



DIVERSITY FRIDAY

Oom Andries ... "The Man"

You know, Oom Andries is a 'baie brêkerige ou' because he is 'The Man' at Kalmstok - Kalmstok being a farm. Oom Andries' date of birth is still a mystery; he claims he was born before the 'rinderpest', maybe in the 1800's, because he says he was already married by the time of the first World War. He is a 'voorman' (in English a 'foreman'), in other words he is a supervisor. Well, he got that position for two reasons: First, he is the only one who can count and secondly, he is known for being a 'witkloue' - people say, "hy het in die meel getrap". Somebody 'wat in die meel getrap het' sometimes forgets what he says in front of the master. And he is the only one who wears what the master wears, because his brand is from the BKB, although there is a serious size challenge ... the master wears a size 44 upwards and Oom Andries is a size 28; nothing more than a size 32 - but 'Antie Sanna' is highly skilled when it comes to sowing, so taking in the seams and losing the pockets of the trousers isn't really a big deal.

Oom Andries never went to school and he is the only one who can speak English. No one dares to challenge him because he is the master's 'witbroodjie' - well, I don't think the queen will be impressed with such language.

To be a 'teller' on a farm is a highly lucrative skill, because if you can't count you will soon be out of business. Now, Oom Andries can count all right, but he can only count to ten and the farmer has thousands of animals. Because of Oom Andries' expertise he knows everything and he always gets the numbers right. But Oom Andries has a trick up his sleeve, that's why he is the 'foreman' and everyone calls him names, but he is good at what he does.

He shared his little secret of counting the animals with me, and this is what he does: Firstly he marks the camps separately with different colours. If, for example, he is at camp 1 he uses green twine that he ties around his thumb; and he has a number 'tokkolotjies', a 'twaksak', which he ties around his waist. He also carries two small bags, one with red mielies and the other with white mielies, that he uses for the counting. When he counts the number of camps he will have all the different colours of twine around his thumb and a certain number of 'twaksakkies' around his waist. Now he will let the workers open the gate of the camp and he will let out ten animals at a time, putting one red mielie in a 'twaksakkie' for each group of ten animals. Any number that is less than 10 he replaces with white mielies and he counts them in full - so if there is, for instance, ten red and nine white 'mielie pitte' in the twaksak, he knows there are 109 animals in that camp. He even counts the animals that are missing or dead by using pumpkin seeds, which he puts into a different 'twaksak'.



In other words, simply put, Oom Andries counts as follows: At the green camp there is a 'twaksak' with ten red 'mielie pitte', which means there is 100 animals + there is a 'twaksak' with nine white 'mielie pitte', which means another nine animals + there is fifteen pumpkin seeds in a third 'twaksak', which means that 15 animals are either dead or lost. Thus $100 + 9 + 15 = 124$; and $124 - 15 = 109$ live animals in the green camp.

Now, talk is that the farmer's son needs a manager on the farm and he must be able to count. So, after learning about Oom Andries' methods, do you think that he is suitably qualified for the position? Taking into account his experience and the fact that he was born on the farm - and that he started as a 'voorman' even before the First World War!

What is your opinion?



After Oom Andries showed me his methods of counting I was exhausted and extremely hungry. Then Oom Andries - being the gracious person that he is - invited me to have lunch with him. We ate the most delicious traditional Bobotie, that 'Antie Sanna' also happens to be a master of preparing, sommer in the microwave!

MICROWAVE BOBOTIE

INGREDIENTS: 1 Onion (chopped), 30ml Butter, 7ml Salt, 5ml Curry Powder, 2ml Tumeric, Juice of 1 Lemon, 1kg Beef Mince, 150ml Bread Crumbs (soft), 175ml Chutney, 100ml Dry White Wine, 50ml Apricot Jam (fine), 100ml Milk, 2 Eggs.

METHOD: Microwave onion & butter for 4 min, stirring after 2 mins. Add salt, curry, tumeric & juice and stir well. Microwave for 2 mins on high. Add mince and stir lightly with a fork. Cover and microwave for 5 mins on high. Thoroughly stir in the bread crumbs, chutney and wine. Cover and microwave for 7 mins at medium power.

Remove and let cool a bit. Spread jam over dish; beat eggs and milk and pour over dish. Cover and microwave for 25 mins on 50% power until eggs are firm and cooked. (The wine can be replaced by a mixture of 20ml Brown Vinegar, 20ml Soy Sauce, 20ml Worcestershire Sauce and 20ml Water/Milk/Cream)



Have a 'Lekker' Friday

~EMPLOYMENT EQUITY AND DIVERSITY UNIT~

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