Awali), an accomplished mangaka known for his Afro-manga, **Siri Watu**, which draws inspiration from African history. Rahman conducted a workshop on creating manga, covering everything from concept development to plotting and character design. With a drawing pad projected on a screen, he demonstrated live how to design characters and draw them from different angles. This workshop attracted 13 enthusiastic teens and generated a lot of excitement within the library.



Ziyaad Rahman (Awali) demonstrating how to draw characters in dynamic poses

Building on this momentum, we established the Manga and Comics Creators Club with the support of a local parent. This grouping now meets weekly, attracting 10 to 15 teens to the library every Tuesday afternoon. Members dive into creating their own stories, comparing artistic styles, discussing their favourite manga, and eagerly checking out new titles from our ever-growing manga section. The energy and creativity in the library are palpable, and we're thrilled to see our teen section buzzing with activity and imagination.

Mitchel Joffe Hunter, Librarian: Fish Hoek Library

Newly appointed librarians: Selection

Kwanele Thabede and Mbali Hadebe joined the Selection section in June. We are thrilled to have you on board, and we wish you all the best in this new chapter of your lives.

Cecilia Sani, Director: Western Cape Library Service



'I am Kwanele "Nqo" Thabede, an Alumnus of Durban University of Technology. I am a reserved and composed individual, yet I'm also inherently kind, approachable, and endlessly curious. It's this curiosity that propels me to continually seek out new knowledge and experiences. Outside of work,

I enjoy trying out new eateries and experimenting with new recipes at home. I am very excited about this opportunity and the challenges that it will bring.'



'My name is Mbali Hadebe, and I was born in Mtubatuba, a rural area in KwaZulu-Natal. My passion for books and learning began when I first visited a library in Grade 12 for an assignment, and this sparked a career path in Library and Information Studies. I have 9

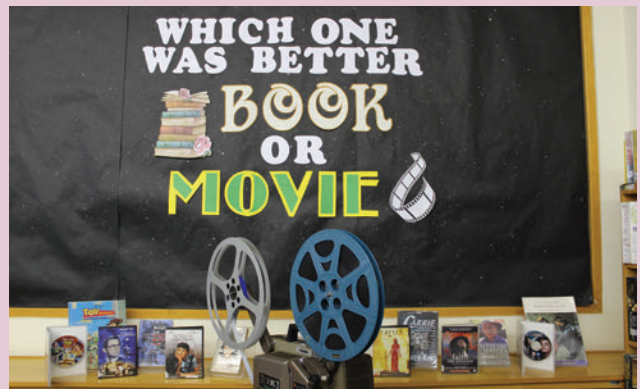
years of experience in academic, special, and public libraries. My most recent role was assistant librarian at eThekweni Municipality, where I served my service for five years. I am a wife and mother of two kids. I am excited to relocate to Cape Town to join my husband, who has been living here for seven years. I am eager to bring my skills and expertise to this new role, contribute to the Western Cape community, and continue learning and growing in my profession.'

miscellany | allerlei | iincwadi ezahlukeneyo

How to build your own displays

As librarians, we always look for innovative ways to get patrons reading. Having a themed display is a great way to showcase a library's collection; create awareness around different topics; entice visitors, and encourage the borrowing of items that are sometimes under-circulated. With a little imagination, paper and glue, anyone can assemble a stunning display to lure uncertain patrons. Here's how:

1. Find a suitable space.
2. Decide on a theme that's translatable into your available book stock (*back to school, the first day of spring, whodunit*, and so on).
3. Do some research on the internet for visual clues. Print out all the templates and pictures you will need for the display. Just bear in mind the copyright issues regarding the usage of certain downloaded photographs.
4. Cut out all the headline letters. To make them stand out more, glue them onto a bright sheet of paper and cut them out again, this time leaving a border. I used old book pages for the word *BOOK* in this display.
Tip: If you place a piece of self-adhesive tape on the back of the letters as a barrier between those and the Prestik, there won't be any greasy marks left on the letters, and you can use them again in future.



5. Collect all the bits and pieces you will need for the display (paper, glue, Prestik, and templates). Ask colleagues or community members for any extra items you may need to spice up the display and don't forget the books.
6. Arrange all the items in an eye-catching, standout manner.

For the display pictured above, I borrowed the 16mm film projector and a block loan of DVDs from the Film Library.

Sandra Kingswell, Librarian: Hospital Street Depot

How libraries are inspiring and empowering our communities



The library has definitely had an impact on my life, especially in my formative years. I was fortunate in that, at the preparatory school level already, our teachers had already introduced us to the library. We often visited the library as a class. My mom has also been a big influence in terms of my being a reader. I remember that we would often visit the library during school holidays. My mom enjoyed reading the magazines, and I enjoyed one title, in particular, *PC Magazine*. I mainly enjoyed reading encyclopaedias. I think I read every encyclopaedia in the library. Throughout my entire school career, I made use of the library, doing research and reading for fun. I can say that the library was a safe space for me, a place where I could gain infinite amounts of knowledge. The staff also played a big role, as they were friendly and knowledgeable regarding the subject matter. I would definitely recommend the library to everyone. I am a 'techie' myself, but I must admit that nothing beats the

personal touch of the library. The internet is not entirely reliable, in my opinion.

Stephan Marais, ICT Cadet, Robertson Library

Ek hou van die biblioteek vandat ek in Sub A, vandag se Graad 1, was. Vanaf dié vroeë onderdom het ek lidmaatskap en het weekliks ongeveer 6 boeke gelees. Dit het my aangespoor om 'n kursus in joernalistiek te volg, en vandaar af was ek geprikkel om aanmekeer inligting te verkry. Vandag nog geniet ek dit om wyd te lees en om ander te help met inligting.

Norman Steyn



Happy Valley Library is more than just my workplace. It holds a special place in my heart. Our library is a centre for life-long education, shared enrichment, cultural experiences, and information that is often necessary to me and others. It's simply a place where we can give back to the community and where we can come together. My favourite thing about working in the library is that I work closely with the community and have the opportunity to make a positive impact on people's lives. I love that I can help and provide information while also creating a fun, calm environment for members. Working in the library has helped me improve myself and grow as an individual. It has also allowed me to work more closely with the community and offer them support. I know that in the years to come, my time as a senior library assistant will be one of the brightest moments of my life. To me, working in the library means helping develop the skills of children and adults that they

need to succeed in life and achieve their goals so that they can fondly look back on their educational years. I hope I can still continue to contribute many more wonderful years at the library. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Marva Slingsers, Senior Library Assistant, Happy Valley Library

Waar anders kan 'n mens gaan as jy rustigheid soek en net ontspan? Die biblioteek natuurlik! Wanneer ek so bedruk voel, kan ek net kom lees en als is vergete. Boeke laat my lag, huil en ek beleef 'n ander wêreld. Ek is verskriklik baie lief vir lees. Ek is 'n boorling van Kaapstad, maar het nou Bonnievale toe verhuis. Met my aankoms het ek heel eerste by die biblioteek kom aansluit. Die personeel het my baie goed verwelkom. Hulle sal als in hulle vermoë doen om jou goeie diens te lewer. Dankie, **Happy Valley Biblioteek**, vir die lekker leesboeke en goeie diens. Julle is die beste!

Francina Hendricks





Dit is altyd 'n plesier om na die biblioteek te kom. Die personeel is altyd so vriendelik en baie behulpsaam. Ek voel so tuis wanneer ek hulle weekliks kom besoek. Die personeel sal altyd vra hoe dit gaan. Jy kan altyd raad kry by hulle. Hulle is net te dierbaar en *awesome*! Hulle sal als los waarmee hulle besig is as jy instap en het altyd 'n breë glimlag. Ek hou van die biblioteek en sy personeel is tops. Ek is so bly julle kan ons van hulp wees. Julle *rock*!

Nazlie Smith

Ek hou daarvan om biblioteek toe te kom, want dit is baie lekker stil. Ek hou daarvan om my huiswerk en leeswerk hier te kom doen. Die tannies en oom help ons graag as ons sukkel met huiswerk en lees. Ek geniet dit om deur al die boeke te gaan. Hier is so baie om van te kies. Ons maak elke week mooi goedjies by die biblioteek. Lees maak my baie slim. Dit sal altyd my gunstelingplek wees. Ek is baie lief vir die tannies.

Chloë Witbooi

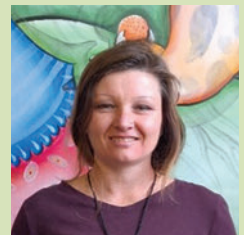


Ek hou daarvan om elke dag biblioteek toe te kom. Ek bly langs die biblioteek en is so bly daarvoor. Dit is so lekker stil hier. Dit is my gunstelingplek. Al die boeke kan jy gratis lees. Ons kan ook die internet gebruik en Tannie Marva laat ons elke week mooi goedjies maak en speletjies speel. As ek sukkel met my take, help hulle my ook. Ek kan ook nou gratis rekenaarlesse kry.

Amy Jacobs

I would just like to say thank you to **Montagu Library** and its staff. I always feel welcome, and the service is great; it's a peaceful space away from home. My kids also really enjoy their time sitting and looking through all the lovely books or just colouring in. And enjoying the awesome fantasy murals on the walls. The library is clean and well-maintained. Thank you to everyone involved.

Elisha Baker Prinsloo



Dear **Hermon Library**,

I am writing to express my heartfelt gratitude for the exceptional service you provide to me through the library. Your commitment to fostering love and learning is truly commendable, and I am continually inspired by the dedication of your staff and volunteers. The library has been a haven for me, offering a sanctuary where I can escape into the pages of a good book or immerse myself in research for personal or professional growth. The resources and programmes you offer have enriched my life in countless ways, and I am so grateful for the role the library plays in our community. I would like to extend a special thank you to Hildegard Adonis and staff for their support and assistance. Their knowledge and enthusiasm have made my visits to the library even more enjoyable and rewarding. Please convey my appreciation to you and your team. In a world that is constantly changing, the library remains a steadfast pillar of our community, providing access to information, fostering literacy, and promoting a love of learning for all ages. Thank you for everything you do to make our library a welcoming and enriching place for everyone.

With sincere thanks,
Jeremy Brander



Our famed ‘Father of the Archives’

by Gustav Hendrich

‘**T**he advancement of the Archives mattered at all times more than his own personal prestige’ was the fitting remark by the University of Cape Town librarian, RFM Immelman, on a pivotal archivist in South Africa. For much of the first half of the twentieth century, the name of Dr Colin Graham Botha was synonymous with that of the Archives. His contribution to the creation of an archive grounded in archival science was colossal. As an admirer of the first Chief Archivist of the Union of South Africa, Immelman hailed him as the ‘Father of the Archives, the real pioneer of the South African Archives.’

Botha’s legacy has faded into oblivion in the contemporary South African archival environment; other than a photo portrait of him in the staff corridor at the Western Cape Archives and Records Service (WCARS). With this year marking 80 years since his retirement in August 1944, it is nonetheless significant to shed light on this extraordinary pioneer of the early archival service. Notwithstanding his fame in promoting not only the functioning of archives, but also the conduct of historical research,



WCARS, A1813, no. 151 The young Dr CG Botha



WCARS A1813, no. 151 Dr Botha at his office in the Cape Archives Depot

he would, according to Immelman, 'throughout his life remained a humble and unassuming man.'²

Apart from his academic appearance with his round spectacles, Botha was in many ways a people's person. He was an active member of several organisations, most notably the Historical Monuments Commission, the Most Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem in the British Realm, the Freemasons, and the *Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns*.

Since he was situated at the former Cape Archives Depot, the WCARS in Roeland Street is today the proud custodian of the Dr Colin Graham Botha Collection, housed as an Accession, containing some of his valuable publications, personal diaries and correspondences, providing a detailed record of his life.

Early voluntary work

Being the youngest son of seven children and after his birth on 15 August 1883, in Knysna, his father, who preached at the Dutch Reformed Church, Rev Michiel Christiaan Botha, and his wife, Elizabeth

Mary Young, whom he had met while he was on a visit to Edinburgh in Scotland, moved to Cape Town, where the former had accepted a new job at the St Stephen's Church. It was evident even in his childhood that the young Colin was a gifted scholar. After matriculating from the Normal College School in Cape Town, he joined the Law Department of the Civil Service in 1901 and obtained the Cape Law Certificate of the University of the Cape of Good Hope.

Despite the young Botha's intention of becoming a magistrate, circumstances were to change after he was transferred to the Master of the Supreme Court in 1906. This building housed some historical records, and it was there that he encountered a new, little-studied field. Gradually, his curiosity for archival records increased, which were then located in the basement of the Houses of Parliament. The first Keeper of the Archives, Rev HCV Leibbrandt, encouraged him to discover the archival records of the early 17th and 18th centuries. Regardless of the efforts by Leibbrandt and his predecessor, Dr George McCall Theal, the state of the archives was still chaotic.

Hardly anybody, except for academics and politicians, has ever visited the Archives. Botha, though, realised the historical value contained in these records. Almost unbeknownst to his department, he ventured to the Archives after hours and on Saturday afternoons to assist in sorting and arranging the records voluntarily. After Leibbrandt's retirement in 1908, Botha was set to continue with his gratuitous work. He compiled a report, which he submitted to the Master Office, and from observing his work, they were so astonished by his efficiency, that it was decided to transfer him to the Colonial Office.³ Viewed in hindsight, it would be this experience and the influence of Leibbrandt that would prove invaluable in his later life.

The Colonial Office then ordered Botha to tour the Cape Colony's older magistrates' offices, such as the one at Seymour, to observe and make suggestions for its record-keeping. It appeared he gained a penchant for travel, since in 1911 he requested six months' leave for Europe to attend the Queen's Coronation. Instead, it was clear that he visited the government archives and state libraries in Great

Britain and other European countries — at his own expense. He thereby became acquainted with the methods of managing archival repositories. After returning to South Africa, he reported back on his observations and made suggestions to the interim Archives Commission in 1908, then serving as a platform for Botha to make invaluable inputs. His report and plea for the consolidation and classification of archives persuaded the government under the then Prime Minister, John X Merriman, to appoint Botha as the officer in charge of the Cape Archives in April 1912.⁴

Government support of the archives came to a standstill during the First World War. A determined Botha continued working, only with the part-time assistance of a messenger. He collected records from government departments, sorted, weeded, and catalogued them, as well as binding and repairing damaged documents. For the standards of the day, his laborious efforts were exemplary. The conviction for his work was perhaps already made clear in a remark penned in July 1919, which stated that, 'among a country's richest treasures are its Archives.'⁵

Apart from a personal setback in the death of his wife owing to illness in 1918, leaving him heartbroken, he continued unabatedly to uplift the early archives. He pressed for more government funding by commencing with writings on the necessity of archives as the backbone of historical research.

Chief Archivist of the Union of South Africa

Botha was appointed as the Chief Archivist of the Union of South Africa in October 1919, a moment that he noted in his diary with relief that 'my work was recognised at last.'⁶ His appointment provided him with significant leverage to improve the country's archives. Apart from the Cape Town Archives, he also became responsible for the establishment of the four provincial archives of the Union of South Africa.

To gain further insight into archives abroad, the government requested, this time at their expense, that he visit Europe, the United States, and Canada for a period of 13 months. This visit

proved to be of immense value as well as presented the opportunity to accompany the High Commissioner for South Africa in London, Sir Reginald Blanckenberg, as private secretary, to the very first Assembly of the League of Nations in Geneva in 1920.⁷ The knowledge gained during his visits to the various archives, such as the British National Archives and the Rijksarchief in the Netherlands, would henceforth be applied in South Africa.

Botha's reputation as a 'pioneer archivist' became apparent. Meanwhile, the sheer increase in records caused the government to approach him for the formal management of archives. As the Chief Archivist, he impressed upon the government to draft the first legislation, presented as an elaborate Memorandum/Draft Bill.⁸ Yet, prior to that, Botha compiled a general synopsis of the 'Rules and Regulations on the Public use of the Records and Documents in the Cape Archives,' of which many of the regulations were already being enforced. Corresponding with the Archives Commission in

September 1921, Dr Botha emphasised the need for properly trained personnel because '... as soon as the financial position allows, the building and preservation of the Archives should be entrusted to specially trained men and should be placed under the control of the Chief Archivist.' He stressed the often-lamentable position of the government and stated that 'the main point, which demands immediate attention is the position of the Archives Department as part of the general administration and its relation to other departments.'⁹

Dr Botha was disillusioned about the condition of the archives in the interior, particularly those of the Orange Free State and Pretoria Archives. He urged the government that, 'without any further delay steps should be taken to have all the volumes lying there properly shelved and catalogued. The necessity for this is so urgent that even under present circumstances it would justify the incurrence of considerable expense, but fortunately the work to be done would only involve the



WCARS, A1813, no. 151 Dr Botha working in the strongroom

appointment of half a dozen temporary clerks, and in due time, the Archivist might find it possible to recruit his permanent staff from these temporary clerks.¹⁰ Evidently, Dr Botha's recommendations and draft legislation were accepted and finally culminated in the Parliament's passing of the first Public Archives Act 9 of 1922.

On a service delivery level, Dr Botha achieved much by providing more uniformity to the provincial repositories. The need for improved storage space was a constant issue, especially during the interwar years, when the number of documents skyrocketed. In response to the overcrowded, dire state of the Archives at the Cape, an appeal by Dr Botha and the Archives Commission was made to purchase the university building on Queen Victoria Street. In 1934, this majestic dome-shaped building was opened as the Cape Archives Depot, containing strongrooms, elaborate wooden shelves, and a reading room — thus all the required components of a functional archival repository.

Attention was given to the physical building and the quality of the work rendered. The newly appointed staff was trained to compile inventories, lists, sorting, and cataloguing. This marked progress became known as the 'renaissance period' of the Archives. To his delight, Botha embarked on his third tour in 1938 to the United States and Canada to gather advanced knowledge and strengthen the organisation of archives back home.

The science of archives

Botha excelled as an archivist. Not merely in his dedication to its administration, but through the bolstering of its functional advancement, of what he called its 'scientific' development. On 5 July 1937, he delivered a remarkable speech as the president of the South African Association for the Advancement of Sciences in Windhoek. His address was considered a milestone for Southern Africa, focusing on the value of archives. He declared that

archival practice in advanced countries was indeed recognised as a science because of its 'systematised, organised, and formulated knowledge.'¹¹

Contrasted to the discipline of general scientists, he argued that 'the archivist performs similar functions with the documents he collects. He arranges, classifies, describes, and indexes his collection.' With improved methods and technologies, there were no more excuses for the older image of repositories as mere dusty places since the 'days of keeping Archives in a haphazard way had gone.' He objected against the established ignorance of the earlier state and citizenry towards archives. In elaborating on the 'science of archives', he mentioned three main elements of crucial importance: firstly, the bringing together under one administration of all archives not in current use; secondly, the efficient and scientific classification and general administration of documents so centralised; and lastly, the custody of the archives under competent officials.¹² Dr Botha highlighted that the activities



WCARS A1813, no. 151 Dr Botha observing microfilms

of the archives, its administration, and science are virtually identical.

On the arrangement and classification of archives, Dr Botha stated that there is one mainstream principle, which the French called *principe de provenance* with *respect des fonds*, meaning a system of arranging public archives whereby every document could be traced to its office or body of origin. After its arrangement, it would become the archivist's primary duty 'to take adequate precautions for the safeguarding and custody of his archives and against those destructive agencies to which records may be subjected. He is responsible for the internal archival economy. The condition *sine qua non* for their preservation is the protection in fire-proof, well-ventilated, and dry rooms.' According to Dr Botha, the physical building set to house documents was key since it had to ensure long-term preservation. The 'physical defense' of the archival record, as he emphasised, was each archivist's fundamental obligation.¹³

He continued to explain that the second duty of the archivist was equally, if not more, important. It is the

obligation of the archivist 'to see to the efficient and scientific classification and prepare lists, inventories, and catalogues for their easy accessibility by all who wish to consult them.'

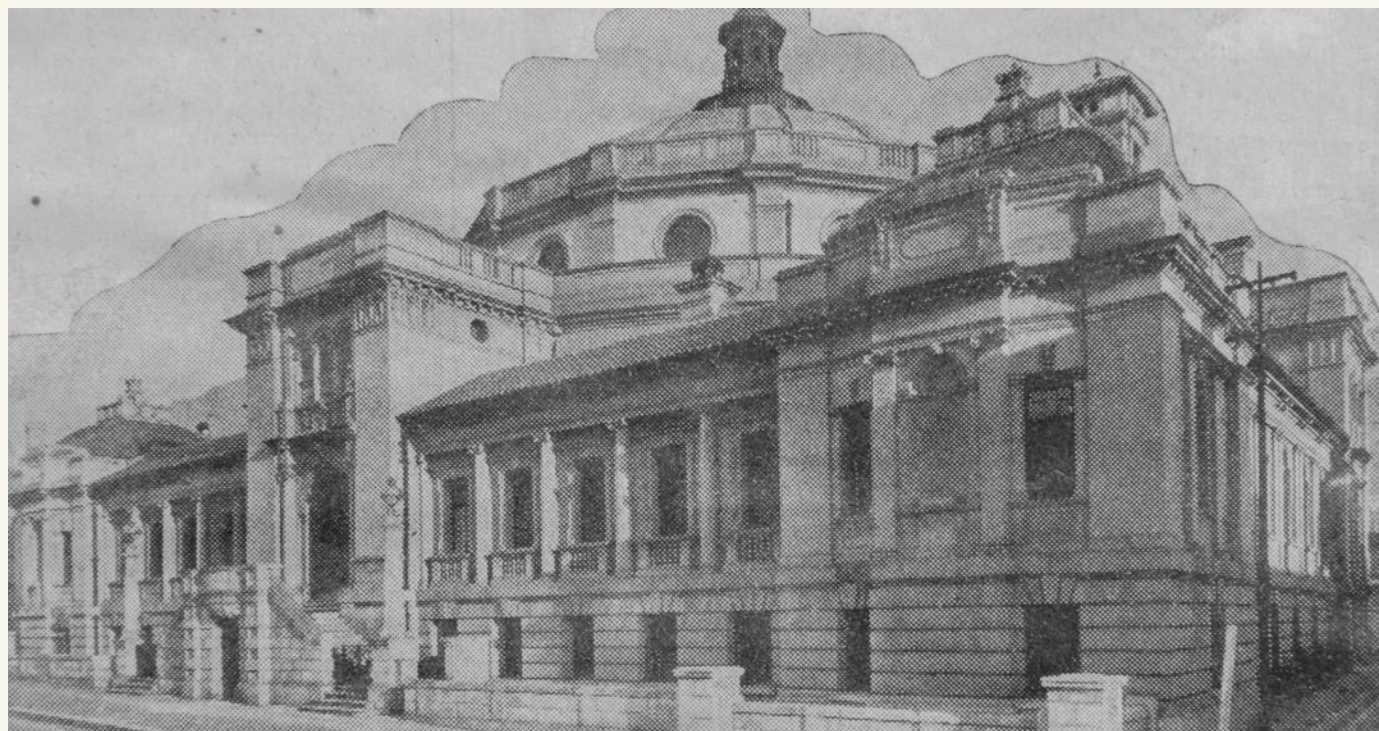
Before concluding his address, Botha discussed the records of the early Cape Colony and a case study of its road development to illustrate the usefulness of such historical records. He expressed his optimism about the growth of the provincial archives, and the addition of equipment and protective strongrooms that cost tens of thousands of pounds. In addition, the increase in overall archival personnel was praiseworthy, demonstrating the exponential growth in size of the Archives as presented in the table below:

Year	Personnel	Expenditure
1919	5	£2 805
1924	8	£2 863
1929	18	£4 520
1934	30	£7 644
1937	42	£11 000

From his experiences from his overseas visits, Botha made a further positive remark that, 'within the British Commonwealth this country had the advantage of studying systems of similar institutions in older and more experienced countries. It avoided the pitfalls made by them in the past, took the best from each country and adopted this to suit the conditions in South Africa.' For evolving modern repositories in South Africa, his message was clear: 'an archives office is not merely an administrative one but is also a scientific institution.'¹⁴

A lifetime devoted to the Archives

As a prolific writer, Dr Colin Graham Botha was, from the onset, striving to popularise public archives by publishing numerous writings, books, and newspaper articles. This invariably attests to his tenacity in instilling an interest in South African history and its archives. Three of his most noteworthy publications were **Place names in the Cape Province; The public archives of South Africa, 1652-1910** and **Social**



WCARS A1813, no. 14 The Cape Archives Depot in Queen Victoria Street, circa 1934

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18. WCARS. A1813. Dr CG Botha Collection, no. 14. Biographical notes..., p. ix.
19. WCARS. A1813. Dr CG Botha Collection, no. 19. Newspaper cuttings. *Cape Argus*, 23 March 1959, 'Cameraman honoured'.
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life in the Cape colony in the 18th century.¹⁵ Throughout his career, Botha published several highly-acclaimed writings on the Dutch East India Company from 1651; the British colonial period after 1806; other local subjects such as the Somerset Hospital; the medical profession, and not forgetting his legal education in law, his writings on Roman Dutch Law at the Cape.

Botha witnessed a marked change in attitude towards the study of history in South Africa, since before the 20th century there was a noticeable disinterest from the mainstream public in the value of history, atrophied by merely elementary teachings at school level. Concerted efforts made by the opening of archives, he believed, would enable the public to consult documents, kindling further interest in exploring the past. Archives were, in Botha's view, the 'recorded image of the past.'¹⁶

In an address in 1924, he spoke on the public archives' value, noting that effective cataloging, compilation of lists, and inventories made the retrieval of documents easier. The researcher and historian were now empowered to construct a comprehensive, albeit trustworthy, account of the past. Regarded as one of his famous remarks on public archives, Botha then referred to archives as '[a] great storehouse of material for the historian, many of the records possess historical value, for though they are dead administratively,

they are vital historically. With the passing of time, the value of these documents increased, and as other sources from which information might be gathered were gradually lost or destroyed, they became relatively more important.'¹⁷

During his time as Chief Archivist, aside from his day-to-day administrative work, Dr Botha also committed to lecture tours of the repository. He also became a prominent radio personality, with a multitude of broadcasts on archives and South African history delivered in his free time. As a result of his broadcasting and elaborate writings, Immelman described him as 'the interpreter of the Archives.'¹⁸

During the Second World War, Botha served as a recruiting officer before being promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, often being referred to by the nickname of 'Colonel Graham Botha.' Serving in the oldest regiment of the Cape as commanding officer of the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Rifles, his disciplined personality was prevalent. As the war neared its end and his retirement was imminent, the government requested an additional year of service, after which Dr Botha retired as Chief Archivist in 1944, which rounded out a career spanning an astonishing 43 years in the civil service.

His passion for the archives remained unextinguishable. He tried and tested the first microfilms and ultraviolet ray

cabinet, delivered speeches, and in March 1959 unveiled a memorial plaque in Long Street at the studio of the renowned photographer, Arthur Elliott, whose photographic collection is until today regarded as a prized asset to the repository.¹⁹ For his academic achievements, Botha was awarded two honorary doctorates; one from the University of Cape Town in 1943 and the other from Witwatersrand in 1952. In 1968, his writings were combined in a publication entitled **Collected works** spanning three parts, demonstrating the vastness of his literature.

He divorced his second wife in 1932 but married for a third time, yet she died, leaving him as a widower.

After a fulfilling life, Dr Colin Graham Botha passed away on 1 February 1973 at the age of 90. The acclaim for his tremendous contribution to archives in South Africa already came to the fore during a tribute by Immelman on his 80th birthday when, it was concluded that, 'South African Archives may undoubtedly be considered a monument to his work, as they certainly were his creation in the first instance.'²⁰

Dr Gustav Hendrich is an archivist in the Western Cape Archives and Records Service



Waking up strange after encounters with my literary heroes

by Ben Williams





Against conventional advice, I've met many of my heroes — literary heroes, that is. By the dozen, in fact: enough to fill the pages of a bestiary, and what a haphazard assortment of semi-mythical creatures that would make.

I learnt quickly that they're ordinary folk, one's literary heroes, lacking horns, but all the while sharing a quality that took me a long time to put my finger on. I now explain it like this: a stranger lives inside each of them, in a kind of emergency situation that is barely tolerable. The status of this stranger may change over time — outrage at its presence can become grudging acknowledgment, or even something akin to friendship — but the emergency itself, the fact of the stranger, never abates.

My pet theory is that this uneasy cohabitation leads to a quality of

personality that helps drive the writer to pre-eminence — alongside, of course, their glittering work. A person produces a certain vibration when a stranger dwells within. Others pick up on it.

By contrast, I've also known writers aplenty whose internal guest rooms for strangers are empty — and what's interesting about them is that their books, well crafted though they might be, suffer steeper odds against achieving acclaim.

Finally, there are the writers who attempt to invent their strangers, conjure the presence of another to fill their forlorn inner chambers, but this mainly leads to a whiff of mould, of something painted over, a grim mark that the ideas and the work might, in the end, be rot.

Back to my heroes, the possessed — or perhaps 'possessed' is the wrong word, better would be 'the attended', by an attendant who never leaves. You see, when you share a personal moment with one, sometimes the stranger who is also present during that moment has an effect on you. After the meeting, perhaps followed by a drink alone and a restless night, you yourself wake up strange.

I once shared a private taxi with Mzwakhe Mbuli. I had been frittering away the time with small talk when the



Mzwakhe Mbuli

car turned on to Beach Road in Sea Point — we were headed to the SABC's recording studio there. The Atlantic sparkled beyond the Promenade, and I uttered some triviality about an administrative problem I faced. The poet looked at me wearily, like I was his last remaining fool to suffer, then said a single word that was so warmly given it has rung in my ears like a distant ship horn in the fog ever since. 'Overcome!' he commanded. I've woken up strange a thousand times to this sound.

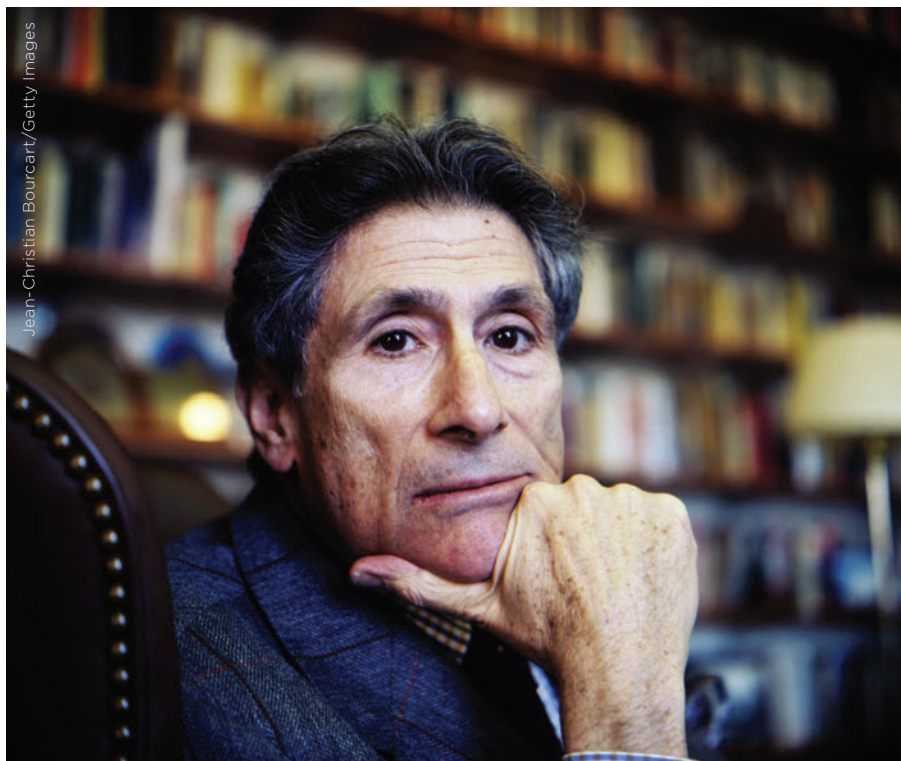
I was invited to lunch with Arundhati Roy in Joburg's northern suburbs, during one of her book tours. As our small party discovered, she can speak merrily and at length on any subject — a brilliant raconteuse as well as a brilliant writer. She and I walked through the restaurant together, and she produced a few giddily unrepeatable truths about life on planet Earth that caused a glowing 3D blueprint to bloom in my mind, for seeing the world anew, in all its moral dimensionality. It was a staggering revelation, especially considering she was giggling the entire time. How strange it made me feel — how often I've woken to the ghostly memory of that floating blueprint.

I was allowed to lurk in eTV's Cape Town studios when Edward Said came in for an interview. I left strange, not because of anything he said to me, but because he mentioned the name of my then-partner, who worked at the station, on screen as I watched — shifting in his seat, waiting for the interview to start, looking for someone to assist him. It seemed to me a moment that one should put in a jar like a lightning bug. Occasionally I wake up strange, remembering the light in the jar.

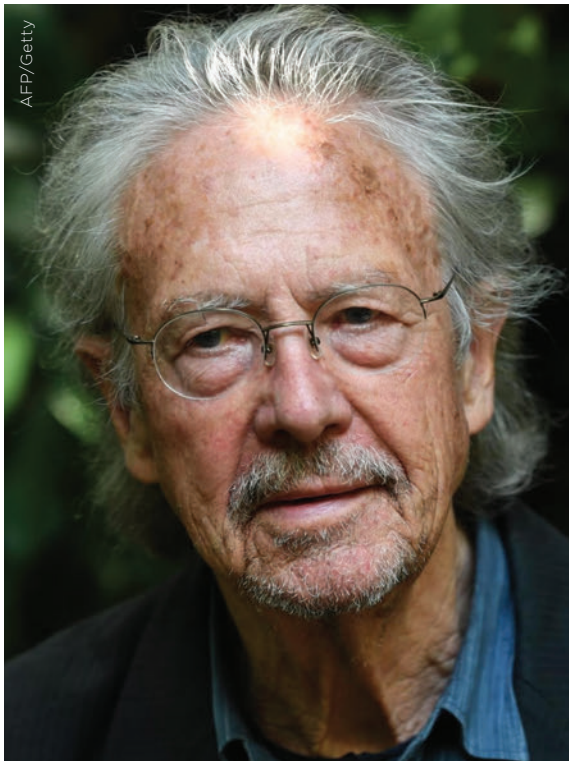
Sometimes the presence of the stranger leaps up at me from a book, whether I have met its author or not. This happened long ago with Peter Handke, the Austrian novelist and playwright who received the Nobel Prize in 2019. Notable is that, before the Swedish Academy made its decision, he had for more than a decade prior been known as a Bosnian genocide revisionist. (He spoke at Slobodan Milošević's funeral, for pity's sake!) A literary hero first, though, for me.



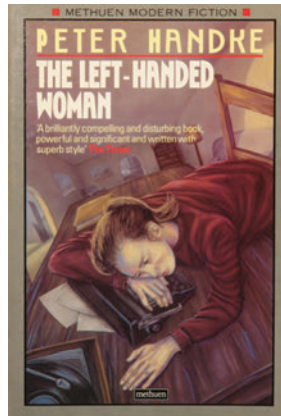
Arundhati Roy



Edward Said



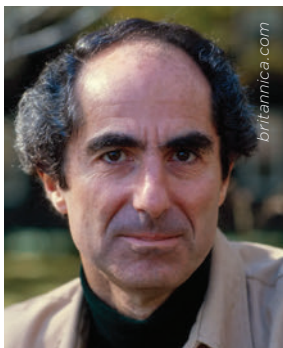
Peter Handke



Amos Oz



VS Naipaul



Philip Roth



Jacques Derrida

The book of his that made me wake up strange, **The left-handed woman**, reappeared in my study recently, as I unpacked it from another box taken out of storage. There it lay on the cold floor, kicked cravenly into the 'maybe' pile: the work of a future denialist. But also: the mind that crafted an image (in translation) that I have carted around for 30 years, in relation to moments of emotional distress. The woman in the story, having just watched her ex drive away, 'went to the coat rack beside the door and thrust her head in among the coats'. Reading that phrase for the first time changed me for good. I'm pleased never to have come near its author and his stranger, though.

Amos Oz, VS Naipaul and Philip Roth also came out of the box, with their immaculate images and phrases, which have turned me strange at various points over the years. If I had the opportunity, would I meet them, and brush against the strangers they bore along? Probably. Damn. There: in my bestiary, writers — and their strangers — may be found for everyone to loathe and love, including me.

Jacques Derrida, the final boss of writers, was not in the box, but that does not pose a problem: I met him in Cape Town in 1998. Add him to the bestiary. He'd arrived to give a lecture on forgiveness, and typically his conclusion tied us into Gordian knots. Forgiveness achieves its highest purpose, he observed, when the acts being forgiven are unforgivable. I spoke to him briefly, snapped his photo, then replayed his lecture in my mind for hours. Talk about waking up strange, after hearing that. His words ring down the years to the present moment, calling us to pull our heads out from among the coats.

I wonder if many of the others I've noted here would go for that, though. I'm unsure. The strangers within seem to move in other directions. Perhaps I should sleep on it, and wake to see if estrangement is indeed our fate, or if there's any scope left for turning sympathetically strange, yet again.

Ben Williams is the publisher of The Johannesburg Review of Books. This article was first published on dailymaverick.co.za on 23 November 2023



Aan die woord: Sidney Gilroy by kykNET se *Die Groot Ontbyt*

Op 8 Maart vanjaar gesels die skrywer, Sidney Gilroy, met die aanbieders, Jennifer Myburgh en Pierre Breytenbach, oor sy jongste pennevrug, **Bloedsomer**, op Die GROOT Ontbyt wat op kykNET uigesaai word. Hier volg 'n geredigeerde transkripsie van die gesprek oor die boek, sy karakters en sy liefde vir biblioteke.

Jennifer Myburgh (JM): Wat 'n bederf, want Sidney Gilroy kuier by ons en ons gesels natuurlik oor hom en hierdie boek, **Bloedsomer**. Hy is 'n bekende Afrikaanse skrywer. Goeiemôre, Sidney, en welkom.

Sidney Gilroy (SG): Goeiemôre. Ek is bly om hier te wees.

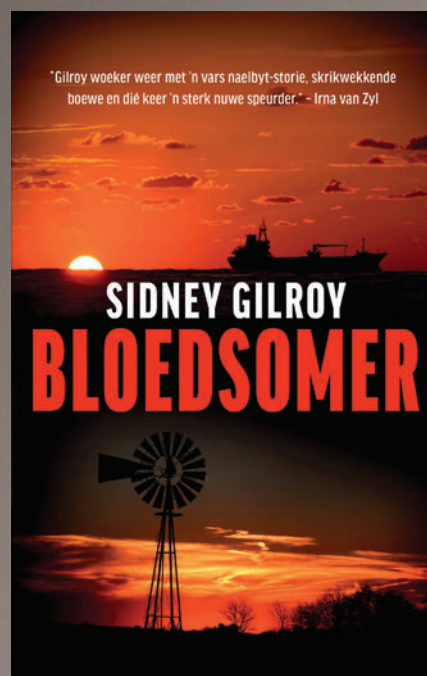
JM: Sidney, voordat ons by die boek kom, wil ek eers by jou weet: Waar het hierdie liefde vir skryf by jou begin?

SG: Jong, van 'n jong ouderdom af het ek gelees. En ek het in die platteland grootgeword. Daar gebeur nie veel daar nie, maar daar is 'n biblioteek. Dus het almal in ons huis *bib*-kaarte gehad. Almal: grootouers, my ouers — lees was maar in ons familie.

JM: Weet jy, ek is mal oor die feit dat jy sê jy het nog 'n *bib*-kaart. Ek is altyd so verbaas as jy met party mense praat en hulle sê hulle was nog nooit in 'n biblioteek nie.

Pierre Breytenbach (PB): Dis 'n skreiende skande!

JM: Ek kan dit nie eintlik verstaan nie. Daar is niks wat my partykeer so rustig maak soos 'n biblioteek nie.



PB: Die reuk en stilte van 'n biblioteek...

JM: Ek weet. Dit is fantasties.

SG: Niemand pla jou nie. Jy hoef nie 'n telefoon by jou te hê nie. Die beste van alles is dit is gratis.

JM: Nou presies. Sidney, sonder om te veel weg te gee, vertel ons van **Bloedsomer**. Waartoe gaan hierdie boek?

SG: Jong, **Bloedsomer** is 'n skop-skiets-en-donner-boek, maar dit is ook 'n diep menslike boek. Die hoofkarakter, ons speurder, is hierdie keer iemand

splinternuut. Dis iemand wat my lesers dalk in my vorige boek al ontmoet het, Petunia Moraleng. En Petunia is haar rang kwyt. Sy is nou nie meer kaptein nie, sy is nou 'n konstabel. En sy moet die Vrystaat verruil vir die Suid-Kaap. Sy dink sy gaan net rubberstempels op vorms stempel en vakansiegangers van die strand afjaag. En toe vind iemand 'n lyk op die strand.

JM: O, ja?

PB: Daar is mense wat sê hierdie boek is verskriklik grusaam.

SG: Jong, daar is dele wat 'n bietjie bloederig is, en dele wat jou gaan ontstel, maar ek waarborg jou daar is dele wat jou gaan laat lag, en dele wat jou selfs 'n traan gaan laat pik.

PB: Maar dit is speurverhale in Suid-Afrika... 'n Mens wil so half sê: Dit is mos maar eintlik ons ding deesdae, nê? Die mense is mal daarvoor.

SG: Die rede daarvoor is dat daar altyd iets, wat nie altyd in die werklike lewe gebeur nie, in 'n speurverhaal of *krimmie*. 'n Misdaad word opgelos.



Sidney Gilroy (links) gesels met die aanbieders Jennifer Myburgh en Pierre Breytenbach

Of 'n skuldige gaan tronk toe. Of iemand word gevang.

JM: Jy noem dit nou. Een van die temas in die boek handel oor 'n korrupte regering, of regerings wat gefaal het. Hoekom het jy besluit om juis oor daardie temas te gesels?

SG: Ek wil graag my boeke op die realiteit grond. My verhale moet vir lesers relevant wees. Baie van hoe ek my karakters skep en vanwaar ek my stories kry, is maar wat ons daaglik in die koerante en so aan sien. Maar ons het ook baie onsensitief daaroor geword. Ons sien dit te veel. Met 'n boek soos **Bloedsomer**, kan ek dit nou na 'n groter verhoog toe neem en die verhaal groter maak as wat dit in die koerant is. Jy kan 'n bietjie met jou verbeelding in fiksie speel. So kan ek die verhaal omdop en anders en vars vir die leser bied.

JM: Sjoe, ek dink dit is so mooi. Ons praat gereeld oor die kunste — meer oor teater spesifiek — en hoe dit half iets sê van die samelewing, of jou iets moet leer en so aan. Jy kry jy dit tog reg om dit met jou boek ook te doen. Jy noem nou die feit dat ons so half

onsensitief geraak het vir dinge, en tog, alhoewel dit fiksie is, kyk na wat in die samelewing gebeur. Ons lees dit in koerante en is uitgesproke daaroor. Dit wys jou met alle kunsvorms kan ons hierdie temas aanspreek. Ek dink deel van wat kuns in die algeheel so opwindend maak, is die feit dat ons hierdie temas kan aanspreek.

SG: Natuurlik. 'n Skrywer se werk is om die ontkenning na die lig te bring. Ons moet dinge waaroor ons nie wil praat nie en nie met mekaar wil gesels nie, vir jou in 'n boek aanbied. Dit maak dit verteerbaarder. Dit maak dit makliker vir jou om oor 'n baie swaar tema soos haweloosheid of familiegeweld of afwesige vaders in 'n boek te lees. In 'n boek is daar afsluiting; dus is daar groei vir die karakters. Dit gebeur nie altyd in die werklike lewe nie. 'n Boek is 'n tydmasjien. Dit is 'n manier om die wêreld deur iemand anders se oë te kan sien — en dalk net ook 'n bietjie meer oor jouself te leer.

PB: Soos die uitdrukking lui... jy skryf 'n ding los. As 'n mens nou so van die regte wêreld praat, is jy nie bekommerd dat iemand dalk bietjie meer daarin

gaan lees as wat hulle moet nie? Dan, jy weet nooit, die volgende oomblik SMS hulle vir jou 'n doodsdreigement of steek 'n posbus voor jou huis aan die brand. Is jy nie bekommerd oor sulke goed nie?

SG: Ek gaan eerlik met jou wees. Ek is 'n klein bietjie bekommerd. In **Bloedsomer** neem ek nogal die idee van 'n korrupte regering tot die uiterste. En die boek is nou maar net 'n paar dae op die rak. Wie weet, dalk wag hier nog iemand vir my net hier om die hoek op die straat. Maar nee, ek dink daar moet daarvoor geskryf word. Ek dink dit moet na die voorgrond gebring word. Laat mense nie net daarvoor kla nie, maar ook daarvoor praat. Hulle moet met oplossings vorendag probeer kom.

JM: Jy het vroeër genoem — en Pierre het dit ook genoem — dat daar 'n paar gruweltonale wat beskryf word, in die boek is, maar die boek laat jou ook huil, en dit laat jou dink aan jou menswees. Is hierdie 'n boek wat enigiemand kan lees?

SG: Natuurlik. Dit is nie net vir *krimmie*-lesers nie. Ek is 'n karaktergedrewe

skrwyer; dus skep ek my karakters heel eerste. Vir my is die kern van die karakter altyd in die hart — wat hulle wil bereik in die lewe; waarvoor hulle hoop; wat hulle vrees; wat hulle bangmaak, is vir my altyd die belangrikste. Jy gaan baie sterk karakters, veral vroulike karakters, in **Bloedsomer** raaklees.

PB: Dit is vir my lekker. Dat — ek gaan dit nou maar sê — 'n Afrikaanse wit man 'n swart vrou se karakter ten diepste kan beskryf. En dat jy dit waag. En dat jy dit onbeskroomd en onbeskaamd, met al die diepte en sensitiwiteit wat daarby betrokke is, doen. Petunia se karakter — kan ek dit sê — wat ons in haar sien, is eintlik 'n

bietjie van ons almal. Dit is drome wat verdwyn; dit is 'n poging om beter te word; dis om jou, as mens, weer terug te kry; om jou waarde weer terug te kry. Dis ons almal — dit is 'n stryd, nè?

SG: Daarin lê die geheim. Ek as 'n skrwyer het wat 'n mens noem, 'n kreatiewe lisensie. Ek kan oor enigiemand en enigiets skryf, maar dit maak dit nie maklik nie. Vir my, om myself in 'n ander kultuur, 'n ander ras, in te skryf is ongelooflik moeilik. Maar ek het in my navorsing gevind dat na alles, soek ons almal maar net 'n herberg. Ons soek veiligheid. Ons soek 'n plek om ons kinders groot te maak. Onder dit alles is ons eintlik maar dieselfde. Dus vat ek daardie

eienskappe van 'n karakter en ek gaan skep 'n nuwe karakter. En die velkleur of die ras is uiteindelik net 'n bysaak.

JM: Dit is nie die menswees nie.

SG: Dis die mens wat tel.

JM: Hoe lank vat dit jou om so 'n boek te skryf? Hoeveel navorsing gaan daarin? Hoe lank het jy aan hierdie een geskryf?

SG: Bloedsomer het in sy eerste formaat so ses maande geneem om te skryf. Maar dit gaan nie altyd so nie. My vorige boek het ek in vier dae geskryf. Die navorsing opsig self is soms jare se navorsing. En baie kere is dit maar net dinge wat jy raaklees of 'n onderwerp waaroor jy meer wil weet. Dit soort van kolk in jou onderbewussyn tot jy die behoefte het om meer en meer daarvan uit te vind. En uiteindelik eindig dit in 'n boek.

JM: Ek weet hierdie een is nou net op die rak; dus is hy splinternuut, maar is daar al klaar planne vir 'n volgende boek?

SG: Definitief. Jy moet verstaan, Petunia is 'n hele nuwe reeks wat nou begin. Die lesers ken my as die skrwyer van die Solly Mtembo-reeks. Solly kry weer 'n boek en beslis — hierdie *chillipit* van Petunia Moralleng gaan ook weer 'n boek kry.

JM: Wanneer gaan daardie boek tweede boek verskyn?

SG: Jong, jy sal maar die pers moet dophou. En my ses maande gee om hom te skryf.

PB: Jy is nou hier in die noorde, besig met 'n boektoer en dies meer. Dis is 'n moeilike besigheid vir 'n skrwyer, nè. Dit gaan nie net altyd oor die woord nie, dit gaan somtyds bietjie oor die vermaaklikheidswaarde ook, nè?

SG: Ons skrwyers is maar 'n bietjie skaam en teruggetrokke, die meeste van ons. So 'n boektoer vaar in onbekende waters, maar dit is altyd lekker om die lesers te ontmoet en hulle terugvoering te kry, met hulle te gesels en hulle in hulle oë te kan kyk en te vra wat hulle toe werklik van my boek gedink het

Gilroy sal op 14 Augustus by die Worcester-biblioteek inloer.



Celebrating 70 years of Fish Hoek Public Library

by the Research Section



FISH HOEK LIBRARY



On Tuesday, 23 April, Fish Hoek Public Library celebrated its 70th anniversary.

The library was founded on Thursday, 1 April 1954, following a written plea by the Fish Hoek Women's Association to their local town council in 1953.

The request came in light of the establishment of a provincial library service in the Western Cape. The council obliged, and a single room was made available to house the fledgling book room in the town engineer's building, after which the Western Cape

Provincial Library Service supplied the library with 1,000 books prior to the grand opening.

The unveiling of the small 'sardine tin' library was chaotic, as the queue of prospective members stretched right around the block as they waited to be registered.

Four years later, Fish Hoek Public Library moved to a new and more spacious building on Beach Road, which was officially opened on 23 June 1958.

In 1988, the library relocated to its current location at Central Circle, which was officially opened by the then-provincial administrator Gene Louw, in June of that year. The new 1,000 m² library building, planned and designed by architect Barry Wood, cost R930,000 to construct (of which R300,000 was subsidised by the Western Cape Library Service) and boasts an atmosphere of modernity, friendliness, and warmth. The new library facility also played

an exceptionally influential role in the community, which was reflected in its active membership of 11,123 out of a total town population of just over 12,000 in 1988.

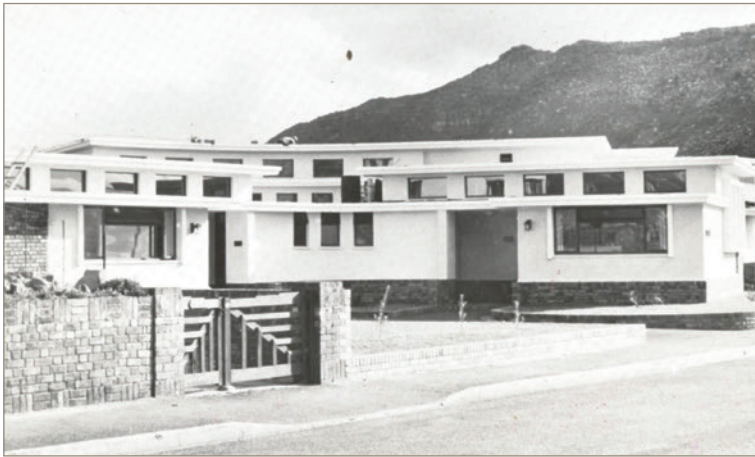
Fish Hoek Public Library's first librarian was Ethelmay Gillard. She was appointed in 1954 at the age of 21, following a successful interview with the Fish Hoek mayor and town clerk. Ethelmay was a fantastic storyteller who established the first story hour in Western Cape libraries, igniting in the town's youngsters a love of reading and books, and earning her the nickname The Library Lady.

She held office for 36 years and subsequently retired in 1990, before passing on in 2011. Her successor, Lyn Steyn, held the position of librarian at Fish Hoek Public Library from 1990 until November 2012. Susan Alexander took on the role of acting librarian-in-charge from 2001 to 2005. Steyn's

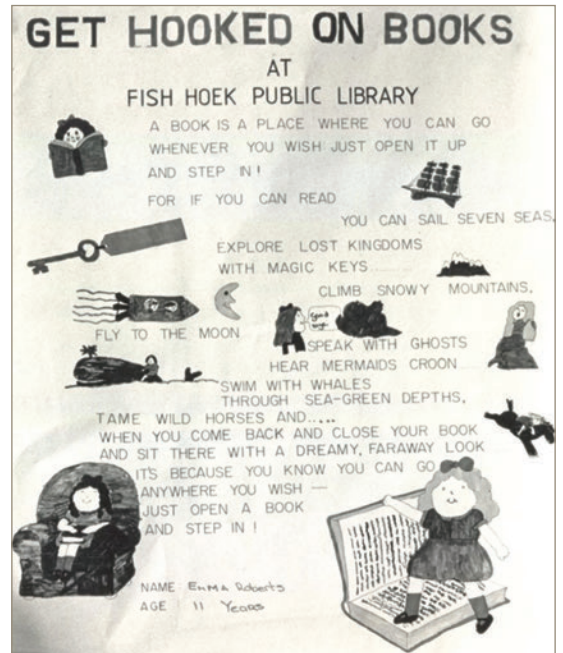


Fish Hoek Public Library's first librarian, Ethelmay Gillard, reading to children in 1956

Fish Hoek Valley Museum



The building in which the first library was housed in 1954



Library display by Emma Roberts (11 years old), 1983



Fish Hoek Public Library's service to senior citizens, circa 1965



Patrons of the library immersed in literature



successor, Janusz Skarzynski, was appointed in January 2013 and held the fort until February 2019. The fifth and current Fish Hoek Librarian, Rika Smit, assumed office on 1 April 2019, and continues to passionately build on the esteemed library legacy that locals have come to know and love for the past 70 years.

Today, with a figure of 141,540, Fish Hoek Public Library boasts the fifth-highest annual circulation of all 376 public libraries in the Western Cape. By the end of the 2022/23 financial year, it had an excess of 4,600 active members and more than 37,000 items available in stock. In 2020, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the library was also one of the first public libraries in the Western Cape to reopen its doors to provide limited services to the community.

Activities and services rendered to visitors and patrons include storytelling, arts and crafts, reading programmes, library orientation, digital literacy, information literacy, board games, book clubs, a chess club, free internet access, photocopying, printing, and the circulation of physical and electronic library materials, to mention a few.

Another seemingly popular attraction is the monthly *Blown away by books* event. These events celebrate writers and publishers and comprise literature related discussions, workshops, book sales, launches, and many more.

The Western Cape Library Service extends its congratulations to Fish Hoek Public Library on reaching this historic milestone. May the library remain a valued community asset and a source of inspiration for many more years.

Statistics

Fish Hoek Public Library (1963/64)

Membership		
Adults	Children	Total
3 921	818	4 739

Book circulation (all genres)		
Adults	Children	Total
160 495	27 093	187 588

Source: Cape Provincial Administration Library Service Annual Report 1963/64

Fish Hoek Public Library (2022/23)

Membership		
Adults	Children	Total
3 906	752	4 658

Book circulation (all genres)		
Adults	Children	Total
88 132	53 408	141 540

Circulation of audiovisual and electronic library material		
CDs	Videos	DVDs
455	14	11 294
Audiobooks	Ebooks	eAudiobooks
417	996	295
Total		13 471

Source: Western Cape Library Service Annual Review 2022/23



A beautifully crafted origami display in celebration of the library's 70th birthday

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Hout Bay: 60 and still going strong

by the Research Section

Hout Bay Library, which celebrates its 60th birthday this year, has a unique history that began in the late 1930s. Margaret McL Thomas, a highly community-minded woman, recognised the need for a place of convergence for locals looking to read a book or magazine, learn a new craft, or attend events.

In light of this, she purchased a site on Andrews Road and, with the assistance of family friends, operated this small cultural centre until her failing health prevented her from continuing to do so. She graciously donated the building to the community for use as a library after her death. Thus, the Thomas Library (as it was known back then) opened its doors on 13 June 1964, with books provided by the Cape Provincial Library Service; and staff and upkeep funded by the Cape Divisional Council.

It was immediately clear that the Hout Bay community enjoyed reading, and circulation grew rapidly. Despite being expanded and benefitting from an adjacent small community hall, the library was overflowing by the 1980s. Understandably, nostalgic residents were hesitant to part with the small library, which they valued for its cozy, village feel. Although further expansion of the structure was explored, it was unfeasible. It was apparent that a much larger site was needed to meet the long-term demands of a fast-growing and rapidly developing Hout Bay.



Library staff (l-r): Desiree van Ster, Senior Librarian; Zandile Isaac, Assistant Librarian; Janica Swarts, Library Aid; Lucian Volkwyn, Assistant Librarian; Roseline Boo, Assistant Librarian; and Renee Cohen, Librarian

Architects Uytendogaardt and Rozendal were appointed to pen a larger substitute, and on 31 July 1989, the Cape Provincial Library Service, along with the employees of the local library, moved the contents of the old building from their beloved location of more than 25 years to the new and current 655 m² library in Melkhout Crescent. The new structure was constructed at a cost of more than one million rand, of which the Cape Provincial Library Service generously donated R250,000. It was formally opened on 7 August 1989.

The requirement for a welcoming, approachable library that preserved the essence of the former Thomas Library was a key component of the architects' mandate. Simultaneously, the design needed to be adaptable enough to meet the various needs and interests of the ever-growing hamlet known as the 'Republic of Hout Bay.' The architects excelled at this task, producing a special structure tailored to serve as a hub for local and cultural events. Membership and circulation skyrocketed as a thrilled public began to utilise the larger, much-improved facilities, not to mention the additional volumes and library resources donated by the Cape Provincial Library Service.

Though the community's needs and interests have evolved over time, the initial settlers' love of the ocean and the surrounding environment is still evident. Today, Hout Bay is populated by a wide variety of people, including writers, artists, artisans, surfers, sailors, retired people, business and professional people, young families, and immigrants.

Hout Bay Public Library currently boasts a stable annual circulation of 35,167. By the end of the 2023/24 financial year, the library had an excess of 1,400 active members and more than 21,950 items available in stock.

Activities and services rendered include free internet access, holiday and outreach programmes, reference and study areas, storytelling sessions, digital literacy and skills programmes, authors' talks, creative workshops, book launches, exhibitions, book sales, community information services, photocopying, and printing, to mention a few.

The Western Cape Library Service extends its congratulations to Hout Bay Public Library on reaching this milestone 60th birthday.



Mrs Thomas, founder of the first library on Andrews Road



Hout Bay Public Library, 2024



Hout Bay Public Library, 1990



Library circulation desk, 1990

Statistics

Hout Bay Public Library (1963/64)

Membership		
Adults	Children	Total
374	117	491
Book circulation (all genres)		
Adults	Children	Total
7 353	2 555	9 908

Source: Cape Provincial Administration Library Service Annual Report 1963/64

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Hout Bay Public Library (2023/24)

Membership		
Adults	Children	Total
1 097	319	1 416
Book circulation (all genres)		
Adults	Children	Total
17 224	17 943	35 167

Circulation of audiovisual and electronic library material		
CDs	Videos	DVDs
3	0	835
Audiobooks	Ebooks	eAudiobooks
76	607	296
Total		1 817

Source: Western Cape Library Service Annual Review 2023/24

Isihobe neembongi kwaXhosa

nguXolisa Tshongolo



Imbongi kwaXhosa yayisaya kuba ngumntu oxabiseke kakhulu. Ibibekwa kwizinga leenkosi leemboni, elabagcinimthetho, eleengcibi namakhankatha, abantu besizwe ke abo. Bekubekelwa indlebe okuthethwa yimbongi, kungako oko intetha yayo ibiyandulela ngokucela iindlebe. Ibithi yakukhwaza ihlaba ikhwelo lokuba kubazwe iindlebe kuthuleke kuthi cwaka! Bekuthula kuthule nenxila, kuba kaloku kuza kuwa umyalezo esizweni okanye eluntwini.

Ngenxa yokubaluleka komyalezo oza ngembongi, imbongi inelungelo lokuthetha nje ngokukhululekileyo ingacezeli nto, ingahloniphi nto, yonke into iyibeke elubala ukuze ibonwe nanguthathatha. Imbongi inegunya lokuthuka, lokugxeka, lokuncoma, lokunyelisa nelokubonga. Akukho namnye unelungelo lokuthethisa imbongi ngento ethe yayithetha, akukhathiliseki nokuba isisithuko na

loo nto, mandulo phaya ke. Isithuko akuyiyo le nto abantu bathi sisithuko kule mihla, igama; akukho gama lisisithuko ngokunokwalo, ke ngoko xa ndithetha ngesithuko andithethi ngokusetyenziswa kwamagama ekuthiwa zizithuko kule mihla. Kambe ke imbongi ivumelekile ukusebenzisa naliphi na igama, nanjani na, ukufezekisa oko ithunywe kona ngaloo mini nangelo lixa.

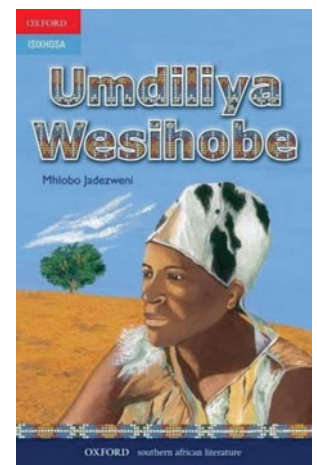
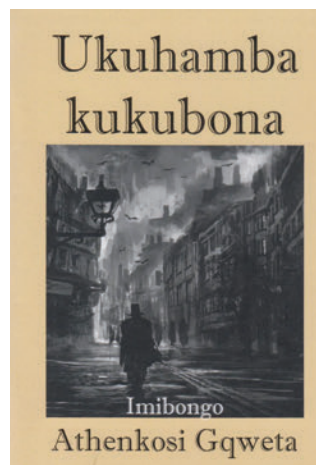
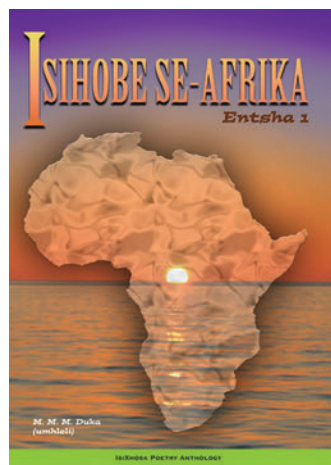
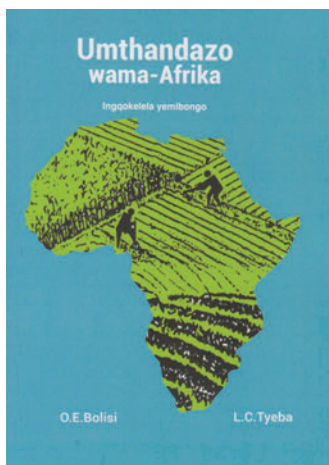
Kule nkululeko yimbongi, bekungakhathaliseki nokuba imbongi yimbongi yenkosi, ukuba inkosi ayiqhubi kakuhle, imbongi ibisithi yakufikelwa yintumakalo yokuba ithethe, isuke iyijikele inkosi leyo, iyixelele ubugwenxa nokungalungisi kwayo, yakugqiba iyinike umthetho. Oku ke bekusenza ukuba imbongi le ibe ngumntu ophilileyo ngokwasengqondweni, onganxiliyo, owaziyo umthetho nenkcubeko namasiko esizwe, ukuze xa ithetha ithethe ngokusekelwe kulwazi, ukuthetha kwayo kungabi kukuphukaneka nokubhibhidla nje amazinyo. Ngobu bungqondi nolwazi nokunyaniseka, bekungabikho mntu ukuthandabuzayo oko kuthethwa yimbongi, endaweni yokuthandabuza abantu abakhathalayo bebeye bazikhathaze ngamazwi lawo, bawaphicothe, kuba asuka kwiinzulu zenyano nobungqondi.

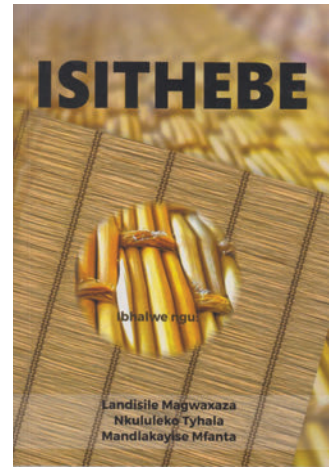
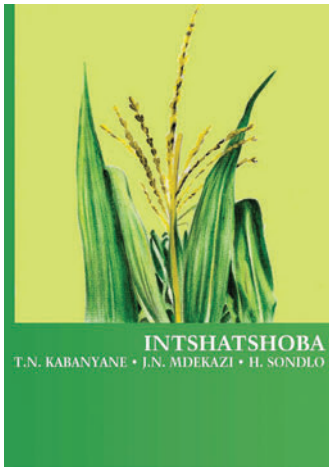
Kule mihla ke ukubonga kuthathwa njengobugcisa bokuziphilisa. Imbongi ziyahlawulwa ukuba zibonge kwiziyunguma; imisebenzi yazo ziyibhala phantsi ukuze ithengiswe zifumane imali. Kambe ke iimbongi

zibe zihlawulwa kwangaphambili, apho uluntu beluthi luzinike umxhesho ofanayo nalowo ubunikwa iinkosi, iingcibi, amakhankatha neemboni. Umahluko nje kukuba oko bekusenziwa ngokusekelwe kumsebenzi wesizwe hayi kumsebenzi womntu ngokusisiqu, apho umntu athi aphume aye kusebenza abuye nemali ukuze ondle usapho lwakhe.

Lo mahluko ungentla apha ke wenza ukuba iimbongi zale mihla zahluke kwezo zangaphambili, ngento yonke eyenza imbongi. Umzekelo, imbongi yale mihla iyamenywa ngentlawulo ukuba ibe kwisici, nto leyo iyibophelela ekubeni ithethe okuhle kodwa ngalowo ibizelwe ukuba ibonge yena, kuba kaloku ihlawulwe. Enokuba oku akusosibophelelo siba sekuhlani, kodwa oko ukhulawuleyo koko kukukholayo, ke ngoko akulindelekanga ukuba ungabiza imbongi ngexabiso lemali kanti uzibizela ugxeke. Oku ke iimbongi kuziphuca amalungelo esele ndiwachaze ngasentla phaya, zitsho zilahlekwe sisidima ebezibekwa sona.

Libathwanyana ke izinto ezidala inkxalabo ngesihobe kule mihla, nesingena kungena kuzo ngokunzulu kweli nqaku. Kukho nomngeni wokungananzwa kolwimi nokungakhethwa kwamagama ngokuchubekileyo ziimbongi zethu. Kuyagqabazeka ukuphawula ukungasetyenziswa ngobugcisa nangokusekelwe ekwazini okugqibeleleyo kwezaci namaqhala, izikweko nezibaxo, nezinye ke izafobe. Xa ke oku kuthe kwasilela nesihobe siyaphoxeka, nto leyo inyelisa





imbongi nokubonga ngokubanzi. Ukusetyenziswa ngobuchule kwezandi, izingqisho, iimvanosiphelo neemvanosiqalo nako kuphawuleka ukuba kuyasilela apha naphaya. Kanti ke ezo ziimpawu eziphambili zesihobe, ingakumbi kuhlalutyo. Umoya wembongi kumele uhlale ucacile ukuze uluntu lube nokulungelelanisa umyalezo nomoya lowo ukufumana eyona ngxam yomyalezo wembongi.

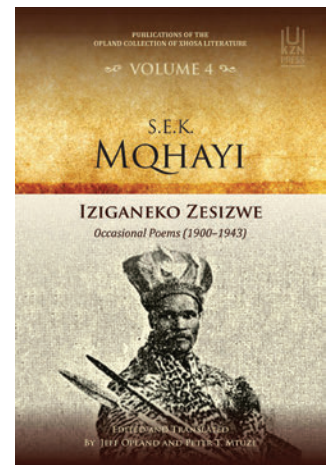
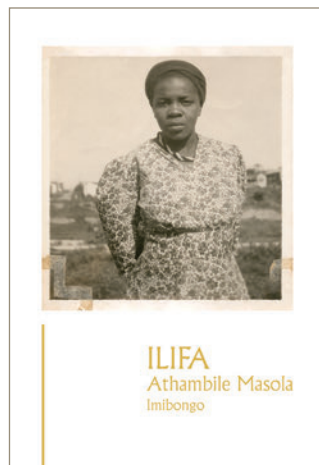
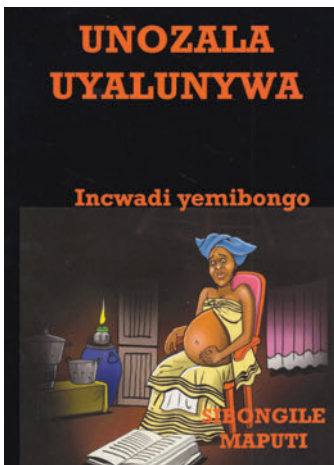
Ngala magqabantshintshi ke zithsaba, ndinyola nje iindawana ezimele ukuphuculwa ukuze iimbongi nesihobe zihlale kwisidima sazo nakumsebenzi wazo. Ndiyayibona indlala esele ingene nedala ukuba yonke into ihlawulelwe, andingeguquli nto ke apho, kodwa masigadwe isidima nexabiso leembongi kwanoko

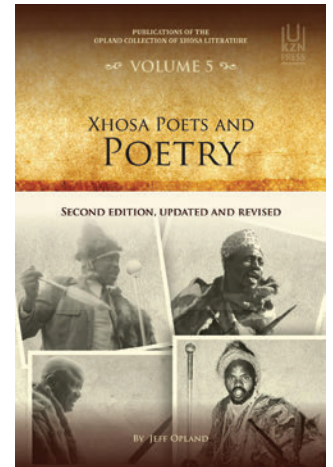
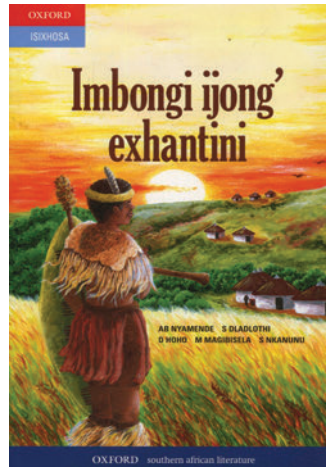
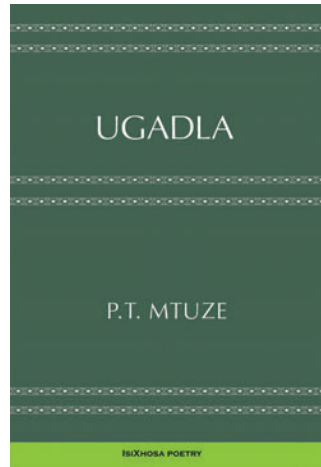
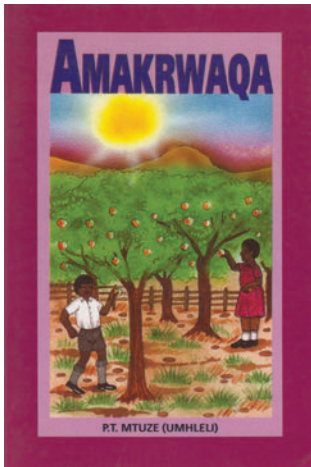
zikuthethayo. Iimbongi mazizixabise zona ngokwazo, zingazinikeli ehlazweni nasekunyelisweni. Iimbongi zale mihla mazifunde ezincwadini kwezo ziphum' izandla zamzuzu, zilungelelanise kakuhle ke ukudibanisa oko kuyimveli yokubonga noko sele kumi kule mihla sikuyo. Iimbongi mazilukhathalele ulwimi, zikuthathele ingqalelo okuqhubeka kwiindawo ezikuzo, zibe noluvo nemfundiso, zinqwanqe, ziqeqeshe ziluleke. Owona mthombo uqinisekileyo ke ukufumana obu buncwane ziincwadi, iimbongi mazifunde iincwadi, zitsho zibhale ezazo ukugcina umqela wemihla yazo.

UGq Xolisa Tshongolo nguManejala oPhezulu wePhondo leMpuma Koloni kwiBhodi yeLwimi zonke zoMzantsi Afrika (PanSALB)

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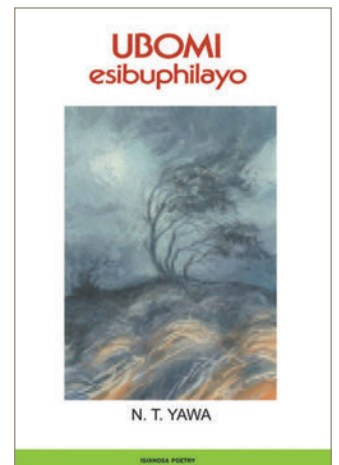
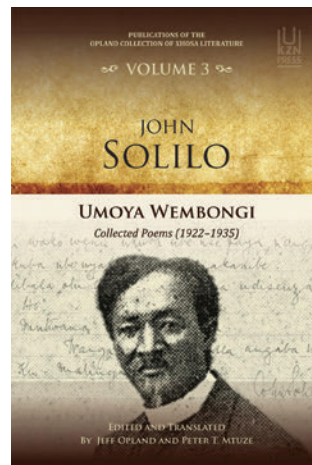
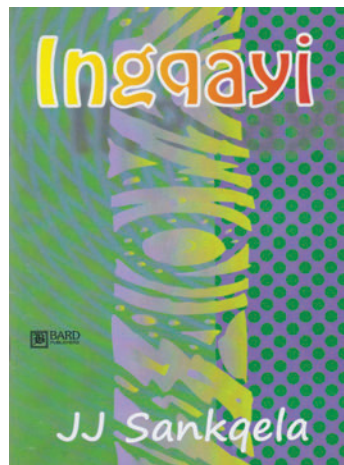
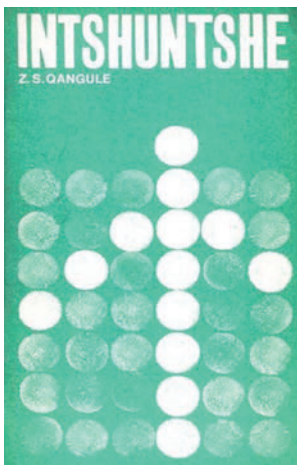
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compiled by book selectors

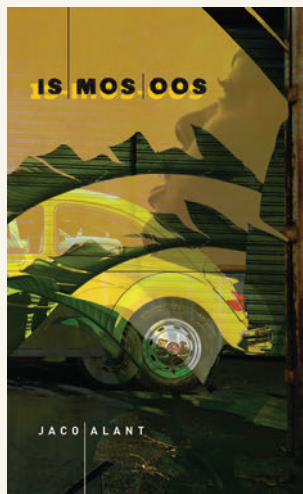
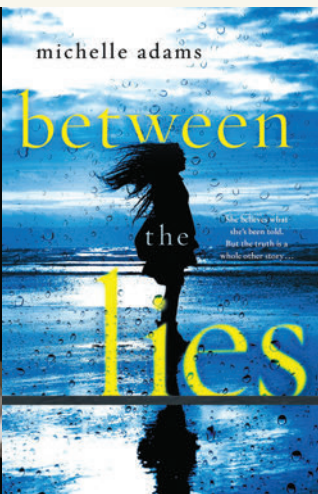
ADULT FICTION

ADAMS, Michelle

Between the lies. – Headline, 2019.
'Like many psychological thrillers, Adams' second novel hinges on the mental state of an unreliable narrator. The question, as always, is: to what degree can we trust the narrator's version of reality? Adams complicates

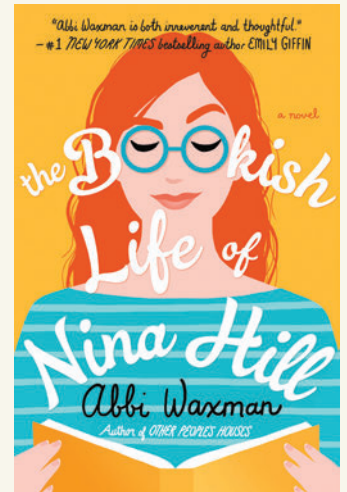
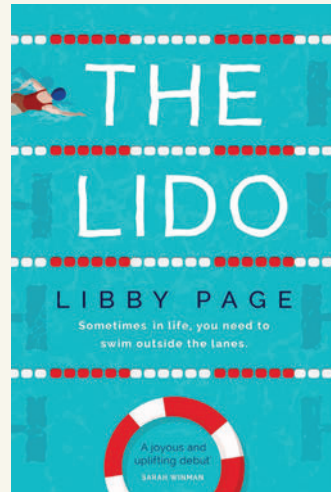
the situation by making her narrator unreliable from the outset, since she's just awakened from a month-long coma after a car crash, with only dim flickers of memory about herself or her past. Chloe Daniels meets people who claim to be (and indeed are) members of her family, who take her home to care for her. But Chloe suspects the motives behind their care, especially those of her

father, an experimental psychiatrist who specialises in memory and who takes over her therapy. A chilling safety net is drawn around Chloe, a prisoner in her own home, confused and traumatised as she is, must become the detective of her own life. An uneven thriller, with some awfully broad hints as to what is going on, but a good read overall.'
(*booklistonline.com*, Connie Fletcher)



ALANT, Jaco

Is mos oos. – Protea, 2021.
'Al is Jaco Alant se eiesoortige debuutroman vlot geskryf, lekker vermaaklik, aangenaam-vreemd en vreemd-aangenaam, maak die skrywer dit nie altyd vir die leser maklik nie. Vinnig-vinnig lees jy tussen die reëls: Hou kop, want hier het die afdraaipaadjies en systrate en doodloopstrate ewe veel te sê as die uiteindelige bestemming. Sonder om die pret te bederf, sal min lesers geskok of verbaas wees oor waar die verhaal gaan draai en hoe die klimaks van die roman dinge tot 'n bepaalde punt laat kom. **Is mos oos** is een van daardie bedrieglik intellektuele, dog skynbaar ligsinnige romans, wat soos



alle uitdagende kunswerke en tekste hul eie logika openbaar en vir die lesers 'n aantal broodkrummels langs die pad strooi. Waar eindig die begin, en begin die einde? In net onder 270 bladsye word hierdie verhaal 'n vreemde, dog roerende leeservaring wat jou telkemale verras en laat skater van die lag — boonop met 'n witwarm slot wat preutses in hul tee sal laat stik...' (netwerk24.com, Jonathan Amid)

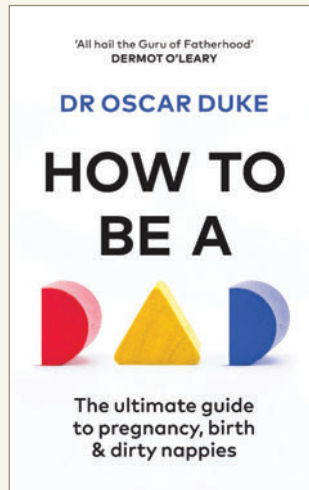
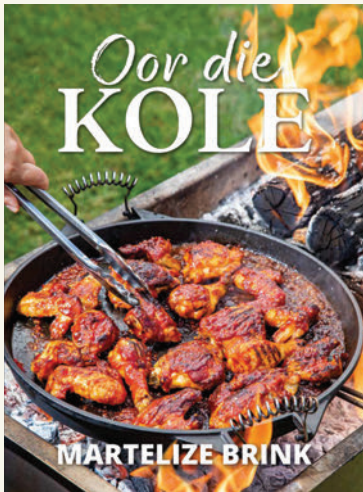
BLOEMHOF, Francois
Die duisend en eerste nag. - LAPA, 2021.
 'Die sinopsis klink eenvoudig: ses maande voor die roman se openingstoneel is Herman Swart se tweeling-suster, Herma, tragies oorlede. 'n Insident tydens 'n kuier by sy ouma het tot gevolg dat Herman in 'n diep koma beland. Maar, alhoewel hy nie in staat is tot uitwaartse kommunikasie nie, is hy in 'n alternatiewe droomwêreld 'n gevangene van avonture, nagmerries, fantasieë, films, vervolghere, musiek en gotiese geheimsinnigheid. As hy nie betyds die drade bymekaar kan trek nie, is daar 'n wesenlike gevaar dat hy ook in die regte wêreld kan sterf. Soos van die titel afgelei kan word, toon die roman, veral as 'n episodiese of onderbroke verhaal, sterk elemente van ooreenkoms met die klassieke **The Arabian nights**. Sherazade, Sinbad en Al Karim is dan ook terugkerende karakters. Daar is egter ook 'n tussenspel waarin Norman

Bates (**Psycho**) figureer, wat my koue rillings gegee het en 'n nostalgiese insetsel aangaande Vincent van Gogh en sy skilderwerk. Die uniekheid van die roman is egter geleë in die feit dat dit 'n multimedia-projek is. Lesers word uitgenooi om 'n klankbaan (met 28 liedjies) en 3 kortfilms (altesaam ongeveer 'n uur lank) wat vertakings van die roman uitbeeld, te beleef. Die musiekkeuses was uiteenlopend en sluit in van *Bohemian Rhapsody*, *Crying* en die temalied van **Mirage** (*Le ciel nous fait rêver*) tot een van my allergunstelinge, *Vienna* van Midge Ure. En — bonus — die skrywer sing self! In sy geheel gesien, was dit 'n baie oorspronklike ervaring wat die sinne nogal begogel. Ek beveel dit sterk aan vir lesers wat 'n uitdaging soek en veelvlakkige verhale (die roman bevat iets van alles: realisme, surrealisme, magiese realisme én fantasie) geniet. Mag nog skrywers hierdie dapper sprong waag! Soos met Lien Botha se **Vin** is die interaktiewe opsie 'n heerlike byvoeging wat bydra tot die dimensie van die eindprodukt.' (goodreads.com, Anschen Conradie)

PAGE, Libby
The lido. - Orion, 2019.
 'Kate Matthews recently moved to London and found a job with a small newspaper in the Brixton district. Reserved by nature, Kate doesn't stray far from work or home, until a new assignment changes everything. The lido, an outdoor pool, might

be demolished to make way for a private gym. Working with 86-year-old Rosemary Peterson, a longtime lido member and instigator of the resistance, Kate finds professional recognition and a real friend. Will Kate's good fortune help her and her fellow swimmers save this local landmark? Populated with endearing, multidimensional characters covering a wide span of ages and backgrounds, Page's debut novel makes it easy for readers to imagine themselves in the mix. The bond that grows between Kate and Rosemary feels natural and draws attention to how isolated individuals are becoming. Being able to root for the little guys as they stand against a powerful corporation generates a satisfying sense of empowerment. Page's underdog tale can also inspire timely discussions about how to build diverse, place-based communities. A smart suggestion for book clubs and readers who enjoy substance with style.' (booklistonline.com, Stacey Hayman)

SCHEEPERS, Mérie
Droom is nie meer genoeg nie. - Naledi, 2021.
 Die skrywer se eerste roman, **Mooi is gister**, het onder die naam Annamari Scheepers in 1991 verskyn. **Droom is nie meer genoeg nie** is 'n verhoudingsroman met middeljarige hoofkarakters wat onverwags verlief raak. Die verhaal speel af in Groblershoop en Lambertsbaai.



'Na Klaas se dood woon Sonja alleen op haar besproeiingserf langs die Oranjerivier. Ben is die "inkommer", die vreemdeling. Daar hang 'n wolk van stories om die aantrekklike man van nêrens. Wanneer die twee middeljarige mense mekaar beter leer ken, word daar dinge wakker gemaak wat hulle albei geglo het nie meer bestaan nie. Die sluier word so effens gelig oor die aktiwiteite van die Franse Vreemde Legioen. Hierdie liefdesverhaal bevat 'n sterk skeut spanning. Dit bewys ook dat die erotiese nie net vir jongmense beskore is nie.' (*Uitgewersprikkel*)

WAXMAN, Abbi

The bookish life of Nina Hill. - *Headline Review*, 2019.

'Introverted Nina Hill, the only child of a single mother, is pulled both kicking and screaming and passive-aggressively resisting into a new family and a new relationship. Nina likes "pinning things down," being prepared in advance, and making a daily schedule. After working in the bookstore, she goes home to her cat, Phil, where she reads and bones up for her next trivia contest. Her static, well-regulated life is turned upside down when a lawyer contacts her with news about her father, though her mother had always claimed not to know who he was. It turns out he was wealthy, and he's left her something in his will. At the lawyer's office, she meets the rest of the family — her half-aunts, brothers and sisters, nieces

and nephews — some welcoming and others decidedly not. Nina wants no part of this family. Who cares what her father might have left her? No thanks! And then another intrusion appears in the form of a handsome man, the captain of a rival trivia team. He's too showy for Nina, and besides, he knows all the sports category answers, so she pegs him as a non-reader — a big turnoff. Nina wants to be left alone. But Nina is not all rules and solitude. She has a spark, an imagination, and a sense of humor that make you want to sit with her and observe people over a cappuccino and pastry while making wise cracks. She of course grows and opens her life to new experiences, her new family and, maybe, the trivia guy. Waxman skillfully shows Nina's changing mindset in the hilarious schedules, complete with meal plans and shopping lists, that she makes each day. If you love writing plans and sticking to them, you'll love Nina Hill. If you roll your eyes at people who make daily schedules, you'll love Nina Hill, too. Waxman has created a thoroughly engaging character in this bookish, contemplative, set-in-her-ways woman. Be prepared to chuckle.' (*kirkusreviews.com*)

ADULT NON-FICTION

BRINK, Martelize

Oor die kole. - Human & Rousseau, 2022. Martelize Brink is 'n be kroonde

en veelsydige radio- en televisiepersoonlikheid, omroeper en programvervaardiger by RSG. Sy is ook welbekend in koskringe, maar met 'n pa soos Matie Brink, die potjiekoskoning — is haar liefde vir kosmaak oor die kole van jongs af vasgelé. **Oor die kole** is 'n resepteboek wat verras met keurige (en geurige) buitekuierdisse vir elke geleentheid, of dit saam met vriende, familie of sommer net vir die lekker is. Basiese inligting word verskaf oor die mees gepaste toerusting, veiligheid, hittebronne, temperatuurmeters, rookmetodes en soorte swartpotte; opgevolg met smaaklike braaiesepte met bypassende glansfoto's. Van ontbyt en peuselhappies, gerookte disse, broodgeregte, prutpot met bees-, vark- of lam; seekos met kreefstert tot waaghalsige nageregte en ander soet smulhappies word ingesluit. Die resepte sal aanklank vind by elke lekkerbekbraaier. Die aanvullende vertellings en stories wat deur die skrywer gedeel word, verryk die resepte en skep 'n verlange na eie stories en onthou-oomblikke by die leser. **AT**

DUKE, Oscar

How to be a dad: the ultimate guide to pregnancy, birth & dirty nappies/illustrations by Matt Chinworth.

- Kyle Books, 2019.

A detailed guide written by a London-

based doctor and broadcaster, for new and soon-to-be dads. It combines medical knowledge with real-life experiences and takes readers step-by-step from conception to caring for a newborn. It answers common questions dads might be too embarrassed to ask in an honest, funny, and engaging way. The book aims to empower them with essential knowledge about pregnancy, childbirth, and baby care. It highlights the important role of fathers and offers practical tips on how they can support their partners and handle the challenges of parenthood, all while maintaining a light and easy-to-understand tone. **APM**

GOBODO-MADIKIZELA, Pumla; GOBODO-MADIKIZELA, Pumla; BUBENZER, Friederike; and OELOFSEN, Marietjie (editors) **These are the things that sit with us: voices from Bonteheuwel, Langa and Worcester/Hierdie is die goed wat aan ons kleef: stemme uit Bonteheuwel, Langa en Worcester/Izinto ezisiSingqala kuthi: amabali okwenyani asuka kubantu abahlala eBonteheuwel, kwaLanga naseWorcester.** - Fanele, 2019. 'Our country has a complicated history, and this history has affected the present. **These are the things that sit with us** makes visible the undocumented everyday experiences

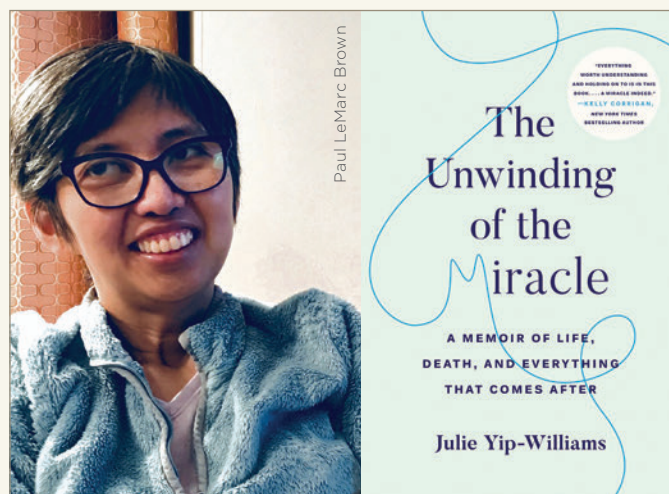
that shaped the lives of ordinary South Africans during the country's brutal and painful past. By sharing their memories, the storytellers map the scope of the wider, more difficult conversation about the meaning of justice and the missing parts of the discourse of reconciliation in South Africa. It creates a space for a conversation about South Africa's history and what it means to talk to and hear others within the context of this history. In publishing each story in Xhosa, Afrikaans, and English, we hope that the book will stimulate conversation among South Africans across languages.' (*timeslive.co.za*)

LEONARD, Quinton
Gedagtes vanne Kaapse klong: 'n debuutbundel deur Winte'tone.

- Tshienda, 2020.
'n Debuutbundel met 34 gedigte in Afrikaans en 14 in standard-Afrikaans. Die outeur skryf: '(Eerstens is) die gedigte in hierdie bundel uniek, anders, enig in sy soort. Dit is alles behalwe konvensionele poësie. Die gedigte in hierdie bundel kan as 'n nuwe genre bestempel word. Dis 'n kombinasie van prosa én poësie. Dit wil sê poësie wat stories vertel. Tweedens erken hierdie digbundel die belangrikheid van Kaaps as 'n taal in die Afrikaanse gemeenskap. Dis die hartklop van die Kaapse Vlakte, vanaf "Lost City" in Mitchells Plein tot die kleurryke huise van die Bo-Kaap, vanaf Heideveld tot in

Parkwood Landgoed, vanaf die "korre" van Manenberg tot die "skurwe flêtse" van Elsiesrivier, vanaf die "council hyse" van Kewtown tot die "koephyse" van Gleemoor. Die bundel is daarop gemik om Kaaps se bestaansreg te bevorder. Kaaps is nie 'n gebroke taal nie, maar 'n lewende taal. As sulks dien dié bundel as kampvegter vir die erkenning van Kaaps as een as van die Wes-Kaap se amptelike tale. Derdens dui dié digbundel op die belangrikheid daarvan om die geskiedenis van gewone mense te erken en dit op papier vas te lê. Geskiedenis onthou net die beroemdstes van die beroemdes. Dit erken nóóit die eenvoudigstes van die eenvoudiges nie. Dit is hoogtyd dat dit verander! As kunstenaars word skrywers, en in hierdie geval, digters – óók die taak opgelê om die lewens van ons gewone mense te vereer én te vier. Só sal hul geskiedenis vir die volgende geslagte behoue bly.' (*amazon.com*, Quinton Leonard)

YIP-WILLIAMS, Julie
The unwinding of the miracle: a memoir of life, death, and everything that comes after. - Bantam, 2019. 'This is the poignant and compelling memoir of Yip-Williams' battle with and eventual surrender to cancer. Entries written in real-time during the five years between the author's diagnosis and death document her



deteriorating physical condition, her emotional angst, and her family's anguish. Throughout, she reflects on her life and reveals what an amazing miracle it has been. Born blind in Vietnam, she survived a perilous boat trip as a refugee, came to the US, excelled in school, traveled, earned a law degree from Harvard, enjoyed a successful career, got married, and had two daughters, all by age 37, when this story begins. Her writing is honest and, by turns, angry, humorous, and heartbreaking, especially when she talks about her two little girls, who are just starting elementary school. Even though readers know the ending, the prologue indicates that if they're reading this, she's already gone. Every bit of new bad news hits like a blow to the gut. Readers will smile when Yip-Williams facetiously describes the slutty second wife she envisions for her husband and share in her grief as she makes plans for her funeral. Never mawkish, **The unwinding of the miracle** will resonate with readers.' (booklistonline.com, Kathleen McBroom)

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

BARNARD, Hannes

Roet - LAPA, 2021.

'Twee tieners en 'n hond in 'n rooi Midge, [is] op pad kus toe deur 'n verwoeste, apokaliptiese land. In die

omstandighede waarin hulle hulself bevind, is dit moeilik om te onderskei tussen vriend en vyand, veral as daar vuurwapens op jou gerig word. Daar is volop aksie, spanning en ontugtering in hierdie jeugroman. Xandr tree baie verantwoordelik op, gegewe sy brose jeugdigheid. Dit terwyl hy roei met die veranderde gevoelens jeens Rufus, en sy antagonisme jeens die Duitser wat sy oë en hande nie kan tuishou nie. Rufus is aan die ontvangkant van Bern se sjarme, en onseker oor haar reaksie daarop. Die konflik tussen die drie jongmense skep 'n groeiende parallelle spanningslyn. Dieselfde patroon word, soos in **Wolk** (2020), gevolg met die verhaal wat beurtelings vertel word uit die oogpunt van Xandr en Rufus.' (goodreads.com)

CAPETTA, Amy Rose

The brilliant death - Penguin Books, 2019.

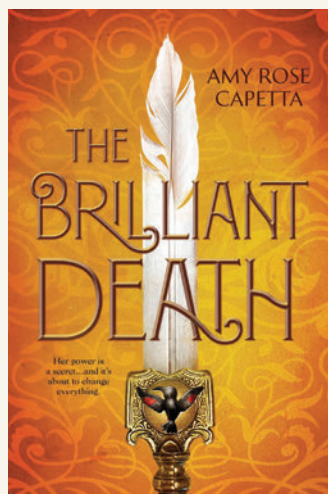
'In the face of war and family destruction, a young strega fights to claim her power. For olive-skinned Teo di Sangro, daughter of a high lord of Vinalia, "family is fate." As a girl, she stands no chance of inheriting her father's title, but she protects her family from the shadows in a way neither of her brothers can. No one knows about Teo's magic, which she unleashes on anyone who dares to challenge the Di Sangro power. Teo longs for her father's acknowledgment, but she also yearns to control her

secret abilities. When a pale-skinned, black-haired, gender-fluid shape-shifter named Cielo appears in the mountains on the same day as an assassination attempt on Teo's father, she gets swept up in a dangerous plot of murder and politics. Author Capetta captures readers' attention with alluring first-person prose and a protagonist who does not shy away from ruthlessness to achieve her goals. As Teo struggles with her place in her family and society, she also explores her sexuality and gender identity. Her interaction with Cielo, who contains a shifting balance of both boy and girl, helps her realise that she too may not always "fit inside the boundaries of the word *girl*." Through shape-shifting and her romance with Cielo, Teo discovers the meaning of wholeness and ownership over her body. A delicious and magical intrigue too tempting not to devour.' (kirkusreviews.com)

JORDAN, Sherryl

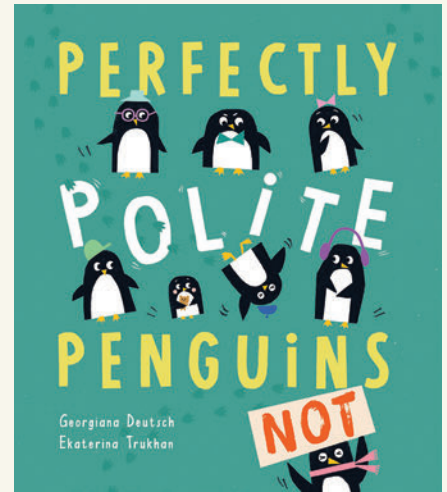
The anger of angels - Walker, 2019.

'This wonderfully written tale marks the return of New Zealand author Sherryl Jordan to the historic fiction market. Set in a country inspired by Italy, it encompasses two realms: one ruled by a generous and benevolent duke, the other by a cruel prince. Our heroine is Giovanna, the jester's daughter. She has had a relatively unconventional upbringing and dreams





simonandschuster.com



of travel and adventure. That is, until her father's latest performance is heard by the wrong ears, and suddenly the cruel prince's eyes, and attention, fall on her city. Now, the fate of her people may lay in Giovanna's hands, and armed with a dangerous secret, she must journey into the hostile land and plead for forgiveness or seek retribution. As befits any strong young adult book, there is romance too, and Raffaele makes for a worthy love interest. While undeniably handsome, he is marred by a slight physical variation that marks him as different and the source of the occasional scorn. He also comes armed with a strong dose of heretical cynicism, which does not go down well in lands where the church holds reign. He has fled the tyrant prince's Kingdom, along with his artist brother, Santos, and has seen much of the horrors it contains. Giovanna is a worthy protagonist. She does not need a man to save her from danger; instead the two support and complement each other. The setting is evocative and somewhat romantic, a nice counterpoint to the dark dystopia novels currently ruling the teen market. And, despite all the tragedy and treachery that befall our heroes and their home, there is also the strong element of hope. Overall, a fresh and compelling read with a few minor loose ends that I would hope hint at future novels.' (booksellersnz.wordpress.com)

JUVENILE FICTION

CHEWINS, Hayley

The turnaway girls.— Walker, 2019. 'Chewins' creative and imaginative debut is set in a cloister on the fantastical island of Blightsend, where Delphernia works as a turnaway girl, trained to make gold out of music that the island's masters play. Turnaway girls are not allowed to sing, but Delphernia secretly does so at great risk to her safety. When an opportunity to leave the cloister arises, she takes it and meets others with secrets of their own. Bolstered by new friendships and the courage inside her, Delphernia endeavors to help bring truth and freedom to Blightsend. The writing in this novel is beautifully soft, poetic, and flowing like the sea, but the plot is confusing. It stalls at the start and never fully forms, ultimately feeling disjointed. Though geared toward middle-grade readers, children may struggle to stay engaged with a story that is more about the poetry of the writing than the progression of the plot. However, persistent readers who reach the story's end will be rewarded with unveiled secrets and unifying connections between the narrative's events and characters.' (booklistonline.com, Florence Simmons)

DEGMAN, Lori

Just read!/illustrated by Victoria Tentler-Krylov.— Sterling, 2019. 'Just read! It could be a command,

a suggestion, or a declaration of accomplishment. Either way, this lively book is a delightful tribute to reading anything and everything all the time. The solitary act of reading is recast as a venture into worlds of people and lives far different from our own: *I read with an astronaut, pirate or farmer / I read with a clown or a knight wearing armor.* Jaunty rhyming couplets bounce around the pages as the children in the illustrations read books, magazines, hand signs, road signs, maps, sheet music, and Braille. Vibrant watercolor illustrations are used to full effect, so that washes of blue transport a girl reading about sharks into a tropical seascape, and a boy reading about tigers sees the big cat's fiery coat leaping from a pile of fall leaves. The diversity of reading material is matched by the diversity of readers, contexts, and interests. There's something for everyone; there's no holding back; just read!' (booklistonline.com, Amina Chaudhri)

DEUTSCH, Georgiana

Perfectly polite penguins — not! illustrated by Ekaterina Trukhan.— Little Tiger Press, 2019. 'When a rude penguin sees the effect of her bad manners, she changes her ways — most of the time. Observant readers will quickly see that the words and the illustrations don't match up on the first few pages. "Penguins always wait their turn" shows one

small penguin, sporting a blue beanie, pushing to the front of the line: "Me first!" And that same penguin is not too keen on sharing her train, though the other penguins' play is positively saccharine with sharing and politeness ("How kind!"). With a turn of the page, readers are introduced to Polly, who sticks out her tongue and giggles at readers when she's prompted to "say hello." Polly's manners are always a little rough, but especially so at dinnertime, and especially when fish is on the menu. As the pages turn, readers will notice more and more penguins going to Polly's dark side and the chaos increasing. But then Polly discovers Peter, a baby penguin, hiding from all the noise, and suddenly Polly sees the value of manners. Now she is always polite — well, almost always. Trukhan's penguins are a delight, each with an accessory to tell them apart, with wings, motion lines, and sometimes eyebrows expressing emotion. The illustrations and backgrounds are simple, keeping the focus on the manners (or lack thereof) on display. This may do the trick for youngsters who have a Peter of their own, depending on them to practice their own manners.' (*kirkusreviews.com*)

HEAPY, Teresa

Loved to bits/illustrated by Katie Cleminson.- Oxford, 2019.

'A child extols a beloved teddy bear, Stripy Ted. Just as Pooh Bear is

anthropomorphised in his stories as he plays with Christopher Robin, Cleminson's illustrations, which have the look of watercolour and ink, clearly depict Ted as a sentient, animate toy. Another literary antecedent, **The velveteen rabbit**, comes closer to the heart of Heapy's story, as the rhyming, first-person text details the adventures the child narrator has with the teddy bear. Bit by bit, their play renders the toy literally "loved to bits." The soft visual aesthetic of the art, with a style akin to Lauren Castillo's, eases any sense of foreboding readers might feel as Ted's stripes fade and he loses first an ear, then an eye, then his limbs. When the narrator's mother asks, "Shall I mend him?" the child doesn't hesitate to say no. "I liked him better. I could hold him in one hand. He fit just right, just here," reads the text in a spread near the book's end with a close-up illustration of the two cuddled up. The bear is well-loved and it looks a fate that's likely to befall this book, as well.' (*kirkusreviews.com*)

LAMPRECHT, Leon-Ben

Wie skrik vir Wortel Wolf?.- Tafelberg, 2021.

'n Leesboek vir beginners wat die verhaale van *Rooikappie*, *Die drie varkies* en *Die seun wat wolf geskree het*, heeltemal omkeer. Wortel Wolf is 'n vegetariër en die hoofkarakter in al drie stories. Hy klop aan die drie varkies se deur om knoffel te leen vir sy sop —

met verwoestende gevolge. Hy kom vir Rooikappie teë in die bos net wanneer gevaar dreig en in Namakwaland red hy Oom Jan se skape uit die kloue van jakkals! 'n Prettige storie met illustrasies wat herinner aan inkleursketse, geskik vir lesers tussen ses en nege jaar oud. **AT**

MOTHUPI, Boitumelo

Die meisie met 21 vrae.- Pan MacMillan Kinderboeke, 2021.

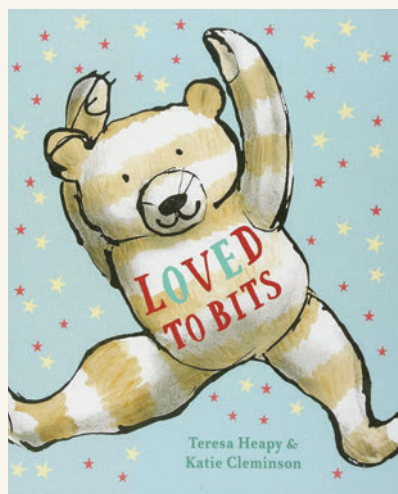
'n Kleurvolle debuutprentboek wat handel oor 'n jong meisie wat voortdurend nuuskierige vrae vra vir elkeen wat sy raakloop. Hoekom? Waar? Wanneer? Gou begin dit egter almal rondom haar irriteer. Dan besluit sy om elders na antwoorde te gaan soek in boeke. Kort daarna begin sy haar eie stories vertel. Die verhaal se opbouende storielyn spreek van die waarde en krag wat in boeke en stories opgesluit is en sal nuuskierigheid by jong lesers aanwakker om self vir antwoorde te delf. Jaco Jacobs het die Afrikaanse vertaling behartig. **AT**

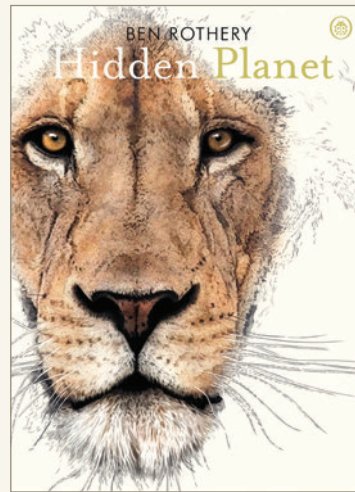
JUVENILE NON-FICTION

MASOLA, Athambile and GUZULA, Xolisa

10 Besondere leiers, aktiviste & baanbrekers.- Jacana, 2021.

'n Afrikaanse vertaling- en vertaalde





titel in 'n drieledige reeks genaamd: *Imbokodo: women who shape us/ Imbokodo: vroue wat ons help vorm*. Die reeks bied 'n nuwe perspektief op 'n minder bekende deel van die geskiedenis oor Suid-Afrikaanse vroue. Met kort biografieë bring dit hulde aan die baanbrekerswerk van Emma Sandile, Nomguqo Paulina Dlamini, Charlotte Makgomo Manny-Maxeke, Mina Tembeka Soga, Mabel Cetu, Ellen Pumla Ngozwana Kisosonkole, Lauretta Ngcobo, Brigalia Ntombemhlophe Bam, Winnie Mandela, Masalanabo Modjadji VII (Die Reënkoningin). Die impakvolle verhale is 'n inspirasie vir Suid-Afrikaanse meisies en vroue om in hul voetspore te volg. Die verhale is veral geskik vir jonger tieners. **AT**

ROTHERY, Ben
Hidden planet. – Ladybird Books, 2019. 'A detail-obsessed illustrator's "love letter" to Earth's wild fauna. Though the art's the thing in this outsized album, Rothery supplies relatively copious descriptive and behavioral notes about dozens of meticulously depicted creatures (nearly all, from mosquito to elephant to land dwellers), plus a gallery of feathers and a complex schematic view of an African savanna food web. He also organises many of his portraits thematically to highlight "hidden" features or relationships, such as camouflage strategies or examples of convergent

evolution. Still, rather than straining to be systematic he is clearly following his own interests in choosing subjects, and his instincts are sure ones, as nearly every page turn brings images into view that are at least always technically accomplished and very often riveting. These include a tiny hermit crab cozily tucked not into a shell but into a plastic squeeze-bottle cap, a probably life-size (!) Komodo dragon head, and a tightly bunched herd of zebras filling a full spread to demonstrate how their stripes create a predator-confusing "motion dazzle." Lovers of animals and animal art alike will pore over both this showcase and its companion.' (*kirkusreviews.com*)

VERMAAK, Adinda
Vrae en feite vir feitevrates! – Penguin Random House Suid-Afrika, 2021. 'n Baie nuttige titel propvol algemene feite oor 'n breë verskeidenheid onderwerpe. Dertig vrae word elk oor 'n aantal bladsye bespreek met 'n woordelys onderaan en 'n aantal idioome verwant aan die spesifieke onderwerp. Die vrae handel oor onderwerpe soos: *Watter vyf diere is die suksesvolste? Waarom het olifante sulke groot ore? Waarom is wit renosters nie wit nie? Wat maak spinnekoppe so spesiaal? Watter diere is die intelligentste? Waarom is Afrika so 'n besondere kontinent?* Dis prikkelvrae wat jong breine sal

stimuleer en nuuskierigheid aanwakker. Daar is ook ander belangrike feite ingesluit soos uitroepe en hul betekenis, wenke oor hoe om gelukkig te wees, hoe om 'n gedig voor te dra, asook hoe om vinnig voor te berei vir 'n onbeplande toespraak. **AT**

Most of these titles are available in e-format on the Western Cape OverDrive webpage and Libby app.

Die meeste van hierdie titels is ook beskikbaar in e-formaat op die Wes-Kaap Biblioteekdiens se OverDrive webblad en Libby-toepassing.

Note: At the time of going to press some of these titles are not yet available at the libraries.

APM Ayanda Majola
AT Anél Taljaard
NNG Nomonde Ngqoba

How Libby can help beat the burnout blues

by Luinda Lilley



Is it just me, or do you also feel like it has been an awfully long year? And are you constantly checking the calendar for any upcoming public holidays? *Hayibo*, and we are only three-quarters of the way into 2024! The winter months have dragged on for long enough that the summer holidays cannot come quickly enough.

The good news is that we're almost there. Take a deep restorative and calming breath, because before we can take time off, we must first meet all our monthly and quarterly targets.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a genuine and recognised condition, and should be treated in the same way as other types of depression by means of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), antidepressants, and/or light therapy. SAD is particularly prevalent in the northern hemisphere's Nordic and Scandinavian countries. Fortunately, our winters in the Western Cape, while wet and grey, are generally quite mild by comparison.

So, this is the time of year when one should be looking after yourself and your colleagues in search of any signs of burnout. The global, non-profit Mayo Clinic, has a list of suggested questions you can ask yourself:

- Is it becoming harder to focus on your job?
- Are you using food, drugs, or alcohol to lift your spirits or to numb how you feel?
- Do you suffer from headaches, stomach or bowel problems, or other physical complaints with no known cause?

To combat burnout, we need to actively nurture workplace wellness for not only librarians but also employees in all other sectors. In this article, I will explore some of the ways that we can do this, focusing on Libby by OverDrive as an essential tool in the fight for mental fortitude.

What is burnout?

In 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) classified burnout as an occupational phenomenon, and not as a medical condition. In the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), the stated definition is:

'Burnout is a syndrome conceptualised as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It is characterised by three dimensions:

- feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion;
- increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and
- reduced professional efficacy.

Burnout refers specifically to phenomena in the occupational context and should not be applied to describe experiences in other areas of life.'

Burnout is a syndrome that has signs and symptoms linked to a specific health-related cause. It forms part of the wider discussion of mental health issues. Whereas burnout is linked to our work lives; mental health forms part of both work and personal life.

The Mental Health America organisation aptly summarises the topic of mental health: 'The world is constantly changing — for better or for worse — and it can be overwhelming to deal with everything going on around you. While society is getting more comfortable discussing mental health, it can still be hard to know "where to start" when it comes to taking care of your own well-being.'

Looking at the causes and taking preventative measures

Just how widespread is the problem? The consulting firm, Mercer, conducted a survey in 2022, and discovered that

more than 80% of employees in the financial sector are at risk of burnout. The contributing factors are 'excessive workload (37%), exhaustion (40%), and financial strain (43%).' We should not make the mistake of placing library workers lower down on the potential burnout ladder. Instead, we need to raise our awareness of the topic and foster wellness in the workplace.

Sadly, we see too many toxic workplaces where a foundation of interpersonal and collegial teamwork is lacking across all levels. Instead, abusive or narcissistic relationships are left to prevail. In this type of environment, we see that people are pushed ever harder and placed under excessive stress. The overall (and false) belief is that such environments will produce better results.

The far more likely outcome is a decline in employees' mental health and overall well-being. What is needed instead, is a need to build positive work environments with a healthy and well-balanced workforce. Under such circumstances, team members are allowed the freedom to thrive while management reaps the desired performance results.

In the context of libraries, it is important to remember that the critical part of any library is its staff, not the building or the collection. They need to be valued and mentored along their career paths. The COVID-19 pandemic was a game-changer in terms of enabling workforce flexibility through remote and hybrid working schedules. Utilised correctly, these are powerful counteragents to prevent burnout at work.

'The most important asset of any library goes home at night — the library staff.'

– Timothy Healy

We must not fall into the trap of merely abdicating responsibility for our mental health to our institutions. It is up to us as individuals to learn to set boundaries, master our work-life balance, focus on friends and family, and monitor our stress levels.

Many years ago, I attended a UCT Summer School course presented by Dr Helgo Schomer. There he mentioned

something that has forever stayed with me: wealthy, high-powered individuals spend half their lives chasing success and financial gain, only to spend the next half buying back their health.

'Too many people burn out because they want to look successful instead of being successful.'

– Gary Vaynerchuk

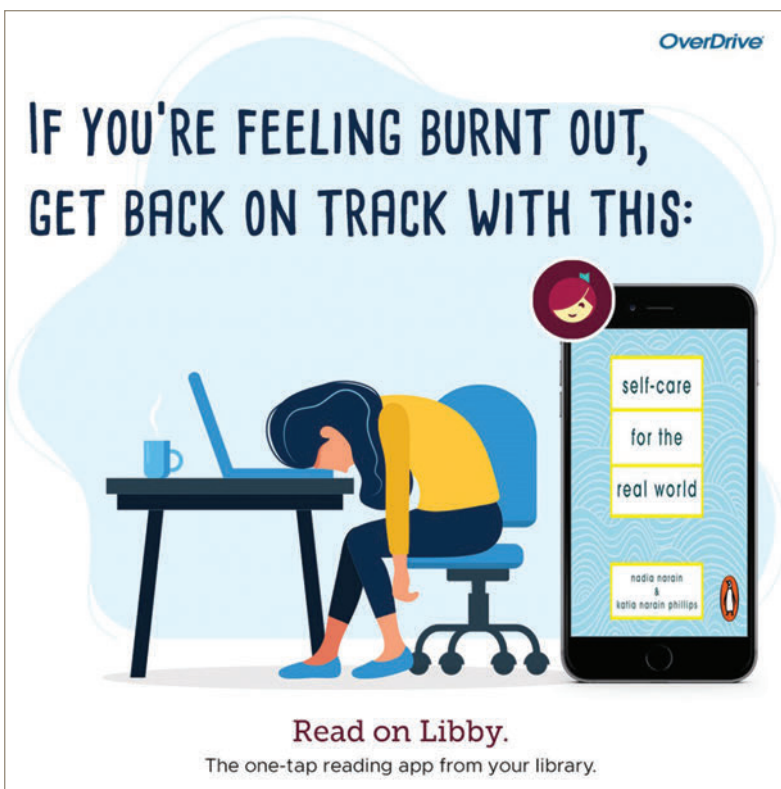
Today, we constantly hear about the positive effects of leading a healthy lifestyle featuring improved exercise and nutrition with science revealing many links between the body and the brain. The 22 May 2024 issue of *The Economist* magazine shed some interesting new light on the subject. It discussed the commonly held view that the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a rise in anxiety, depression, and other mental health conditions. It was seen as the root cause of the breakdown of normal social connections and the overuse of social media. Subsequent studies have started to delve deeper into what other factors might be at play, and the results are revealing (and surprising).

Distinct factors include the foods we eat, physical infections, our immune systems, and the workings of the brain. Scientists are now looking at how mental health conditions are triggered by physical issues in the body. For example, those patients who have been affected by long-term COVID-19 or neuro-inflammation can present as suffering from brain fog or fatigue.

There is a personal tool that I use to filter incoming information so as not to be overwhelmed. It is as simple as choosing (and limiting) the blogs, websites, and people that you follow. I constantly re-evaluate my social media, including LinkedIn, and thin it out. Everything has its time and season. Similar to physical travel, don't carry unnecessary baggage on your journey. Too much of a good thing can be detrimental, even if the content is excellent. Monitor yourself for when you start to feel overwhelmed by your email inbox. Stop and recognise when it is time to do a housekeeping cleanse. Use in-built rules and filters to delete and weed out the bulk of the noise.

Another suggestion is to broaden your work influencers to include a diversity of positive voices in your reading pile.

We also need to create a workplace culture where taking vacations is required as part of our self-care and investment in employees. Most importantly, library staff should be able to fully disconnect from work after hours and not be expected to take their laptops with them to respond to emails, texts, or phone calls.



Adam Grant • 3rd+ + Follow ...
 Organizational psychologist at Wharton, #1 NYT bestse...
 3w •

Too many leaders label people as lazy when they're actually exhausted. A steady decline in effort and output is a common symptom of burnout. When people are drained, they don't need carrots and sticks to motivate them. They need fewer demands and more support.

Illustrated by [Liz Fosslien](#) and [Mollie West Duffy](#)

HOW BURNOUT HAPPENS

WHAT'S ASKED OF YOU

WHAT YOU HAVE LEFT TO GIVE

@LIZ ANDMOLLIE

15,629 512 comments • 1,105 reposts

Like Comment Repost Send

linkedin.com

'My goal is no longer to get more done, but rather to have less to do.'

- Francine Jay

What else can we do on a practical level? I think two simple things would make a big difference in the workplace:

- We need to normalise taking steps to prevent burnout.
- We need to recognise the importance of taking these steps.

How do we overcome burnout?

Note to self: When things feel overwhelming, remember to:

- Think one thought at a time.
- Perform one task at a time.
- Take one day at a time.

As checkout statistics attest, self-help books have always been a popular genre in our libraries. It is a breakthrough that there is now far more openness to discussing sensitive mental health issues, and a desire to smash the stigma and raise awareness about the topic. More commonly used workplace words include 'self-care', 'managing stress', 'coping with anxiety', 'overcoming depression', 'practising mindfulness', and 'healthy lifestyles.' It's all too easy to get feelings of being overwhelmed. We need to stop it from going too far and causing damaging burnout.

Libby users will find a broad range of material and topics to assist those who wish to improve this area of their lives. The self-help subjects that we have covered range from improving sleep, to the latest studies of the brain and how to improve one's workplace skills. A helpful gateway comes in the form of the *Browse by Subject* feature to see what is available.

Libby's selection of ebooks and audiobooks is available to all interested members to boost their creativity, moods, and productivity on all levels. Readable non-fiction by world-class experts and transformative, inspirational biographies are a fantastic resource in particular, and let's not forget the role that fiction plays. Books can help us make connections with others as well as help us find our true selves. They help us find our purpose. And it brings us the healing power of laughter.

An article in the 19 January 2022 edition of *The Guardian* newspaper called *Easy wins: better than a warm cup of milk, read for six minutes before bed for good sleep*, detailed how a University of Sussex research study had



found that reading for just six minutes per day could reduce your stress by a whopping 68%. The message is clear: if you're not already following this routine in your life, now is the time to add it.

During times of high stress, I will dip into some comfort reading by rereading my favourite authors and titles. It's a harmless indulgence that goes a long way towards bringing calm when I need it most. Libby now has many of my beloved authors in audiobook format, which I find particularly helpful when I'm having to multi-task.

Raising the awareness of self-care and mental health issues

We see how mental health conditions are also affecting an increasing number of children and young adults across all socio-economic groups every day. This is occurring because, as a society, we are dealing with multiple threats, including dysfunctional families, physical and emotional abuse, violence, crime, and unemployment. Whether we are directly or indirectly affected, such pressures will take a toll on our mental well-being and our ability to cope.

We all have a role to play as individuals in doing our part in fighting the stigma of mental health issues. Greater openness, discussion, and compassion are needed. A recent documentary titled *Black people don't get depressed*, directed by Sara Chitambo-Hatira, addresses a little-explored area.

'As the title of this engaging documentary suggests, depression is often unacknowledged in Indigenous Southern African cultures and is instead written off as something that is "for white people." But, as the film makes abundantly clear, the impact of mental health is a fundamentally human experience that transcends all boundaries, racial or otherwise.'

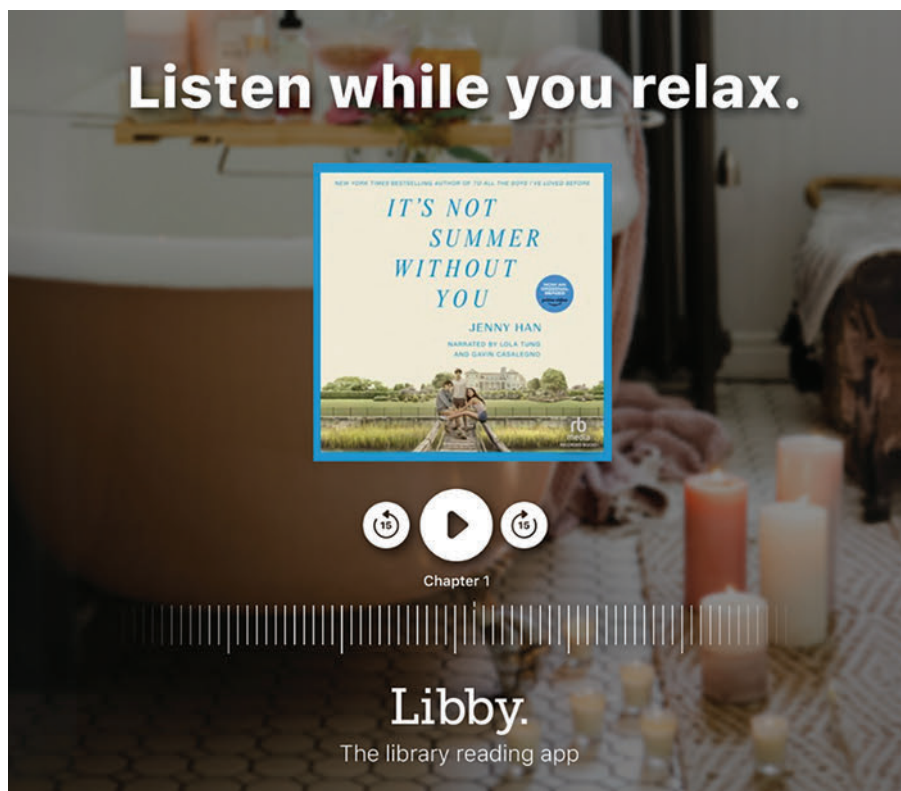
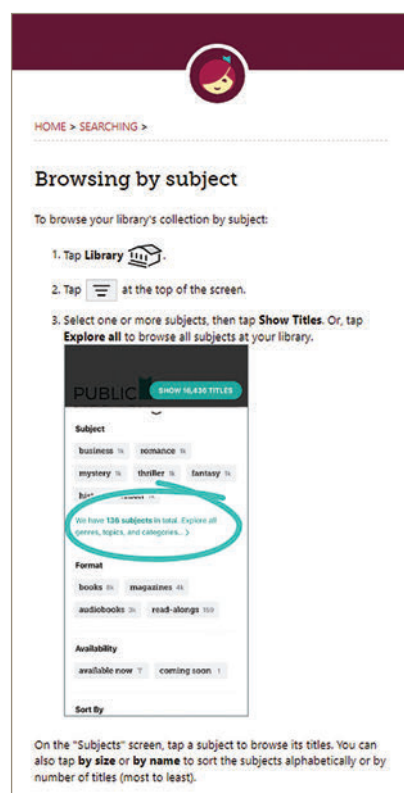
Taking our focus off social pressures and shining a light on the work arena, we see that there are massive challenges just to find a job, followed by the added stress keeping that job and extra pressure to succeed at it. Alongside our work and technical skills, we similarly need to develop emotional and psychological skills to manage the broader issues around burnout. It is encouraging that many

large companies are investing in employee wellness programmes. They have recognised the deep personal and corporate costs arising from allowing staff to succumb to burnout.

Final thoughts

In conclusion, let me introduce you to my new favourite word: *niksen*. Roughly translated it is the Dutch art of doing nothing but doing it with a purpose. It is a philosophy for slowing down and relaxing with the aim of counteracting our always-on world. It is a state of being where there is no guilt or anxiety about actively resting. I think we could safely also call it me-time, or in modern speak, *#MeTime*. The best news is that it is simple and free because you only need three things: time, a calm mind, and solitude.

You have now been given a toolkit of tips, suggestions, and statistics. Take the plunge and open up Libby today. Start investing in yourself. As the world-famous L'Oréal slogan says, 'Because you're worth it.'



Take Care.



Self-care, self-help, inspirational titles... books for **you**.

Read on Libby.

'And one day I understood that it was no one's job but mine to take care of myself and make myself happy.'

– Paulo Coelho

Additional resources

1. Mental Health America
<https://mhanational.org/>
2. The WHO has produced a readable non-fiction fact sheet called *Mental health at work* that is easy to understand and apply in our lives.
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-at-work>
3. The WHO and HealthRight Uganda have published a very accessible free ebook on stress called *Doing what matters in times of stress: An illustrated guide*. The English is pitched at a basic level because it was adapted for people from South Sudan, which makes it a useful resource for multilingual South Africa. It can be downloaded at <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/331901> and also includes options to download audio tools.
4. 2024 report from the Mercer management consulting firm:
<https://www.mercer.com/assets/global/en/shared-assets/local/attachments/pdf-2024-global-talent-trends-report-en.pdf>
5. Dr Helgo Schomer:
<https://www.doctorschomer.com/>
6. Six minutes to improve your life:
<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2022/jan/20/easy-wins-better-than-a-warm-cup-of-milk-read-for-six-minutes-before-bed-for-good-sleep>
7. Mayo Clinic's Job burnout: How to spot it and take action:
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/burnout/art-20046642>

Work smarter, not harder, with this:



Read on Libby.

The one-tap reading app from your library.

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Jan van Anrooy: Art Section, 1973

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