

REPORT ON THE 2010 SASHT CONFERENCE

Theme

HERITAGE IN THE HISTORY CURRICULUM:

The how to of yours, mine and ours in a still divided community environment

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The South African Society for History Teaching was founded in 1986 and 15 conferences later I can say that this conference on heritage in the curriculum was the second to relate to the theme heritage. In 1998 the 6th conference was held at the Cultural Historical Museum, Cape Town and titled *History, Heritage and Curriculum 2005*. Twelve years later the need has arise to discuss heritage again, and it coincidentally fall together with the recent public making of the draft manuscript on the DoE's History Curriculum in the GET and FET Phases.

May I extend my warmest thanks to the 20 presenters that has made it possible for all of us to gather in one of South Africa's most breath taking environments with its own very specific histories worth commemorating. In this regard a special thanks to Mr Simon Haw who has travelled in time with us in a post conference Heritage tour. This conference gathered presenters from all over South Africa. To be somewhat specific, the following statistics of presenters (and it does not relate to rugby at all!) may allow you to feel proud or disappointed: four Capetonians; three from Free State; four from KwaZulu Natal and eight from the Gauteng Province). We unfortunately missed out on many provinces but hope to recruit members in these once a regional structure, within the SASHT's activities, could an acceptable find format.

The conference theme was well presented in the papers. The quality and standard of all the presentations is appreciated. The HOWTO in the conference theme most certainly was demonstrated efficiently, and so uniquely, in most papers dealing with "HOW". We were also exposed to micro and macro events as memories of past wrongs and rights that could have contributed to more understanding, or to divisions, or even to uncertainties leading to a

causing of wounds. These can only be managed (and listen, I don't say heal yet) if we as educators of History approach every theme in the classroom with a sober historical mind within a meaningful and acceptable teaching methodology.

To concisely summarise the presentations of the 2010 conference from the Chairperson's perspective, the presentations/workshop presentations are divided in five categories within the main theme of the conference:

- Themes that were presented on Heritage opportunities within School/ University Societies
The papers to be associated with in this division are those of Paul Haupt; Simon Haw and Matthew Marwick.
- Themes that were presented on Heritage "how to's" related to the History Curriculum
The papers to be associated with in this division are those of Henriette Lubbe and Pieter Warnich.
- Themes that were presented on Heritage "how to's" as fieldwork assignments but perhaps not specifically related to the History Curriculum
The papers to be associated with in this division are those of Dee Gillespie; Tienie Beukes; Johann Strauss; Simon Haw's second paper; Lawrence Thotse; Jackie Grobler and Sue Krige.
- Themes that were presented on general ideas on teaching heritage
The papers to be associated with in this division are those of Motsebetsi Mofokeng; Barry Firth; Buti Kompi and Boitumelo Moreeng.
- Themes that were presented on general ideas/thinking (though specific in its own right) on national/international themes with some opportunities for linking/relating it to heritage.
The papers to be associated with in this division are those of Hermann Giliomee; Michelle Koekemoer and Marlene Silbert.

We are currently, yet again, facing a revised History curriculum and valid questions very well may be "in what themes can we explore heritage opportunities" OR "are there specific heritage themes that can be exploited as we did not do so up to now and now they may be less?" I would like to think that we should consider exploring the current and newly revised History Curriculum as an "open agenda" regarding the way we deal with teaching methodologies in History to approach heritage themes, or even any theme in the History Curriculum, through a more familiar (local history) to

the unfamiliar (national or international curriculum themes). In doing so any theme in a History Curriculum has the potential to be applied or utilised as a heritage theme to eventually provide a better understanding for a theme that's actually accentuated as a Curriculum theme. Think for example about themes like protests; economic growth; slavery; liberty movements; Trade Unions; power abuse; conflict; transformations and resettlement that links to local heritage sites etc (all these core concepts relate to themes in the newly drafted History curriculum which can, with creativity and innovation, be extensively explored. There is also no reason why History textbook developers can't guide educators a little bit more in this regard to serve the value of Heritage as an undisputed activity that covers the whole of South Africa in every micro community (and in all country for that matter) with its presence. These micro historical events as part and parcel of past doings can't be selected into a state of "non existence and not important" for the sake of "nation building" in an "anti conflict society approach". They (the mine and yours) should be explored across all groups and languages to be able to achieve the "ours" in South Africa. You can't create an "ours" on an empty foundation. That is where History can and should compliment any discussion or activity in Heritage.

Its heartening to have become aware that history educators value the worth of the variety of local histories, and I want to endorse the utilising of your area's/region's local history to help your learners in History to understand the broader curriculum themes better. In a general sense I want to provide my support to Paul Haupt, Simon Haw and Matthew Marwick for making heritage alive in a History Society (outside the class context). History teachers and educators in the HET phase actually are in an excellent position to explore this possibility to eventually help preserve an area's local heritage. Obligations should expand the walls in which we teach. These opportunities can in turn provide educators excellent opportunities for further studies so dearly needed. Local History teacher VHT Skipp (an American) is an excellent example of a History Teacher that has contributed in the field of local history but also simultaneously leaving behind to followers a methodology for doing so and making the teaching of History come live.

With these thoughts I leave you with. Thanks again to all who contributed, who attended and who have helped to make a success of this conference!