

OUTTSHOORN

Baron Pieter van Rhee de van Oudtshoorn gave his name to the town - or perhaps it was his wife, Baroness Gesina van Rhee de van Oudtshoorn. The Baron had been appointed governor of the Cape in January 1773, but died, at sea on his way out. In 1961 the town adopted a new coat of arms - that of the Van Rhee de van Oudtshoorn family and the main street was named Baron van Rhee de Street. The town did not get going till 1839 when then owner of the farm Hartebeesrivier, CP Rademeyer, gave land for a church. The surveyor John Ford then parcelled the farm out into 500 residential stands. In 1847 the town was established and grew to be the main town in the Little Karoo, gaining global importance as the centre of the ostrich feather industry. Feathers were first exported in 1826 and the birds were first domesticated in 1867. The industry boomed through the 1880s into the 20th century till World War I put an end to it. The boom reached its peak in 1913, just before the war broke out. In that year 450 tonnes from 750 000 birds were exported for nearly £3 million. The boom resulted in the feather palaces in the area. It also attracted some 300 Jewish families to the area so that Oudtshoorn was

sometimes referred to as the Little Jerusalem. The feather market is no longer as frenetic as it was, but the ostrich still has many uses and has gained popularity in recent years as a healthier form of red meat. In fact ostrich farming has now spread to many other countries. There are also other farming activities in the area.

For tourists, apart from the ostrich farms, there are also the massive, famous Congo Caves which former Van Zyls slaves lowered him into in 1780. Oudtshoorn was also the home of famous C. Langenhoven, the author of Die Stem, the national anthem of the Union and then the Republic of South Africa and still part of the extended anthem - a lawyer, poet and writer who did much to have Afrikaans recognised as an official language in 1925. His home in Oudtshoorn, Arbeidsogenot, is a museum. The school Langenhoven Gymnasium bears his name.

The town now hosts an annual festival which is enormous fun - the popular Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees (KKNK), the first Afrikaans national arts festival.



Oudtshoorn High School

School History

Oudtshoorn Boys' High and Oudtshoorn Girls' high were founded over a century ago. In 1906 Boys' High moved into a magnificent, green-domed sandstone building, which is now the town's museum, in the main part of the town. The two schools amalgamated in 1963 and moved to new premises in 1967. The school badge is derived from the family crest of Baron Pieter van Rhee de van Oudtshoorn. The three horns are hunting horns, used to assemble people for important announcements, such as the arrival of the mail coach.



FOUNDED: 1963

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PROUDLY Struisie TROTS



Struisies Rugby

The biggest rugby day in the year is the Interschools with Outeniqua, when the Struisies play the Kwagga. The Afrikaans word for ostrich is "volstruis", which gives the school its nickname "Struisies". Outeniqua's nickname is Kwagga. When the two schools meet in Oudtshoorn it is Struisies Day, and when they meet in George it is Kwagga Day. It has been a big Interschools day since 1965 and is still keenly contested, though the Struisies lose more often than they win. In 2003 they had a surprise victory. It's harder for Struisies to keep up for while George flourishes, Oudtshoorn does not and school numbers suffer. There are now 620 pupils at Hoërskool Oudtshoorn and 1 400 at Hoërskool Outeniqua.

The school battled for a while but picked up in 2006 and 2007. It is able to compete with Paarl Gim, for example, and usually beats local rivals, Langenhoven Gimnasium of Oudtshoorn and Punt of Mossel Bay. The local Oudtshoorn game with Langenhoven does tend to bring out the passionate town support and exciting schools rugby is always on offer. In 2007 the Struisies beat both Oakdale and Marlow, two powerful schools. An annual derby against Brandwag, a co-ed school of similar size, also began in 2006.

Famous Players

In 2007, 13 of the First side were selected for SWD Craven Week or Academy sides. Great things are expected of prop Caleb Oosthuizen (who made the SA Academy side, and who is now contracted to the Lions), flyhalf Gerhard Nortier and inside centre Waldo Lategan (who was also selected for the SA Schools cricket XI). Four Springboks are Old Boys of Oudtshoorn Boys' High — Hansie Brewis (flyhalf from 1949 to 1953), wing Loftie Fourie (1958, who was a schoolmaster in

South West Africa when he became a Springbok), hooker André Bestbier (1974, who became a brigadier in the army) and scrumhalf Barry Wolmarans (1977–81, who played 72 matches in succession for the Orange Free State). Wolmarans later became a national selector. In addition, the Test referee Hansie Schoeman was at Boys' High. He later became the chairman of the Western Province Referees' Society and the vice-chairman of South African Referees. Rudi van Vuuren, a talented flyhalf and centre, played at both the rugby and cricket World Cups in 1999, becoming the first man to represent his country (Namibia) at both events.

The most famous of the Springboks was Hansie Brewis, also nicknamed Kiewiet, who died in 2007 at the age of 88. He was born in Oudtshoorn and educated at Oudtshoorn Boys' High and then at Langenhoven Commercial. He became a Northern Transvaal when he went to the Police College in Pretoria. He stayed there and died there. He was a brilliant player with great hands, clever feet, a long kick and great acceleration. In 1949 he scored one of the great flyhalf tries against the All Blacks. The Springbok Willem Ferdinand van Rheede van Oudtshoorn Bergh, despite, his name was neither born nor educated in Oudtshoorn. He represented five provinces in his career. One of them was South Western Districts, but even then he played for George, not Oudtshoorn.

Internationals

South Africa:
Hansie Brewis
Loftie Fourie
Andre Bestbier
Barry Wolmarans

