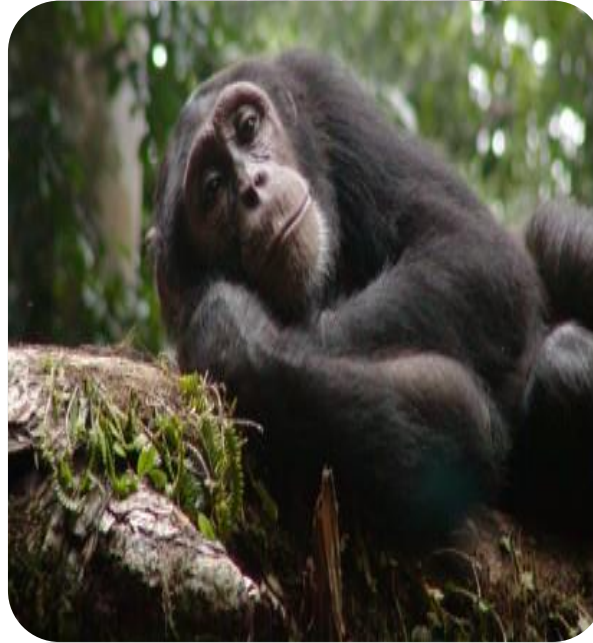


A JOURNEY THROUGH PARKS, CEMETERIES & ZOO



a world class African city



Greener. Conserved. Yours.



IERM CONVENTION
28/09/2015

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RATIONALE



- Role of cemeteries in society;
- Institutional knowledge (stories by staff);
- Remarkable stories about Johannesburg, South Africa (Enoch Sontonga);
- Marketing/eco tourism;
- Public education;
- Natural heritage as an integral part of urban heritage;
- Stewardship of public open spaces – curb vandalism etc.



OBJECTIVES



- Add value to the use, appreciation and enjoyment of Joburg zoo, parks, nature reserves and cemeteries.
- Promote importance of protecting their rich cultural and natural heritage which speaks volumes about their past, for the benefit of future generations



HISTORY OF JOBURG



How Johannesburg came about – an iron furnace on Melville Koppies attests to the city's early Tswana residents (1963);

the Boer farmhouses in Bez Valley and Klipriviersberg were built long before the city itself;



the disused shafts in the George Harrison Park tell of the first discovery of payable gold;



In 1863 farmhouse of Frederick Bezuidenhout was used in the SA War as a British Military base



INDIGENOUS PLANTS & RARE SPECIES OF FAUNA



- Parks include Zoo Lake, the Johannesburg Botanical Gardens, Joubert Park, Kloofendal and Lonehill.



Dorothy Nyembe Park

- The Wilds are filled with Johannesburg's indigenous plants and shrubs.



The Wilds



POLITICAL HISTORY



The cemeteries are where many of the city's heroes lie, their stories told on their tombstones. Some of them include Alfred Xuma, Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Charlotte Maxeke, Hector Pieterse, Herman Charles Bosman, Nkosi Johnson, and Walter and Albertina Sisulu.



Westpark cemetery

Forum@8: Have we forgotten the role women played in our struggle for liberation such as Nokutela Dube?



JOBURG ZOO



The Johannesburg Zoo, home to over 2 000 animals from all over the world, started 111 years ago with a lion called Mac, a baboon, a leopard, a pair of monkeys, two antelopes, an eagle, a genet, a pair of porcupines, and a giraffe.



ROODEPOORT COPPER BUTTERFLY

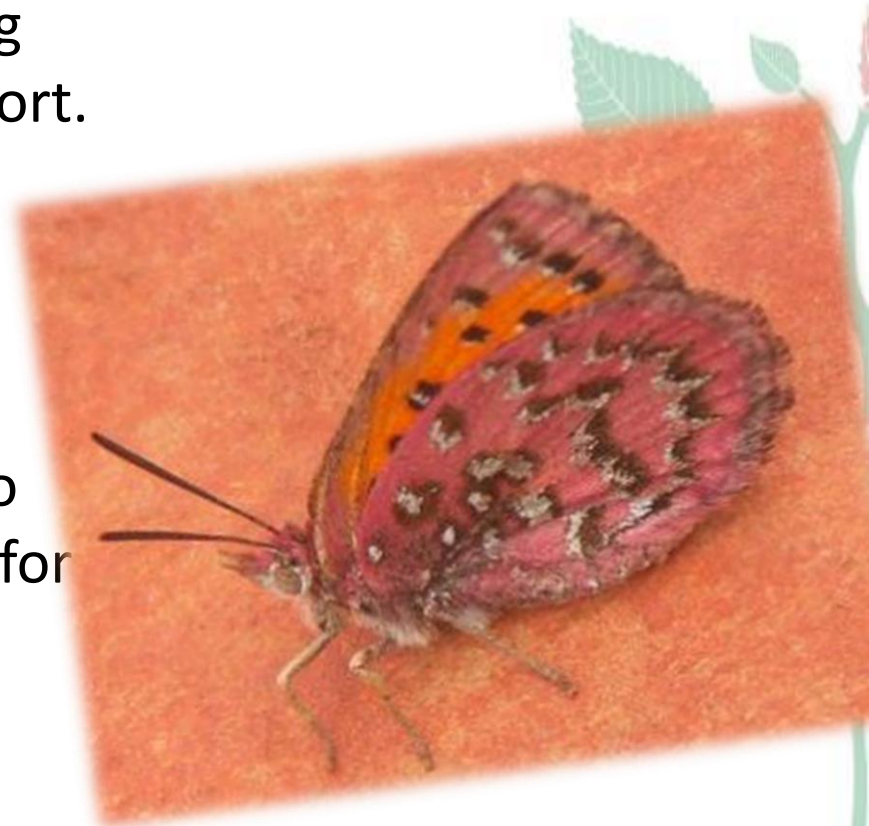


The rare **Roodepoort Copper Butterfly**, found only in the Ruimsig Entomological Reserve in Roodepoort.

Red listed under the SA red data butterfly book

First reserve in Africa proclaimed to protect a unique grassland habitat for insects not common in the Witwatersrand (Henning, 1994)

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BOOK LAUNCH



BOOK REVIEW by Prof Gumede

Parks book galvanises the reclaiming of public spaces

IT IS important that the diverse past, stories and folklore of all South Africa's communities are written in official histories. This is crucial to build a common South African-ness out of our diverse, contested, and often shameful and heroic past.

Weaving the tapestry of our different past – are the foundations of our common South African identity.

The elegantly written, captivating book, *History of Johannesburg's Parks, Cemeteries and the Zoo* (Big Media Publishers) by journalist Lucille Davie, does justice to the contributions of all Joburg's communities – especially those who were written out of history because of colonialism and apartheid.

Johannesburg City Parks must be recommended for not only financially supporting the book project, but for the maturity to give the writer editorial freedom, and not imposing a dictat.

To read the stories behind Joburg's parks, cemeteries and the zoo is like taking a journey through South Africa's different history.

The book should help us start a debate about the role of public spaces in our democracy to bring



Opinion
William Gumede

South Africans of all classes, races and cultures together in building a new common Southern African-ness.

Democracies need accessible public spaces where all can safely play, dream and bond.

In fact, an important part of our

post-apartheid democratic building project must be to reclaim our open spaces, create more open spaces and bring back to life neglected ones – as part of reclaiming our dignity as individuals and communities in a democracy.

Integration, accessibility and availability of parks, nature reserves and zoos are an important part of "freedom". Giving previously disadvantaged communities access to clean, safe parks and zoos is an important part of restoring the dignity of oppressed communities.

For many black South Africans during apartheid open spaces in townships, informal settlements and inner cities were often terrifyingly frightening places – dirty, garbage-strewn and unsafe. Sadly, this is often still the case.

We often think about democracy as only the constitution, democratic institutions and laws.

Frederick Law Olmsted, co-founder of the Nation magazine in the US, who also designed and campaigned for the establishment of New York City's Central Park, a century ago, have made a convincing argument for the spatial requirements of democracy.

Olmsted argued that the built environment and public spaces can

promote democratic values and behaviour. The wonder, beauty and miracle of nature can transform individuals – whether changing one's state of mind or being.

Democracies need public spaces where the "simple joy of human togetherness" can be exercised.

Olmsted argued for "civic spaces" where the "feeling of fraternity can be nurtured", and solidarity and community, and a community spirit is nurtured.

In a democracy, people, regardless of socio-economic standing, colour or culture, should feel they belong to a community. South Africa, with its history of segregation, needs physical spaces for citizens and communities of different colours and backgrounds to interact.

It is stating the obvious to say that in South Africa's racial past communities were segregated along racial lines.

Now, sadly, they are still segregated along racial lines, but also along class lines.

There has been a decline in South Africa of physical spaces where individuals of different classes, races, cultures and traditions can mingle.

Malls have in the 20-years of

democracy increasingly become the physical spaces where people – without interacting with each other – gather.

The city has "lost" many parks and cemeteries, which has fallen into disarray, or simply are not accounted for. These have to be reclaimed.

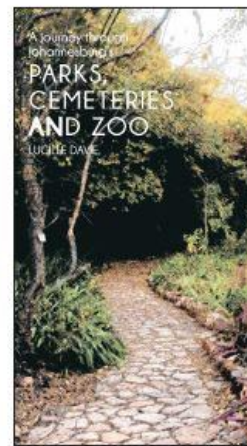
But we need greater individual, community and civil society involvement in reclaiming public spaces that has fallen in disrepair, and converting disused spaces into local public parks – and the city must support such efforts.

South Africa needs the creation of mass community parks, whereby every open space in towns and townships is converted into parks, with indigenous greenery and trees.

Local communities could run, maintain and see to it that these parks are safe spaces – whether as part of job-creation, public works initiatives or part of their obligations for getting a social grant.

Business and privileged individuals contribute the trees and greenery.

Architects, planners, designers and architectural schools at universities could contribute to landscape these parks in a particularly South



African style, combining all our different cultural heritage. These community parks could celebrate the rich and beautiful plant diversity of South Africa.

These community parks could be dedicated to local struggle heroes of all ideologies, the forgotten artists,

and community activists and leaders – many of them forgotten, as we often only celebrate the "prominent" national leaders.

In these community parks, festivals, concerts and rallies should be organised. In these parks the works of local artists and sculptors should be celebrated.

In Joburg itself, open, derelict and abandoned spaces should be converted into parks; while abandoned parks should be renewed.

The rivers flowing through Joburg, its suburbs and townships should be rehabilitated as part of one continuous series of community parks, with walking, cycling, paths and benches for its citizens.

Along this route, historical individuals, places and actions – from our diverse past should be sign-posted.

A mushrooming of community parks across the city may give Joburg a new democratic identity. Just imagine the legacy we will be able to leave to new generations. South Africa needs a movement to community parks.

■ Gumede is Chairperson of the Democracy Works Foundation; and author of *Restless Nation: Making Sense of Troubled Times*, Tafelberg.

PROMOTION



- Documentary
 - Heritage Tours with Tourism agencies
 - Audiobook
 - Ebook
 - Targeted conferences e.g. JIKE- Africities
 - Book stores (exclusive books, love books)
 - A dedicated page on the JCPZ website linked to JCPZ and COJ and Joburg Tourism sites
 - UNESCO 's global Aspen schools, Education for Sustainability
 - Universities reference material (Unisa & Wits)
 - Department of Basic Education
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Thank You

Ayanda Roji
GM: Corporate Research, Policy and
Knowledge Management

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