



NEWSLETTER

Heritage in Action

Showcasing SAHRA's Impact in Conservation and Protection

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ABOUT SAHRA

SAHRA is a statutory organisation established under the National Heritage Resources Act, No 25 of 1999, as the national administrative body responsible for the protection of South Africa's cultural heritage.

THE ROLES OF SAHRA

SAHRA is responsible for identifying, recording, and managing South Africa's heritage resources. It provides expert advice to all levels of government, ensures compliance with national heritage standards, and promotes an integrated approach to heritage management. SAHRA also works to raise public awareness and appreciation of the national estate.

OUR MANDATE

South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) is a statutory organisation established under the National Heritage Resources Act, No 25 of 1999, as the national administrative body responsible for the protection of South Africa's cultural heritage. SAHRA, as an Agency of the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC), has been tasked to manage and implement the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) of 1999.



| FREEDOM PARK MUSEUM

Heritage in Action: Driving Impact Through Innovation

This quarter, SAHRA demonstrated national leadership in heritage management through bold initiatives and targeted collaborations. From advancing conservation projects and enabling regulatory clarity to strengthening digital infrastructure and building skills across the sector, our work reflects a consistent commitment to excellence and impact. Every project, engagement, and innovation is aimed at making heritage a catalyst for unity, education, and responsible growth.



| CONSTITUTION HILL VENDOR

Unit Highlights

Celebrate Culture. Embrace Unity. Honour Heritage

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Heritage Protection Unit (HPU)

The Heritage Protection Unit advanced nominations, declarations, and monitoring activities that anchor national memory. The team participated in interviews with a Wits doctoral candidate on living heritage nominations, convened engagements on the declaration of

Constitution Hill and the Life Esimendi Memorial, and joined monitoring discussions with University of Fort Hare and Mqhekezweni while progressing heritage agreements. Guidance on nominations was provided to institutions such as Groot Constantia, Robben Island, and the Johannesburg Art Gallery, and HPU contributed to workshops supporting World Heritage processes for sites associated with events at Sharpeville. Technical work on Government Gazette notices for Fort Hare, the Union Buildings, the Voortrekker Monument, and Liliesleaf continued.



🇿🇦 Robben Island Museum remains a beacon of hope and remembrance. Recently, families of former political prisoners visited the Island, touring historic sites and paying tribute at gravesites. 🌸

It was an emotional day of reflection, sharing stories of resilience and love that endured through hardship. ❤️
📸 SAHRA Media captured these powerful moments for future generations.

#RobbenIslandMuseum #Heritage
#Remembrance #Hope
#OurSharedHistory



Policy and Skills Development (PSD)

The Policy and Skills Development Unit shaped SAHRA's strategic direction and strengthened governance frameworks through practical policy work and sector partnerships. The team advanced planning for a lecture series with Sol Plaatje University to deepen academic engagement and share applied heritage management practice. It also rolled out new standard operating procedures for application-fee invoicing and permit processing, improving transparency and predictability for applicants and staff. In collaboration with Provincial Heritage Resources Authorities, PSD supported guideline development to enhance cross-provincial cooperation, and it facilitated communication sessions to clarify processes and expectations across the permitting value chain.

While the unit navigated capacity constraints due to temporary staff unavailability and experienced slower internal feedback cycles on specific policy documents, it maintained momentum on priority actions. Lessons from the quarter informed a scheduling approach that builds in late-quarter MANCO meetings for document finalisation and earlier planning horizons with academic partners to ensure smooth delivery. Collectively, these efforts reinforce policy coherence, operational clarity, and SAHRA's role as a thought leader in heritage governance.



Unit Highlights

Connecting Minds Creating Future

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Heritage Objects Unit (HOU)

The Heritage Objects Unit advanced high-profile conservation, repatriation, and compliance matters. A Memorandum of Understanding with NAACCSA was finalised after an extended negotiation, creating a framework for specialist firearm assessments. The unit contributed thought leadership to the sector through a published opinion piece on theatre as living heritage and continued technical work on the return of Irma Stern's Arab Priest, now scheduled for March 2026.

SAHRA supported the Johannesburg Art Gallery on conservation challenges and invested in staff capability through online training, including a UNESCO conference on illicit trafficking. Planning continued for an inter-agency heritage-crime workshop with law-enforcement partners, earmarked for October 2025. Operationally, permits were processed timeously and cross-unit support remained strong.

The team also addressed recurring misconceptions about import permitting and progressed compliance actions in matters involving state entities, while preparing to recruit additional capacity for Section 9 liaison.



MUCH Manager Brieghe Williams was in Oostende, Belgium, representing South Africa at the IKUWA8 Conference on underwater and maritime archaeology. She presented on "The Role of Oral Histories in Maritime Archaeology in South Africa", highlighting how community voices and indigenous knowledge enrich heritage research. Proud to see SA perspectives on the global stage! 🇿🇦

#MaritimeHeritage #IKUWA8
#UnderwaterArchaeology
#OralHistories #SouthAfrica #MUCH
#CulturalHeritage

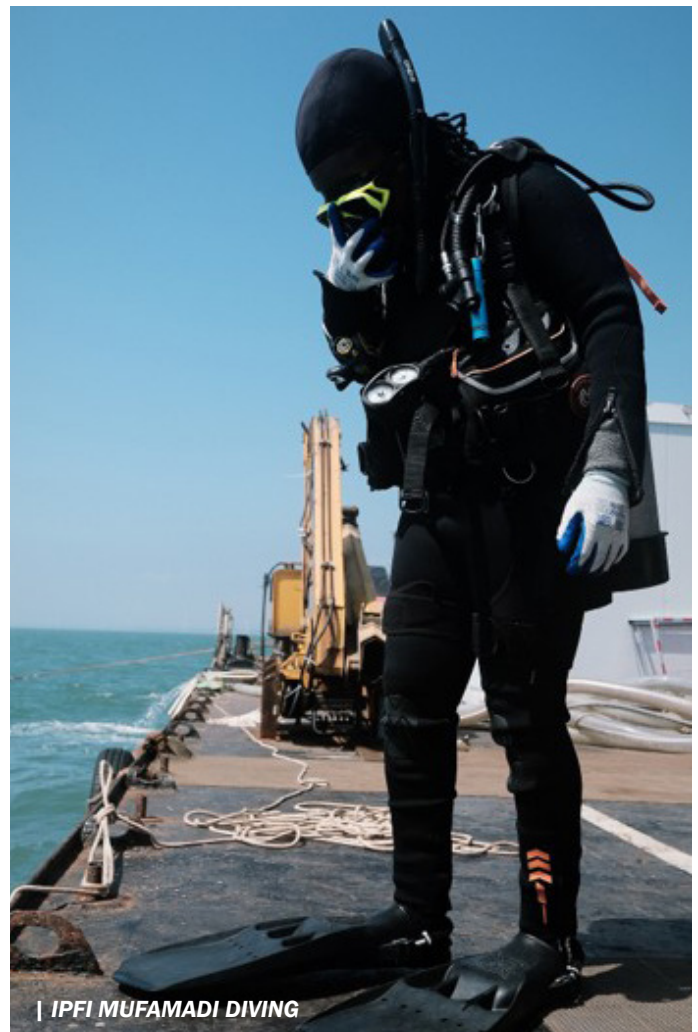


Archaeology, Paleontology & Meteorites (APM) and Maritime, Underwater & Cultural Heritage (MUCH)

Across land and sea, the APM and MUCH teams protected irreplaceable resources while enabling responsible access. Site visits to the Cradle of Humankind and Wonder Cave supported grading assessments, and stakeholder engagements progressed Heritage Agreements at sites such as Thulamela, Mapungubwe. Blue Mine achieved Grade 1 status during the period, and 40 permit applications were processed in support of research and compliance. Social outreach continued through digital channels, where shipwreck-related content drew strong interest. The units also flagged structural challenges, particularly diving capacity and operational funding for underwater work and set out practical pathways to address them with partners.

Please Follow the MUCH Facebook page for more updates and community engagement.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/1FcSDj7xrg/?mibextid=wwXlfr>



Unit Highlights

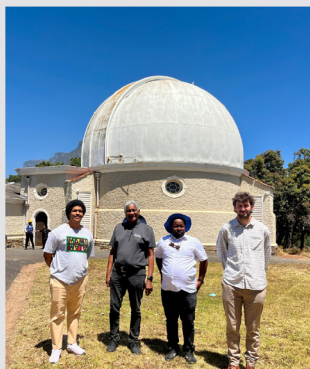
Exploring SAHRA's Legacy: A Journey Through National Heritage Sites

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Built Environment Unit (BEU)

The Built Environment Unit delivered a high-impact quarter across South Africa's historic townscapes and landmark sites. Its operational plan combined site visits, knowledge dissemination, grading assessments, permitting, and fresh research lines on industrial heritage, sport in heritage, and Section 34 policy. Mandela Legacy Sites received priority attention in support of their World Heritage nominations, with groundwork laid for Heritage Agreements to stabilise governance and maintenance across these symbolically charged precincts. BEU also supported national preparations for the G20 Summit, contributing planning inputs for the Union Buildings and Robben Island among other venues, work that required sustained rounds of coordination meetings and presentations. To amplify public understanding, the unit designed content templates and posts for SAHRA's social media channels, drawing strong internal feedback. Alongside these programmatic efforts, the unit managed a steady stream of site-specific enquiries, referring applicants to the correct provincial heritage authorities including Amafa KZN, Heritage Western Cape, ECPHRA, and Free State PHRA for statutory handling. The enquiries spanned metro and small-town contexts from Durban and Johannesburg to Cape Town, Paarl, George, and Bloemfontein.

Permitting activity reflected both the breadth and depth of BEU's portfolio. Approvals were issued for maintenance, restoration, and alterations at prominent heritage sites including the Voortrekker Monument, Robben Island infrastructure, Bo-Kaap, and properties in Richmond and at Standard Bank in the Northern Cape. Notably, the unit issued its first permit in the Northern Cape under Section 30 of the NHRA, signalling expanded reach and regulatory certainty in that province. Together, these actions keep the country's built heritage in active use, safe condition, and public view.



Our Built Environment & Heritage Objects Units visited the South African Astronomical Observatory in Cape Town for site monitoring.

Declared a National Heritage Site in 2018, SAAO is home to many firsts:

🌍 Africa's first scientific institution.

🔭 First permanent observatory in the Southern Hemisphere

⭐ First to measure a star's distance
SAAO continues to inspire through tours and events come explore the universe!

[#HeritageConservation](#)

[#NationalHeritageSite](#)

[#ScienceInnovation](#) [#Education](#)



Burial Grounds and Grave Unit (BGG)

The Burial Grounds and Graves Unit honoured national memory through careful assessment, rehabilitation, and community engagement. The team held two rounds of discussions with nominators of the Sutherland Nine to clarify requirements for advancing the nomination and undertook assessments at key sites, including the grave of Chris Hani and exposed human remains at Steelpoort.

Conservation work reached visible milestones with the completion of rehabilitation at Chief Adam Kok III's gravesite and repairs at Steve Biko's gravesite. Although the unit operated with reduced capacity due to extended leave for a team member, it met priority obligations and identified short-term resourcing options to sustain coverage in the next period.

Development Applications Unit (DAU)

The Development Applications Unit safeguarded heritage in the context of ongoing development pressures by maintaining disciplined review and decision-making processes. The team issued 3 permits for mitigation of impacts on heritage sites and finalized 233 formal decisions and comments, while contributing to internal tools such as a permit-tracking register and a handover pack for the Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority that seeks to streamline continuity. Staff supported multiple engagements and site visits across the country, including a lecture to the North West University, Protected Area Expansion meetings, Working Group 5 meeting and implementation workshops, and internal project kick-offs, while providing inputs on planning instruments such as a major maintenance plan for the Kruger National Park. The unit closes the quarter with a focus on consistent quality, predictable turnaround times, and incremental process improvements.



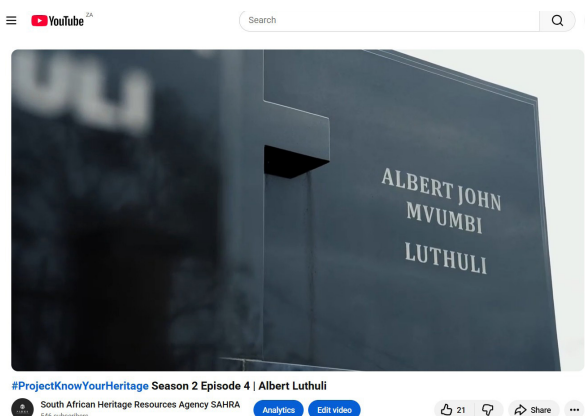
Know Your Heritage

Exploring SAHRA's Legacy: A Journey Through National Heritage Sites

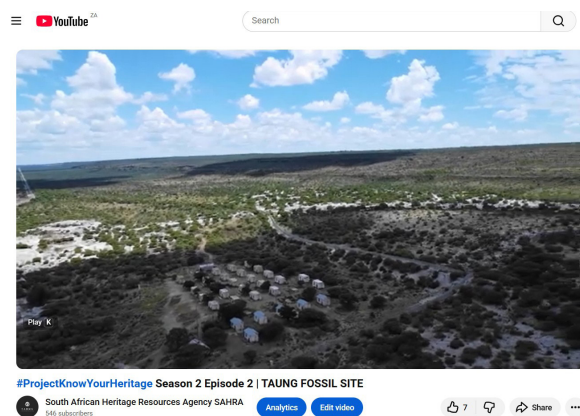
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Know Your Heritage

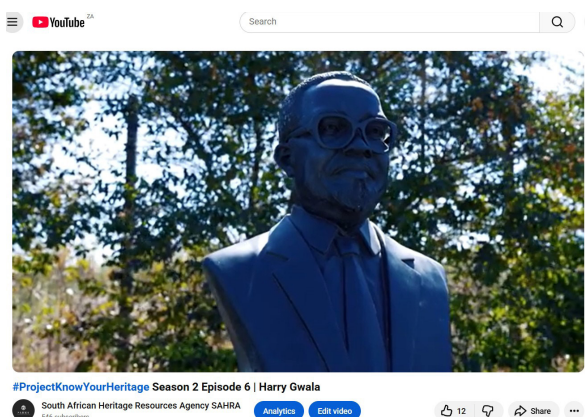
The SAHRA Know Your Heritage Film Project aims to celebrate and promote South Africa's rich cultural legacy by showcasing our National Heritage Sites. Through this initiative, audiences will gain deeper insight into the historical significance, cultural value, and purpose of each site, fostering appreciation and understanding of the stories that shape our nation's identity.



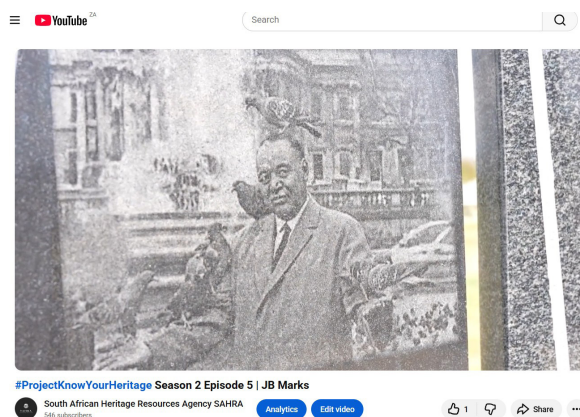
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjv8zU_mZT4&t=14s



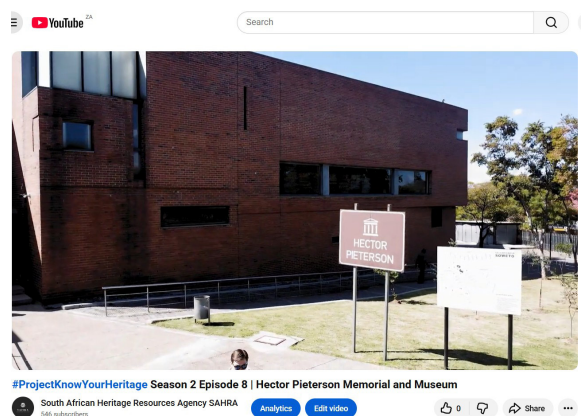
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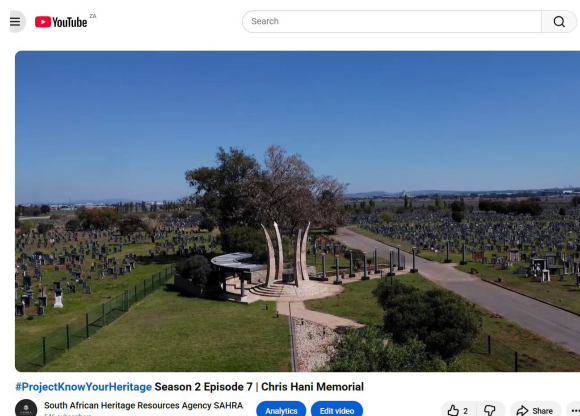
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FA2tQX8jVC4&t=5s>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrhhGwAyyqQ&t=74s>



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McS2amskd_8&t=66s



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rWNYkh6y9A&t=47s>

SAHRA SOCIAL MEDIA

Stay Connected with SAHRA!

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Discover South Africa's rich heritage, exciting events, and behind-the-scenes stories.

Watch. Share. Engage.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT

SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY

SCAN CODE

Follow us on social media and be part of preserving our legacy!



SAHeritageResourcesAgency



SAHeritageRA



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South African Heritage
Resources Agency

Become A Partner in Conserving South Africa's Legacy

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Your investment in SAHRA is an investment in South Africa's future. By joining us, you contribute to:

- Preserving irreplaceable cultural treasures.
- Educating future generations about our rich history.
- Empowering communities and fostering cultural pride.
 - Supporting a thriving cultural tourism sector.
 - Building a more inclusive and equitable nation.

Together, let's shape the future of South Africa's heritage story.

How you can help SAHRA:

SAHRA welcomes contributions of all sizes.

For tax-deductible donations from the US, please consider supporting Friends of South African Heritage Resource Agency at Myriad USA.

Donors can make tax deductible contributions to Friends of South African Heritage Resource Agency at Myriad USA. Because Myriad USA is a public charity, within the meaning of Sections 501(c)(3) and 509(a)(1) of the IRC, donors may claim the maximum tax benefits allowed by U.S. tax law for their contributions. If you wish to support us, here is how to proceed.

Gifts By Check:

Address your check to Myriad USA, write Friends of South African Heritage Resource Agency the memo section of the check, and send it to Myriad USA at 551 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2400, New York, NY 10176.

Gifts by credit card, see:

<https://www.every.org/south-african-heritage-resources-agency>



Who is MYRIAD?

Myriad is a global alliance that facilitates borderless giving. It connects donors with trusted charities worldwide, providing a platform for individuals and organizations to make a meaningful impact. Myriad offers a variety of services, including grant distribution, donor-advised funds, and philanthropic consulting.

By leveraging its extensive network and expertise, Myriad ensures that donations are used effectively to address pressing social and environmental challenges. Through its various funding mechanisms, Myriad empowers donors to support causes they care about, fostering a more equitable and sustainable world.

Myriad has partnered with SAHRA to facilitate easy giving dedicated to conserving South Africa's rich heritage and assisting SAHRA execute its mandate





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Thank You

An Agency of the Department of Sport, Arts, and Culture