



Vleiplaas girls present their Red Fin play

### HOLIDAY SCHOOLS

Preparations for the annual **Giant Puppet Parade and Performance** have been gathering momentum since April and are now in full swing as December approaches. This year's theme carries forward our passion for conservation and biodiversity and also for reconciliation in our divided village.

Barrydale conservationists, **Prof. Les Minter** and **Flora Cameron** brought our attention last year to the plight of a species of **Red Fin Minnow** unique to the **Huis River** which flows through our village. Pollution, the invasion of alien species and vegetation and thoughtless exploitation of the river have placed the Red Fin under severe threat of extinction. Our Interns and Young Leaders responded by signing up for a **Save the Red Fin Campaign** and with our children set about cleaning the river and cutting down alien growth on Wednesday afternoons.



Cape Nature's Martine Jordaan with us at the Huis River

It seemed appropriate that the River and the Red Fin would

provide the theme for this year's Parade.

With the help of **Cape Nature**, staff and Interns researched the situation and Young Leaders and children were brought on board in the **July Holiday School** which featured the River and the Red Fin as its theme.



The 4-6 year olds present their contribution

A record of 130 youngsters turned up for the programme and they spent the week learning about the Red Fin and its situation. They were then tasked in age groups to improvise a play about the Red Fin for performance on the final day, complete with props and puppets.

In the second week, the Holiday School moved to the **Vleiplaas Farm School** where 55 youngsters attended a similar programme.



The December Parade is being directed by **Aja Marneweck**, a post-doctoral fellow at the **Centre for Humanities Research Flagship** at the **University of the Western Cape**, our partners in this annual event. CHR also provided a workshop for our actors run by **Itumeleng Wa Lehulere** and a water-sound workshop for our musicians run by **Luis Gimenez**.

The **September Holiday School** was dedicated to cleaning

up the environment and then recycling what could be salvaged. Among the items made was the red fin installation the six youngsters alongside constructed from waste plastic and mounted on the school fence.



## SULP

In October we had a surprise visit from three musicians from **Switzerland** comprising the **Swiss Urban Ländler Passion**. Sponsored by the **Swiss Arts Council**, they brought with them a tenor and an alto sax, a tuba, a double bass, several concertinas and a huge Alpen horn.



We took them to play for children at the **Vleiplaas** and **Akkerboom Farm Schools**, at the **BF Oosthuizen Primary School** in Barrydale and for the Net vir Pret **After Care Programme**. We also took them to the **Ebenezer Old Age Club** in our township where they were a great hit.

Three of our young musicians joined them in performance at the **Karoo Art Hotel** and the **Mez Restaurant** in Barrydale.





The Sulp musicians were extraordinarily generous with their time and indeed with themselves and the children who met them had an experience they'll never forget.

## RIEL DANCERS

Both our junior and senior **Riel Dance** groups came home from the **ATKV** riel dance festival in **Vredendal** with trophies.



The senior group was invited to provide the entertainment at the opening of the **Fossil Park Museum** in **Langebaan** in October before a distinguished audience.



On **Heritage Day** we ran an all-day event at which our 13 riel dance groups performed alongside local rap artists.

*The senior group at the opening of the Fossil Park Museum*

Our group based at the **Akkerboom Farm School** was invited to perform at a **Heritage Day Festival** in **Oudtshoorn**.

## PROJECT HOPE

**Project Hope**, our full-time programme for school drop-outs grows from strength to strength. While 5 of the original group are back at school, the remaining 9 have been joined by a further 5 who attend our programme every day.



They are receiving individual tuition in numeracy and literacy from retired special needs teacher, **Andries Truter**, and are also learning carpentry, have planted an extensive food garden and have embarked on a new project to propagate succulents.

They set up a stall at the recent **Barrydale October Fest** where the work of youngsters who were

previously stigmatised and considered good-for-nothing was admired by all.





In September the boys prepared a chicken curry for a dinner to which their mothers were invited and at which they were presented with **Certificates of Achievement**.

## FARM OUTREACH

Although four farm schools (**Vleiplaas, Lemoenshoek, Akkerboom** and **Weltevrede**) are visited on mornings once a week for a programme involving story-telling, art and craft and sport, we felt it was high time the farm youngsters had the chance to participate in the activities offered at our centre in the village.



In consequence we have been bringing in groups of teenagers on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. They have had access to the computers in the Homework Room and the **Eduplay** programme, and more particularly to the **Jazz Studio** where several have shown promise. We are now inviting them to participate in the Pottery and Craft Studios as well.



## THE POTTERY STUDIO

The Pottery Studio acquired a new, smaller kiln during the year and now firings can take place at more frequent intervals than before. The studio has worked solidly and the pottery produced has been exhibited at the **Barrydale Library**, the **Barrydale Blooms Festival** and the **Barrydale October Fest**.



## THE ART AND CRAFT STUDIO

The Art and Craft Studio increased its meetings from three to four sessions a week to accommodate a new group of youngsters entering their teens who are now too old for the After Care Programme.







The Studio has done a lot of work on the Red Fin theme, producing fish images from recycled material and making banners and cushion covers on the theme.



The Studio held exhibitions

of work at the **Barrydale Blooms Festival** and will exhibit work in the Barrydale Library in December.

## THE AFTER CARE PROGRAMME

The After Care Programme runs every weekday afternoon and up to 50 youngsters cram in on a regular basis.



Activities run from story-telling and reading to art and craft to biking and games.



Youngsters also receive a nourishing meal.

We are particularly grateful to **Mike Clarke**

and **Lisa** and **David Hooley** who make soup for the children on Wednesdays and also to the **Lunchbox Fund** which provides foodstuff for the Holiday Schools.



## INTERNS

Our Interns are tasked each year with improvising a play on a theme of social concern which can tour schools and this year's group decided to tackle marijuana as their theme. They began by combing the web for information and followed this by conducting interviews in the community – at the clinic, the police station, the schools, with parents, grandparents, teenagers and self-confessed smokers.

After two months of hard work, they came up with **Open Your Mind**, a 40 minute play, set in the classroom, which told the story





of a teenage girl pulled one way by friends who smoked and the other way by others who didn't.

The script was full of humour and engaged audiences wherever they played. The star of the show was Intern **Selanvor Platjies**, whose original rap accompanied the action and provided a commentary on it.

There were 32 performances in all, at school in towns and on farms as far afield as **Calitzdorp, Robertson, Slangrivier** and **Swellendam**.

## THE HOMEWORK ROOM

The 18 computers in the **Homework Room** continue to be a valuable resource.



In the mornings they are available to anyone who wishes to do research or type a cv; after lunch the after-care children take it in turns to access the Eduplay language and maths learning programme; then the farm children have their chance and finally the facility is available until

18h30 to youngsters who want to work on school assignments.

It should be noted that the primary school and the farm schools do not have computer labs, and the high school's single lab is only accessible to those students who have Computer Applications Technology as a subject.



## DRAMA GROUP

Our Drama Group decided to tackle a theme of a more serious nature than we have before. They chose to tell the story of vulnerable teenage girl who is abused by her trusted uncle.



With flashbacks to the past, the play showed the girl's older self trying to come to terms with what had happened to her younger self.

**Who Is To Blame?** was selected at the semi-finals of the **Overberg Drama Festival** to go forward to the finals which will be held in Oudtshoorn in February 2019.



## HERITAGE TOURISM

In an attempt to develop a **Heritage Tourism** aspect to the services we offer, we invite accredited Heritage Tourism Trainer, **Joline Young**, to run two 3-day workshops with us. There were 5 participants and each has now developed a unique tour of their own which highlights aspects of Barrydale, both in the village and on the farms.

The tours will be available over the weekend in the lead-up to the December Parade and we hope that this will provide an impetus for further development of what could be an income-generating activity.

## LITTLE SUNS – BRINGING LIGHT TO THE DARKNESS



A box of 100 **Little Suns** arrived during the year, sent as a donation by Belgian pediatric psychiatrist **Dr. Griet du Pont**. The Little Suns are small but powerful solar-powered lamps.

We were given the opportunity

to distribute them.

We decided to target households on local farms which do not have electricity and have to do everything by candle-light.

Our Director and our Administrator (Peter and Derek) spent the month heading out to the farms in the evenings to find deserving recipients.

In the end we gave the lamps to 35 different households on 6 farms, where they were greatly welcomed. In truth, the need is such that we could have distributed three times the number.



## PETS – PROGRAMME FOR EDUCATING TEACHERS

Now in its sixth year, our partnership with **PETS** is focusing on emergent reading and emergent mathematics in 2018. With assistance of educators from **Net vir Pret**, the **Vleiplaas** and **Akkerboom Farm Schools**, and the local **BF Oosthuizen Primary School**, PETS Director **Dr. Michael Rice** has developed an interactive 8-module internet course entitled **It Begins At Birth** for practising teachers, ECD practitioners, caregivers and Home Schooling parents which will be launched on the E-classroom



website [www.e-classroom.co.za](http://www.e-classroom.co.za) in January 2019. An Afrikaans version will be available shortly thereafter, and Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho and Sepedi versions are in the pipeline. The online course will be supported by a hard copy booklet.

The course covers how children start becoming literate at birth and continue the process throughout life through a combination of cognitive development and interaction with their environment. In broad terms it includes not only speaking, story-telling, reading and writing, but also emergent mathematics, with which it shares many similar concepts.

## BREAKING NEWS

The **Ukwanda Puppetry Collective**, who are building the Giant Puppets for this year's Parade have just completed the Red Fin Minnow Puppet, which appears below.

