

18.3 REPORT 3: DEPUTIES HISTORICAL MATTERS – BURGERSDORP CULTURAL HISTORICAL MUSEUM (Artt 96, 237)

- A. The meeting continues in camera.
- B. Rev G Opperman tables the Report.
- C. **Decision:** Point 3 are refer to the Commission Historical Matters as well as the letter from prof B Spoelstra and remarks in the meeting.
- D. Rev MJ Erasmus reports on behalf of the Commission Historical Matters.

E. REPORT

1. Mandate

Acta 2012:215-216.

Decision: Noted.

2. Matters that the Synod take note of

2.1 *Interest*

Visitor numbers were 3826 in 2012 and 3909 in 2013 respectively. Among these there were 84 foreign visitors and 2138 school children in 2013/2014. The staff also undertakes visits to the various schools in the area and pupils also utilize the staff's services when doing projects about tourism attractions in the Gariep area, history of the Taalmonument as well as other population groups' cultural history, history and the origin of Burgersdorp and the Theological School of the GKSA. Special mention should be made of the visits arranged by profs PH Fick and DF Muller for their students to the BCHM (Burgersdorp Cultural Historical Museum) and the historical birthplace of the GKSA in the North Eastern Cape.

2.2 *Displays*

Like all other museums adjustments are made to existing displays from time to time and new displays are created. Likewise an exhibition of Steve Biko and the history of the ANC was opened. Quite some space has also been allocated to an exhibition of a unique collection of hunting trophies.

The integrity of the existing exhibitions regarding the pioneer history of the European population of the North-Eastern Cape has not been affected by this and the history of the GKSA as well as the NWU still enjoy the prominent place it has always had.

Like many other museums the BCHM also experiences problems due to a lack of funding for the maintenance of existing buildings and especially outdoor exhibitions.

2.3 *Funding*

The subsidy from the Eastern Cape government amounts to R112 000 per year. Because the temporary workers must be compensated out of this, it means that the BCHM's available funds are less than they should be. This in turn limits the abilities of the Board of Trustees.

As stated in the Deputies Report of Synod 2012, the BCHM also makes use of funds from the National Lottery to the extent that it is available. Public donations in the financial year 2013/2014 amount to R794. An amount of R3 900 was also obtained from membership fees and the letting of a room during this period.

2.4 *The administration of the Museum*

Ten years after the announcement of the Museum Law of the Eastern Cape government in 2004, and after it has been revised, it has still not been implemented. According to the Acta of the National Synod of 1997 the situation around the BCHM was then "unclear and sensitive". Nothing has changed since then and as it was recommended during the last Synods, the Deputies again recommend that the GKSA adopts a "cautiously waiting attitude" towards this matter.

Meanwhile the BCHM is still administered by a Board of Trustees consisting of 14 members. Twelve members are representatives of the Premier of the Eastern Cape and two are appointed by the Association of Subscribers. Of the fourteen members five are members of the GKSA, of which one, br Gerhard Coetsee, is the Chairperson and a second, Coert Venter, is the Vice-Chairperson. Two members of the Deputies Historical Matters namely revs J Malan and G Opperman attend the quarterly meetings of the Board as far as possible.

The meetings of the Board take place in good spirit, although the attendance of the Board members does not always meet expectations. The ongoing and constructive involvement of the GKSA members in this meeting is crucial to the future of the BCHM. Special mention should be made of br Gerhard Coetsee, an elder of the Reformed Church Burgersdorp, and his ongoing service during recent years as Chairperson and also as Chairperson of the BDHM's executive committee that has ensured that museum matters run smoothly.

2.5 *Association of Subscribers*

Currently the museum has 117 subscribers, of which 93 have life memberships and honorary memberships. 24 Members are ordinary members. Two new life memberships have been recruited. The annual meetings are held in June. Interest from GKSA members and involvement in the society is of equal importance for the museum in order to achieve the goal for which it was founded, namely as place for safekeeping and displaying of the cultural heritage of the different cultural communities of the Eastern Cape and Burgersdorp area.

Herein there cannot be relied on the members of the Reformed Church Burgersdorp alone. Their weakened position in relation to the BCHM has already been stated at Synod 2003 (Acta:449).

2.6 *Staff*

Mrs Daleen Bredenkamp has been serving the Museum for more than 20 years and is currently Head of the Museum. She does not only fill this position with experience, but also with dedication and good judgement within the limits of the BCHM's budget.

At the moment the permanent staff consists of only two persons. No response has been received to the letter addressed to the government of the Eastern Cape in which inquiries were made about the number of vacant positions at the BCHM. The Museum is thus dependent on temporary staff that have to be compensated from their own funds. Sometimes volunteers from the community will assist Mrs Bredenkamp.

Decision: Points 2.1 to 2.6 noted.

3. Matters that the Synod decide on

3.1 The involvement of the churches with the Burgersdorp Cultural Historical Museum continues.

3.2 Prof B Spoelstra is relieved of the assignment of Synod 1976 (p211,6.2).

3.3 The Deputies' assignment with regards to the BCHM is continued.

3.4 Churches and members are encouraged to support the BCHM and visit the museum. Members are also encouraged to join the members' association as subscribers.

Decision: Point 3.1 to 3.4 refer to the Commission Historical Matters.

F. REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

1. Mandate

To advise the Synod with regards to:

1.1 Point 3 of the Deputy's Report.

1.2 The writing of prof B Spoelstra regarding the BKM.

1.3 The BKM inclusion of churches from all the former Synods of the GKSA.

Decision: Points 1.1 to 1.3 noted.

2. Matters that the Synod take note of

- 2.1 That there exists grounded concern at the Deputy as well as the Trustees of the BKM regarding the future management of the BKM.
- 2.2 That there are certain points relating to the property and donations in the BKM that requires attention from the Trustees and the Deputies.
- 2.3 That a legal opinion about the matter has already been obtained from the Legal Deputy.
- 2.4 That the BKM is a regional based culture-historical museum where only that which relate to Burgersdorp and the direct surroundings are taken up.
- 2.5 That the NWU also has interest at the BKM regarding donations and exhibitions that is in the museum.

Decision: Points 2.1 to 2.5 noted.

3. Matters that the Synod decide on

- 3.1 The Synod approves points 3.1, 3.3 and 3.4 of the Report.
- 3.2 Prof Spoelstra is relieved from the task on his request (1976:211, 6.2).
- 3.3 The Synod thanks prof Spoelstra for his yearlong involvement at the museum and carries it forward to him in writing.
- 3.4 The Deputy receives instruction to follow up and clarify all uncertainties in terms of the property and donations of the BKM in cooperation with the Legal Deputy.

Decision: Points 3.1 to 3.4 approved.