



National Book Week

3-7 September

ETHNEY WATERS

Publication and Promotions

The Western Cape Library Service, in partnership with the Department of Arts and Culture, Overstrand Municipality and the South African Book Development Council celebrated National Book Week with the theme: *Stay connected: get to know your library*. The celebrations took place from 3-7 September 2012 and activities were presented at both the Zwelihle and Moffat Halls in Hermanus as well as at the Thusong Centre in Hawston.

The event was launched on 3 September at Zwelihle Hall by the provincial minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Dr Ivan Meyer. Two posters were also released with the themes *Climate change* and *International literacy day*. The event was attended by local public librarians, staff from the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Library Service staff, members of the media and the public. Special guests included Alderman Pieter Scholtz, deputy mayor of the Overstrand Municipality and the ambassador for National Book Week, Liezel van der Westhuizen. Liezel captivated the audience with her story of how she used books as a vehicle to kickstart her career as a television presenter.

The week showcased various activities facilitated by the Western Cape Library Service, the public libraries of Hermanus and Hawston, as well as role players within the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport. Activities by the Library Service in partnership with local public libraries included promoting a reading culture, storytelling, creating awareness on how to become a library member, face painting, craft-making and old-fashioned film shows (educational and recreational). Displays and exhibitions such as the African writers' exhibition were aimed at creating an awareness of books and the pleasures of reading. The storytelling sessions reached

approximately 120 children per day from surrounding crèches with the focus on early intervention in terms of creating a culture of reading. The film shows were extremely popular and enjoyed by children and teenagers and requests for follow-up film shows were made by the local public librarians. The Pearly Shell Senior Club from Hawston thoroughly enjoyed the trip down memory lane with the screening of **A sailor-made man**, the 1921 Harold Lloyd classic silent movie about a young man who joins the navy to prove himself worthy of the woman he loves. In its time the film became a huge hit at the box office taking in almost half a million dollars.

Departmental activities included an exhibition by the Archive Service, indigenous games organised by the Mass Opportunity Development (MOD) centres of the Regional Sports Unit, Overstrand District, as well as a sign language awareness programme presented by Language Services. The sign language programme was attended by parents, learners, librarians and community organisations, and was rolled out as part of Deaf Awareness Week. These sessions, presented by messrs Ernst and Armandt Kleinschmidt, both former members of the Western Cape Language Committee, were so powerful that the Association for the People with Disabilities requested that Language Services host a session for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities in Hermanus on 3 December 2012. Language Services in collaboration with the Library Service also arranged a 'Train the trainer's' book club event at Zwelihle Library. The participants, comprising educators from Zwelihle Primary and Lukhanyo Primary schools, received training on how to establish and maintain their own book clubs. A book club demonstration was subsequently held with learners from Zwelihle Primary and Lukhanyo Primary schools on Friday, 7 September 2012.

Another highlight of the week was the book reading session by the 17-year-old author, Mbu Maloni from Cape Town. Mbu read excerpts from his book **Nobody will ever kill me**, a memoir of

▼ The halls were jampacked with people young and old wanting to share in the fun of National Book Week



◀ Dr Ivan Meyer, Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Western Cape, extolled the virtues of reading in his keynote address during the launch of National Book Week



▼ Director of the Western Cape Library Service, Nomaza Dingayo, doing the vote of thanks



◀ Ambassador for National Book Week, television presenter Liesel van der Westhuizen, who said books kick-started her career

▼ Deputy Mayor Pieter Scholtz from Overstrand Municipality addresses the crowd



▲ Several indigenous games were organised by Mass Opportunity Development (MOD) centres of the Regional Sports Unit in the Overstrand District

▶ Dr Meyer interacting with one of the pupils at the launch



hardship and abandonment, ending with a positive message that there is always hope for a better life. The session was attended by 25 grade 11 learners from Hawston Secondary School. Ten learners subsequently received copies of Mbu's book, donated by the South African Book Development Council.

The overall impressions were one of a successful event that had reached its target groups. This is reflected in the increased membership statistics of the libraries in Hermanus, Hawston, Mount

Pleasant and Zwelihle since the event. The statistics indicated an increase of 431 new library members for the period of September; an increase of 1%. The membership status of the above-mentioned libraries will be monitored and evaluated for the next few months by the Library Service so as to assess further impacts as result of National Book Week.

The launch

We share the keynote address by Dr Ivan Meyer, Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Western Cape Government, held at the launch of this exciting event.

'Good morning and thank you for inviting me to be part of an event that focuses on something that has had a profound impact on my own life, namely books. In fact, my relationship with books continues to this day. In trying to understand why this is indeed so, I am reminded of the words of St Paul. Writing to Timothy he says: "When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all, the parchments" (2 Timothy 4:13). In a 1863 sermon, *Paul – his cloak and his books*, CH Spurgeon said of Paul: "He was inspired, and yet he wants books!"

"He had been preaching for 30 years, and yet he wants books!

"He had seen the Lord, and yet he wants books!"

"He had a wider experience than most men do, and yet he wants books!"

"He had been caught up into the third heaven, and had heard things that it was not lawful for a man to utter, and yet he wants books!"

"He had written a major part of the New Testament, and yet he wants books!"

'American Founding Father and third President of the United States of America, Thomas Jefferson, puts the above in context for me with his words: "A library book . . . is not, then, an article of mere consumption but fairly of capital, and often in the case of professional men, setting out in life, is their only capital."

'This morning I am joined by approximately 1.2 million library users in the Western Cape (45,631 from the Hermanus area) to firstly, share with you our passion for books and secondly, to invite you to join a library and get access to the amazing world of books.

'Columnist Pete Hamill of the *New York Daily News* once said that what libraries give us is all three tenses - the past tense, the present tense in which we live and the future that we can only imagine. These places have teachers who are living and dead and we are lucky to have them. If I sit here and read Aristotle, he is speaking to me across a thousand years - more than a thousand years. That sense that I am in the company of the greatest people who ever lived is a humbling but a liberating experience.

'Ladies and gentlemen, we are also celebrating Heritage Month and if indeed we accept that libraries are about the past, present

and future, then libraries are surely then also repositories of humanity's heritage. I want to therefore encourage you to, in keeping with the theme, *Stay connected: getting to know your library*; join a library and gain access to much more than books. Gain access to an understanding of our common heritage.

'One can, however, only stay connected if you were connected in the first place. The key to the connection is the library card. The library card provides access. To what you may ask? Celebrated author, Toni Morrison, describes the access as follows: "Access to knowledge is the superb, the supreme act of truly great civilisations. Of all the institutions that purport to do this, free libraries stand virtually alone in accomplishing this mission. No committee decides who may enter; no crisis of body or spirit must accompany the entrant. No tuition is charged, no oath sworn, no visa demanded. Of the monuments humans build for themselves, very few say touch me, use me, my hush is not indifference, my space is not a barrier. If I inspire awe, it is because I am in awe of you and the possibilities that dwell in you."

'The institution Morrison refers to is of course the public library. We have 343 such institutions in the Western Cape. Worth mentioning is that one of these institutions, namely, the Hawston Public Library is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. For 25 years the Hawston Library and its staff have been giving thousands of readers access to a world beyond the confines of space and time and opening up a world of possibilities.

'One of the possibilities which I believe that libraries are certainly well positioned to explore and promote is cultural warmth. The musician, Gloria Estefan, makes the following comment: "The library takes me away from my everyday life and allows me to see other places and learn to understand other people unlike myself."

'Estefan's words in fact bring to the fore the role that libraries could play to build understanding between people from different backgrounds and cultures. Libraries can and should therefore become centres of cultural warmth.

'In conclusion, I do want to encourage everyone of the approximately four million citizens of the Western Cape who have not yet joined a public library to do so and I am confident that if they do indeed take up the challenge, they will one day understand what the author, Rita Mae Brown, meant when she said: "When I got my library card, that's when my life began."

'Thank you.'



◀ The young ones were entertained by activities such as craft-making and face-painting. Seen here is a youngster with his handmade bunny ears



▼ Mbu Maloni, a 17-year-old author from Cape Town, signing autographs. During the week he read excerpts from his book, **Nobody will ever kill me**



▲ The movie, A sailor-made man attracted large audiences



▼ Postermaking was also one of the activities that attracted lots of attention

▲ More indigenous games by MOD



▲ There were also opportunities to test one's skill at board games