

**SA Weemagvereniging**



**SA Defence Force Association**

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## **PROJECT: CONCENTRATION CAMPS JOINT VENTURE**

Military veterans should be **acknowledged** for their contribution to the development of the RSA. Men and women that made sacrifices and served their Country with honor and dignity. People that had served their Country unselfishly and deserve to be recognized, remembered and taken care of. The SADFA was established to ensure this specific purpose.

The great German militarist Bismarck once made the remark: "Fools say they learn by experience. I learn by the experience of others!"

The SADFA has as its objectives to **Commemorate**, to give **Recognition** and to encourage **Reconciliation**. We have decided to organize local events at each and every Concentration Camp site of the South African War of 1899-1902. When approached by Mr. Twin Mosia, a young entrepreneur, to assist with his endeavor to visit all sites and erect a monument in Petrus Steyn, this plan was given wings.

**115 Years** ago, 50 Camps for White woman and children was built as part of the "Scorched Earth" policy of the British, in which 34011 died. The Women's Memorial was built in Bloemfontein in recognition of the sacrifices made by the white woman and children. Little known is that at the same time, 64 Camps were erected for Blacks, leading to between 18000 and 22000 deaths. Up to now nothing has been done for our fellow black South Africans that died under the same circumstances. We want to use this opportunity for joint commemoration, recognition and reconciliation.

The **aim** of the project is to take some of the lessons of the past and together build a better future for all in South Africa.

The proposed **theme** is: "Swords into Ploughshares".

The **concept** is to have 9 teams of military veterans, school children and history enthusiasts simultaneously participating in an "Amazing Race", discovering and visiting each and every Concentration Camp around South Africa over the period 1 – 15 December 2016, planting commemoration crosses as they go, and collecting two stones from each site. This will culminate in the building of a Reconciliation Monument at Petrus Steyn Heritage Site Station on 16 December 2016. Each town along the route will form a local Heritage Committee, responsible for preparing and hosting the events and mobilizing their own community in the process. Local, national and international media coverage will be arranged for the whole event. Toastmasters International will assist in presenting a national competition and provide training to secondary school pupils to select the main speakers at each event on the theme: "What lessons can be taken from this tragedy 115 years ago, in making South Africa the country of our Future!" The best school speaker will have the stage at the final event on 16 December.

The above mentioned endeavor will **promote the efforts** of the Elandskop Museum to establish themselves as a tourist attraction. It should also be an **inspiration to many others** to take the initiative the same way as Twin Mosia is doing, in making a difference in his own town – “Where there is a Will, there is a Way”.

To enhance the experience and promote general tourism to each of the Concentration Camp and other historical sites throughout South Africa, the following new technology will be utilized:

1. The **South African Heritage and Battlefields App** has been launched. You choose an Icon that interests you most consisting of Battlefields 1650 -1900, Monuments of South Africa, Concentration camps, South African War's 1900 – 2000, History, Videos, Treasure hunts, where to Stay, Images of historical places and things, Websites, Join our social media through Facebook, Museums, Join our social responsibility program creating jobs and help preserve our heritage sites. You can download this App for free from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) play store! Please use the chance to by stars (at R50 each) or an e-ball (at R 600) to sponsor this project.
2. Our Maps are **GPS enabled** and will show you how to get there, GPS coordinates and links to relevant websites! This is a must have for every family going on holiday!! Make your road trip interesting and memorable! This is truly South African, for South Africa. We are also busy with a Road Atlas linked to all historical and heritage sites, and linked to the school syllabus. This must help to bring our kids to visit the “forgotten” sites and to enjoy the history in a new exiting way.
3. On each site a **Treasure Hunt** is now being developed. This will enable you and your family/tour mates to discover what really happened where on the site, with pictures, videos and text, finding the hidden treasure, and learning through a unique “Edutainment” process the realities of the past. Access will also be through the above mentioned App and available in 5 languages.
4. We are also busy developing a **Genealogy Database** linked to all the good work that has been done in this field. This will allow a visitor to find his/her own family links to the deceased at the different historical sites.

Participating in this Amazing Race we are planning to have military veterans from all over the spectrum - MK/APLA/AZANLA/Transkei/Bophuthatswana/Venda/Ciskei/CMVO/MOTHs/SA Legion/32 Battalion/61 Mech/Infantry Association etc., joined by scholars and students and any enthusiasts that want to participate. The aim will be to demonstrate solidarity, our seriousness in changing swords into ploughshares and together using our skills and experience to assist in building a better future for all.

Many other national organizations have shown interest and will become part of the arrangements. These includes amongst others the Voortrekkers, the Scouts, Toastmasters SA, Freedom Park, the Heritage Foundation, Earth Ambassadors with their projects The Amazing Race and Total Makeover, etc. We aim to make this a real Joint Venture, asking Freedom Park to assist as to make it possible and to act as torch bearer!

To make a concept like this fly and become a national movement, will require the enthusiastic buy in from our National Government. To effect this there can of nobody beter positioned than Freedom Park. The ideal is that we organize a proper **national launch** for this project as soon as possible at a time and place we can get the following dignitaries with their families together to demonstrate what has been developed and what is in the pipeline. Such event may take the form of lunch at a time and venue of your choosing:

The President of the Republic

The Deputy President

The Minister and H.O.D. of the Department of Military Veterans

The Minister and H.O.D. of the Department of Education

The Minister and H.O.D. of the Department of Arts and Culture

The Minister and H.O.D. of the Department of Labor

The Minister and H.O.D. of the Department of Tourism

The H.O.D. of Transnet

The senior management of SANMVA

Champions of Industry like Mr Anton Rupert, M.D.'s of major motor manufacturers, cellular companies etc.

Any other mayor role players you might want to add!

I have taken the liberty to add some supporting documentation to fill in what we envisage doing between the launch and the actual tour. To have a Proof of Concept we plan to do an adventure race and discovery of

the Concentration Camps for Black people at Irene and Olifantsfontein this year on Heritage Day 24 September 2015. This will also involve doing a Total Makeover of some facilities in Tembisa, as this area had its origins in the Black Concentration Camp positioned at Olifantsfontein! These and other ideas will be discussed as soon as we can do a presentation to you.

Please advise when we can visit you and the people you feel should be included in such presentation at your earliest convenience?

Veteran's greetings,

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