

DIVERSITY FRIDAY

OOM ANDRIES

A True Servant of the People

This man is filled with knowledge, yet he is so humble. Every time I visit him I come back feeling refreshed and motivated. He always has the best advice for any situation ... this week's edition is dedicated to Oom Andries.

Oom Andries is a 'blue blood stallion', a fanatic supporter of the Blue Bulls; and when it comes to soccer, well it's obvious ... But we're not going to discuss his love for sport. We would like to talk about his 'servanthood' – as we celebrated Freedom Day on 27 April 2016.

I know most of you don't believe a word Oom Andries says, but obviously I do. "Kyk seun, ek kom van Kalmstok af daar tussen Noupoot en Steynburg..." (last time Kalmstok was in Namaqualand, now it's in Pixley, maybe there's more than one Kalmstok – whatever, a name is just a name, right? There are Harry's and Duifies or so on, with farms it could be the same).

Now, here's what Oom Andries told me about being a true servant of the people. Some of you might have heard this term over and over, but it's true meaning has always been very illusive, until I went to see Oom Andries about it. "Jy weet boeta, ek het op die plaas Kougom Fontein gewerk, nie baie vër van Kalmstok af nie. Ek was 'n voorman daar en die baas, hy was baie lief vir my. Die water op Kougom Fontein was baie skaars..." As he was telling this great story, he was sipping beer from two 'blik bekere'; the one contained 'stuur-my-rond' and the other was filled with 'oukop' – both home brewed, with the help of 'Antie Sanna', of course. After almost finishing the beer, I started to notice that the 'oukop' was giving him a lot of ideas and the 'stuur-my-rond' made him walk around; he was walking up and down in the small room. Well, eventually he continued with his story ... he told me about the time he saved the entire farm from dying because of the scarcity of water in that area.

"Nou, jy moet verstaan ou seun, daar op Kougom was net een windpomp wat water gee en toe het dié een windpomp gaan staan en breek; en die koöperasie gaan toe wees op Saterdag, maar daardie windpomp se silinder, hy moes vervang word. Niemand het geweet wat om te doen nie! Toe vra ek myself, 'Andries, wat gaan jy nou maak?' ek gryp toe daai silinder en ek gooi dit op my dikwiel; toe ek verby Noupoot gaan toe fluit my dikwiel se speke al en toe hoor ek die anties wat skree, 'Aggenee Andries man!!' Kyk, op daardie stadium toe hardloop ek soos 'n blou paraffien trekker op die pad Colesberg toe en toe ek daar kom was dit kwart voor drie, maar die koöperasie het nie parte nie en die naaste plek was De Aar ... of Bloemfontein. Toe sê ek vir myself, 'De Aar, Andries.'

According to Oom Andries the farm 'Kougom Fontein', not far from Kalmstok, was 35 miles from Noupoot, and Noupoot is 54km from Colesberg. Colesberg is 74km from Hanover and from Hanover to De Aar it's 63km; so from Noupoot to De Aar is 120km. Oom Andries left Colesberg at 14:45 in the afternoon and at 16:30 he was at the 'koöperasie' in De Aar, with a windmill cylinder weighing more than 30kg on a 'dikwiel' bicycle, which is made of solid iron!

"Toe ek in De Aar inkom, toe spring ek van my dikwiel af en hardloop met die silinder, want die mense gaan dood op Kalmstok van te min water! Vyf minute daarna toe kom val my dikwiel hier voor die koöperasie, toe staan ek al lankal daar. Seseur toe gooi daardie één windpomp op Kalmstok yskoue water!"



This was indeed a fascinating story! Oom Andries travelled close to 400km with a heavy windmill cylinder on a 'dikwiel' bicycle; on gravel roads and tar roads with big potholes, replaced the cylinder and brought refreshing, ice cold water to the people of Kalmstok, in just short of 4 hours ... and just in time to watch the final of the Super 14 match, Bulls vs Cheetahs!! Truly Amazing, is it not!?!?

Oom Andries is a true servant of the people, he couldn't watch the Kougom Fontein farm and the people of Kalmstok die, whilst he knew he could at least try to do something!

Well, Oom Andries' story reminds me of a great book I once read, 'The H 3 Leadership', wherein the author, Brad Lomerick, gives the following pointers about servanthood leadership:

AMBITION – Develop an appetite for what's next

CURIOSITY – Keep learning

PASSION – Love what you do

INNOVATION – Stay current, creative and engaged

INSPIRATION – Nurture a vision for a better tomorrow

BRAVERY – Take calculated risks

Every freedom day let us celebrate the great leaders of our country, like Oom Andries!

"Lead yourself. How can you attempt to lead others until you embrace this simple truth?"

~ Brad Lomerick

Let us have a great diversity Friday!!

EMPLOYMENTEQUITY AND DIVERSITY UNIT

Tel: 053 838 2464/5 Fax: 086 619 8903

jtwas@ncpg.gov.za / dhendricks@ncpg.gov.za / lgreyling@ncpg.gov.za