



## CHAIRPERSON'S FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT: 1 January to 31 December 2017

### Scope of Report

The Chairperson's Report reflects the period for 1 January to 31 December 2017. This brings the Society into line with the Constitution which prescribes an operating year as a calendar year, with an AGM before 31 March the following year.

### Aims and geographical area of focus

Greater Hermanus from Voelklip to Fisherhaven is the geographical area that involves the History Society. Briefly, the aims of the society expressed in the constitution are to bring history alive to residents and visitors, disseminate information, collect and conserve historical resources and collaborate with relevant bodies.

### Organisational activity

**Committee:** Angela Heslop (Chair); Robin Lee (Secretary); Michael Clark (Treasurer); Blaise Jones; Storm Kreusch, Marinda Wilmans: resignations during year: Elsabe Brink

Committee Meetings: 4

**Membership:** 109 members in December 2017. There have been 8 members meetings and 1 excursion during the year.

**Correspondence:** Members, benefactors, other history societies, media and responding to history queries from the public

**Presentations to other organisations:** U3A and SA Association of Retired Persons

**Articles published:** Heritage Portal: *South African Radar in the Overstrand in World War II* by Robin Lee judged 10<sup>th</sup> in 10 **Most Read Articles**

18 other publications Village News, Hermanus Times and Whale Talk. Collaborate in reviewing history section in Hermanus Info. For the Tourism Office

**Library:** 2-3 books per month are borrowed from our library based in the chairperson's house, the committee discussed having an easier venue for members to access. SANTA Bookshop has agreed to house our books for loan purposes. The new system will commence shortly and members will receive a revised book list and date when this will be operationalised. Members will need to contact the chairperson to process a book loan.

**Website:** fully operational and more active, updated at least monthly. Both articles and website have been a source of enquiries.

**Face Book:** We have started using this social media to hopefully encourage young people to read about local history,.

### **Major projects ongoing: 2**

**Zwelihle history:** Drawing to completion and currently being written up

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**New history book about Hermanus.** In addition during the year funding was obtained to part finance the publication of a new history of Hermanus. Dr Robin Lee has been drafting the text and several members have provided assistance or information. These include Blaise Jones, Michael Clark and Felicity Jervis. Lee Ann Rauch of the Municipality has been very helpful with research into land and housing ownership.

### **An Event in 2017**

**Victoria Cross celebration:** Hermanus shared this event with the town of Copdock in Suffolk, England to celebrate the Centenary Memorial of Major WH Hewitt V. C on 17 September. The event took place near the bench on the cliff path which originally commemorated WH Hewitt. The event was presented in collaboration with the Cliff Path Management Group.

This unusual event arose from an enquiry from Jennifer Jones a local historian who lives in Copdock where Hewitt was born, asking for information that might still exist about Hewitt. Her records showed that he had stayed in Hermanus in the late 1950s and early 1960s, before returning to the UK where he died in 1966. The event is available to view on you tube. (<https://youtu.be/L3YwnpWTZFw>)

**History Boards and Plaques:** Mostly in good order; however some of the plaques near the sea have been replaced with granite as the print has faded. Others remain to be done. The graves of Sir William and Lady Hoy are waiting for name plaques to be replaced.

**Cultural Affairs Award.** The society was awarded a nomination for Best Contributor to Archival Heritage by Western Cape Government on 25 March 2017.

**Future**

2017 has been a busy and stimulating year and 2018 looks forward to a variety of exciting members meetings. I thank the committee for their work and to members who have continued to make contribution to the work of our society.

**Next reporting period:**

This will cover the period January- December 2018.

Next Annual General Meeting: February 2019