




LANGEBERG
MUNISIPALITEIT MUNICIPALITY MASIPALA

Nkqubela

'A place of progress'





The background of the entire page is a photograph of a township. In the foreground, there are dense green trees. In the middle ground, a hillside is covered with numerous small, colorful houses (shacks) in shades of orange, yellow, and white. The houses are built closely together. In the background, a steep, rocky hill rises, covered with sparse, dry-looking vegetation in shades of brown and green. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the middle of the image, containing the table of contents.

CONTENT

Foreword	Page 1
Nkqubela Township Map	Page 2
Township History	Page 4
Township Life in 2017	Page 15
Township Culture	Page 16
Township Sport	Page 19
Traditional Art, Food, Dance & Music	Page 21
Traditional Healing	Page 22
A Moment in History	Page 24
Change Makers	Page 26
References	Page 29

COMPILED BY

the Department of Strategy and Social Development

PROJECT LEADER | Celeste Matthys

RESEARCH COORDINATOR | Octavia Richards Liemens

RESEARCHER | Mzimazi Kama

RESEARCHER | Thabisa Burwana

EDITOR | Matthew Sheldon

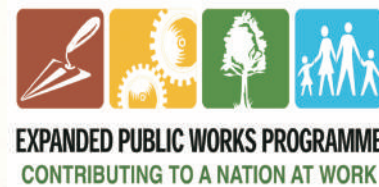
PAGE DESIGNER | Melissa Pieterse

CONCEPT & DESIGN | Dave van Schalkwyk

CONCEPT & DESIGN | Willy-John Gordon

MAP ILLUSTRATIONS | Hannelie Fölscher

an initiative by:



FOREWORD



**MUNICIPAL MANAGER
SA MOKWENI**

Every town has a history, an untold story of events which took place that defined its community - and moulded its people.

If history isn't captured and transferred from one generation to another, then traditions, cultures and old practices could fade away or be lost forever.

Therefore Langeberg Municipality in collaboration with the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) initiated a project in 2017, to capture and preserve the rich history of the vibrant Nkqubela Township in Robertson. A Coffee Table Book was thus designed to document the true story of this blossoming township.



**EXECUTIVE MAYOR
HM JANSEN**

This initiative forms part of the Municipality's long-term plan to document the history of the various communities within the Langeberg Region.

The booklet focusses on the history of the township, its influential people, traditional practices and cuisine, as well as local sporting heroes.

We would like to thank all the role-players who contributed to the compilation of this book. We also want to extend a special 'thank you' to those who shared their knowledge and experiences with us, to be able to accurately document all the key events.

ROBERTSON, WESTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA



NKQUBELA STATISTICS

Source: STATS SA Census 2011



Total Population
5,786



91,7% Black African
7,8% Coloured



Number of households
1,849



19,1% Matric
1,5% Higher education



69,2% IsiXhosa
9,8% Afrikaans
8,9% Sesotho
1,5% English



Piped water inside dwelling
52,3%



Flushed toilet connected to sewerage
67,4%



Electricity for lighting
85,1%

TOWNSHIP HISTORY

1952

The first Black people came to settle in and around Robertson. They came from predominantly different regions of the Eastern Cape and Transkei, looking for work opportunities.

Some of them used to stay in Van Zyl Street and others in Muiskraalkop, better known to the residents as “e Kop”. It’s an area next to the municipality’s electrical engineering department, formally used as an initiation site by the residents of Nkqubela.

The settlement of Muiskraalkop consisted of makeshift shacks and mud houses. And conditions there were appalling. Needless to say, residents yearned to move to an area where they could at least have access to basic services, as they had to contend to use one communal tap. There were no ablution facilities at all.

1955

The White Municipality in Robertson was established and governed by Mr Van der Walt.

This is also the time period when the “Dompas” had been introduced, as part of the Group Areas Act.

A delegation consisting of Mr Jerry Ndengane, Mr Pikoko Ndongeni, Mr Mkhafu and Mr Xhalabilie to name a few, were tasked with mobilising funds to pay for the services of an attorney who would negotiate with the authorities for alternative land on which to settle the people of Muiskraalkop.

1960

A Mr Sentlaar, an attorney from Montagu, was enlisted to negotiate on behalf of this community. Each household had to fork out five pounds to pay for this service.

1961

The construction of Nkqubela, which means ‘Prosperity’, began. The name was given to the township by Mr J Kotze Van Wyk, who was the municipality’s manager for Black Affairs at the time.

Mr Van Wyk was placed in charge of the location on behalf of the Apartheid government through the Bantu administration, which was in charge of all Black Townships.

The administration of Nkqubela went through numerous white municipal officials. Eventually, Mr Nagel was in charge and he was a very strict enforcer of the pass laws.



1962

The first group of families moved into Nkqubela from Muiskraalkop.

For the first time in their lives, they lived in brick houses.

This new environment was better than the squalor they had to endure in Muiskraalkop, as these sites were at least serviced.

The municipality demolished the sink and mud houses as residents made the move to Nkqubela.

All working individuals with a pass permit, which allowed them to live in Nkqubela, had to pay 50cents to the authorities for what was called a lodgers fee. This fee is known to the locals as "I Rojasi".



1962

“

Families moved into brick houses for the first time in their lives...

”



AFM CHURCH (AGS KERK) COUNCIL MEMBERS OF NKQUBELA

Back (left): Mr C. Danti, Mr W. Makhapela, Mr J. Booï
Front (left): Mr P. Mokweni, Mr. A. Stemmet, Mr. S Matyana



**The Dutch Reformed Church was one of the first churches built.
It is now known as the Uniting Reformed Church**



1968

“ Local churches were used as classrooms ”

1970-1969

The first Take Away Fish Shop opened its doors to the community.

The first school in Nkqubela

Once the people had settled in Nkqubela the need arose for some form of education. Mr Howard Mbi and his wife fondly known as Maga, started a school in their house. The amount of learners grew and eventually they made use of different local churches to house the various grades they taught.

In October 1970, the government at the time opened Nkqubela Primary School and the first Principal was Mr Sanqela.

The affairs of the school were administered by a board which consisted of a group of parents. Some of the first members who served on this board included: Toti Dayi; Samuel Gwabi; Amos Mzola; Jackson Boo; Gilbert August; William Makapela and Pienaar Kwinana.

1982 — 1976

The residents of Nkqubela voted against the establishment of a community council.

Nkqubela Municipality

The Black Local Authority's Act came into existence. It is for this reason Nkqubela Municipality then ran independently.

A Community Hall and rugby field was built.



Nkqubela like all the locations in the region became a municipality having its own Council.

After deliberations, residents accepted the idea of having its very own community council. This council was sworn in on 07 September. The members included: Albert May (chairperson), Andreas Mokweni (deputy- chairperson), Piet Mhobo, Bankies Samuel, Tom Bukwana, Ruben August and Pickson Mokweni.

This body ran the affairs of the Township until taken over by the Department of Community Services in Cape Town (Goodwood Headquarters).

During this period, the streets hadn't been named yet. It was this first Council that took the initiative to attach an identity to each street. And thus decided to name it after their surnames.



The first Nkqubela resident to be elected as a Mayor Mr Albert May, a prominent community leader.



1990 -

Community Council of Nkqubela placed by the National Party Government to manage the affairs of Nkqubela.

Voor v.l.n.r: Raadslede P.K. Ndongeni (O-Burgemeester), J.S. Matwa (Burgemeester) en S. Bukiwana.
 Agter v.l.n.r: Raadslede J.K. Boy, P.N. Mokweni, M.L. Vos (H.U.B.) A.T. Malhakametsa en W. Mantutle.

1985

Public violence erupted across South Africa. Increasing civil unrest and township violence, which took place in the form of massive riots, led the government to declare a state of emergency. This period of unrest lasted until about 1989.

The first arson incident occurred in Nkqubela when both of the municipal offices burnt down. During the unrest that followed, 6 stone houses, 3 sink houses and 2 motor vehicles belonging to local residents were demolished. Councillors had to, at times, flee for their lives.

This period also led to 317 residents being arrested in terms of the emergency measures that were enforced by government. For more than two years, regular incidents of unrest occurred and there had been no functioning council at this time.

1991

Initially, the plan was to build a high school but there weren't enough scholars at the time. Alternatively, the Department of Education and Training gave permission to erect a learning centre instead.

1993

The Bantu and White Administration combined to form one Town Council.

The first High School was built and named the Learning Centre.

1994

The Learning Centre produced its first matriculants.

The first RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) houses were built.

The 'Dompas' System came to an end.



2000

Initially, there had been a separate municipality for each of the five towns in the Langeberg region. The municipalities were called Breë River Winelands. Each municipality also had its own Mayor. This was the year when all five municipalities amalgamated.

2002

The former police station was refurbished and formally reopened as Nkqubela Community Peace Centre on 19 October.



1991

Governing council of the Nkqubela Learning Centre

Back (left): Mr R. Nentsa, Mr T. Dayi, Mr S. Burwana, and Mr J. Ngonyama

Front (left): Ms P. Mabombo, Mrs R. Du Plessis and Mr P. Mhobo

Front: Ms. P. Mabombo, Mrs. R. Du Plessis & Mr. P. Mhobo



2006

The municipality had a name change and thus became known as Langeberg Municipality.

2009

The Learning Centre split into two separate entities - Nkqubela Primary School and Masakheke Secondary School. The primary school now has 1 100 learners enrolled and a total of 23 teachers.

2013

The Nkqubela Public Library was built.



TOWNSHIP LIFE, 2017





TOWNSHIP CULTURE

Initiation, A Xhosa rite of passage

The inhabitants of Nkqubela are predominantly isiXhosa speaking. The Xhosa way of life is one that believes their ancestors are the pillars of their existence.

Certain rituals are performed at certain times in honour of or to appease the forefathers.

One of the most practised traditional customs is the initiation of boys. Participating in the initiation process gives a boy the right of passage into manhood.

Boys of about 18 years of age are sent off to the bush or mountain, away from civilisation, to learn how to deal with issues

that they will encounter in their next phase of life.

This is a very important stage in every boy's life due to the fact that high expectations are placed upon men from the community. The men will be responsible for ensuring their family's well-being, financial stability, and raising their children in a safe environment.

After completing their initiation (**ulwaluko**), they will return home where the whole community will celebrate their successful transition.

Normally, celebrations take place by performing a stick fighting ritual amid song

and dance.

A lamb or cow will also be slaughtered. These celebrations often last for an entire weekend. The eldest man in the village will take the young men to the kraal and give them his final words of wisdom, telling them how to behave as they are no longer boys but men.

After this, the young men are then showered with gifts (**ukusokwa**) before undertaking the next phase of their lives. On the other side, women are singing and celebrating the return of the young men. This is what makes the Xhosa tribe different and unique to other tribes.





BLACK EAGLES R.F.C, Robertson

Winners of Klipdrift Knock-Out, G.Conradie Trophy and Le Chasseur Knock-Out

Standing: V. Nentsa, K. Fulani, P. August, B. Matyana, W. Mkhozi, M. Nokonya.

Sitting: A. Mozola (President), M. Stuurman, P. Ndongeni (Vice Captain), S. Qhanqiso (Captain), H. Matyana, J. Ndengane (Chairman).

Front: B. Frans, K. Ndengane, S. Lendele, N. Danti

est 1971



The township had a very vibrant, social and sporting life. It was regarded as a 'rugby nation'. Black Eagles, a local rugby club from the location was one of the best performing clubs in the district. Long hereafter, soccer fever developed in the township and a club titled Swallows was established by the much younger generation.

Arts and culture was the order of the day. Choral music, drama and concerts were the only forms of entertainment at the time.

Rugby

Nkqubela has always been regarded as a Rugby-crazed community. The township had a very successful Rugby Club named Black Eagles. Mr Nentsa, born in Robertson and went to school at De Villiers Primary, established the popular Black Eagles Rugby



Club after playing for Boland for some time. After hanging up his boots, Mr. Nentsa was awarded Springbok colours, which he turned down. He didn't feel it would serve any purpose to wear it years after he had already retired from the game.

Boxing

Mr. Wazile Mkosi grew up in Robertson and went to school in Worcester. He left school quite early as he had to help his parents. He moved to Worcester in 1970 to further develop his love and passion for boxing, as there were only 3 clubs at the time. One of the clubs, the Battling Birds still exists today.

He decided to move back to Nkqubela in 1973. Mr. Mkosi decided to join a local Boxing Club at the Masonic Hotel in Robertson. Learning more about the sport and then



ploughing that knowledge back into his community was the main goal.

At that time, there were no boxing clubs in Nkqubela and Mr. Mkosi wanted to use this sporting code to get young people off the streets. After a while he registered Behave Boxing Club with Western Province and starting training youngsters.

He once said in his own words "before I close my eyes, there must be a boxing club in Nkqubela to keep the young people off the streets."

Other sporting codes that were practised and played on some tournament level include golf.



“The African culture is a broad and exciting one.
We as Africans embrace them all.”



TRADITIONAL ART, FOOD, DANCE AND MUSIC

Traditional Food

While maize is a staple food in most of Africa, it is the Xhosa of the Eastern Cape who have refined its culinary usage to an art.

The most famous maize dish in Xhosa cuisine is 'umngqusho'. This dried maize and bean melange has been compared with Italian risotto and is delicious when served with a meaty stew.

Other key Xhosa foods include 'isopho' corn soup, 'umphokoqho' maize porridge and sour milk porridge.

Vegetable dishes are also common in this culture. 'Imithwane' is a pumpkin leaf and butter melange; when the leaves are cooked together with fresh pumpkin the combination is called 'ilaxa'.

There's also a range of wild indigenous plants that are specific to Xhosa cooking. 'Ikhowa' is a mushroom that grows after summer rains, 'imvomvo' is the sweet sap of an aloe, and

'rhabe' is a lemon-scented wild spinach, reminiscent of sorrel.

When an ox is slaughtered, there are traditional regulations as to who gets which portion of meat. 'Incuma', the meat between the intestines and the stomach wall, is reserved for the elderly men, whereas 'isibindi' (the liver) is shared between the men and women, and 'irhorho' (the portion where the leg meets the body) is only for young men.

Music and Dance

Cultural music and dance has a lot of significant meaning in the indigenous culture. Special occasions are celebrated with dance and music. Different types of songs are sung for different celebrations. Each cultural occasion has different ways they are celebrated.

When the men return from initiation school, they are accompanied by men who sing and dance along the way, expressing their joy for

the boys who have now become men. When they arrive, they are welcomed by the ladies who are also singing and dancing upon their return home. It is an exciting ceremony to experience.

The cultural dances are also different and unique. Locally we specialize in traditional Xhosa, Zulu and Sotho dances. Each of these cultures dress and sing differently. The Xhosa and Zulu way of dancing seem similar but there are small details that make them unique.

When it comes to traditional music, the drum plays a very big role. Almost all of the African rhythms and beats feature drums. Zulu's and Sotho's also use whistles but they blow them differently.

Clapping of hands also has a huge effect in this kind of music. The African culture is a broad and exciting one. We as Africans embrace them all.

TRADITIONAL HEALING

Traditional Healing is one of Africans most profound cultural practices and has always been celebrated by them throughout the continent.

You will also find several qualified traditional healers and practitioners practicing in townships. It is widely believed that traditional healers are very secretive and don't easily share information about their practice.

Traditional healers believe that this form of art or work isn't for everyone, but is rather seen as a calling from their ancestors or forefathers. They claim that its a gift to be a natural practitioner.

It's said that, besides going to initiation school, to become a traditional healer, one has to go to healing school and obtain a diploma or a degree. It's now a government requirement for these healers to legally practice. This is so that they can perform their healing techniques in hospitals.

Many traditional healers claim to be able to cure people from various illnesses through their natural healing-based techniques.





“ Traditional healers believe that this form of art or work isn't for everyone, but is rather seen as a calling from their ancestors or forefathers. ”

A MOMENT IN HISTORY





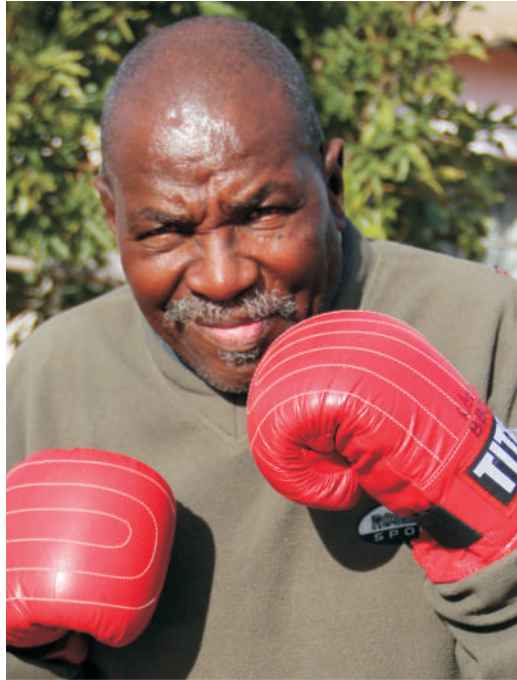
CHANGE MAKERS

Many individuals have fought for a better life for themselves and for others.



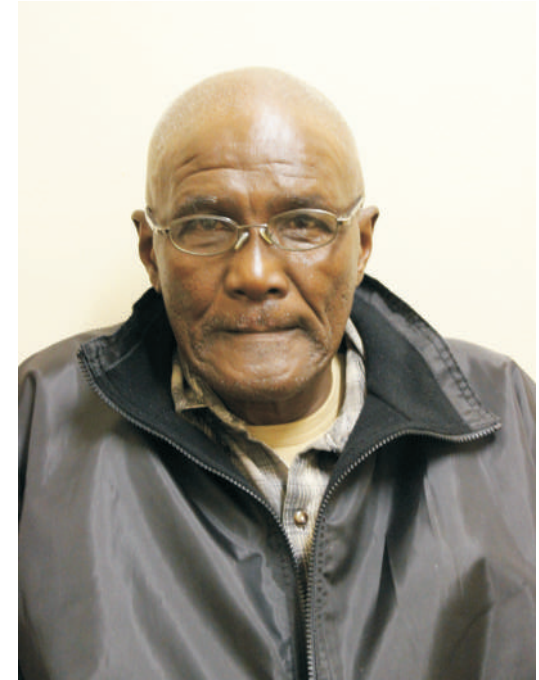
Toti Dayi

Toti Dayi, who was born in the Eastern Cape 1922, is currently the oldest living man in Nkqubela (By the time this book went to print). Dayi moved to Robertson in 1955 and later became a prominent church leader in the Zionist denomination. His family was one of the first to move from Muiskraalkop to Nkqubela. Amongst other things: he fought against the political system known today as apartheid and served on the Nkqubela Primary School Board for more than 10 years.



Wazile Mkosi

Wazile Mkosi contributed immensely to the development of boxing as a sport in Nkqubela. He developed his talent as a boxer at a club in Worcester in 1970, before returning to Nkqubela to share his experience with the youth. At that time, there were no boxing clubs in Nkqubela. He wanted to use boxing as a means to get young people off the streets. He eventually established the first club named Behave Boxing Club, and registered with Western Province. He trained several youths to become boxers.



Swane Thembekile Qhanqiso

Swane was born in 1948 in Tindall Street, Robertson. He moved to Nkqubela (May Street) in 1964. Being an avid rugby player, he played for the Young Stars Rugby Club in Klipdrift. In 1970, he was one of only a few people who established the first Rugby Club in Nkqubela- named Black Eagles.



Soyisile A. Mokweni

Soyisile Mokweni spent a large part of his life living in Nkqubela. He was an active political figure in the community for quite some time before becoming a councillor.

In 1983, when Nkqubela became a municipality on its own with its very own Council, he was inaugurated as the Deputy Mayor. He assisted the Council to improve the living conditions in Nkqubela.

Mokweni also served as treasurer on the Board of the Black Eagles Rugby Club.



Georgina Gqabi

Georgina Gqabi is a well-known figure in Nkqubela. She is the first person to have established a much-needed Old Age Home for the frail. The facility, which could only house two people at a time, can now accommodate eight patients.

The building was named after the Mayor of the Black Council at the time- Joseph Matwa.

Gqabi served as the chairperson of the Joseph Matwa Old Age Home committee for about 10 years.



Johannes Qhanqiso

Mr. Qhanqiso was imprisoned many times because of his brave actions. He used to protest against the authorities and questioned them about the pass rule.

Mr. Qhanqiso was all about positive things and was involved in sport and recreation.



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