



RHODES EXCHANGE

Bringing you news about research, progress and development

*ISSUE 005 / APRIL 2014



PG 1: INTERNATIONAL & CULTURAL DIVERSITY



PG 4: 32 DAYS AT RHODES



PG 5: REHABILITATING MINES

As we celebrated 20 years of our South African democracy during our May elections, at Rhodes we looked back on the past two decades of transformation, consolidation and the continued growth of our excellent educational experience. We celebrate the increasing exchange we have with international students and academics and welcome greater numbers of students from other African countries and further abroad. We take pride in the democratic dialogue in our University and our recognition of the need for continued vigilance with respect to human rights and freedom of speech.

Imagine a world without divisive cultural, political and gendered borders. At Rhodes we continue to build our sense of community and to mentor the ethical leaders of tomorrow.



INTERNATIONAL & CULTURAL DIVERSITY



Ms Orla Quinlan, the Director of the International Office writes about the essential processes of internationalisation and cultural exchange in higher education

Internationalisation has been one of the critical factors in shaping Higher Education globally. Clearly "it is not possible for higher education to opt out of the global environment, since its effects are unavoidable" (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009). For example, who would have envisaged 20 years ago that in 2014, Rhodes would have a thriving Confucius Institute and increasing numbers of South African students keen to learn Chinese?

Rhodes University provides a rich context in which Internationalisation may be developed; 20% of the students and 7% of the staff are international. The majority of these students are from the SADC region. In 2013, Rhodes had 68 different countries of origin represented on campus.



RHODES EXCHANGE

Bringing you news about research, progress and development

*ISSUE 005 / APRIL 2014

INTERNATIONAL & CULTURAL DIVERSITY

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Given that globalisation and internationalisation continue to shape Higher Education, internationalisation begs constant definition and rethinking. Internationalisation at Rhodes is the conscious, proactive and consistent effort to create a learning environment inclusive of international, intercultural and global dimensions at every level of thinking and practice within the institution. We expect all our staff and students to be aware of the wider world and to make constructive contributions at the local, national, continental and global level in their chosen fields. At the heart of internationalisation is the intention to improve the quality of research, teaching and learning and community engagement.

This includes encouraging academics to critically reflect on the internationalisation of the curriculum. In 2014, we initiated an internationalisation award for academic staff. We have a competitive distinguished visiting professor programme and, throughout the year, we support academic departments to bring in people from all over the world. Our partnerships initiative programme encourages academics to go out and engage with universities in other countries in Africa and the global South. We continue to have plenty of engagement with university representatives from Europe and the United States. For example, we recently hosted representatives from 15 US universities on campus on the same day!

Mobility programmes such as student exchanges, which may be life-changing for many students, will only ever be accessed by a minority of South African students. Even with generous arrangements from partner universities, the supplementary finance required for students to travel abroad is often prohibitive, which is why "Internationalisation at home" has been receiving considerable attention in the past three years. For all our activities, partnership with other departments across the University is essential.

From 17 to 24 May we will hold our third International Week, which aims to celebrate our diversity, highlight our international academic links and discuss institutional culture to ensure that we really are a home for all. A parade enables local community groups and students to engage with each other and we hold academic events. In 2013, we introduced the Africa Ball, which was a resplendent occasion. Internationalisation and the appreciation of cultural diversity is closely linked with our transformation agenda.





RHODES EXCHANGE

Bringing you news about research, progress and development

*ISSUE 005 / APRIL 2014



ABOVE: THE 2013 AFRICA BALL AND SRC COLLOQUIUM ON INTERNATIONALISATION.
BELOW: THE ALWAYS COLOURFUL PARADE DURING INTERNATIONAL WEEK.
PAGE 1: CELEBRATING CULTURAL DIVERSITY AT RHODES
PAGE 2: MS ORLA QUINLAN, THE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICE (TOP)
ALL SMILES AT THE RHODES UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL PARADE (MIDDLE)
VIBRANT AFRICAN FASHION AT THE 2013 AFRICA BALL (BOTTOM)

INTERNATIONAL & CULTURAL DIVERSITY

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

In addition, we also support the international community at Rhodes with problematic immigration issues. Naledi Pandor, the Minister for Home Affairs, has recently acknowledged that there is a tendency to sometimes see immigration as negative rather than strategic in contemporary South Africa, and the intention is to have a stronger focus on attracting skills, creating jobs and encouraging investment. The Minister is considering further streamlining the scarce skills strategies by proposing work permits for international graduates from South African universities. Streamlining the visa processes would be hugely welcomed by the international community at Rhodes, as this would free up a huge amount of time for the International Office to pursue the more strategic and academic aspects of internationalisation at Rhodes University.

Orla Quinlan was in South Africa during the 1994 elections and worked on gender in education policy in the ensuing years, when the iconic Nelson Mandela was at the helm of the country. Her relationship with South Africa continued, as part of her global remit in Oxfam's international Division in Oxford. In 2011, she joined Rhodes University to drive internationalisation.





RHODES EXCHANGE

Bringing you news about research, progress and development

*ISSUE 005 / APRIL 2014



32 DAYS AT RHODES



When I am not writing my manuscript I do some paintings “Impressions of Grahamstown” which will express some of my experiences and feelings in this place.

Amanda Tumusiime is a postdoctoral Fine Arts graduate from Uganda who came to Rhodes University on the African Humanities Programme (AHP) during April and May. She shares some of her experiences with us.

“I came to Rhodes University on the African Humanities Program (AHP) funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. In 2012 there was a call for applications and a good number of my colleagues at Makerere University, where I work as a lecturer, lodged their application forms and so I did. The applications process was very tedious and I was in my first trimester. In April 2013 an announcement came that I was among the 34 AHP fellows; one of five fellows from Makerere University.

The AHP gave me the opportunity to choose a place to go to for a writing residency to transform my PhD thesis into a publishable book. I had been to South Africa before to study at the University of Witwatersrand for a Master’s Degree and thereafter at the University of South Africa for the Doctor of Literature and Philosophy (DLitt et Phil). However, I had not been to Grahamstown before. When I asked a friend, who did all her schooling in Grahamstown, she said that Rhodes University would be a good place for me.

On 7 April I left Uganda and came to Rhodes University to start working on my manuscript. Here I was attached to the Rhodes Centre where I met Prof Fred Hendricks, the Director, and Ms Karen Kouari. These are two gracious people have

made my stay at Rhodes University very safe and interesting. I am indeed so grateful to them.

In the first week of my arrival, my hosts invited me for the Rhodes graduation ceremony. Ms Kouari gave me a lift to the Settlers Monument. The ceremony was, for me, marked by hearing Dr Saleem Badat give his final VC’s address, especially when he addressed that “patriarchy and sexism continue to stifle girls and women realising their potential and the contribution they can make to society and development. Gender violence is a pervasive, morbid ill that that destroys innumerable lives of women.” This statement immediately resonated with my own work which looks at how African women in general, and Ugandan women in particular, are ‘othered’ in cultural discourse authored by men and expressed through the medium of art. In addition, attending workshops and conferences allowed me to interact with other scholars, such as Ms Camalita Naicker, who are exploring similar gender-related ideas in their own work. For me, this context, which included a well-resourced library and the welcoming and helpful people at the Alumni House, who gave me support and information upon my arrival, was energising and gave me a springboard to embark on the journey of completing my manuscript, which is almost done.

The hospitality of Profs Fred and Monica Hendricks, who opened their home to me, made it possible for me to meet some very nice and interesting people. I also had the benefit of spending some time with my funders, who

happened to be in town selecting new fellows for 2014. We enjoyed many evenings and dined together. Besides that we had a lot of time discussing my project. I also had the opportunity to see some parts of the countryside and travel to Addo Elephant Park. The scenery was irresistible.

When I am not writing my manuscript I do some paintings “Impressions of Grahamstown” which will express some of my experiences and feelings in this place. As Eleanor Roosevelt said, “The purpose of life is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience.”

My experience at Rhodes has helped me to mature academically. Grahamstown calmed me down. Its simplicity is magical. However, through this experience I have learnt that in order for one to make a career you have to make hard choices. Learning is a lifetime process. We must learn something from our lives to make our future better and be ready to take care of hardships. I have learnt to live one day at a time. Every day I wake up with new determination to get the best out of it. For the first time in a long time, I was able to have time for myself, to go to the gym regularly, to work, to take walks, to paint, and I have revived my spirit with self-love. I have learnt that I have a great man in my life, I appreciate him and love him for being too courageous to look after our two babies single handedly while I am here. If all men in the whole world will go that extra mile, the world would be a better place.



RHODES EXCHANGE

Bringing you news about research, progress and development

*ISSUE 005 / APRIL 2014

NEWSFLASH: REHABILITATING MINES

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF EBRU AND PROFESSOR KEITH COWAN

A R17.5 million Anglo project to improve and accelerate opencast mine rehabilitation is being undertaken in partnership with Rhodes University's Institute for Environmental Biotechnology.

Known as Fungcoal, the project harnessed fungi and weathered coal to produce natural fertilisers that were regarded as the building blocks of soil fertility and plant life.

The partnership with Rhodes began in 2004 when Anglo Thermal Coal sought ways of accelerating and improving the quality of rehabilitation at its open case mines.

"Research showed that certain fungi had the ability to break down and liquefy coal that had been exposed to the elements. When accompanied by other microorganisms, they created humic and fulvic acids, which acted as natural fertilisers," said Anglo American mine closure manager Henk Lodewijks.

The humic and fulvic acids promote soil microbe and plant-growth and also significantly alleviate the compaction of rehabilitated soil, which is one of the greatest rehabilitation challenges facing the industry

Discarded coal was used as a medium on which certain grass species grew, significantly reducing the need for topsoil, which is both a scarce and costly resource.

Rhodes University Professor, Keith Cowan, said the research team had been fortunate to discover in a relatively short time the fungi and bacteria that were so important to the process.

"We are finding a complete toolkit of organisms for land that has been disturbed to ensure that it can be returned to communities for economic activity almost immediately after mining has ended."

So far this bioconversion technology, developed and patented by Anglo Thermal Coal, has been trialled at four Anglo American coal mines and, in certain applications has shown "extremely" positive results.

The next step is to establish a thorough record of land that has been rehabilitated with Fungcoal and gain a greater understanding of its use in other applications and over a longer time.

Prof Cowan says that while the results have been impressive, "the regulators have stipulated that a 'soil-like' substrate to a depth of 1.25 m is required before true rehabilitation has been achieved. In our case, good vegetation (or re-vegetation) points to the possibility of rapid progress toward rehabilitation. This I suppose is the true value of the technology — rapid rehab in the absence of imported top soil."

Adapted from http://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article/r175m-anglo-project-to-improve-accelerate-mine-rehabilitation-2014-04-23/article_comments:1



SO FAR THIS BIOCONVERSION TECHNOLOGY, DEVELOPED AND PATENTED BY ANGLO THERMAL COAL, HAS BEEN TRIALLED AT FOUR ANGLO AMERICAN COAL MINES AND, IN CERTAIN APPLICATIONS HAS SHOWN "EXTREMELY" POSITIVE RESULTS.



In our next issue ... In our next issue we hear from the Dean of Science and take a look at some of the Faculty's fascinating research projects.



RHODES EXCHANGE

Bringing you news about research, progress and development

*ISSUE 005 / APRIL 2014

A 20 YEAR PERSPECTIVE

Tim Huisamen first started lecturing at Rhodes on 1 September 1976. He retired at the end of last year and was reappointed on full contract for one year. That makes his service to Rhodes over 35 years. With this election celebrating 20 years of democracy, we asked him to comment on the changes he has seen at Rhodes over the years.

"If feel as if I am one of the luckiest and happiest people because I have a job I love to do that allows me to combine my hobbies and my passion. Through education we are able to provide skills, knowledge and values and prepare our students for life."

Mr Huisamen is an Afrikaans lecturer in the School of Languages. Changes and additions to the courses in the school and its research outputs have been pivotal to the changing educational needs of the growing student body. Embracing multilingualism, community engagement, the development of subject terminology for students who are not first language English speakers and other forms of support have been among the outputs of this School in its recent past.

Within the Arts Faculty itself he has witnessed the continued high profile of several departments, such as Drama and Music, in the arts world. Touching on some of the challenges faced by the University he describes how the City of Grahamstown does struggle to service the community and a growing student body. "But with Rhodes University being one of the biggest employers in town we have a big stake in service provision," he says. "We are a hub for arts, culture,

education and employment. As such Rhodes has been very important to the Festival and to contributing to the economy in this way."

Today, he says, the Arts Faculty is still flourishing and is full of creative people. "While our philosophies might have changed from modernist to postmodernist over the years, we still are one of the most important arts centres in South Africa. The Drama and Music Departments have a continued high profile in the arts world."

The almost 50/50 demographic enrolment of the student body contributes strongly to a wealth of cultural enrichment and he adds how other Faculties have also flourished. "There is Distinguished Professor Tebello Nyokong in Science, the Pharmacy Department is thriving, Commerce and the Business School have grown exponentially." But equally key to the continued success of students at Rhodes, he says, is that it has maintained a good staff to student ratio even though it has expanded its student body.

So what has changed? "The University is democratising and we have more and some very exciting black staff members. It is a difficult process and we must keep reminding ourselves what the limits are. We need to be looking increasingly at gender based as well as racial equality."

And in his own Department? "I am a teacher of Afrikaans in the School of Languages. While it should be a recipe for disaster with the combination of languages and cultures it is a very happy place, he said. "The School is a centre of cooperation headed by an erudite scholar, Prof Patrice Mwepu, who is sensitive to our multicultural realities. His presence here says something about the School's reach, he has come to us from the strife torn Congo to share his knowledge and experience.

Over the years we have been home to some

of South Africa's greatest writers, including Andre Brink, Etienne van Heerden, Peter Mtuzze and Guy Butler. Our students come from a variety of backgrounds and they speak from their hearts. Many have been let down by our schooling system and have a lot of basic catching up to do. I also find that the younger people, while their field of reference is vast given the innovative technologies available to them, are "innocent" of some of the basics of our culture such as biblical references.

He does look back with fondness on student societies of old such as film, music and the amateur drama societies that have been lost over the years due to technological advancements that make student entertainment more mobile and accessible. But there are other advancements that stand all Rhodes students, graduates and society at large in good stead

Rhodes has become more open to exploring the dangers of violent and sexist behaviour, rape, xenophobia and homophobia and to supporting human rights for all interest groups. "Because the university is small and we are all close to each other, there is a definite sense of society amongst our staff and students from all backgrounds," he said. "This engenders a fierce sense of loyalty to one another and a sense of love. This makes for a fairly safe, supported and respectful environment."

Against the backdrop of the transforming and supported environment that is Rhodes, other academics and students alike will have to agree with Tim Huisamen about the continued quality of the Rhodes experience.

"If feel as if I am one of the luckiest and happiest people because I have a job I love to do that allows me to combine my hobbies and my passion. Through education we are able to provide skills, knowledge and values and prepare our students for life."

This newsletter has been produced on behalf of Rhodes University Development Services by Creatives on Click and Kerry Peter Wordweaver. Any reproduction or alteration of these digital files is strictly forbidden and all original artwork is protected by copyright laws.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please contact: The Manager, Development Services, Development & Alumni Relations Division, Rhodes University at v.adams@ru.ac.za or +27 46 603 8510

At Creatives on Click and Kerry Peter Word Weaver we are both independent professionals who believe in the power of creative collaboration. Uniting our skills and experience we add value to the products we offer our clients.

Kerry Peter
* WORD WEAVER

TO CONTACT US:

Kerry Peter | 083 794 0005 | kerry@kerrypeter.com
www.kerrypeter.com

creativesonclick
Conscious Creativity. Dynamic Design.

Robyn Oosthuysen | 082 454 8242

robyn@creativesonclick.com
www.creativesonclick.com