

Choral & dance lighthouse project in St Francis

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Others in the project team include Karen & Wolfgang Fuchs, Rotary St Francis (Bruce Brooker) and John Hammond (Business skills and facilitator) and Kouga Municipality.

Through this project the team aims to create and develop pride in achievements, enhance self worth and exposure to different parts of the global market and commerce.

The events will take place throughout Kouga at venues. In St Francis the main performance venue is likely to be the original Five Elements restaurant at the airport and the Sea Vista community hall.

According to L'hente there are communities where traditions, customs, language, music and art are undervalued. The Lighthouse Project will develop and deliver a platform to people of a young age. It will enhance their sense of self-worth, a sense of self-esteem and awareness of their community and their own uniqueness.

"Education is key and music & art education are powerful components" L'hente says. "Without music many people might pass their whole lives in a state of cultural starvation - without knowing it."

"We say every child has a right to food and shelter, to education, to medical treatment, and so on. We must also understand that every child has a right to the experience of culture. We all must understand that without stories and poems and pictures and music, children will starve emotionally."

L'hente says current data indicates choral singing is a thriving and growing form of artistic expression in South Africa.

In addition to providing great musical performances it advances many positive qualities associated with success for children and adults. "People who sing demonstrate characteristics that make them remarkably good citizens," L'hente says. She expands by saying choral singers are more likely to be generous people who volunteer in communities and contribute to philanthropic causes. They're far more likely to take on leadership roles. The data results show children who sing have academic success and valuable life skills.

Anyone who wishes to know more about the Lighthouse project can contact Hammond on 072 770 7788

About Mari-Pitout Lhente:

Lhente works as a musician, conductor and adjudicator in classical and contemporary genres. She regularly travels to Europe and North America to work as choral clinician or adjudicator at National and International Festivals. She has been awarded numerous prizes for her contributions to the arts as a singer and conductor.

Apart from conducting UP Youth Choir from 2005, she is also the conductor of the highly prestigious and awarded Pretoria Boys High School Choir and the St Alban's College Choir and Barbershop. She is the Co-Founder of the South African Youth Music and Arts Development Foundation and the Artistic Director of the Music co, a group of specialized young solo performers.

Lhente represented South Africa in the World Youth Choir and World Chamber Choir for six years touring and performing in over 15 countries.



Canadian volunteers, Cassandra Hickman, left, and Sidney M'sahel, front, with Karen & Wolfgang Fuchs and Mari-Pitout L'hente

Papiesfontein celebrates 20 years of horse rides



Frank & Esre Lotter

Papiesfontein Beach Horse Rides celebrates its 20th anniversary this month.

In the nineties when Jeffreys Bay was still a one-horse town, Frank Lotter decided to offer tourists fantastic horse rides. He bought six horses and with the help of his children, Casper, Barend and Barbara, started Papiesfontein Beach Rides in 1996.

The children, 15 years and younger at the time, signed the riders in, gave instructions and acted as guides on the outrides. "They worked hard, pushing wheel barrows with lucern bales to feed the horses, cleaned the tack, saddle the horses for the ride and rinsed them afterwards," Esre says.

Papiesfontein today is renowned in Kouga for tremendous beach horse rides on a pristine beach in the Eastern Cape. The farm is 10 km outside Jeffreys Bay, an hour's drive from Port Elizabeth on the seaward side of the R102.

Frank and Esre Lotter have farmed here since 1980 and have been running Papiesfontein Beach Horse Rides in

addition to their cattle farm since 1996. They have more than 70 well-schooled and good-natured horses to choose from, Esre says. They breed their own horses and use a crossbred between the Boerperd and the Scottish Highland Pony - they have the only Scottish Highland Ponies in the country.

Experienced guides escort riders twice daily along a 13km circular route, the highlight of which is a thrilling gallop along a magnificent stretch of white beach.

Bird life is in abundance along the trail, including francolins darting out of the way, plus one can spot some wildlife, such as tortoises, bushbuck, plant and marine life. This experience offers a front row seat to nature.

The route from the stables leads to the Gamtoos River, winding down through farmlands and sand dunes to the lovely river mouth and the beach.

Non-riders have thousands of acres of open ground for walking and film of seafront.

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• Edited by Bev Marston

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I kid you not...

A St Francis Bay lady inadvertently left her cell phone in the public toilets at the Village Square. She then went to a coffee bar with her hubby.

On seating, she opened her bag and to her horror she realised that her phone was left on the shelf at the loo. She upped from the table and charged like the light brigade - she is in her 70s, mind you - to the loo in the hopes it was still there.

On the way someone stopped her, asking if she was alright because she was running so fast. Without thinking she replied: "I cannot stop now I am running to the loo!"

Then it dawned on her the embarrassment of what she had just said... And was her face red!

But the good news is her phone was still where she had left it!

Do you have a funny story to tell. Please send to The Editor: bav@stfrancis.co.za *Anonymous assured*