



# JOURNAL

for Friends of the vir Vriende van die Bartolomeu Dias Museum

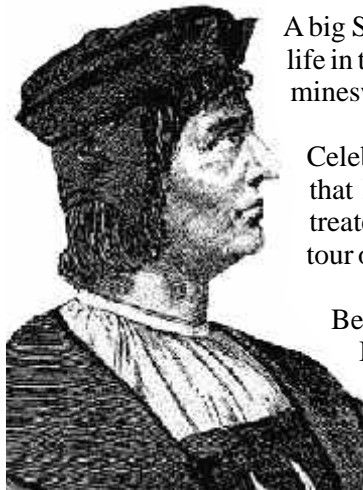
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News Letter 2009 /3-4  
Nuusbrief 2010

## DIAS DAY CELEBRATION

522 years

The Dias Day Celebrations kicked off on the 1st February with the arrival of the Naval Vessel, the SAS Umzimkulu in the port of Mossel Bay. There was a warm reception awaiting Commander Morne Beck and his crew, in the form of the local band, the Guiding Stars as well as the Mayor of the town, Alderlady Marie Ferreira.



A big SA Navy truck was parked at the Dias Museum to offer learners an educational insight into life in the SA Navy. The SAS Umzimkulu was also open to the public for a glimpse of life aboard a minesweeper.

Celebrations reached a crescendo on the 3rd February, as that was the exact date 522 years ago that Dias landed in Mossel Bay. As part of the celebrations a group of street children were treated to a tour around the museum, lunch underneath the Post Office Tree and the big bonus, a tour of the Navy Vessel!

Before departing on Thursday, a special delegation was honoured with a trip around Seal Island on the SAS Umzimkulu. Various manoeuvres were performed and all aboard the vessel had to hang on for dear life!

To receive a Navy delegation in Mossel Bay after a 12 year absence was a great honour and a wonderful learning experience.



The huge Dias cake!



Guest trip on the navy vessel

## CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

### EVENT:

27 April: Opening of Nelson Mandela Exhibition

For more information please contact Erna at the Museum Tel: 044 6911 067

# MANAGER'S CORNER

By Mr Mbulelo Mrubata

The main reason for the existence of Bartolomeu Dias Museum has been and still is to display, conserve and present the cultural and natural history of Mossel Bay, and also to contribute to the economic growth of the area by attracting visitors from all over the world. The objective of museum's newsletter (Jornal) is to give its readers a synopsis of the new developments, activities, events and functions which took place at the museum in the past 3 months period. This is suppose to be the third edition of the jornal covering the period between October and December 2009 but due to the long festive holidays there was no time for compilation of this edition. We have taken a decision to combine this edition with the fourth one (January to March) as we are now approaching the new financial year. In other words this edition is the last one in this financial year and the next one will be the first one in the new financial year. I would like to use this platform to apologize to the readers of our Jornals for the inconvenience and I promise this will not happen again in the next financial year(s).

The sound curriculum-orientated education and outreach programmes were presented to the school learners. The number of learners who participated in our education programmes did not drop considerably even though the period under scrutiny was characterized with end of the year examinations and long end of the year school holidays. Pertaining to the on-site education programmes the challenge has been and still is a lack of commitment from schools. Local school principals seemed to expect the museum to be responsible for bringing the learners to the museum. Fortunate enough for the museum the Garden Route Casino Community Trust continued to fund busing of learners from the surrounding schools to the museum and back. Even though from time to time school learners from other parts of the country and other countries visit the museum, it is clear that if the Garden Route Casino Community Trust withdraws their sponsorship the number of participants in our education programmes will drop significantly.

We had 4 events which were hosted by the museum in the above-mentioned period. The milestone of these events was the ability of the museum to forge partnerships with non-governmental and governmental organizations. In celebration of National Marine Month on the 22nd October 2009 the museum hosted a talk by Professor Geoff Brundit from UCT who presented a paper about the role of oceans in climate change. Everything went according to plan as around about 80 people attended the talk. The flower festival started on the 30th October and ended on the 1st November 2009, and it was organized by the local women who are keen flower enthusiasts with the museum personnel giving all the necessary support. This event brought about lots of positives that originated from it. It achieved its main objective which was to attract more visitors, particularly the locals. For the first time in the history of this annual event, visitors had to pay the normal museum entrance fee. The event was opened by the Mayor who was accompanied by the Municipal Manager. She emphasized the retention of the good working relationship between Dias Museum and Mossel Bay Municipality.

In celebration of World Aids Day, the museum collaborated with Alma Clinic. Mrs L. Kortje made available a display at the museum using the material they use to educate the public about the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The material included posters, pamphlets, flip charts as well as male and female condoms. Every day two health officials sat next to the exhibition to attend to the questions. In an attempt to encourage people to know their HIV status, voluntary testing and counselling was also done at the museum by a nurse and counsellor. All these activities started on the 1st and ended on the 31st December 2009. On the 3rd February 2010 the museum hosted the Dias Day celebration. Even though this is the museum's annual event, this year's one was unique as the museum entered into partnership with organizations such as the South African Navy, Mossel Bay Municipality, Garden Route Casino, PetroSA, Transnet National Ports Authority, as well as Bayside Mall Pick 'n Pay Family Store. The celebration started on the 1st and ended on the 4th February 2010. The main objective of this year's Dias Day event was to educate the local youth and adults about vessels and career opportunities in the South African Navy.

In order for our museum to continue attracting visitors it has to be maintained constantly. The challenge has been the inconvenience the contractors cause to visitors and staff members when they work during visiting hours at the museum. We have tried many times to solve the problem by asking Public Works Department to instruct contractors to start working when the museum is not that busy. But the thing is this museum is always visited by many people all the time and that compels us to welcome people and maintain the museum at the same time. Closing the museum during maintenance period is not an option as tour operators book the museum in advance. We cannot procrastinate maintenance projects of Public Works Department as they work according to their budget and time-frames. The displays and some of the stored artifacts are also affected negatively by the construction work as they pick up a lot of dust.

# GENERAL NEWS

## AIDS MONTH AT DIAS MUSEUM

The museum continued with its trend of being a place where people can acquire knowledge about various social facets. Celebration of special days at the museum is one of the strategies the museum employs to attract people to come to the museum for entertainment and education. The local organizations and individuals are always encouraged to get involved and work with the museum in organizing and executing events and activities.

In celebration of World Aids Day (1st December 2009) the museum joined hands with the Alma Clinic. After a long discussion the two parties agreed that one day would not be enough for the general public to learn about how to protect themselves from this universal epidemic. Mrs. L. Kortje from Alma Clinic then organised a display at the museum using the material they use when they educate the public about the disease. The material included posters, pamphlets, flip charts as well as both male and female condoms. One or two health officials always manned the exhibition to answer any questions. In an attempt to encourage people to know their HIV status, voluntary testing and counselling was done at the museum by a nurse and counsellor.

All these activities started on the 1st and ended on the 31st December 2009 as both parties regard December as AIDS month. The good about this initiative is that it does not only target the local people but also foreign tourists. Everybody was welcomed to come to the museum and learn.



The AIDS exhibition

## THE 2009 FLORAMOSS ROSE & FLOWER FESTIVAL



Some arrangements of the flower show

The organisers want to thank everyone for entering their flowers and plants and for all the hard work put in to ensure the success of the festival.

We were surprised and overjoyed that even with the drought we had a huge amount of entrants. A special thank you to the mayor, Mrs Ferreira for a very applicable speech and opening of the show, Mr Mrubata and staff of the Bartolomeu Dias Museum for all their help, to everyone that helped with the building and clearing after the festival, the ACVV and all the stalls, the Mossel Bay Advertiser and Tourism office for all the help with the advertisements and NG Designs for all the printing.

Thank you also to all our sponsor donations: Mossel Bay Municipality, the Dias Museum Trust Fund, Roland Host from Old Mutual and Garden Route Agri for all the gifts.

## TO MITRA – OUR SPECIAL MUSEUM CAT!

For sixteen years Mitra made the museum her home. She was well-loved by all – from the visitors to the museum guides. Her resting place when tired was the giant clam in the Shell museum. Overseas tourists loved taking photos of her and she always received lots of strokes and attention.

One day she was joined by a young male cat with long white legs and there and then decided this was the place for him too. Everyone called him "Langbeen" and Mitra suddenly had a brother. They loved each other and brought us much joy.

When she died due to old age we laid her down softly and we know she is now in kitty heaven.

Everyone misses her but we know now she is safe, happy and healthy. We will see you again Mitty-Kitty. We love you and will never forget you.

**All our love  
Bartolomeu Dias Museum Staff**



Our beloved Mitra

## INTERESTING SCHOOL STATISTICS

Since the last newsletter we have had so many learner groups visit our museum; either for general history orientation or for one of our curriculum-based education programmes.

The following learner total just proves again how important schools value the Bartolomeu Dias Museum as an Education Centre. The number portrays all schools: those visiting for general tours, education and outreach programmes.

Outreach programmes are there to take the museum to our communities. Especially where they are unable to transport themselves to the museum.

The learner total for the financial year 2009/2010 is 7 140 learners! We are very proud of this. This proves again the importance that museums still play in our communities, primary and high school learners.

### THE DIAS PROGRAMME

It was a wonderful first quarter with most of our local grade 4 primary school learners attending our local history programme. It proved to be very popular as all of them have to do this at school as part of their social sciences learning area. The programme again helps the educators to make the learning experience fun. The programme is three hours long with a powerpoint presentation, worksheet and hands on experience of boarding the replica Dias caravel!

### THE FRENCH INVASION

Another highlight for us was the French high school learners that also visited us again during February after an absence of a year. This is the second time that the same school attended a special programme and itinerary organised by the museum for them. They are from Lille in the north of France.

The group consisted of 13 girls and 7 boys – all in grade 11.

We are overjoyed to have them and that they never skip the museum but always trust us to organise their visit.

We are looking forward to their visit next year.



Learners attending Dias programme



In the Museum classroom



The Frenchies

## LET'S SAVE WATER!

### EASY, SIMPLE WAYS TO SAVE WATER

Collect water to use in your garden (or the garden where you work, or any garden /plants nearby) by doing the following:

- When you shower, put a few buckets around you
- Stand inside a large basin when you shower
- Only open the shower to wet your body and the soap, and to rinse yourself afterwards
- Keep plastic basins in all wash basins and a bucket next to the basin (also at work). Wash / rinse your hands / dishes / whatever in the plastic basins, and pour it in the bucket. When the bucket is full, use it in the garden
- If you do not have a rainwater tank yet, catch rain water in buckets or other empty containers

**YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE! EVERY DROP COUNTS!!**

