



Mamre

(Off the R307, between Atlantis and Darling)

Enquiries:

Tel: 021-576 1134

Fax: 021-576 1206

Address: Rev M. Ludolf, Mamre Moravian Mission Station, P.O.Box 2, Mamre, 7347

Mamre is situated between Darling and Atlantis on the R307, within an hour's drive of Cape Town. It was first settled in 1701 when the Governor of the Cape, Willem Adriaan van der Stel decided to establish a military and cattle post in this area to protect the European settler's cattle from theft by the indigenous KhoiKhoi people. In 1808, when the Cape Colony was again under British control, the region was transferred to the Moravian Missionaries, Kohrhammer and Schmidt from Germany. In time a thriving mission station became established and all of the buildings dating from this period have been restored and were declared National Monuments in 1967. Today the mission complex at Mamre provides a peaceful oasis under the oak trees.



Wittewater

(Off the R399, between Piketberg and Velddrif)

Enquiries:

Tel/Fax: 022-912 4210

Address: P.O. Box 36, Wittewater, 7322

The German Moravian missionaries established Wittewater ("White Waters") in the early part of the 19th century. The village is nestled against the slopes of the Piketberg Mountain and was run as a single unit with the Goedverwacht Mission, which is situated close by. The original whitewashed and thatched houses have fallen into disrepair but there are plans to restore them. The town is situated near the end of the Peerboom ("Pear Tree") Hiking route, which starts at Goedverwacht.



Goedverwacht

(Off the R399, between Piketberg and Velddrif)

Enquiries:

Tel: 022-912 4784 or 4924

Fax: 022-912 4207

Address: P.O. Box 65, Goedverwacht, 7323

Goedverwacht ("High Expectations") is situated near to Piketberg and is accessed by an excellent tarred road. It was established in 1881 as a Moravian Mission station and has a fascinating story. The land originally belonged to a widowed farmer, Hendrik Schalk Burger. When the emancipation of the slaves was in sight, he asked his slave, Maniesa (originally from

Bengal, India), and her five children and son-in-law to stay on the farm with him and care for him until his death. In his will, he left the farm to Maniesa and her children with the instructions that when all her children had died; their descendants should sell the farm and divide the proceeds. His own children challenged the will in court but it was upheld and remained in Maniesa's family's hands until 1888 when her last child, Hester, died. Her grave can still be seen in the graveyard. Their descendants then decided that instead of selling the farm on open auction, they would sell it to the Moravian Missionaries for 750 Pounds. Owing to its close proximity, it was run as a unit with the older Wittewater Mission for many years. The village is situated in a fertile and well-watered valley and is characterized by simple thatched homes with brightly painted windows and doors and gardens full of flowers. The church and parsonage were built by the villagers and are constructed of local stone. Other interesting buildings include the school, the Mission Store and the watermill, which is now being restored. Plans are also being made to provide overnight self-catering accommodation for visitors in a restored old cottage. The Peerboom ("Pear Tree") Hiking Route has been developed which leads from the old graveyard through the mountains behind the village to emerge above the neighbouring village of Wittewater. The route can be walked in a day, accompanied by a knowledgeable guide, and features beautiful views over the Berg ("Mountain") River valley, indigenous Fynbos ("fine leaved") vegetation and amazing rock formations. There are many spots for picnicking on the outskirts of the town or at the nearby settlement of Wolfkloof. Guided tours and meals can be arranged. The town is currently seeing a revival of the traditional organic farming methods and fields, which have been lying fallow for years.

The produce is available on occasion from the Mission Store. Most of the men of the town work elsewhere and only return to town on weekends or at the end of the month. The church, its festival and activities still form the focus of community life in Goedverwacht and visitors are welcome to attend a service.



Elandskloof

(17km south-east of Citrusdal, surrounded by part of the Koue Bokkeveld Mountains on the road to Ceres. It is reached by a partly gravel road.)

Enquiries:

Tel: 022-9212422 / 0826495824

021-4485605

Address: P.O. Box 228, Elandskloof, Citrusdal, 7340

The inhabitants of Elandskloof are mostly descendants of the Khoi people who lived in the area as stockfarmers even before the time of Jan Van Riebeeck.

In 1881 the Dutch Reformed Church purchased the land, today still known as Elandskloof, and a missionary station was established. In the early 1900's a school was built. In 1961 the church sold the land to a farmer and the inhabitants were scattered over the Western Cape after being a self-sufficient community for over a century. With the change of government in 1994 and the new land reform policy the struggle started for the Elandskloof people to get their rightful land back. In 1996 they succeeded and slowly but surely the children and grandchildren of the Elandsklowers began the great trek back to their heritage.

Everything they once had, had to be rebuilt. It is a big task, but the community has the will and a vision for the future. The church has been restored to its original glory. Every Sunday morning at 10h00 there is a church service. Visitors are welcome to join in.



Wupperthal

(74 km from Clanwilliam, in the Cederberg Mountains)

Enquiries:

Tel/Fax 027-492 3410

Address: Church Plein, Post Office, Wupperthal, 8138

Wupperthal is situated about 74 kilometres from the town of Clanwilliam in the remote Tra-Tra valley on the edge of the Cederberg ("Ceder Mountains") wilderness area. The town can only be reached by gravel road that winds down into the valley via the Koueberg ("Cold Mountain") pass and this isolation is part of what makes it such a special place. The road is navigable in an ordinary sedan car but can become more challenging after heavy rains. The town dates back to 1830 and was established by German Rhenish missionaries, Baron Theobald Von Wurmb and Johann Gottlieb, a shoemaker by trade and grandfather of famous South African poet, Louis Leipoldt. They named the town Wupperthal after their home town in Germany. Under their guidance, the town was laid out with the cottages of the inhabitants overlooking the fertile farmlands along the Tra-Tra River. The church, workshops and school form a separate complex. This layout is still evident today and the shoe factory established by Leipoldt to create work is

still in operation, making hand-made leather velskoene ("vel"="skin", "schoen"="shoes") which are available for sale. This craft has been passed down from father to son and the workers currently at the factory are fourth generation shoemakers. Other attractions in the village include the Rooibos Tea factory, which is in operation during the summer months. Rooibos ("red bush") is an indigenous plant which grown wild only in this area. It is gathered by hand and blended with organically grown rooibos cultivated in the hills around the town. Rooibos is exported but is also available for sale from the Lekkerbekkie ("sweet things") shop and information centre. Wupperthal is surrounded by several outlying settlements whose inhabitants make the journey into town using traditional carts drawn by six donkeys. Accommodation facilities include the Khaki Park camping and caravan site which has hot running water and electricity as well as two self-catering guest houses, Palmhuis ("Palm House"), set in a grove of palm trees, and Kloofhuis ("Ravine House"), set against the mountain and behind the church. The simplistic church approached through an avenue of gum trees is an imposing sight. Wupperthal also offers numerous opportunities for hiking and mountain biking as well as a wonderful natural swimming pool about 1km from the village.

The Wupperthal 4x4 route is a popular off road driving route and includes overnight accommodation in the mountain above the town. Guided tours, traditional meals and donkey cart trips can be arranged and light refreshments are available from the Lekkerbekkie. There is also a museum and an information office. The town became a Moravian Mission Station in 1965 after the Rhenish Missionaries withdrew from South Africa.



Vredendal

Vergenoeg Mission Station

(24km from the N7, in the town Vredendal)

Enquiries:

Tel.: 027-213 2245

Fax: 027-213 3232

Address: P.O. Box 780, Vredendal, 8160

On 15 September 1935 Reverend Archambaud bought the farm Vergenoeg and established the first school on it. Four years later, after secession from the Vanrhynsdorp congregation the then Mission Station was handed over to Reverend H. Klein. Soon the school became too crowded for church services and funds were raised for a church building. On 3 July 1953 the construction of the church was started and on 2 December 1956 the church was inaugurated. The church is a architectural jewel with towers that can be seen from afar. The windows, ceiling, square pillars and other structures all have classical significance for the Catholic religion.



Papendorp

(On the Olifants River estuary; 88km from the N7)

Enquiries:

Tel: 027-217 1608

Fax: 027-217 1930

Address: Nuwestasie, P.O. Box 100, Ebenhaezer, 8149

The small settlement of Papendorp is situated overlooking the Olifant's River Estuary where the river enters the sea. It has a beautiful view over the wetlands and river with a huge variety of bird species to be seen (183 species).

Papendorp derives its livelihood from fishing in the estuary and from salt gathering at the nearby salt pans. Salt is still processed in the traditional way. Remnants of the old reed-and-mud houses where the fishermen dwelled in the past can still be seen as well as the rustic little church overlooking the river mouth. At the community needlework project beautiful hand embroidered linen can be bought. Another attraction is archaeological remains in the form of shell middens.

Papendorp is one of the few remaining places where you can see the simplicity of life in its purest form as it used to be along the entire West Coast.



The Mission Route was jointly made possible with the support of the West Coast Investment Initiative and the West Coast District Council



Ebenhaezer

A memorial to God's help

(Close to Papendorp, approx 78km from the N7)

Enquiries:

Tel: 027-217 1608/ 217 1616

Fax: 027-217 1930

Address: Nuwestasie, P.O. Box 100, Ebenhaezer, 8149

Ebenhaezer is situated about 55km from Vredendal on the banks of the Olifant's River. Baron von Wurmb who was also involved in the establishment of Wupperthal established a Rhenish Mission Station in 1831. The community is linked to that of Papendorp, which is situated downstream near the mouth of the river. When the Rhenish Missionaries withdrew from the country, Ebenhaezer became part of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Kerk ("Dutch Reformed Mission Church"). Recently many farmers have settled in the area due to the extension of the irrigation canal of the Olifant's River irrigation scheme in 1978. Fields of lucern, beans, paprika and coriander fields are therefore now a part of the landscape. Ebenhaezer is a peaceful, rural village with cattle and sheep grazing in the green pastures.





Vanrhynsdorp

*Troe-Troe Zending and Mission
of the Little Flower*

**(Off the N7 - known as the
Gateway to Namaqualand and the
Hantam Karoo)**

Enquiries:

Tel/Fax: 027-219 1552

Address: P.O. Box 28, Vanrhynsdorp, 8170

Vanrhynsdorp, situated in the centre of the Nama Karoo, provides a good base from which to explore the West Coast Mission Route as well as the Namaqualand and Karoo Mission Stations. Vanrhynsdorp was founded as Trutro ("TroeTroe") after the area became known through the expeditions made by Pieter van Meerhoff in 1661. The Troe-Troe Zending ("Mission") dates back to the completion in 1751 of the Trutro Homestead which is still standing at Vanrhynsdorp. During the era of the Troe-Troe Zending and the involvement of Hendrik van Rhijn the establishment of several mission stations like Wupperthal, Ebenhaezer, Leliefontein, Steinkopf and others took place. More than 120 years later the Troe-Troe Mission Congregation (United Reformed) was established in 1874 after the name of the Trutro Homestead changed to "Het Gesticht" - meeting place of first the Dutch Reformed Congregation. The name of the town Troe-Troe was changed to Vanrhynsdorp in 1881 to honour the legendary Van Rhijns for invaluable contributions made as community and church leaders. Vanrhynsdorp was the location of the Catholic Mission of the Little Flower during the 20th century. The closing down of this once flourishing Mission Station tells a sad story. Visit the Van Rhijn Museum in Van Riebeeck Street for Troe-Troe artifacts and eco-facts and the Latsky Radio Museum in Church

Street to view a collection of old valve radios, some dating back to 1924. Vanrhynsdorp's succulent nursery, the largest of its kind in the world, has become the centre of preservation of a variety of indigenous succulents. These interesting plants draw attention from overseas and local visitors alike. In bygone years the Vanrhynsdorp's mountains were home to the San and many fine examples of the art of these Late Stone Age hunter-gatherers exist in several rock shelters. There are numerous accommodation establishments in the area ranging from camping to rustic farm accommodation to comfortable bed & breakfasts, guesthouses and a hotel.



Rietpoort

**(Situated 35km from
Bitterfontein and the N7)**

Enquiries:

Tel: 027-642 5004

Address: P.O. Box 11, Rietpoort, 8202

Rietpoort is situated 28km northwest of Bitterfontein in the Namaqualand region of the West Coast. It can be reached via a good gravel road. It was established by a Dutch Catholic Missionary, Father Cornelius van't Westeinde who arrived here in 1913. He spent his first 18 months in the area in a cave just outside the town, which can still be visited today. He began his ministry in the open air before a church was constructed. The beautiful cathedral of Rietpoort was inaugurated in 1937 and Mass is still celebrated at 6pm every day. Visitors are welcome to attend services. The bell in the cathedral tower is rung every day at 6am, 12pm and 6pm to call the townsfolk to

prayer. The town is surrounded by granite domes, which change colour according to the time of day - a magnificent sight. In this very dry part of the country, water is always a problem and the people of Rietpoort have always found ingenious ways to obtain water. One of these was to channel dew from the huge granite outcrops into a reservoir to supplement the ground water supply. A desalinisation plant has now been established. There are a number of small settlements in the hills surrounding the town. Inhabitants of these settlements choose to live here without electricity or running water in order to be closer to their animals and small vegetable gardens. Many people still use traditional clay ovens for baking and kookskermers ("cooking shelters"), constructed of dried thorny bushes to shelter their cooking fires. Guided tours, traditional meals and donkey cart drives can be arranged. This area is also renowned for its spring flower display, which can be among the best in the region.