



MeerKAT exploring space

The South African-built MeerKAT radio telescope was constructed some 90 kilometres north-west of the small Northern Cape town of Carnarvon, in the Meerkat National Park. WHY MeerKAT? The telescope was originally known as the Karoo Array Telescope (KAT) which would have consisted of 20 receivers. When the South African government increased the budget to allow the building of 64 antennae, the team re-named it “MeerKAT” – i.e. “more of KAT”. The MeerKAT (scientific name *Suricata Suricata*) is also a much-beloved small mammal that lives in the Karoo region and that you will find in the Meerkat National Park. MeerKAT is a precursor to the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) telescope and will be integrated into the mid-frequency component of SKA. The SKA Project is an international enterprise to build the largest and most sensitive radio telescope in the world and will be co-located in Africa and Australia. MeerKAT has 64 antennas with a Diameter of 13.5 m and a sub-reflector of 3.8m. MeerKAT is currently one of the most sensitive Radio Telescopes in the world.

Carnarvon Astro Guides

Explore the mystical universe with the Carnarvon Astro Guides - sky viewing with a difference. This unique cultural astro tourism show has been billed to align the stars with ancient tribe stories about the night sky. Their craft is to present the Milky Way woven with cultural wisdom, embracing tradition's rich tapestry and letting the stars sweep your thoughts away to a world that once was a world that is still being born. Book your tour at the SARAO Visitor Centre, corner of Victoria and Hanau Streets.



Remnants of Schietfontein

Carnarvon's history can be traced back to the late 1700s when Schietfontein, an Xhosa settlement, was established. Originally protected by the British, Schietfontein became a vibrant community, drawing people from various backgrounds, including Griqua, San, Korana, Khoi, and colonial farmers. The British influence further expanded with the establishment of the Rhenish Mission in the 1800s, around which the village of Harmsfontein thrived. Renamed Carnarvon later on, the town still bears the legacy of the Rhenish Mission, evident in its street names and architectural landmarks.

Today, remnants of Schietfontein, approximately 3km west of Carnarvon, serve as a historical window, offering visitors insight into the region's diverse and rich past.

Carnarvon

For millennia the initial inhabitants of the area were |Xam (San) hunter-gatherers and their later Stone Age antecedents. This is part of what is referred to as |Xam-ka !kau (home of the |Xam), rich in archaeological and rock art sites, and part of a “|Xam and #khomani heartland”.

The origin and establishment of Carnarvon as a formal settlement dates back to 1840 through early explorers and traders en-route from Cape Town to Botswana.

The town was originally established as a Rhenish mission station under the name Harmsfontein. One of the first Rhenish Missionary stations was established in Schietfontein to service the spiritual needs of the Xhosa and Khoi families who have established themselves in that area since the early 1800s. The mission station at Harmsfontein was home to a number of Xhosa families who was granted land by the Governor of the Cape Colony, Sir George Thomas Napier (see more about *Schietfontein on the opposite page*).

The Afrikaans poet A.G. Visser had strong associations with Carnarvon, and the house where he lived in the town still stands.

Koeëlkop, the prominent hill that overlooks Carnarvon, got its name because of the many bullets (Afrikaans: "koeël") that were found lying around on top of the hill, left there by the English soldiers during the Anglo-Boer war. One can assume that Koeëlkop would have been an important lookout point for the guards during the war, but today it serves as a site for the water reservoir that supplies water to Carnarvon. Lately the remnants of an old English fort was rebuilt on top of Koeëlkop.

The area is known for its corbelled houses - domed-roof houses constructed from flat stones - which were built between 1811 and 1815. A well preserved example can be seen outside the museum in the old Zaal.

Pieter Hoffman, lifelong resident and affably known as “Lord Carnarvon”, beautifully renovated a number of typical Karoo houses, saying that his life's dedication is to restore Church Street to its original splendour.



Carnarvon

is a town within Kareeberg region and the Kareeberg Pixley ka Seme District Municipality.

This lies in the heartland of the Karoo in the south-east of the Northern Cape province of South Africa.

Indulge in the rich, uniquely Karoo cultural heritage of Carnarvon with a leisurely stroll through its streets.

TOURIST INFORMATION Kareeberg Local Municipality Tel 053 382 3012

Design & Photography - tourismblueprint.co.za

Tourist & Walking Trail Map of Carnarvon

NORTHERN CAPE



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1 UNION PLAIN MISSION

Panos Street
Rev. Alheit pitched his tent on this site on which the first mission manse was erected in the 1850s.



3 UNITING REFORMED CHURCH

Mark Street
Church with gallery and bell tower: The Rhenish Church (1847 to 1943) later became the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (1943 to 1997) and Uniting Reformed Church (1994 to present).



2 UNION PLAIN PARSONAGE

Panos Street
The second mission manse and present parsonage opposite the church was built in 1912 and is still in use. This late Victorian-Edwardian house is a landmark in Carnarvon.



4 UNION PLAIN WELL

Mark Street
The town's water was initially obtained from a fountain, but in 1874 this Governor's well was dug.



5 UNION PLAIN MISSION SCHOOL

Parsonage Street
Mr. Dönges, Carnarvon's first teacher, arrived in 1859 to aid Rev. Alheit, teaching High Dutch, English, Religious Instruction, and Latin. The Mission School, established in 1871 with a right extension in 1902, now serves as the church office. The Rhenish room and museum, showcasing the Rhenish Mission Church's history, can be accessed through the parsonage.



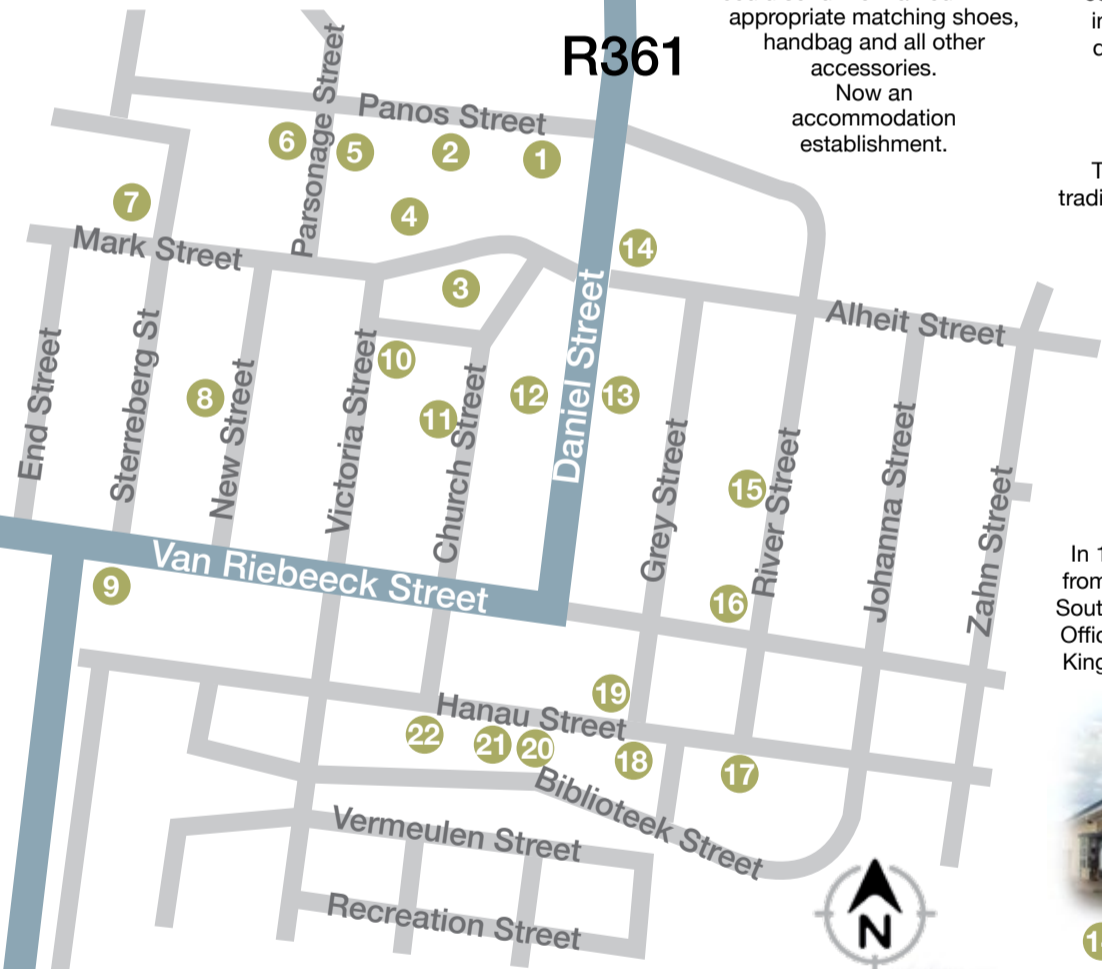
6 THE CARNARVON HOTEL

Parsonage Street
For four generations, the Carnarvon Hotel was linked with the Panos family. Mr. Panos, arriving in South Africa around 1900, established a butchery in Carnarvon after initially selling merchandise. The hotel features a large collection of beer cans, housed in the 'blikkies' bar.



7 CARNARVON BAKERY

Mark Street
Valley Ahmed established himself in Carnarvon in 1903. Later his sons joined him and the business became known as Ahmed Bros. Later, Valley Ahmed's son Adam, known as 'Mr Adam' took over the business. He and his sons ran a very successful general dealer, bakery, printing-works and other business enterprises.



NUWE STRAAT HOUSES

The street showcases well-preserved original Karoo-type houses, each with distinct character. Constructed from local materials like stone, handmade bricks, and breathable mud plaster, these homes feature thick wooden beam ceilings. Before the late 1800s introduction of corrugated iron roofing, mud was packed onto the beams, topped with thatch.



8



9 VOLKSKERK

Van Riebeeck Street
The Volkskerk van Afrika founded a congregation in Carnarvon in 1926. Following the enforcement of the Group Areas Act it moved to Panos Street in 1965. The Panos family purchased the building for the Roman Catholic Church, however they were the only Catholic family in Carnarvon and the Apostolic Faith Mission took over the church building after 1992.



10 ASTORIA HOTEL

Victoria Street
The Astoria Hotel replaced the Premier Hotel, destroyed by fire. A cock atop the Uniting Reformed Church's tower stood for almost fifty years until Mr. Sol Visser shot it with a .303 rifle from the Astoria Hotel's bar. The incident arose from a wager between the Astoria and Carnarvon Hotels.



11 BLACKIE'S WELCOME STORE

13 Church Street
The proprietor was Mr Jan Black and one could buy anything there. His stepmother Koba knew her customers so well that she could send them an outfit with appropriate matching shoes, handbag and all other accessories. Now an accommodation establishment.



12 DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH

Church Street
The Dutch Reformed Church was founded in 1875 with Rev. WP de Villiers from Beaufort West as its inaugural pastor, serving for nearly 30 years. The first church, costing £12,000, was constructed of dressed stone and inaugurated in February 1882. In 1952, a new church was decided upon, incorporating stones from the original structure.

NAGMAALHUISIES

Church Street
This street has some beautiful examples of traditional Nagmaalhuisies (communion cottages)



13 OFFICERS MESS

10 Daniel Street
In 1863, Mr. Jan Rademeyer bought the house from the Rhenish Missionary Society. During the South African Anglo-Boer War, it was used as the Officers' Mess, and from 1905 to 1919, it hosted King Edward VII Lodge no. 2969. It is part of the the Lord Carnarvon Guest House.



14 THE STANDARD BANK

Alheit and Daniel Streets
This was the first bank in the town and opened in 1879. The manager was Mr David Horwell Harris. In 1886 it was closed and only re-opened in 1895 with Mr Richard Seymour as manager. The bank building is one of the few sandstone structures in the town.



15 DR. DF MALHERBE'S HOUSE

9 River Street
The former mansion of author, poet, and teacher Dr. DF Malherbe, along with neighboring homes, blends Victorian style with traditional Karoo elements, including ornate 'broekie lace' and coal fireplaces. Malherbe and his neighbor, Dr. AG Visser, fostered a vibrant community in early 20th-century Carnarvon with their "Joernaalaande" gatherings, featuring music, prose, and poetry recitals, attended by elegantly dressed guests. ("op 'n koppie in die kaalte met die vlaktes wyd omheen", by Dr. DF Malherbe)



16 VICTORIAN STYLE HOUSE

Cnr of Rivier and Van Riebeeck Streets
A good example of the Victorian verandah tradition. Note the loft.

St Alban's Anglican Church

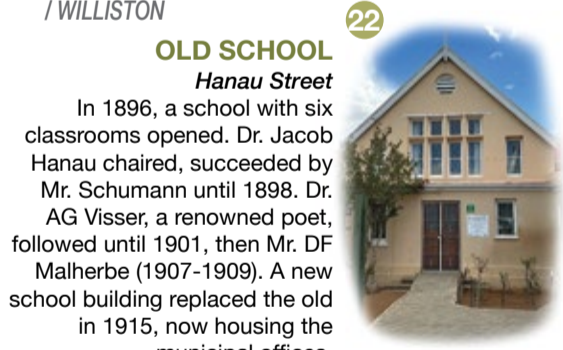
Hanau Street
This stone masonry church with square tower was possibly designed by Sir Herbert Baker's Office. The corner stone was laid by the Administrator of the Cape, Sir Frederik de Waal on 4 September 1919.



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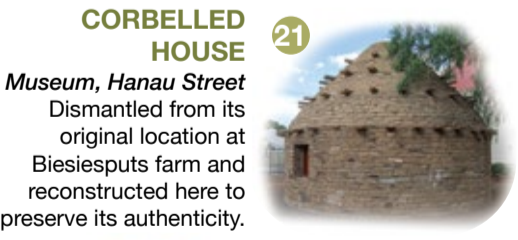
19 VICTORIAN STYLE HOUSE

Hanau and Grey Streets
A fine example of a late-Victorian verandah house. It has two wings and a turret in the corner between the wings.



22 OLD SCHOOL

Hanau Street
In 1896, a school with six classrooms opened. Dr. Jacob Hanau chaired, succeeded by Mr. Schumann until 1898. Dr. AG Visser, a renowned poet, followed until 1901, then Mr. DF Malherbe (1907-1909). A new school building replaced the old in 1915, now housing the municipal offices.



21 CORBELLED HOUSE

Museum, Hanau Street
Dismantled from its original location at Biesiesputs farm and reconstructed here to preserve its authenticity.



20 CARNARVON MUSEUM

Hanau Street
Housed in the original Dutch Reformed Church community hall which was built in 1907 before being donated to the municipality when a new community centre was constructed in 1973. The museum holds a number of artefacts related to the area, including an old hearse.

18 MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE

9 Hanau Street
Originally the post office and telephone exchange. Mr Daniel Cornelis Boonzaier worked at the magistrate's office, he achieved fame with his series of caricatures and political cartoons.



To VANWYKSVLEI / PRIESKA

To SCHIETFOONTEIN / WILLISTON

To LOXTON