

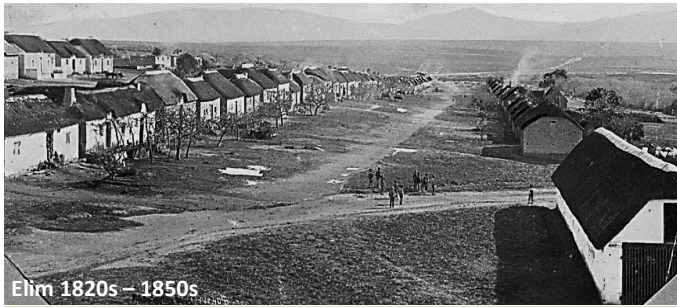
The National Heritage Resources Act aims to enable and encourage communities to nurture and conserve their legacy. The preamble to the Act states that heritage is unique and cannot be renewed. (NHRA 1995: 25)

Elim village, an integral part of the Strandveld cultural history

Genadendal as a missionary station grew to such an extent that the farm *Vogelstruyskraal* (Volstruiskraal) along the Nuwejaars River was purchased for expansion by the Moravian Mission Society in 1824. *Vogelstruyskraal* was one of the farms on which Matthys Rostok Lourens (1708-ca1782) received grazing rights in 1762. In 1777 Matthys left *Vogelstruiskraal* to his second son, Dirk Cornelis (*1756). In 1796 *Vogelstruyskraal* was granted on loan to Louis Taljaard and from 1804 to 1807 to Dirk's younger brother, Cornelis Janse (*1762). The main reason why *Vogelstruyskraal* was bought by the Moravians was the proximity of water and the soil type that was suitable to plant vineyards. The Moravians produced their own wine for the Holy Communion. Elim has an abundance of sweet-water fountains and was named after an oasis with 70 palm trees. The Biblical Elim was where the Israelites rested after their trek through the Red Sea.



Vogelstruyskraal farmhouse, built in 1796 by Louis Taljaard



Elim 1820s – 1850s

From the beginning the village was neatly laid out with the church *werf*, a plot to build a house and streets

First inhabitants



The first inhabitants of the Elim area were the nomadic Chainoqua and Hessequa stock farmers. They roamed the Overberg between the Hottentots-Holland Mountains and the Swellendam area of today. They would have moved in and out of the Strandveld seasonally.

Community

Since 1824 a self-sustaining community developed to become the heart of the Strandveld in the 19th century. The first permanent inhabitants established vegetable gardens along the Nuwejaars River. Community life and activities developed and centred around the Church. The community lived as a brotherhood, governed by a set of self-imposed regulations. After the emancipation of the slaves in 1834 more people moved to Elim.

The Church

The church was built in 1835 and became the central point in Elim around which community life was built. The building of the church and school was at the time the most important. The church has one of the oldest clock mechanisms in South Africa (1757). It was made in Zittau near Prague in the Czech Republic. It was a gift from Herrnhut in Germany in 1911 and is unique in that the two clock faces are operated from one set of works, connected by a long rod. It was built into the gables in 1914. The *werf* with all its buildings was proclaimed as a heritage site in 1975.



Die Elim huise

Die plaas Vogelstruiskraal waarop Elim in 1824 aangelê is, het reeds 'n bestaande woning (1796) en buitegeboue gehad. Die ou plaaswerf het die latere kerkwerf van vandag geword. Boupersele is in Kerkstraat aangewys en rondom 1826 was daar alreeds 16 huise opgerig. 'n Standaardplan is vir die huise opgetrek: 10 by 20 voet (drie by ses meter). Slegs "ordentlike" mure van modderstene is toegelaat. Die dakke was oorspronklik van riet met ronde afgewerkte houtbalke en die nok van kleipleister. Die plafonne was van spaansriet met 'n klei-brandsolder. Van die plafonne bestaan vandag nog. Die vloere was ook van klei en is gereeld elke Vrydag met beesmis gesmeer. Die meeste ou huise op Elim is met pannetjiesriet gedek. Elke huis se vooraansig is deur grensmure, 'n vyeboom, blomtuin, stoep en fasade gekenmerk. Elke inwoner het ook 'n tuinperseel gekry. Na twee jaar moes hulle 'n huurpenning betaal.

(BRONNE: FRANSEN, Hans. 2006. *Old towns and villages of the Cape: a survey of the origin and development of towns, villages and hamlets at the Cape of Good Hope*. Jonathan Ball. LE GRANGE, Lucien. 1995. *Elim: riglyne vir bewaring*. Overberg Streekdiensteraad en Elim Gemeente; Persoonlike Herinneringe.)

Volledige beskrywings van die huise is in bogenoemde bronne beskikbaar, asook in die Elim Erfenissentrum.



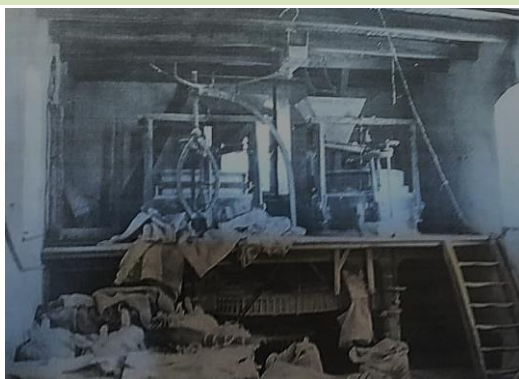
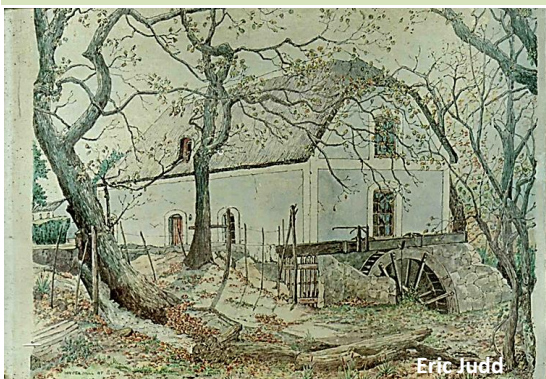
Die Skool

Die bou van die kerk en die stigting van 'n skool was van die belangrikste aksies met die stigting van Elim. Ongeveer drie weke na die eerste sendelinge se aankoms op 23 Augustus 1824 is met skoolhou in een van die eerste sendelinghuise begin. Eers in 1876 is met die bou van 'n formele skoolgebou begin en in 1877 voltooi en geopen. Op 26 Maart 1913 is die *nuwe skool* ingewy.



The Water-mill

A water-mill was built in 1828 with a wheel made in Germany and machinery dating back to 1881. The mill house was restored in 1974 and the water-mill wheel in 1990. The old smithy and the original mill house can still be seen at the eastern entrance of the town



Elim as “koöperasie”

Besef enige iemand wat die ontstaan van die sendingstasie na 1824 vir die boere van die omgewing beteken het? Swellendam was ver en 'n klein dorpie waar die landdros gesetel was om beheer oor die inwoners ten ooste van die Hottentots-Holland uit te oefen. Caledon, gestig in 1811, was in sy ontwikkelingsjare en Bredasdorp het nog nie bestaan nie. 'n Reisiger uit die binneland met 'n swaar gelaaide wa het vyf skofte, of vyf dae, nodig gehad om die afstand tussen Swellendam en Kaapstad af te lê. Die boere was op hul eie of op die naaste buurmense aangewese om 'n lewe in die middel van “nêrens” uit te kerf. Smouse uit die Kaap het maar beperkte dravermoë op hul waens gehad en dan was die goedere meer daarop ingestel om aan die huisvrou se behoeftes te voorsien. Barry en Newe se handelsempire het meer gereedelik die boere na ongeveer 1820 in die ooste van die Overberg bedien. In die Overbergse noordweste het die Genadendal Sendingstasie die omliggende boere ongeveer 1800 en later van arbeid voorsien en kon hulle ook van die ambagte aldaar gebruik maak. Voor die totstandkoming van Elim, het die Strandveld boere saamgespan om gereeld in groepe met 'n aantal waens oor die berg te trek om besigheid te bedryf – om “plaas-vervaardigde” goedere na die markte in Kaapstad te neem en om benodighede vir hul plase en gesinne aan te koop. Na die opening van die Sendingwinkel (waarskynlik sedert 1827) lees ons: “The ox wagon of the Mission regularly went to Cape Town with produce from the settlement and surrounding farms and brought products back for the residence and the farmers.” (BRON: Van der Hoven, p.158). Tot in die vroeë 1900's is elke artikel na en van Kaapstad met die ossewa vervoer.

Die Elim Debiteure Grootboek

Die twee Debiteure Grootboeke wat in die Elim Erfenisentrum bewaar word, toon die omvang van handel met hoofsaaklik boere van die 1850's tot na 1900. Lianne van der Hoven maak in haar tesis melding van die persone wat rekeninge by die Elimwinkel gehad het. Dit blyk egter dat net Matthys Rostok Lourens se twee seuns – Matthys Johannes



Johannes en Hendrik Jacobus *1766 se nageslagte wat in die omgewing van Voëlvlei en omringende plase gewoon het, van die Elimwinkel gebruik gemaak het. Ene Gertruida Louwrense J.D. het op 15 Februarie 1853 onder meer nege *el meerschein* *Tabbertsgoed* gekoop. 'n Dirk Louwrense van Rhenosterkop het op 14 Julie 1853 1 *Tjaali*, 1 *Bafta* en 1 *waterpot* gekoop. Die meeste van Matthys Johannes *1753 se sesde seun, Hendrik Albertus Lourens *1796 se kinders en verskeie kleinkinders, was gereëde kliënte by die winkel. (Johan Lourens)

First traders and exporters in fynbos

Elim was the first community to trade in fynbos. The Matrassewejaartjie *Syncarpha argyopsis* was the first fynbos specimen to be picked and exported as from 1884. It was harvested on the plains surrounding Elim. Stuffing mattresses and cushions with this white Everlasting became a traditional Elim craft.



Rietdak dek

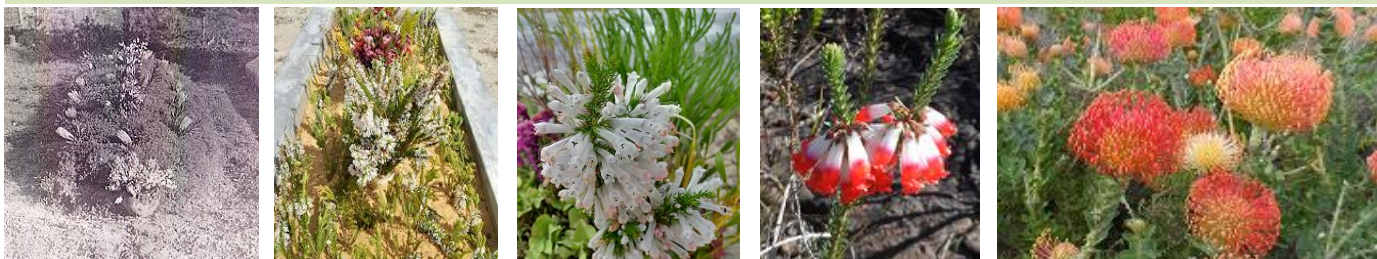
Rietdak dek was, en is, die uitvoerprodukt van Elim. Die Strandveld huise se dakke is almal deur die Elimmers gedek en hulle dek ook in die buiteland dakke. Die meeste ou huise op Elim is met pannetjiesriet gedek. Die Kerk se riet het 60 jaar gelê. Dieselfde riet is afgegooi, opgebind en het weer 60 jaar op Oom Sion Daniels se dak in Kerkstraat gehou. 'n Rietdak word net dun en lyk lelik; dit lek nie. Die dak lyk soos swart modder as gevolg van die feit dat dit eintlik uit die moddergrond ontstaan het. Volgens oorlewering is slegs agt van die groter huise met bergriet gedek. Pannetjiesriet word van Januarie tot Maart gesny wanneer die veld droog is. In die winter is om pannetjiesriet te droog te moeilik. Wanneer dit nat word, vrot dit maklik, skif en trek gou swart; jy verloor dus jou riet. Die meeste riet is dus na Nuwejaar gesny en gedek. Augustus groei nuwe lote uit. As jy dan riet sny, sal die jong riete ombuig of uitbuig. Die dak lyk onnet en sak uit. Dit is moeilik om in die winter riet te sny en nie prakties nie. Pannetjiesriet is skaarser as gevolg van die blombedryf en brande in weiding (vleie dus).

Dekriet word geoes wanneer die plant vier jaar oud of ouer is. Die plant moet ryp wees. Die gesnyde riet moet vir 14 dae rus tot dit geel raak en droog is. Slegs dan kan dit in bondels gebind word. Riet sal weer hergroeï en kan na vyf jaar weer geoes word. (Soos oorvertel deur Benjamin Appel aan sy seun Alliston)



Elim Flower Traditions – Madine Swart

Church traditions are an integral part of life in Elim and most of these traditions are celebrated with fynbos from the veld surrounding the town. These rich flower traditions were shared by three members of the community who have been involved with the Elim Flower Festival since it started in 1985: Carolina Apollis, Maggie Schippers and Christina Afrika. They also shared their knowledge of the local plants with the authors of *Southern Overberg South African Wild Flower Guide 8* (1997), and made a valuable contribution by supplying common names for this publication. During Easter time (*Paasfeestyd*) family members who have moved away return to their home town Elim to celebrate and pick flowers for decorating the church as well as the graveyard or *Godsakker*. Easter heath or *Rysies* (*Erica tenella*) are picked for decorating the beautiful Moravian Mission Church, dating back to 1835, as well as the graveyard. The Childrens Festival (*Kinderfees*) in August is celebrated with the help of *Struthiola*, *Erica*, *Protea* and *Leucospermum* species. The community of Elim remembers and honours their deceased during Sunday of the Death (*Dodesondag*) or Eternity Sunday (*Ewigssondag*) in November when the graves are decorated with the flowering heads of pincushions or *Luise* (*Leucospermum cordifolium*). These flower traditions tell a story of religious devotion and add to this community's rich history with Thatching reed or *Pannetjiesriet* (*Elegia tectorum*) and Everlastings or *Matrassewejaartjies* (*Syncarpha vestita*) that are also part of the villages' plant heritage. Thatching reed is used for the traditional Elim craft of thatching and the flowering heads of the *Matrassewejaartjies* were used to stuff mattresses and making wreaths. This was the first fynbos plant to be picked and exported by the Elim community in the late 1800s.



Reconcile with our slave past

In 1938 a monument was built in Elim to celebrate the emancipation of the slaves. In 2016 the *Afrikaanse Taalmuseum en -monument* (ATM) in Paarl commemorated the slave emancipation on December 3. The theme of the event was "Reconcile with our slave past". According to Michael Jonas, Director of the ATM, the aim of the celebration was to commemorate the legacy of the slaves in South African culture and environment. Jonas said slavery is not exclusive to South Africa, but a worldwide phenomenon already practised in Biblical times. He pointed out that slavery has had a profound effect on the economic and cultural development of society and that many of the socio-economic and racial identity issues South Africans struggle with today have their origins in slavery. In December Reconciliation Day is also celebrated. Between 1658 and 1808, 63 000 slaves were imported to the Cape from the East as well as from other parts of Africa. These diverse origins led to the establishment of a unique and diverse slave population and their important contribution to language and cultural development at the Cape. An important present-day concern is that, although slavery is officially illegal in all countries, there are more slaves today than ever before in history. During the four centuries of slavery, about 13 million people were exported from Africa. Today there are an estimated 27 million slaves – people who are forced to work for no pay, who are locked up and are controlled through violence. (SOURCE: Die Afrikaanse Taalmuseum en –monument, 11/11/2016).



Elim
200
JAAR
VAN
GENADE

Die Elim feesboek

Die Elimmers glo dat God 'n plan met hulle gehad het. Daar was geen twyfel by hulle dat Elim gestig is met die doel om die evangelie te verkondig en siele vir Christus te wen. *Jeremia 29:11-12: ¹¹ Ek weet wat Ek vir julle beplan, sê die Here: voorspoed en nie teenspoed nie; Ek wil vir julle 'n toekoms gee, 'n verwagting! ¹² Dan sal julle My aanroep, tot My kom bid, en Ek sal julle gebede verhoor.* (Die Bybel 1983)

Die bietjie inligting wat in hierdie Nuusbrief opgeneem is, ráák skaars aan waaroor Elim gaan. Met alle respek teenoor die samestellers van *Elim: 200 jaar van genade*, 'n wonderlike boek, wie hard gewerk het om die boek saam te stel: daar is stories wat nog baie boeke regverdig. Die boek word Saterdag, 3 Augustus, bekend gestel. Vir meer inligting kontak Hennie Ulster by hulster@mweb.co.za.