

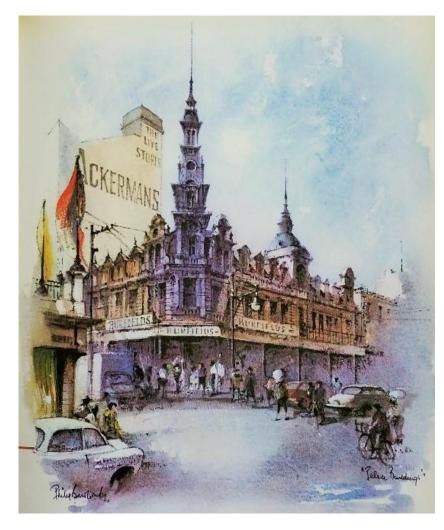
www.theheritageportal.co.za

The Story of The Heritage Portal

### What is the Portal?



- The voice of South Africa's Heritage Community
- A place to share heritage related stories, news & notices (website, newsletter, social media)
- A platform to get people excited about history
- A tool to connect people & organisations
- A Blue Plaque database
- An archive of fascinating material



Palace Buildings by Philip Bawcombe. An early Joburg icon.

#### How does it work?



- Contributors from across the country send in their news, stories, events, plaques etc.
- I edit & post the details in the most appropriate place on the website
- I spread the word via the weekly newsletter and social media



Facebook screenshot





#### The Heritage Portal Newsletter #2 2022

Homage to Zoo Lake Relief of Ladysmith - Special Anniversary Tour The History of Jacaranda Trees in Pretoria Mr Bellman's Hangar
The Heritage Portal Jan 19 ♥ 1 ♥ ♣ •••



#### The Heritage Portal Newsletter #1 2022

A Short History of the West Cliff Stairs | Victoria Cross special awards with a South African connection | Common Ground - A brilliant and welcome...

The Heritage Portal Jan 12 ♥ 1 ♥ → ···



#### Looking back at 2021

Top What is The Heritage Portal Newsletter? Q

Mysteries & Discoveries | Tragedies & Neglect | Good News & Awards
The Heritage Portal Dec 21, 2021 ♥ 2 ♥ ♣ •••



#### The Heritage Portal Newsletter #46 2021

Exploring the oldest collective financial institution in South Africa | Pretoria on Parade - A Mystery Photo Album Emerges | The Unfinished Story of the...

The Heritage Portal Dec 15, 2021 ♥ ○ ♣ ···



#### The Heritage Portal Newsletter #45 2021

Houghton, Orange Grove, Killarney, Mayfair & Greenside get blue plaques! | Isandlwana's Forgotten V.C. | Student in Trouble - Protesting against... The Heritage Portal Dec 9, 2021 ♥ ♥ ♣ …



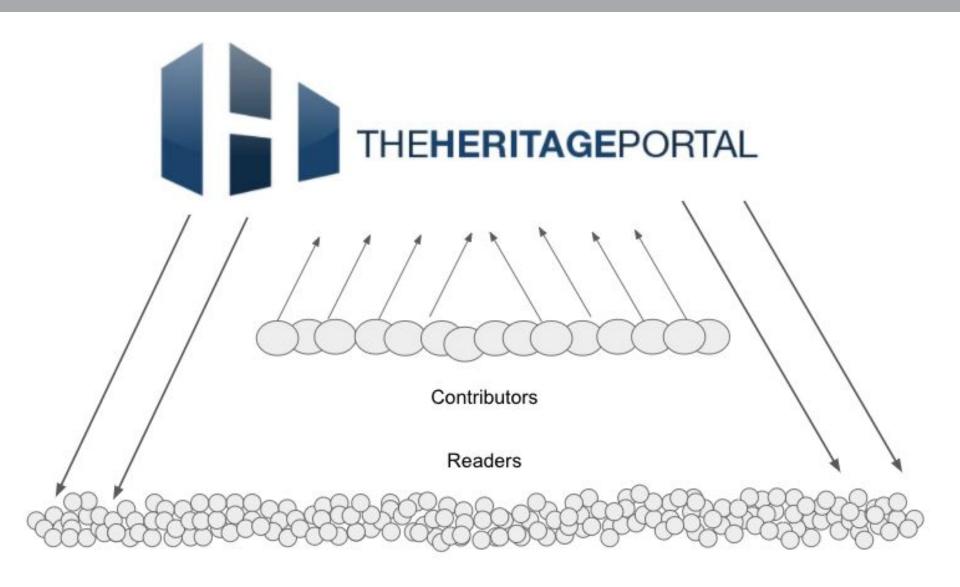
#### The Heritage Portal Newsletter #44 2021

Review of Art Deco Durban | Historic photographs of Apartheid Johannesburg in the 1980s | Railway Modelling, a hobby that lasts a lifetime | Surgeon in...

The Heritage Portal Dec 1, 2021 ♥ 2 ♥ ---

Screenshot of the newsletter archive

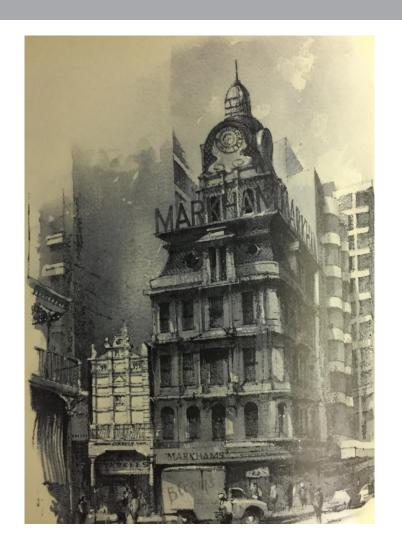




# **How & why did the Portal get started?**



- Back to 'school'
- The real lesson of the Markhams Building (for me)
- Balancing the forces of preservation & development
- Developing the website
- Creating the content
- Connecting the community

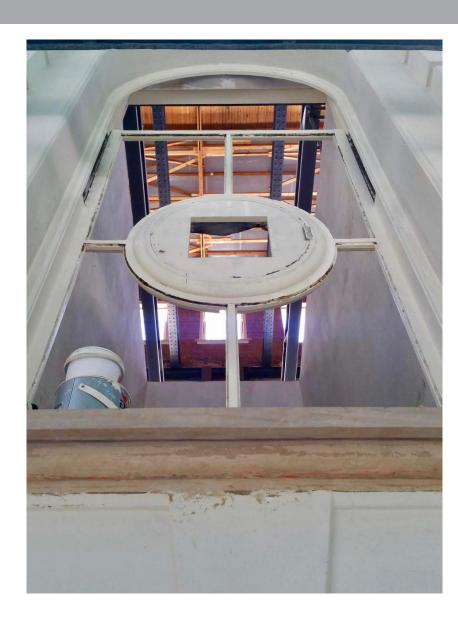


Markhams Building, another drawing by Philip Bawcombe

### Who uses the Portal?



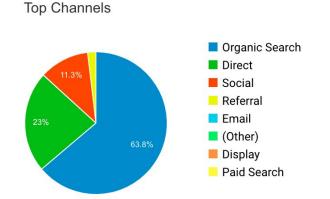
- Anyone interested in History & Heritage
- Researchers, Genealogists, Journalists
- Officials
- Professionals (Architects, Archaeologists, Heritage Consultants, Historians, Geologists etc.)
- Craftspeople & restoration contractors
- Property owners & developers

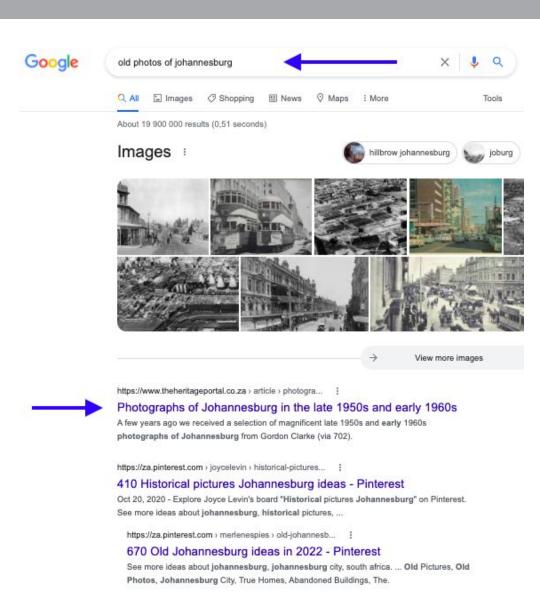


# How do people find the Portal?



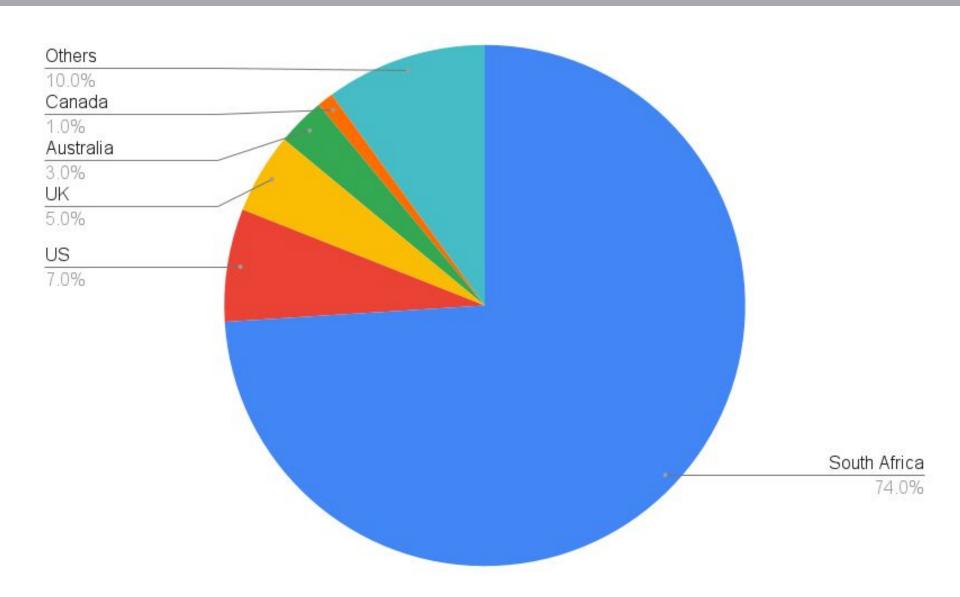
- Search engines
- Social media
- Newsletter
- > Direct
- > Referrals





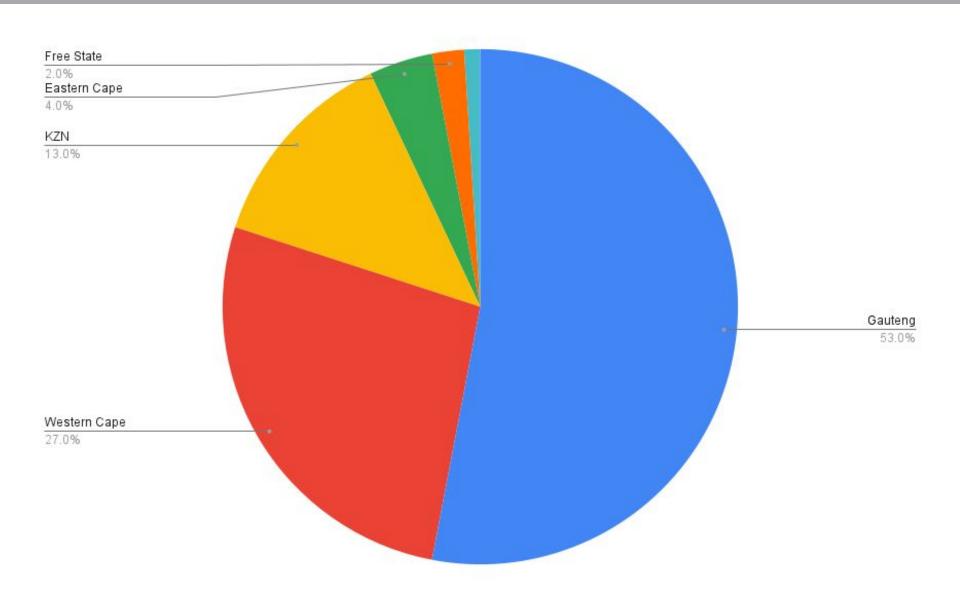
# Where do readers come from?





# Where do readers come from?





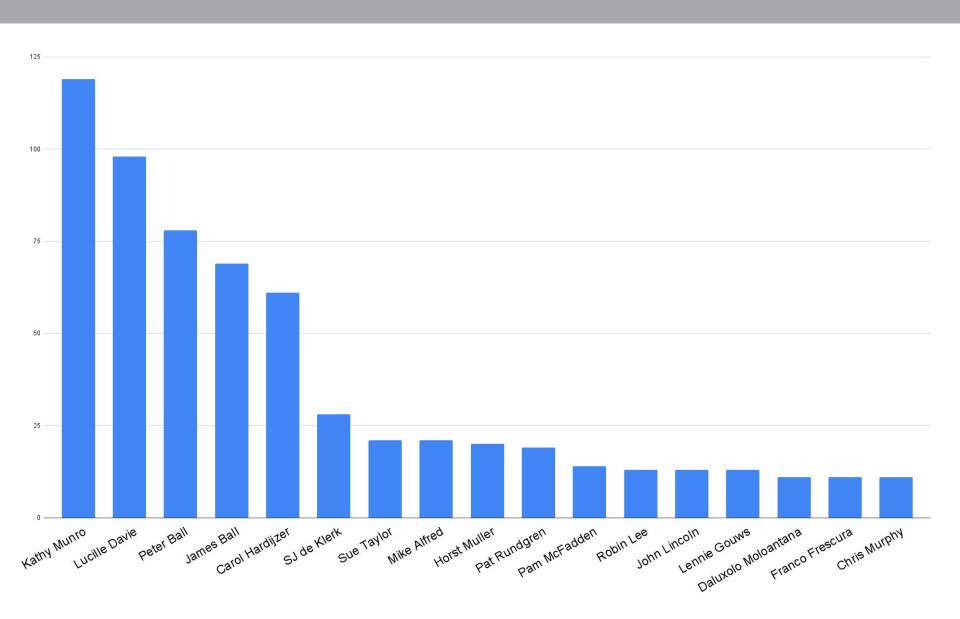
### The Portal in Numbers



- > People reached (unique users): 2 044 000
- > Pages visited: **4 575 000**
- Biggest month: Just under 50 000 (September 2021)
- Monthly readers: +-40 000
- Number of contributors: Just under 300
- Number of articles: 1 087
- > Book Reviews: **167**
- Directory Entries: 344
- ➤ Plaques: **337**
- Images: 12 600

# **Top Contributors**





#### Most read articles to date



- 1. Mining Headgears Pure Functionality Ruling over Beauty | *Peter Ball*
- 2. Forbidden Images (1960s to 1980s) Illegal photographs captured by young men conscripted into the South African Military | *Carol Hardijzer*
- 3. Rediscovering the 1947 Royal Visit to South Africa | Kathy Munro
- 4. Nongoloza: King of the Ninevites | Lucille Davie
- 5. The Last Remaining Natural Waterfall in Johannesburg | William Gaul
- 6. One of the most extraordinary archaeological and historical phenomena in Southern Africa | *Peter Delius, Tim Maggs, Alex Schoeman*
- 7. The remarkable life of Charlotte Maxeke | *Daluxolo Moloantoa*
- 8. A Brief History of Knysna | *Philip Caveney*
- 9. Water, water... everywhere Johannesburg's streams and rivers | *Lucille Davie*
- 10. A Brief History of Roads in South Africa | Peter Ball

### **Stories I Love - Historic Photos**



Spectacular old photographs of Joburg from above



Unique Photographs from the Boer War



Remarkable Photographs Emerge from Joburg Family Archive



Billy Monk was a Loaded Gun - A Treasure Trove of Photographs of Cape Town in the 1960s



Photographs of the Kruger Park that haven't been seen for half a century



Where there was gold there were photographers - Barberton Goldrush



# **Stories I Love - Heritage Personalities**



16 300 books... and counting



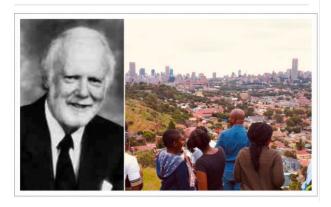
Marc Latilla is a Joburg enthusiast – Then and Now



Clive Chipkin - 'No coherence!'



Neil Fraser - reclamation champion



Flo Bird - house by house, street by street



Brian McKechnie: heritage, passion and cars



### **Stories I Love - Graves & Cemeteries**



A mysterious grave next to a railway line



Visiting the Historic Simon's Town Old \*\* Burying Ground



Visiting the oldest extant cemetery in South Africa



Visiting the historic Brook Street Cemetery, Durban



Nostalgia and remembrance in the **Brixton Cemetery** 



Only this cemetery remains as a stark reminder of an uprooted community



# **Stories I Love - Mysteries & Discoveries**



Discovery of a cannonball that was fired during the Battle of Muizenberg (1795)



A secret heritage home on the Kensington ridge



Heritage Heist - The mystery and intrigue behind Yukon's missing windows



Parkhurst House had enough explosives to 'blow up Johannesburg'



Rediscovery of historical survey beacon on Oxford Road



Modern Day Mystery - What has happened to the owner of the Kensington Castle?



# **Stories I Love - Buildings Over Time**



# The Buildings of C. H. Thrupp and Company over the Decades



The Nedbank Historical Collective -Exploring the oldest collective financial institution in South Africa



Johannesburg Stock Exchange Buildings over the Decades



### **Stories I Love - Grand Mansions**



#### Modderfontein's Grand Mansion



Norscot Manor - Built on a scale few could afford today!



Once in a lifetime trip inside majestic Cape mansion



Restoring one of Parktown's Greatest Mansions



Dolobran mansion sits smugly among Baker's Joburg icons



The Early History of Tara Sandton



# **Stories I Love - Blue Plaques**



Blue plaques and their inspiring possibilities



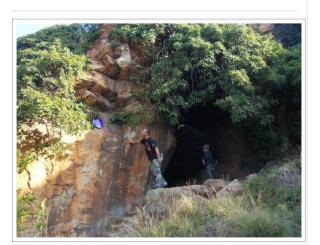
Westcliff Stairs honoured with Blue Plaques



Blue Plaque celebrates Jewish contribution to Muizenberg



Five Sneaky Blue Plaques



Blue Plaque Honours Helen Suzman



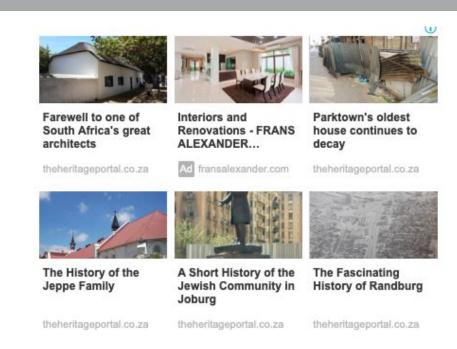
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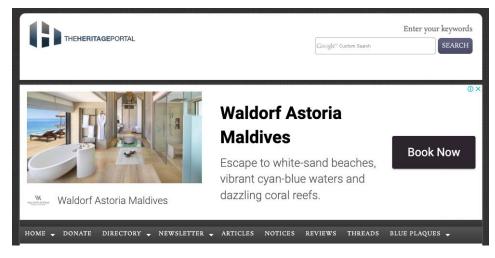


#### **How does the Portal sustain itself?**



- Volunteer driven initiative
- All content submitted by generous contributors
- Some advertising on the website & in the newsletter
- Donations
- Heritage Directory



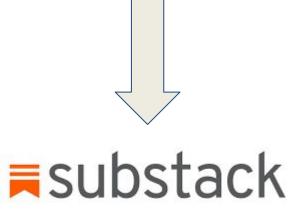


# **Biggest Challenges**



- Learning how to build the platform
- First 50 stories
- Hacked by Russians (and starting from scratch)
- Newsletter ceiling
- Balance with work
- Legal threats





# **How the Portal & the JHF work together**



### Portal Tour including a few hidden features



Enter your keywords

Google" Custom Search

SEARCH

HOME 🖵 DONATE DIRECTORY 🖵 NEWSLETTER 🖵 ARTICLES NOTICES REVIEWS THREADS BLUE PLAQUES 🖵



Spectacular old photographs of Joburg from above

. . . . .

### The Future of the Portal



- More great content
- Podcasts
- > Books
- Maps
- List every plaque in the country
- Expand The Heritage Directory



Escom House under construction

