Welcome to the first edition of the new SAMANTICS.

A big thank you to the Vice-President, Helene Vollgraaff, for reviving this important SAMA newsletter. I hope that many colleagues will take the opportunity to publish their papers and advertise their programmes in this publication. It will be a good chance for professionals to disseminate their views and ideas without having to conform to the strict rules of publishing.

SAMA has come a long way and we are slowly moving ahead.

We have talked about the new Strategic Plan for quite a while and hope that by now many of you are familiar with it. For those who have not had the opportunity to read it, we have included it in this newsletter.

As you may remember, in my acceptance speech in October last year, I have promised to increase membership by 10%. Unfortunately, we are still far away from our target of 300 members. I urge you all to join SAMA and to invite your colleagues to do so. We need you to grow this organisation and make it more relevant.
SAMA Regional Committees are still doing wonderful work in offering various training workshops, which are advertised through their facebook pages and on SAMA's national website.

In July this year SAMA National will offer a *Train the Trainer* workshop as part of our *Shared Cultural Heritage Programme* with the Dutch Cultural Heritage Agency. This is made possible through the efforts of the chairperson of SAMA's training portfolio, Catherine Snell, and her link to the colleagues from the Dutch Heritage Agency. Conservation experts from the Netherlands will train experienced collection managers and conservators to train less experienced colleagues in the conservation of various materials representing objects in our museums. Six courses are planned over the next three years. So, please watch the space on our website. Places are limited.

On 18 May we celebrated International Museums Day with the ICOM theme: *Hyperconnected museums; New Approaches, New publics.*

"The objective of this day is to raise awareness that “museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples” (ICOM website)"

I hope that we will read all about your International Museum Day events, showing us how you interpreted this theme in the next edition of *Samantics*.

Regina Jansen van Vuuren

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Samantics is a platform on which to share ideas and keep up to date about what is happening in museums in South Africa. Please send us short articles and news about our museums.

The deadline for the next issue is:  
30 September 2018
The 2018 SAMA National Conference is being hosted by SAMA Eastern Cape and will be held at the National English Literary Museum (NELM) in Grahamstown from 22 to 25 October. The conference theme is that of ICOM’s International Museums Day: Hyperconnected Museums: New Approaches, New Publics. The theme references the network of communications within which modern museums operate, and the opportunities for museums to capitalise on those networks to expand their engagement with both existing and new communities.

The conference venue, the National English Literary Museum (NELM), is the first South African museum to receive a five-star rating from the Green Building Council of South Africa, and represents another form of connectivity – the vital connections between our culture and our environment. The building’s ecological architecture blends with its landscape, and through its activities the museum is a cultural hub for the surrounding communities.

SAMA Eastern Cape looks forward to seeing you at the conference.
Museums and the debate on decolonisation

Medee Rall, University of Cape Town

Museum literature shows that there has been debate abroad and locally about decolonisation, although this appears not to be a wide ranging debate given the dearth of scholarly articles on the topic. This article will highlight some of the discussions on decolonisation, and question whether this could be the right moment to take the debate on decolonisation in South African museums further. It will argue that museums are institutions of learning, like universities, and that it is thus appropriate to consider the current call for decolonisation in institutions of higher learning and the ideas being debated in universities, and how these could be applied to museums.

Many European countries are former colonisers and hold material in their museums from the countries they ruled over. The appropriation and submission of bodies and objects of other cultures has been the subject of discussion for some time. Much of this material is found in ethnographic museums. In Berlin, Wonish (2017) from the Humbold Forum, argues that ethnological museums are inseparably linked with colonialism, and suggests the only option for ethnological museums is to face their history of violence with openness and self-reflection. She argues that the violence, suppression and denial of humanity of colonialism need to be addressed when considering the decolonisation of museums. The violence of colonialism Wonish refers to is described by Césaire (2000) as a ‘disruptive, dehumanising, exploitative, racist, violent, brutal, and covetous and a “thingifying” system’. Wonish further states that the renaming of museums, increasingly removing the term ethnology from museum names and replacing it with terms such as world culture obscures the origin of collections during colonialism. Bodenstein and Pagani (2014:39–48) consider how museums can reshape their colonial heritage and how it could be reframed. For them decolonising collections is a process through which an ethnographic object is removed from its former classification which gave this object its colonised status.

South Africa, conversely, like most countries in Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States was colonised; South Africa is a settler colonial country. Many of our museums are colonial institutions, house colonial collections and displays, and have particular ways of representing people and objects. Colonialism had a ‘civilising’ mission, embodied in universities in colonised countries, as it did in museums (Bennett 1998:79). Museums, like universities, are educational institutions, teaching through their exhibitions (their curricula) and their education programmes.

The nationwide Rhodes Must Fall student protests which began in 2015 initially called for the removal of the statue of Cecil John Rhodes, a colonial figure that became representative of colonial thought and knowledge. This campaign led to a movement to decolonise education in universities. The call for the decolonisation of universities is also applicable to other institutions of learning, such as museums.

The revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage 2016, produced at the same time as the ongoing student protests calling for decolonising universities, defines decolonisation as ‘placing African knowledge, epistemology, art, culture and heritage at the centre of policies, practices,
institutions and programmes’. Whilst not going into detail this definition does refer to the core objective of decolonisation – not foregrounding Western knowledge.

For Jansen (2018) decolonisation means dealing with the legacies of colonialism, such as the continued dominance of Western knowledge in the curricula of universities. Many African scholars have written on ways in which Eurocentricity continues to characterise school and university curricula. Similarly the question of whose knowledge dominates museum displays and education programmes can be asked.

The ‘new’ museology that developed in the 1980s was the start of a reassessment of museums. The purpose of museums has since been debated; this is a key question when considering the decolonisation of museums. Changes in museology have, for example, led to questions being asked such as who has the right to speak for ‘others’, which links with the criticism of Western knowledge dominating institutions of education.

Oncieul (2015), working with the Blackfoot community in previously colonised Canada, gives consideration to the decolonisation of museum displays in which this community is represented. Reframing of the Blackfoot community decolonises the way in which they were viewed in previous displays. She believes that displays are able to challenge public perception and are thus powerful tools for reclaiming indigenous knowledge, which as stated by Jansen, is a vital part of decolonisation. Oncieul is of the opinion that museums are key sites for debate on decolonisation as they embody colonial narratives whilst they have the potential to decolonise the history of the former colonial countries.

Locally Mehnert (2014), similar to Wonisch, refers to the necessity of museums with colonial collections having to look at their histories, which, as discussed, is one of violence. Mehnert (2017) argues that colonial museum collections can be used as an archive into African intellectual thought and agency. Where this is not possible the collections could be used to begin a process of discussion by talking about the intricacies of a system that has far-reaching consequences. What makes this an interesting point of departure for further discussion on the decolonisation of museum collections is that this is a window into African intellectual thought, which is at the very core of decolonisation – that of acknowledging and including into curricula African intellectual thought and knowledge.

Given the discussions on decolonisation in the museum literature and the call for the decolonisation of institutions of higher education, is this the moment to foreground the debate on the decolonisation of museums and to consider what re-imagined and reframed collections and displays could look like?

Source list


Musings on a contested past: museums, monuments and memorials

Helen Joannides, Independent Museum and Heritage Practitioner

As a member of the SAMA 2018 Conference Organising Committee in 2017, I have selected three cameos to reflect on the conference discussions – one from a museum, one from a monument and one from a memorial. In this article, I attempt to tease out some of the themes that we dealt with during the deliberations, and that we deal with often in the heritage arena. The theme of the conference was Museums and contested histories: saying the unspeakable in museums.

My first example is from a museum, The Cape Town Holocaust Centre. The Centre focuses on human rights and Holocaust education. Last year they reached close to 25 000 high school learners through their programmes. They undertake educator training in all the provinces, have programmes for students and adult groups and hold regular events for the general public. The exhibitions at the Centre represents everyone who suffered under Nazism: the Jews, Roma and Sinti, Jehovah Witnesses, black Germans, mentally and physically disabled Germans, gay men and women, Polish prisoners-of-war, German political dissenters and peace activists. They also portray other genocides and crimes against humanity such the Rwandan genocide. They also have a permanent display on the history of apartheid.

The presentation by Michal Singer, the Centre’s educator and archivist, described how their aim is ‘neither to shock nor desensitise, but on the other hand, they aim not to curate the history of genocide in such a way that is so palatable as to be untrue to the past’. So how does the Centre find this balance? How do they deal with the unpalatable and shocking without numbing or making people shy away? How do they avoid oversimplifying and glossing over the terrible details, but show sensitivity and not enter the realm of sensationalism?

One of the ways in which they do this is by using stories about individuals in order to humanise the victims of genocide. They display Jewish life in Europe before World War Two and highlight its cultural diversity. They pay special attention to Lithuanian Jewish heritage as the South African Jewish community is made up mainly of the descendants from this area. Perhaps a personal connection to the past can be found or imagined? The Centre becomes a space of reflection and
memory. A Lithuanian visitor wrote in their visitors' book that 'so many friends are gone. They could (have been) my friends!!!!'. The focus is on, as Singer put it 'lives that were lost, not only on their deaths'.

Another method the Centre uses is to provide a human perspective on the horror is by looking across cultures to contextualise the study of the Holocaust in South Africa. This includes an examining of how 'the unspeakable' of genocide is dealt with in a culturally specific manner. There is more than one genocide event and more than one way of processing and representing trauma. Singer described how they had a talk by a victim of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia as part of a travelling exhibition. This woman has spoken in public around the world about her experience of that genocide. However, she also described how the Buddhist tradition of silence discourages her from speaking about her pain in her own country.

A third way to deal with such a sensitive subject is by drawing out the relevance of that history for the present. According to Singer, one Grade 10 learner wrote 'the programme relates a lot to events that are currently happening in South Africa and the world where there is still a lot of division, segregation, religious and racial intolerance.' A study of the Holocaust highlights the consequences of legalised racism and institutionalised discrimination – particularly salient for South Africa.

Singer continued to talk to the 'contested' part of the conference theme. There was no suggestion about entering into Holocaust denialism – the facts are not contested. But, she pointed out that, as the Canadian historian Margaret Macmillan wrote 'every generation has its own preoccupations and concerns and therefore looks for new things in the past and asks different questions'. Children of survivors asked questions about their roots, Germany as a nation has had to come to terms with a past of atrocities, and today we ask different questions about the past. These different generational questions can result in an open, honest discussion about the past. In Singer’s words: 'There should be nothing unspeakable about the past if we seek to overcome its legacy. The Holocaust is never unspeakable – it is universally relevant today, and we need to continue the conversation, even when it hurts'.

The second example focuses on a monument that is probably familiar to many of the conference delegates, namely the Rhodes statue at the University of Cape Town (UCT). A panel discussion entitled Movements around monuments unpacked how pieces of public art and commemoration can become catalysts for social movements; symbols of the need for or lack of broader institutional and structural change, and even the rallying point for violent turmoil.

The case study by Heidi Boise of Heritage Western Cape (HWC) described the process HWC went through in deciding what should happen to the Rhodes statue. The statue is a declared provincial heritage site as is the whole of the campus. The campus is described as having 'historical and architectural interest displaying the Classical Revival style which together with the open spaces, constitute the original campus plan as designed by the architect J. M. Solomon in 1918'.

Boise described how the statue, unveiled in 1934, was originally placed to link the Summer House and Jameson Hall. In 1962 the statue was moved to above the rugby fields to make way for the widening of Rhodes Drive. This new position placed the statue in a position where it visually dominated the campus. It is little wonder that in March 2015 a group of students and workers gathered at the statue 'to end institutionalised racism and patriarchy at UCT'. The statue was seen
as the embodiment of Empire and, as Boise noted, 'presented Rhodes in the role of a visionary, the man of action and a dominant symbol of his time'.

By the end of March 2015, given the immediate and real threat to the statue, HWC agreed to the temporary removal of the statue. A formal application for permanent removal was to be initiated, including a thorough public consultation process. In April 2015 the statue was removed and relocated and the plinth boxed up. The statue was unharmed apart from some aerosol paint graffiti and water-based paint spatters which the conservator decided to leave untouched as part of the historical patina of the object.

Between April 2015 and July 2016, the wheels of heritage and university bureaucracy ground along, deciding what should happen to Rhodes statue against the backdrop of deeply contested public opinion, performance art, discussions on decolonialisation of the education system, the rate of transformation, and on the state of the nation. Questions raised during this debate included: What does heritage mean? Do we have a common idea of our heritage in South Africa? What do we preserve and what do we destroy? What do we remember? Does public art always have to celebrate what is fitting to a modern audience and context or should we confront uncomfortable truths and learn about and from them? How should memorialisation take place? Do we reinterpret statues and try and layer meaning? As one delegate at the conference put it: ‘How do you have history without killing part of it? Do we want collective amnesia?’, or, as through other comments: ‘Reinterpretation doesn’t remove the original intention’; ‘How does a profession dedicated to preservation accept change?’ and: ‘Cultural meanings change over time and cultural integrity means we give precedence to different truths at different times’.

It was decided to permanently remove the statue and the UCT community were given the options to either demolish the plinth with markers detailing the date of the statue, its artist and the date of the removal, or to demolish the upper portion of the plinth and retain the lower portion as a performance and ‘reclaimed space’. The shadow of the Rhodes statue could be retained and a marker erected, detailing the dates of the erection and removal of the statue. UCT preferred this option. The statue will remain in storage for the safekeeping at an undisclosed location and will need HWC approval for relocation and conservation interventions. As Boise stated: ‘the removal of the statue becomes a new symbol of change, possibly more significant than the commissioning and placement of the statue in the first place’. Its removal adds to its historical significance as it now not only has ‘historical and architectural interest’ as when it was first declared, but now has cultural significance as a catalyst for change at the university and elsewhere.

What does this story of Rhodes' literal fall from grace tell us about the role of our contested past in the present? It tells of history that hurts – the statue is and was perceived by many as a reminder of the pain and injustice caused by colonialism and apartheid. It tells of a present where that hurt has not been addressed adequately materially or psychologically. It tells of those who, in the words of one delegate, ‘have not come to terms with the fact that their legacy (however far in the past) was someone else’s pain’. It tells of our collective choices as a society. Do we really value multiple perspectives and complexity? Do we prefer a single simple narrative of good and evil? It tells stories of identity and how we negotiate them in a public space. It tells of the collision of past and present that is the very definition of heritage.

The final cameo focuses on the contentious issue of human remains. You may remember the controversy surrounding the human remains found in Prestwich Street in 2003 when they were
unearthed from the corner of Prestwich and Napier Streets, Cape Town, during a building development. The archaeologists ascertained that the area, called District One, used to be a burial ground for the Cape Town's underclasses in the 17th and 18th centuries. They were the poor, slaves, victims of shipwrecks and indigenous workers who were not allowed to be buried in the formal demarcated cemeteries of the time. The remains of thousands of peoples were uncovered in the area in the 1990s and 2000s.

Between 2003 and 2005, there was a public outcry uncovering the fault lines of our divided society. On the one hand there was economic pressure to renew and develop the city and not to halt building. On the other hand, there was unhappiness about the exhumation of the remains. Some felt that yet again the marginalised are victimised and remain an inconvenience for the city to be disposed of unceremoniously. There was a feeling that the remains needed to be respected and laid to rest. On the third hand (we need more than two hands for such issues), the archaeologists wanted to study the remains and find out more about the early inhabitants. After a protracted battle, the National Minister for Arts and Culture requested that a compromise should be found. The city was asked to assist the South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA) to establish a dignified place to reinter these and future remains found through redevelopment. The development in the area went ahead, the remains were not allowed to be studied and the Prestwich Memorial was built on the corner of Buitengracht Street to house the remains and tell their story. A ceremony was held to lay the remains to rest and today, the remains are kept in boxes in the ossuary with archaeological grid markers as the only identifiers. In addition to the ossuary, the Prestwich Memorial has open space with public art, an exhibition space with panels telling of the history of the area and, problematically, a Truth coffee shop.

Antonia Malan, from UCT's Archaeology Department and Heritage Western Cape has studied the area and written a book on the city's forgotten graveyards. She spoke on the topic at the conference. Delegates visited the site accompanied by the city's guide, Fagmee Jacobs. It seems, while the original controversy may have subsided, it is certainly not resolved. Malan's view is that the compromise of reburial needs to be relooked at. History is not served by boxing it up and leaving it to sit on a shelf. She also feels that the city lost an opportunity to tell the story of the controversy and have a discussion through the sites' visitor's centre. She argues that the current exhibition text is dense, it glosses over the controversy in a few sentences and doesn't interrogate the process or the city's role at all. Furthermore, the coffee shop with people sipping cappuccinos and working on laptops, is the ultimate in disregard for the past. The name 'Truth' further rubs salt in the wounds as, she feels, the truth remains, if not buried, at least rather difficult to excavate. The city's guide was very diplomatic and discussed the need for the city to sustain heritage through income-generating initiatives (like the coffee shop). He said people can request a visit to the ossuary for commemoration. There are plans underway to develop the open space around the memorial into a garden of remembrance and to possibly allow the study of the bones. The Truth coffee shop is also being reconsidered. He didn't say at what stage the process was and how long it would take.

The general feeling of conference delegates going into the ossuary was that it left them cold and sad. They felt learning about the people behind the bones would do more for restoring dignity than leaving them on a shelf – it would 'rehumanise' them. Some discussed the cultural need to leave the bones to rest. Some wanted to know why the city gets to represent the unnamed dead and where the groups shouting to be heard now are now.
Prestwich memorial showed us the multiple perspectives that our identities, cultures and experiences of power can bring to bear on the past. It shows the sometimes competing demands of economics and commemoration. And, like the Rhodes statue example, the virulence of the contestation shows that sometimes heritage issues seem to be rallying points for much broader social issues. Conference speaker Wendy Black from Iziko, reiterated this point, speaking on human remains in museum collections. She feels every public consultation meeting where museum and government officials are present, become forums to share the broad hurt, bitterness and mistrust communities feel and that it takes a long time to get anywhere near the issues at hand – a museum Truth and Reconciliation Committee she calls it.

Having looked at the three examples, perhaps it would be useful as a brief aside to examine the museological context that has prompted this conference theme, both in South Africa and internationally. Why do those working in the museum discipline need to discuss contestation and multiple perspectives and painful pasts now? A whistle stop tour through the history of museums might be helpful.

Museums as we would recognise them today were born in the mid-nineteenth century Europe and centred around collections. There was one ‘correct truth’, and, by walking (linearly) through the hallowed halls, the public (with blank slate brains) were improved and moulded into proper citizens.

The 1950s and 1960s saw new museums, as well as the museum profession, developing in both Europe and America. In the 1960s, along with increased social action and inclusion for minorities, came a move towards museums being more inclusive of minorities. The message underlying this trend to include minorities is that all audiences are valuable and can contribute, and that they contribute differently, through their varied experiences and cultures. They are no longer there merely to be improved or informed of ‘correct truths’. They demand to be consulted about their truth. Coupled with this inclusivity was the move to make education a major function of the museum.

There was, and is now, a move from collecting and protecting objects on display to communicating with audiences (a two-way process where audience responses are important). There was, and continues to be, much more experimentation with space, and objects are not necessarily placed in a linear, temporal order, a shift to a more ‘hands on’ or interactive approach to using objects. Authorship and the selective nature of exhibits is acknowledged and audiences’ reactions are often incorporated into the displays. People enter museums with preconceived ideas and prior knowledge and experience. They therefore construct different truths and meaning for themselves, which may or may not match those intended by the display. This ‘cultural baggage’ that people bring with them is not seen as problematic but rather as valuable.

As the keynote speaker of the conference, Ciraj Rassool pointed out that of late, museologists have begun to talk more about the relationship between museums and justice and a social museology. This takes a number of forms. UNESCO urges states to resource museums to be social forums and agents of social change. The National Museums Association of Brazil deploys museums to areas with social tensions to stimulate social cohesion. Conditions under which objects have entered museums is being interrogated around the world and repatriation is a ‘hot’ topic. Collections from
colonial pasts are being reinterpreted and boundaries between art, social history, ethnography and science re-examined.

It is clear that the conference themes and the content arising from it is part of reimagining of the museum into a space for communities, for frictions, for multiple perspectives. A place where speaking the unspeakable, history that hurts and the battle grounds of commemoration can be played out.

As I conclude my musings, I want to take you back to the beginning of the conference, to what one of the dignitaries, Bonnie Horbach, Consul General of the Netherlands said. She urged us on in our work of navigating difficult pasts as, and I quote, ‘arts and culture can speak to pain without estrangement’. I have been thinking about that statement and wondering whether that is true or not. Are we, in museums and heritage, able to deal with multiple perspectives, dissention and complexity without polarising? Are we, as our tour through the history of museums suggests, moving towards thinking of ourselves as safe spaces – forums for social change. I think, as this conference showed us, we know how to have the (polite – as one delegate pointed out) conversation with each other about the politics of representation, about contested pasts, about public consultation, about a critical practice and about social cohesion. And I think we are positioned to facilitate conversations and deepen public discourse. I am not sure we always have the stomach to tackle it bravely head on with visitors.

Would you like to join the Samantics team?

Do you have a good museum network and know what is going on in the museum sector? Whether you would like to chase up stories on our behalf or write up events, please volunteer to become part the Samantics team.

We are also looking for a lay-out artist for the publication.

Unfortunately, all we can offer is goodwill and a big thank you.
Reflections on museum practice

What have we got ourselves into? Some notes on doing big exhibitions.

Tom Jeffery, curator of exhibitions, National English Literary Museum

In 2017, the National English Literary Museum (NELM) moved into a brand new, purpose-built facility in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape. This is the first museum building to have a five-star rating from the Green Building Council of South Africa, architect-designed to blend in with its surroundings. You only need to look at the pictures to see how amazing it looks. There is no comparison with the old NELM buildings, which were rented and not fit for purpose.

A new museum needs new exhibitions. The museum’s research, education and public programmes staff spent five years developing the content for the exhibition titled *Voices of the Land/Amazwi Elizwe/Landskrif*, which tells the story of South Africa through the nation’s literature. Graphic design of the exhibition took a year, and production and installation of the exhibition infrastructure happened over the same period, culminating in the installation of the graphics and objects. Especially in that last year of installation and in the months that have followed, we have gained valuable insight into the development of large, new permanent exhibitions for a purpose-built museum. As the exhibition curator I want to share a few of those insights.

Graphic design for exhibitions is not the same as for coffee table books or advertising; it needs a different approach. Few design agencies know this, and fewer have worked with museums on large scale projects. Meet with the agency and tell them what you need. Be clear about the fact

*Voices of the Land exhibition*
that you will have to be involved in the graphic design process, that you will expect to see many design proofs and that you will be giving constant feedback, and that you are not simply handing over content to be prepared as the designer chooses. This may surprise them. At the same time, though, be open to their suggestions and develop a cooperative relationship.

If possible, get a graphic designer in the same town as your museum, so that the designer can attend regular meetings and you don’t have to do the whole project by e-mail. Graphic design development by e-mail is not easy. Make sure that the first time you send the exhibition text to the graphic designer, it is the final text. Final final, not mostly final. Final. Have it proofread, and then proofread again. And again. Don’t let any errors creep through. The text will change through the design process, as the design takes shape, but you don’t want to be dealing with errors at the same time. There is going to be enough work to do as it is, because the graphic designer is going to find that all of the content you want is not going to fit in the available space. One of the first conversations we had with our designer went something like this:

   Designer: Cut 90% of the content.
   Us: No.
   Designer: Please.
   Us: Weewell ... nope.

The main responsibility of the museum exhibition graphic designer is to make relatively dense content look good. Ultimately, though, there does have to be some give and take between what curators want to see in the exhibition and what is possible from a design perspective. There must be balance between the content you want and what is possible in the available space, in order to create an exhibition that visitors want to see and that will engage their interest. You will have to make hard choices about what gets cut, but don’t give up too easily. The museum’s storyline

*Voices of the Land exhibition*
development team must decide, and must work closely with the designer throughout the design process. Once graphic design is done, then proofread again to pick up the errors that will have crept in during the design phase. Yes, the graphics are pretty, but don’t be lured in by the way they shine in the light. Do not sign off the graphics until they have been closely proofread.

The tender process means that this next issue – similar to the fact that your graphic designer is in Kimberley and you’re in Mbombela – is pretty much out of the museum’s hands, but if you can wave a magic wand without being suspected of state capture, make sure you get contractors and project managers who have done museum work before. Exhibition project construction is not like other building projects. There are very few people in the country who have actually worked on big museum exhibition projects. If you are not lucky enough to have one of them on board, take everything you are told with a large pinch of salt because you cannot necessarily apply office building principles to museum exhibitions. Don’t believe everything you are told about methods and products. Do your own research, unless you are absolutely sure you are dealing with someone who understands the specific needs of museums and your museum in particular. Don’t let the project managers tell you how your museum and your exhibition should work. Be firm about what you need, and once the work is done, create detailed snag lists and do not sign off anything until you are happy that everything has been taken care of. You are not obliged to either accept what is presented to you or to approve anything that is not correct. Do not sign approval and then look for snags. It’s too late. Snag first, and don’t be afraid to reject anything substandard, even under pressure to do so.

Spec spec spec. Spec everything. If you see something that hasn’t been specced properly, spec it, or tell the right person to spec it. Don’t be afraid to speak up and query whether something has been thought of, because it probably has not. Specifying what the exhibition needs is the only way you will get it, and correcting errors after installation is a nightmare. For instance, the requirements for museum exhibition audio-visuals are not the same as for installations in airports or the foyer of a business, so alarm bells should ring if someone uses anything like that as a recommendation for products. Businesses, for instance, don’t have hundreds of people pressing the same buttons and plugging and unplugging earphones every day. In museums we need to be able to change our audio-visual content regularly and easily, and to do so ourselves. Be very careful about what audio-visual hardware is getting specced and make sure it is fit for purpose. Durable and simple is best. Also keep an eye on how it is installed. The wiring for audio-visual equipment must be accessible so that when the equipment suffers a malfunction (and trust me, this will happen to your equipment and you have to plan for it) you can get to the wiring. In short, make sure that your planning means you will never have to think about cutting holes in your exhibition. If a designer is doing drawings for your exhibition installation, make sure you get copies and check that they are as detailed as they need to be. If there is a place on the plan for audio-visual equipment, make sure that the equipment has been specced in detail, and that what is specced is what you get.

Don’t get me started on display cabinets. Make sure that the people making yours have experience with museum cabinets, and that they understand the requirements. This is not shop fitting, or bathroom cabinet installation. An experienced shop fitter has experience in shop fitting, not museum cabinet production and installation. It’s not the same. And don’t believe them when they tell you that those are the only hinges available for your glass doors. There are hundreds of styles, some of which are capable of handling heavy glass doors and some of which are not. The ones that happened to be in stock at Bathroom Bizarre are not the hinges you are looking for.
Design and planning is everything, for both aesthetics and practicality. Make sure that the installers of anything are doing the job well, that things that should line up do in fact line up, that scratches are touched up, that edges are neat, that nothing sags or limps. There's nothing worse than a sagging, limp exhibition, which you can avoid if you pay attention to the details and have the confidence to raise your voice.

**Participation in the Western Cape Annual Cultural Affairs awards**

*Sig Howes, Education Museum, Centre for Conservation Education, Wynberg*

These awards were initiated by the MEC for Cultural Affairs and Sport, Western Cape, in 1999. The event is held annually to give recognition to individuals and organisations for their contributions to the cultural, linguistic and heritage excellence in our province. The awards are hosted annually by the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS) and the occasion is an opportunity to showcase the diversity of the province's cultural landscape. The categories may change slightly from year to year, but there are several opportunities for museums to enter their proud-making efforts: Best Museum Project, Best Heritage Project, Most Dedicated Museum Volunteer, Best Contribution to the Preservation of Local Heritage and Best Museum.

The Education Museum has been participating in and supporting these awards since 2007. We have entered far more times that we have won, but we have always enjoyed the process and the event itself. Ultimately it is about sharing our rich and diverse heritage; winning is an added bonus.

One of the reasons we like entering for these awards is that the process of nomination is uncomplicated and easy. There is a one-page standard form that needs to be completed, and the strength of the application rests on the written motivation that the form makes provision for – not on expensive promotional material or supercharged high-tech video productions. This makes the awards accessible to every individual and organisation that is making a contribution – no matter how small – in its small corner of the world.

*Sigi Howes accepting the Awards from Mxolisi Dlamuka, Director of Museums, Heritage and Geographical Names*
the province. The entries are judged by a panel and the finalists are invited to attend the function, which is always a splendid affair.

This year we entered in two categories and, to our great surprise, won both of them. We were thrilled beyond words to receive this recognition from DCAS for two of our projects:

- History that Hurts – Best Museum Project
- Local History/Heritage: Make a Museum Display – Best Contribution to the Preservation of Local Heritage.

The History that Hurts project was developed for International Museum Day in 2017 and was inspired by the theme Museums and contested histories – saying the unspeakable in museums. Because we work mainly with school learners, we simplified it to terminology that children could understand, and then focussed on how the Group Areas Act of 1950 and the subsequent forced removals affected schools in Wynberg. Two schools were forcibly removed: one to a white area (John Graham Primary to Plumstead) and one to a coloured area (Broad Road Primary to Lansdowne; this school is now called York Road Primary). First, our staff did some sound historical research to learn more about the histories of these two schools, focusing on what happened to them after the Group Areas Act was passed. We then made contact with both schools and invited them to participate in our programme. John Graham Primary was going through some trauma at the time and asked not to take part. York Road Primary responded enthusiastically and so we embarked on a wonderful journey of discovery, of delayed hurt and ultimately healing and pride with them. We presented the complete history of the school to the Grade 7s in a PowerPoint presentation. We also took them to the two previous sites of their school: what remained of the original building on the corner of Ottery Road and Broad Road and the building in Broad Road from which they had been evicted. The children were struck by the fact that both buildings were still there. Not much was visible from the street level of the original building in Ottery Road, but back at school we showed them what GoogleEarth revealed; they could see the outline of the school, the intact roof structures, the original gables and even the railings in the road. It was an ‘Aha’ moment for the children when they saw first-hand how technology could be used to search for historical evidence.

We then briefed them on how to present this history to others. We left them with the presentation and invited them to add their own information and pictures. In the meantime, we set about inviting other schools in the Wynberg area to come and visit our Museum during the week of 15 to 18 May to hear the story of York Road Primary, presented by the Grade 7s. The forced removals affected everyone and we wanted to reflect that in our audiences. Six schools responded. We deliberately mixed the age groups, the different languages and the diverse backgrounds so that we could achieve a better sense of shared history. The children listened to York Road’s story spellbound.

It was necessary to do a bit of debriefing with the children afterwards so that they did not leave with sadness, fear or trauma. So we held a session with them on how to ask questions on such a sensitive topic, and then helped them structure those questions to either the York Road learners or the adults present. The York Road learners were fantastic presenters. They demonstrated that they were no longer the victims of forced removals, but that they were survivors. In their own final words: ‘And now our history doesn’t hurt quite as much’. It was a fantastic, enriching experience.
The Local History/Heritage: Make a Museum Display project respond to the introduction of local history in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). The growth of social media has put history back into the hands of the people. There has been a surge in sites on Facebook that deal with local history. They encourage people to contribute by sharing their knowledge or asking their questions that others may be able to answer. That should tell us something; people love local history because they can relate to it. They are also more inclined to fight for the preservation of heritage if it is something they have personal knowledge of – in other words, if it in their own backyard.

A focus on local history has been largely absent in the history curriculum. With the advent of CAPS there is, for the first time, a component dedicated to local history in the Social Sciences History subject for Grade 4. A whole term is dedicated to this topic, culminating with a project that encourages the learners to make a museum display from what they have learnt from the local history around them. It provides a wonderful opportunity for educators to narrow the history down to a small, more personally known area for the children.

However, teaching local history can only be done successfully if the educators have the necessary knowledge. Our experience of working with educators has shown that sadly, this is often not the case: at; best, they have a little, at worst, they have none. Despite the vast amount of information available on the Internet, not much has been written on localised geographical areas where schools are located. The Education Museum is responding to this problem by providing educators with easy-to-read notes on the histories of their areas, together with some matching images and photos. As such research takes a long time and we didn’t just want to hand out this valuable information for nothing, we decided to tie this to a lesson as part of our education programme. Called Make a Museum Display is a practical activity in which learners are taught basic skills that are needed to set up a small museum display, using objects from the Education Museum’s teaching collection. The lesson begins with a revision/presentation of the local history of the school’s area. Next we cover the vocabulary to do with museum displays: selecting and grouping different kinds of information, identifying objects from the past and present and their use, interpreting/comparing old and new photographs, tips for arranging and displaying material, making labels and being creative and innovative.

We believe that the key to getting young people interested in history, to engage with it robustly, and to gain a greater understanding of how our individual and collective pasts have shaped us as a nation, is to begin with local history. To assist educators with this task, we are developing historical sources on local history one class and one school at a time. We would like to think that we are making them excited about teaching local history in such a way that it is interesting and fun for their learners. In this way we feel we are making a positive contribution to local history and local heritage.

Getting rewarded for these projects has been a tremendous boost for our museum. But as I said at the beginning, it is more about a journey of discovering and sharing, than winning. We would like to encourage other museums in the Western Cape to enter for these awards – there is so much great work being done by our museums, and you all have the potential for being winners. And to enjoy the ride!
This article emanated from a temporary exhibition at the KwaZulu Cultural Museum *Ordinary Women with Extra Ordinary Lives*. The aim of this exhibition was to acknowledge women's contributions to local society. These role models from our communities are motivators, setting the example that we are the architects of our future.

Learners see these success stories and realise they can choose any career.

Apart from its more traditional role as a custodian of artefacts, the museum also plays a social role responding to local social needs. In an overwhelming patriarchal African context, gender inequality was well entrenched, with women taking on subservient roles. However, times have changed and African women are challenging this traditional role, achieving high office in business and government.

We identified fifteen women from Ulundi and surroundings who are making a difference in community development and/or are challenging male dominated spaces. These are women from all spheres of life. They include leaders in traditional authorities (‘chiefs’), initiators of schools
and crèches, pushing a strong youth development agenda. Some work as brick layers and forklift drivers, and some are founders of the non-profit organisations assisting HIV patients and those with disabilities. There are boxing and soccer club founders, and women’s development programmes, promoting skills development in their communities and encouraging job creation to alleviate poverty.

I believe museums are educational facilities, in service of the public. As custodians of information it is our role to research our own society and to educate future generations. Lives can be changed through such exhibitions, stimulating the apathetic, the unemployed and demotivated to seek answers within themselves. Facilitating such changes in perspective gives museums a great social responsibility.

Cogmans Kloof billboards of yesteryear
Emile Badenhorst, Mantagu Museum

Evidence that Montagu only started to blossom and bloom after a decent road was rigged, shovelled and blasted through Cogmans Kloof, was recently ‘discovered’ in the archives of the Montagu Museum.

From the earliest times, explorers, big-game hunters, traders and farmers had been trying to find safe passage through Cogmans Kloof, the short, but dangerous portal to the pretty town. Almost like one of those dusty frontier towns from the old West, Montagu was cut off from the lucrative trade business in Cape Town for a very long time, with the result that opportunities and developments came at its own pace fuelled by reluctance in some sectors to invest in commerce and the rich and fertile lands that surrounded the town. In fact, it took as long as 150 years after the first farmlands were granted for the local folks to finally get a taste of what the word ‘prosperity’ meant.

Still, access did not come easily. The original road, or rather path through the kloof, simply followed the flow of the river – which the wary traveller had to cross eight times. For long periods, there was simply no road due
to the floods which broke through the kloof often – a narrow gorge at places where the fierceness of water and the stubbornness of rock clashed in all its fury. No wonder the opening up of businesses and the starting of farming activities were risky enterprises for anyone with a bit of sense. While the rest of the Cape Colony was enjoying the fruits of its labour, the folk of this town had to endure the temper and mood swings of the restless Kingna- and Keisie-rivers that slumbered and toiled on its doorsteps. Eventually, after twelve lives were lost in the kloof during the 1867 flood, the authorities, under pressure from local threats and demands, realised that tough action had to be taken. Although previous attempts were made (and failed) this time around they knew that success was imminent. In due course, legendary engineer Thomas Bain and his foreman Charles Handy with 32 labourers were given the go-ahead to proceed with their mandate to build a proper road through Cogmans Kloof.

One can read in the journals of Bain that this was no easy task. But he had his work cut out for him, and 141 years ago, on 28 February 1877, the people of Montagu were granted proper access to the profitable markets west of the kloof. Business was soon booming. Entrepreneurs started moving in, which led to new and more businesses opening, enabling new products to being delivered to new far-off markets. The kloof road that Bain built was thus largely responsible for the rapid development of the town and the surrounding district. Periods of gloom were soon replaced by a jubilant feeling of excitement and joy. Signs of prosperity was soon evident, the success of new beginnings for all to share in.

Two weeks ago I was called to the museum archives by enthusiastic museum volunteer Irma Jordaan. Part of her weekly duties include the sorting of boxes with mixed content into properly labelled files for easier future reference. There were a number of fascinating documents and letters in this box on Cogmans Kloof, but what caught my eye was an old
black-and-white photograph with words painted in white on the rock panel right next to the narrow gravel road winding through Cogmans Kloof. With a ghostly transport-rider standing in the old Bain road just before entering the tunnel on the Ashton side. Behind him were the distinctive cliffs of Kalkoennes in the background. The words on the rock face clearly reads: TO TRAVELLERS. TRY THE BOARDING HOUSE NEXT TO THE CHURCH. PROPRIETRESS MRS WYBURD, NEE MISS VAN TONDER, MONTAGU.

I could hardly contain my excitement, for at home I have a postcard, also taken at Cogmans Kloof, but on the Montagu side of the tunnel, with the words TRY MAZAWATTEE TEA clearly painted about halfway between the roof of the tunnel and the fort. This was found in the attic – letters, postcards and photographs belonging to the Mullin family who built the house in Joubert Street in 1902. Furthermore, and most importantly, this is proof that once the old road had been replaced by the Bain road, business really was beginning to flourish.

By looking at these photographs, there can be no doubt that there must have been a number of these advertisements in the kloof at the time. Initial investigations have made it quite clear that information on the subject of painted advertisements on rocks faces in mountain passes seem to be scarce. However, it would be somewhat naïve to gather from this lack of more evidence that these signs were solely painted in Cogmans Kloof. There is so much to get excited about – one would always look at these rock faces differently from now on – would traces of these ‘billboards of yesteryear’ still be visible today? Maybe behind that Gwarrie bush up there, where the paint would have been concealed from the sun for all these years? I could not help but think of another site near town where we recently came upon the vanishing letters painted in white on a huge boulder next to the walkway. Could this also have been an advertisement of yesteryear? What it definitely is not is graffiti, for the letters were much too neatly painted, almost stencilled. I will have to go back there for another look…

News from the sector

A story to tell

Zongezile Matshoba, Manager: Education and Public Programmes, National English Literary Museum

Museums are interesting terrains for contestations and for public discourses. From museum practitioners to the users and visitors, there are many stories to tell. Themes for the International Museum days in recent years, such as ‘Museums=Social Change’ (2013), ‘Museum Collections make Connections’ (2014) and ‘Museums and Contested Histories: Saying the Unspeakable in Museums’ (2017) suggest the need to engage everyone further about museum practice.

It is no mistake that, among the many museums of the world, Africa has its one unique museum of stories. That museum is the National English Literary Museum, affectionately known as NELM. Interestingly, NELM is located in a town of many public discourses. Grahamstown is sometimes called the city of saints. Others call it a creative city, a university town or a festival city – different names depending on the academic journal or creative genre the story originates from.
It was no coincidence when NELM announced the launch and hosting of the Schools’ Prescribed Literature Festival in 2017. Call it a warm-up to the arts festival at your own peril, but 16 May was inscribed in NELM’s calendar and that of the Department of Education and schools as the date for the annual event.

Grahamstown’s status as the creative city was reinforced, and the inviting new state-of-the-art museum building continues to add value to heritage and tourism. Wholeheartedly welcomed by high school language teachers, schools from Makana local municipality and Ndlambe local municipality came and were amazed by NELM’s auditorium. A Mary Waters High School grade 12 learner opened the proceedings with a stunning performance of Maya Angelou’s Still I Rise. The learner, Alisson Brown, in a red and black dress, had the audience in stitches. She started sitting within the audience, reciting it with oomph, and stood slowly, moving from one side of the auditorium to the other, giggling, snapping her fingers, swinging her body, and finishing on the podium with the lines Still I Rise, Still I Rise, Still I Rise. The museum auditorium felt like floating with her, and the museum vibrancy came alive as the audience gave her a standing ovation. The museum as a social change agent was felt.

The stage was then set for everyone else that was having butterflies in the stomach. It was time to showcase love, enjoyment, understanding, analysis, criticism and opinions of the prescribed Grade 12s English setworks. Their schools prescribed literature, which is also in NELM’s collection as a literary heritage institution, was making connections.

More schools followed, with Velile Secondary from Bathurst dramatising Bessie Head’s short story, Village People. Kuyasa Combined School, from Port Alfred, analysed Gcina Mhlophe’s short story, Transforming Moments. PJ Olivier did Shakespeare’s Sonnet 18. Nombulelo Secondary School could not be left out, and unpacked the novel that many schools had avoided, The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde.

Hendrik Kanise Combined School from Alicedale, Nomzamo Secondary and Nompucuko Combined School from Port Alfred were also in attendance. Other writings that these schools presented included the short story, A Chip of Glass Ruby by Nadine Gordimer, and the poems Captive by Francis Carey Slater and Mid-Term Break by Seamus Heaney.

Waldo Oosthuizen and Dampers Bande, English teachers from PJ Olivier and Velile Secondary School respectively, were the panellists. They led the discussions, shared their expertise and answered almost everything that learners wanted to know. Senior education specialists Vuyokazi Makubalo and Viwe Pikoli thanked teachers for their efforts in preparing their learners and committing to the betterment of education in the province and South Africa, and the museum for coming up with an innovative education programme that is linked to the much-needed grade 12 curriculum intervention.

‘In 2015 Grahamstown was number one in English, and number two in 2016. It must go back and retain its first position’, said Makubalo, who coordinated the English teachers, encouraging both teachers and learners.

NELM took the festival further to Cradock, given that it has its satellite museum there, Schreiner House. Unlike in Grahamstown, Cradock grade 12s presented both their isiXhosa and English
poetry and short stories. It was held during the 2017 Schreiner Karoo Writers Festival in July. Learners came from Matthew Goniwe Comprehensive School, JA Calata both in the Inxuba Yethemba local municipality and Inyathi Secondary in the Enoch Mgijima local municipality.

The plan is to grow the festival further in 2018 to include isiXhosa and Afrikaans prescribed literatures in the two regions. Mzwandile Mayalo, the Deputy Chief education specialist in the Grahamstown area liked the idea so much that he even requested permission from NELM to sell it to other districts in the Eastern Cape, and will hopefully be a national festival one day.

Believe it or not, the various museum collections have many captivating stories, and those of the cabinets of curiosity are unbelievable. For a moment, you need to forget about the soapies, the social media, and the movies. Check a museum near you. So, the next time you visit Grahamstown, pop in. You may have a story to tell, and be interested to be told a fascinating story, especially by a museum person.

Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport

Cultural Awards

Content and photographs supplied by the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport.

On Saturday, 3 March 2018, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport honoured individuals from the Western Cape at the Annual Cultural Affairs Awards. The awards, held for the first time in 1999, honour those who have made an extraordinary contribution to cultural affairs in the province. The evening was a celebration of all fields of cultural affairs, with those in the fields of culture, linguistics, archives, museums and heritage being honoured. Head of Department Brent Walters emphasised the importance of the work of the department in providing opportunities for local talent to be showcased. ‘This is an opportunity to use creative talent to project our own unique identity to the world. Those participating in culture and the arts help us to connect with our identity, which is incredibly important for young people’, he said. HOD Walters also congratulated all the nominees and winners and thanked them for their role in promoting arts and culture in the province.

In her speech, Minister Marais spoke about the importance of uniting in our diversity in order to promote cultural inclusivity. She also mentioned that 2018 is the year in which we commemorate the centenary of former President Nelson Mandela. ‘Tata Madiba would have been please with each nominee’s work and what they are doing to embrace cultural inclusivity’, she said. Minister Marais bestowed ministerial recommendations on Dr Marlene le Roux, Hanneli Rupert-Koegelenberg, Deon Meyer, Dr WF Botha and Omar Badsha.

Museums were rewarded in four categories:

- Best museum promoting social inclusion
- Best museum project
- Museum volunteer of the year
- Best contribution to the preservation of local heritage.
Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum and Stellenbosch University Museum shared the award for the best museum promoting social inclusion. Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum received the award for its active community projects focusing on youth, especially within the performing arts while the Stellenbosch University Museum received award for its highly inclusive, extensive and sustainable program of dialogue within the community.

The Education Museum, Centre for Conservation Education received the award for the best museum project as well as the best contribution to the preservation of local heritage. Elsewhere in this publication, Sigi Howes tells us more about these projects.

Hester Lotz is the current Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Shipwreck Museum in Bredasdorp received the award as the best museum volunteer of the year.

**Hola Espana!**

_Leon Steyn, SA Naval Museum, Simon’s Town_

I attended the *Congresso Internacional de Historia Primus Circumdedisti Me* in Valladolid, Spain from 20 to 22 March this year. The congress, which was attended by over 200 historians and delegates from 21 countries, focused its proceedings on the 500 year anniversary and achievements of Fernão de Magalhães (Magellan) and Juan Sebastián Elcano, who completed the first global circumnavigation in 1522.

Comprising five ships and 241 men the Spanish convoy departed Spain on 20 September 1519. The Spanish convoy was the first group of Europeans who found the passage to the Pacific rounding South America, through the Strait of Magellan. Crossing the Pacific Ocean, they reached the Philippines in March 1521. Magellan met his end at the Battle of Mactan on 27 April 1521, when warriors of Lapu-Lapu, a native chieftain of Mactan Island, overpowered and defeated the Spanish force under his command. The depleted fleet, now consisting of only two vessels and commanded by Elcano crossed the Indian Ocean and rounded the Cape of Good Hope in January 1522 on their way home. The fleet eventually reached Spain on 6 September 1522, with only one ship, the carrack Victoria and Elcano and seventeen survivors.

At the completion of the congress, I visited the *Museo Naval de Madrid* (Spanish Naval Museum) and the *Museo del Aire*, (Spanish Air Force Museum) on the outskirts of Madrid at Cuatro Vientos.
Airport, Spain. The Naval Museum dates to 1792 and show the history of the Spanish Navy since the Catholic Monarchs, 15th century, up to the present. The displays are expansive and elaborate and include a Daphne class submarine ESPS Delfín and the Peral submarine in Cartagena that dates back to 1888. Organisationally the naval museums are directed by Director Naval History and Culture (Admiral Fernando Zumalacárregui) with just over one hundred staff members, to assist the Admiral Chief of Staff of the Navy in everything related to naval history and culture. These functions include the control of the seven naval museums, seven historical archives, naval libraries and an Institute of Naval History and Culture.

**SAMÁ Activities**

**81ST SAMÁ national conference report**

**SAMÁ Western Cape Conference Organising Committee**

One hundred and eleven museum delegates from across the country attended the 81st SAMÁ National Conference in Cape Town from 23 to 26 October 2017. The conference was organised by the Western Cape regional committee and hosted at the Sanlam Conference Centre in Bellville. 2017’s ICOM Museum Day theme, Museums and contested histories; saying the unspeakable in museums, was used as the conference theme.

The SAMÁ Western Cape organising committee took the early decision to change the format of the conference from the traditional 'two and a half days of conference papers' to one that would encompass a more practical learning experience.

Prior to the start of the conference, the SAMÁ National Executive committee convened for their annual meeting, deliberating on strategic matters that concern the future of SAMÁ on a national level.

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<td><strong>Publication Awards:</strong></td>
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<td>• President's Award for best paper by a first time speaker: Heidi Boise, Heritage Western Cape</td>
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Old friends reunited, while others met for the first time at the ice breaker event on the Monday evening. The cocktail event featured the artwork of Richard Mudariki and a talk by the curator of the Sanlam Art Gallery, Stefan Hundt.

On Tuesday, the conference officially started on a more serious note, featuring keynote speaker Dr Ciraj Rassool and the Western Cape Minister of Arts and Culture, Anroux Marais, who officially opened the event.

The first day of the conference featured conference papers and discussions on The representation and interpretation of our contested past, movement around monuments and How our collections reflect and preserve our contested past. These sessions were
connected to the evening social event held at the Castle of Good Hope. The evening proved eventful, featuring excellent wines and canapés, a tour of the iconic Castle and SAMA National President Mr Victor Netshiavha firing a quarter pounder cannon, much to the delight of the gathering.

Day two (Wednesday) was the excursion day in which delegates could join one of three tours. The Helderberg tour comprised of visits to Lwandle Migrant Museum, Vergelegen Estate and the Kramat of Sheikh Yusuf of Macassar. The Simon’s Town tour comprised of visits to Simon’s Town Museum, the Heritage Museum, the SA Naval Museum, a very eventful train ride and a visit to the SAPS Museum in Muizenberg. The city tour provided visits to the District Six Museum, Cape Town Holocaust Centre and Prestwich Memorial.

The final day (Thursday) featured an offering of practical workshops. Delegates had an option to choose from two of four workshops. The education workshop was presented by the Western Cape Museum Educator Group, while Carol Brown presented the exhibitions workshop. The organisers were graced by the presence of Dutch Cultural Heritage Agency and Reinwardt Academy of Amsterdam University who presented the conservation workshop (Alexandra van Kleef and Hanna Pennock) and marketing workshop (Marjan Otter) respectively.

The all-important SAMA Annual General Meeting was held just before lunch on Thursday. The regional chairpersons delivered their annual reports, followed by the outgoing President Victor Netshiavha’s final report. The appointment of the new SAMA National President, Regina van Vuuren, was confirmed while Helene Vollgraaff was elected as the new Vice-Chairperson. Catherine Snel, vacating the Past President position, was retained on the committee in the training and communication portfolios.

The last session of the day featured the Show and tell session, and as always, provided an ideal opportunity for speakers to showcase their own museum projects and activities.

The much anticipated conference dinner was hosted at Skilpadvlei Wine Estate near Stellenbosch and, in line with the conference, sported a slightly different format from the more traditional formal events of the past. The local Cape Town band Just Friends set the tone and the delegates were taking to the dance floor long before the main course was served.

For more serious intermissions, guest artist, Khadija Heegers’ touching reading of Khoisan and slave poems provided much reflection and thought.

Officially concluding his two-year term as National President, Victor Netshiavha delivered his final address to the delegates before the ceremonial Presidential Chain was handed over to his successor, Regina van Vuuren.

Victor’s final task was to announce the winners of the SAMA speaker and publication Awards. The winners received a certificate and book voucher.
Collections are the mainstay of museums, and provide visitors with a concrete connection to the past in a way that other displays often cannot. Curator of the Royal Museums Greenwich, Katy Barrett, noted that ‘objects bear the marks of how they've been used, giving us access to ideas that may have been too fundamental to a person's life ever to have been written down’, which is partly why many people are attracted to exhibitions centred on museum collections. Taking care of collections, regardless of whether they comprise natural history specimens or artefacts of social history, is a tremendous responsibility as they are unique resources that are impossible to replace. The KwaZulu-Natal committee made a decision to make museum collections the focus for the annual conference, and invited papers on the theme ‘Celebrating Collections’ for a two-day meeting held at uMgungundlovu in the eMakhosini valley outside Ulundi.

The organisers received nine proposals that examined various aspects of how museums manage and curate collections in terms of management, conservation and preservation, as well as research and display. The presentations, which included a practical display of techniques used in the care of textiles and beadwork, examined the challenges we face in this important work, and offered an opportunity to discuss the accomplishments that museums and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal have achieved. Finally, our conference venue at uMgungundlovu overlooks and is surrounded by a wonderful historical landscape, which the conference programme included as part of excursions to see the adjacent royal homestead of King Dingane kaSenzangakhona, as well as the nearby eMakhosini valley and the KwaZulu Cultural Museum in Ulundi.

When the thirty conference delegates gathered at uMgungundlovu, they represented eleven museums and heritage organisations from within KwaZulu-Natal, as well as the National Museum in Bloemfontein. The gathering was welcomed by Amafu CEO Dr Vikinduku Mnculwane, who noted that although the numbers of those in attendance were modest, the range of organisations reflected all areas of the sector and that often small groups have the ability to make a large impact due to the quality of discussions that emerge. Also present were SAMA National President Regina van Vuuren and the Director of Museum Services in the provincial Department of Arts and Culture, Mrs Bona Zondi.

The first session of the conference tackled the topic of managing collections, with two papers relating to GRAP103 and a third on digitisation of collections. Mohau Qalaza, senior curator at the Durban Local History Museums based at Bergtheil in Westville, provided a thorough overview of the issues that should be considered when adopting an electronic collections management system, while John Midgley from the KwaZulu-Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg gave a fresh perspective from the natural sciences on the various challenges which GRAP103 creates for managing collections. David Larsen, from Africa Media Online in Pietermaritzburg, outlined the impressive work his organisation has done on the digitisation of the ANC archives at Fort Hare University. A lively discussion followed these presentations, which illustrated the acute problems created by the implementation of GRAP103 without sufficient consultation among museum professionals. James van Vuuren of Amafu suggested that the conference adopt a resolution on
these challenges, and the importance of dialogue with those responsible for accomplishing this type of work.

After lunch Jenny Stretton, curator at Durban Art Gallery, and Neil Stuart-Harris, textile conservator at Durban Local History Museum, conducted a ‘Show and Tell’ session on a wide range of methods they have developed to both store and protect art and artefacts under their care, as well as innovative ways to display objects such as beadwork. Their joint presentation was of a highly practical and interactive nature, which allowed for questions from the audience as they demonstrated their work, and shared their passion for allowing collections to ‘speak’ to viewers. This participatory practical approach in at least one session of the conference was identified beforehand as key to increasing the hands-on experience of local conferences, especially considering the success of similar slots at the 2017 national conference in Bellville.

The importance of collections in research occupied the final session of the day, and once again reflected the diversity of collections. Kirstin Williams, of the KwaZulu-Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg, gave a presentation on the value of natural history collections today while Mark Coghlan and Reinhardt Hartzenberg from the Provincial Museum Services illustrated the importance of a single photographic archive of military themed photographs. Finally, Ayanda Ngcobo and Gugu Ntshangase, both of Durban Local History Museums, examined the importance of ongoing research in the development of cultural history collections, particularly as South Africa draws nearly a quarter century of the democratic dispensation and museums consider how this era is represented in collections. After an intensive day of discussions the conference delegates moved outside to enjoy a braai under a slender crescent moon and bright autumn stars.

Under the topic of how displays depend on collections, Zameka Yamile of the KwaZulu Cultural Museum in Ulundi gave a presentation on a temporary exhibition which used objects from their cultural historical archive to illustrate proverbs and idioms in the Zulu language. My own contribution to the proceedings was the final one of the conference, and comprised a detailed look at a class of metal object, namely locally forged agricultural tools used mainly by women in crop production, as a means of illuminating African domestic life during the 19th century. Once the conference presentations were over, the Annual General Meeting of the regional SAMA branch was conducted and members discussed of the various training programmes and efforts to build capacity among members. A stimulating two days of dialogue were brought to an end with tours of heritage sites surrounding the venue.
SAMA Western Cape Workshop on archives and museums
Huguenot Memorial Museum, 25 April 2018
Leon Steyn, SAMA Western Cape Chair

A one-day workshop on archives and museums was presented by Petria de Vaal-Senekal, a well-respected archivist.

The venue was filled to capacity with 30 delegates attending from as far afield as Knysna. This shows that there is a real need for training and capacity building in the museum sector.

The workshop was interactive and provided a lot of discussion around the following topic: ‘Museum collections, traditionally comprised of artefacts, are often accompanied by a documentary collection or archive. This can be correspondence, diaries, pamphlets, reports, photographs, drawings and maps, banners, books, cuttings, etc. that support the collection or relate to it in some way. Museum staff are sometimes unsure how to deal with this eclectic mix’.

The workshop dealt with how to apply archival principles and international archival standards. The following functions, amongst others, are applicable within any archive: acquisitioning, accessioning, appraisal, sorting and description, indexing/retrieval, preservation and access.
SAMA Eastern Cape exhibitions workshop: National English Literary Museum, 15-16 May 2018

Tom Jeffery, SAMA Eastern Cape Chair

An exhibitions workshop will be facilitated by Balthi du Plessis. He has great experience in South African museums, and particularly in exhibition project management, design and installation. The focus of the workshop is on identifying strategies through which ‘small’ museums can make best use of their resources for exhibitions, source new resources and streams of income, and on how they may get their exhibitions to reflect the significance and calibre of their sites.

The workshop is replacing the SAMA Eastern Cape Regional conference as the SAMA National Conference being hosted by the Eastern Cape later the year. The regional conference will return in 2019 at the Nelson Mandela Museum, Mthatha.
TOWARDS A NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR SAMA.

1. Introduction.

Following decision of the SAMA national Council to review its strategic framework, a workshop was held during October 2015 to plan a way forward. A generic strategic analysis was conducted, looking at the positioning of SAMA as the museum industry's professional body, and the role its members felt it should be taking. The results of this workshop were presented at SAMA 2015, with an undertaking that a revised strategic framework would be presented at SAMA 2016. In an environment of limited funding, the exercise was conducted in-house using planning skills of members and facilitation by a senior manager in the heritage sector.

2. Core Ideas

The core of the museum industry is the museum collection itself. The traditional museum idea is based on collections of objects and the work that goes into documenting and conserving those objects. With the increasing emphasis on newer categories of objects, including abstract collections, members looked at the ever-changing definition of a museum and analysed the core values of SAMA to see whether the objectives of SAMA are reflective of the needs of the museum industry and the community it serves.

The members felt that the current definition was adequate at present, but should be driven by debate, notably that around the white paper on heritage and museums. The understanding of the public sector parent departments appears to be hazy and inconsistent and will continue to be so unless our parent departments are pressured into accepting the important role museums have to play in national discourse. However rather than being reactive to often uninformed perceptions that drive national policy, the museum industry should be driving policy which informs national policy. With this position in mind it is critical that work on the white paper on heritage and museums is resuscitated, with SAMA as a key stakeholder in the policy-making process. The SAMA National Committee should be instrumental in driving this process.

The workshop also looked at the core goals as they apply to SAMA. Apart from looking purely at activities that emanate from a standard museum's definition to produce outputs, goals should go a step further and speak to outcomes. The core goals were analysed and the group suggested a number of additions that recognise the expanded function of museums beyond simply managing collections, to being responsive to broader societal issues. They also ask for a stronger affirmation / commitment to re-evaluating relevance, and striving to meet the highest standards of governance. A useful approach would be to dovetail SAMA goals and objectives to those espoused by the national growth strategy document. This in turn would affirm the industry commitment to its role in meeting national objectives, and unlock support for the industry from various sectors.

### PRELIMINARY ACTION   RESPONSIBILITY

| Ascertain status of White Paper and develop a response / position on current SAMA National content. | SAMA National |
| Develop memorandum on the status, content and future of the White paper | SAMA National |
| Request Audience with Provincial HOD's to present and discuss Memorandum, with a view to an audience with National HOD and Minister. | SAMA President |

* It is important that the actions above are not viewed independently of other actions that follow, but that those actions influence the position adopted *

### PRELIMINARY ACTION   RESPONSIBILITY

| Establish a Strategy Committee to drive the strategic process. Not necessarily only drawn from Museums industry | SAMA National |
| Develop a clear set of outputs for the museum industry based on the accepted definition. | Strategy Committee |
| Expand the above outputs to include outcomes | Strategy Committee |
| Analyse the above outcomes in terms of the important national growth strategy criteria and proposed interventions, namely et al: | Workshop with SAMA National and co-opted Province |
- Job Creation
- Skills Development
- Poverty Alleviation
- Strategic Infrastructure
- Environmental Sustainability
- Service delivery and Governance

and produce a relationship matrix demonstrating museum industry support of national goals.

Using the information above produce a branding industry based **Mission**

**SAMA National**

**Statement**

Extract from the above a time based **Vision Statement**

**SAMA National**

White Paper Concurrent / parallel linkages

**SAMA National**

Museum Industry Buy in Process

**SAMA National**

3. Positioning for Success.

A fairly simplistic positioning exercise, using a SWOT process imposed on the current idea of the museum, analysed SAMA position from three angles:
- External Issues – focus on partnerships and relationships.
- Internal Issues – focus on internal relationships within the sector.
- Market Position – Focussed on perceptions.

3.1 External Issues:

Analysis of the SWOT matrix clearly showed that the museum industry is disillusioned and feels alienated from the stakeholders most likely to support it. Escaping from this condition will probably take a significant amount of time and care should be taken not to action unreasonable targets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>CORE IDEA</th>
<th>PRIMARY ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many potential allies exist to assist the museum industry</td>
<td>Exploit all possible relationships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| THREATS | 1. Many of the threats relate to the position of the museum industry in relation to core stakeholders. (Museums are tolerated, rather than supported)  
2. ICOM and SAMA appear to be challenging for the same space, rather than collaborating in the same space.  
3. As evidenced by large scale appointment of non-professionals in critical museum posts, the perception of a disintegrating profession is created | 1. Improvement of external position of SAMA by demonstrating positive aspects of museums and benefits.  
2. Clarification of roles and adherence to global museums objectives.  
3. Re-affirmation of professional standards. |

| WEAKNESSES | 1. Poor networking between Museums and potential partners.  
2. Very few meaningful partnerships exist between SAMA / local / municipal / provincial / national stakeholders | SAMA networks must be improved by developing a coordinated approach to dealing with stakeholders, and tapping into member contacts. |

| STRENGTHS | 1. Conservation has a positive stigma; therefore public perception is that the museum Industry is a good thing.  
2. Museums support a number of | Actively exploit relationships with similar industries / stakeholders |
important peripheral functions (education, entertainment)

### PRELIMINARY ACTIONS: RELATIONSHIPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Network questionnaire to determine those members who have access to potential partners / stakeholders / policy makers etc. Determine extent or willingness of those members to assist in bringing stakeholders on board</td>
<td>Strategy Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a relationship matrix based on existing relationships</td>
<td>Strategy Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand relationship matrix to desired matrix with potential partner roles</td>
<td>Strategy Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed national SAMA SA Growth Strategy contributions into relationship matrix to determine priority relationships</td>
<td>Strategy Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PRELIMINARY ACTIONS: PROFESSIONALISM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reaffirm professionalism within the industry by renewed focus on individual and institutional professional accreditation.</td>
<td>Deputy President</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PRELIMINARY ACTIONS: PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of SAMA / ICOM Liaison Committee to coordinate efforts.</td>
<td>Deputy President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of SAMA / DAC liaison Committees to feed Museum efforts into National / Provincial initiatives and tap into additional resources.</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2. Internal Issues

Analysis of the SWOT matrix clearly showed that SAMA members feel that the professional body has little to offer. In addition, SAMA is not enforcing professionalism as a condition for placement in a museum environment. As long as professionals are not employed or developed, there will be no need for a professional body, and the industry will lose the capacity to develop itself from within and eventually lose relevance.

Other findings related to poor communication between members that had led to an insular work approach that failed to benefit from the experience or potential contribution of others in the industry.

### CORE IDEA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>PRIMARY ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human resources and other museum discipline /subject – related forums exist.</td>
<td>1. Resurrect standing committees with enforced annual targets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum-related studies exist</td>
<td>2. Establish opportunities for in-service and institutional training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THREATS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insular museum environment and “turf” mentality</td>
<td>1. Membership drive showing benefits of professional membership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Develop activities that encourage / reward collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEAKNESSES</td>
<td>Coordination of annual member targets to allow collaboration and avoid duplication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Most of the weaknesses identified relate to poor coordination of efforts and absence of a unified museum front (solidarity).</td>
<td>Develop an effective member communication portal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRENGTHS</td>
<td>Create opportunities for subsidiary skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Short skills and budget challenges have necessitated development of multi-skilled workers.</td>
<td>To be developed and tap into skills base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. There are a large number of museum staff with specific technical skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PRELIMINARY ACTIONS: PROFESSIONALISM/ TRAINING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resurrect SAMA Training Sub committee</td>
<td>Deputy President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit of existing museum-related coursework and skills transfer</td>
<td>Training Sub committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extract “low hanging fruit” from above coursework and develop a series of short courses at existing institutions attached to SAMA bursaries.</td>
<td>Training Sub committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the existing long-term museum training plan.</td>
<td>Training Sub committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a list of accredited museum related professions coupled with accreditation requirements, taking into account in-service experience and qualifications.</td>
<td>Training Sub committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source bursary funding from partners to develop skills in the industry</td>
<td>Training Sub committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmarking of “Museum Professional” positions against similar professionals to create professional equity</td>
<td>Training Sub committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage heritage as a career and study choice – Tertiary qualification partnerships with Technical Institutions and Universities</td>
<td>Training Sub committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PRELIMINARY ACTIONS: MEMBER BENEFITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAMA negotiated discounts for study, entry, subscriptions to journals/ cross discipline membership etc. Investigate likely reciprocity arrangements</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Push SAMA professional accreditation as a requirement to be employed in a museum environment. - “Museum Licence” as a requirement for all state-funded museums. - Relates back to the White Paper. The need for dedicated museum legislation.</td>
<td>Deputy President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect and circulate opportunities from within the industry</td>
<td>Deputy President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resurrect the SAMA Technical Conference to be held every two years. This used to provide a workshop environment in which many technical aspects of museum work were shared. The first step could be a technical component at either the national conference or to slot the technical conference onto the provincial conferences on a rotational basis</td>
<td>SAMA National</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PRELIMINARY ACTIONS: COMMUNICATION/ INTERNAL RE-BRANDING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collate and circulate annual SA Museums Calendar</td>
<td>Provincial Deputy President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a media policy to govern media releases and target a minimum number of releases per year. Develop the existing website to reflect the revised Mission and Vision and target at least 1 website modification per week.</td>
<td>Deputy President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a relay portal on the website to allow members to request/share information related to their work. This could also contain a set of generic policies to empower smaller museums.</td>
<td>Province + Volunteer Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a social media policy to govern the social media network and target at least one social media vehicle with at least 104 posts per year</td>
<td>SAMA National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a “SAMA STRAT DASHBOARD” to allow all members access to current action progress of the strategic plan and hold the Committee accountable.</td>
<td>SAMA National</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3 Market Positioning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>CORE IDEA</th>
<th>PRIMARY ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A diverse set of potential partners / stakeholders who are sympathetic to the museum cause exist.</td>
<td>1. Create public buy-in.</td>
<td>2. Develop on-line museum presence and attract partners able to assist museums in developing technology-based interpretation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The virtual world provides a good opportunity for museums to exploit technology and interpret material that was previously difficult to portray.</td>
<td>3. “Claim” heritage events.</td>
<td>4 Harness tourism authorities, local and district authority initiatives and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Heritage events

**THREATS**
1. The relationship between SAMA and DAC was damaged some years ago when funding provided by DAC was not well accounted for.
2. A perception exists that Museums / SAMA is ineffective.

**WEAKNESSES**
1. Outdated media utilization.
2. No marketing / PR strategy.
3. Little museum-related news reaches beyond local media.

**STRENGTHS**
Some museum professionals are well networked.
The museum cause is linked to conservation, which currently has the public spotlight.
Rediscovery of heritage / reinterpretation of collections is critical to transformation

**PRELIMINARY ACTIONS: MARKET**
Nominate one member of the SAMA National Committee to take on the responsibility of SAMA spokesperson.
Develop an interim marketing strategy for SAMA based on existing resources and skills, including an inventory of free and affordable media partners / service providers / opportunities.
Develop SAMA website to allow linkages to as many like sites as possible (both national and international)
SAMAB is the face of research in museums. Its role must be clearly articulated to the museum industry. The SAMAB committee should be not only looking at high level research / work, but should focus on developing young professional’s ability to produce minor publications / papers. An inventory of existing research work throughout the museum industry should be maintained
Develop a database of museum technology professionals who could assist museums / consult on technical issues
Add a website link to virtual museums / tours/ exhibits in South Africa
Develop a database of potential heritage events that could be harnessed, along with appropriate partners who could share benefits of exposure attached to such events.
Develop a generic “museums and local authorities” leaflet that can be circulate to local and district planning, tourism and LED portfolios, appropriate provincial DEAT committees, as well as a SAMA presentation that could be used when attendance slots at such forums are granted.
Develop a high level strategic presentation Request audience with DAC HOD and Submit SAMA Strat review and recent financials to demonstrate commitment to fiscal discipline and also benefits that SAMA could bring to DAC in achieving national objectives.
Develop renew the media (and specifically social media policy) to bring SAMA in line with all that can be exploited from the media.
Target interrupted contact with the public through the website and social media. (The Website should never be “silent” for more than one week)
Unambiguous transformation charter that recognizes the value of older experienced museum professionals

**RESPONSIBILITY**
secure representation on heritage/tourism related committees.
2. Repair relationships/ perception with demonstration of good governance and clear strategic thinking.
1. Develop a social media policy and targeted marketing strategy.
2. Create and maintain constant flow of information related to the industry
1. Reach out to older experienced members with strong professional and public and political networks.
2. Develop a transformation charter based on museum industry needs, rather than parochial needs.
Encourage a positive unbelligerent interpretation of what transformation entails in the museum environment.

The first action for SAMA national would be the establishment of a Strategic Committee, and to decide on its composition. It is recommended that an individual is either appointed from the Committee or co-opted to the SAMA committee to champion the strategic process. Where possible additional strategic skills should be co-opted to the committee. It should be possible to achieve most of the initial targets without the need for one on one meetings (by way of virtual committees). The composition of this committee is critical as its members ability to give time to the project will determine the time and dependences in the project management approach to be employed. The fairly simple analysis approach detailed in the preceding paragraphs has been developed specifically because the strategic process cannot, due to financial constraints, be outsourced to a consultant. As a result a consolidated course of action is recommended whereby the actions list is attended to by allocating targets to an appropriate action group. Again because of personnel constraints, I would suggest as few action groups as possible, most likely those based on the initial analysis criteria, namely:

- External
- Internal
- Market.

The actions within each action group would then be divided into interinstitutional, intra-institutional and local actions. Most of the actions are not dependent on each other. However, a project management approach that analyses each action in terms of financial, personnel and time based resources as well as possible target dependencies and sub tasks should be carried out. Once the correct sequential positioning of each target is ascertained, a progress chart setting out targets will be developed. It is important that certain targets which could obviously continue independently are commenced as soon as is possible. It is also important that the progress chart make provision for early achievement of ‘low hanging fruit’ targets in order to ensure continued stakeholder interest/ confidence in the process.

Conclusion.

While it would have been ideal to have adequate resources to fund this project, this is not the case. Given the austerity measures imposed by treasury, it is unlikely that SAMA would have access to government funding for such a project in the near future. However, if SAMA is able to demonstrate that it is able to place itself on a good strategic path, using only the skills it possesses, that in itself would demonstrate reason to have confidence in the body. For this reason all members are requested to be supportive of the process, and to offer time and resources if so requested.

James van Vuuren
August 2016.