

DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE

NO. 1358

18 DECEMBER 2020



SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY

DECLARATION OF THE GRAVESITE OF MAGRIETA JANTJIES, KAMEELBOOM CEMETERY, UPINGTON, NORTHERN CAPE AS A NATIONAL HERITAGE SITE

By virtue of the powers vested in the South African Heritage Resources Agency, in terms of section 27 (5) of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999), SAHRA hereby declares the gravesite of Magrieta “Hlabi” Jantjies, Kameelboom Cemetery; Upington as a National Heritage Site.

Statement of Significance

“Language contributes to a community’s sense of place, identity, and social practices. Thus, memorialisation of the grave of Magrieta “Hlabi” Jantjies brings into focus a diminishing community’s culture and sense of place. The inscription of the N|uu Language on a grave of one the last community members to speak the language (the first in the country) was a milestone in contributing to restoring to the N|uu. In its discussion of the N|uu, the UNESCO notes, “A lost language is not only lost cultural heritage, it is also lost traditional knowledge, such as precious knowledge about medicinal herbs or local species or environment. Thus, with each language that disappears, humanity is impoverished in manifold ways.”¹

The grave of Magrieta “Hlabi” Jantjies, is, therefore, both of historic and social importance to not just the Khoisan community, but to the South African community as a whole. As one of the last speakers her grave brings into the public consciousness important aspects about the South African past. The near extinction of the language speaks to the legacy of colonialism and apartheid, of land dispossession, coerced assimilation, forced labour, neglect and migration amongst others. The extinction of the language in a democratic dispensation as a lived community experience, further reflects the depth of this legacy. While fragments of the N|uu language are in the process of being recovered, several words from its vocabulary have been lost thus extinguishing part of the richness and diversity of our heritage tapestry. Thus, her grave is of cultural significance as it foregrounds a forgotten aspect of South African history.”

¹ The #Khomani Community of South Africa mourns one of the last N|uu language speakers, http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/dynamic-content-single-view/news/the_khomani_community_of_south_africa_mourns_one_of_the_las/ [Accessed 20 February 2020]

Schedule

The demarcation of the site is as follows:

Site Name	Grave Number	Cemetery	Town	Municipality		Province
				Local Municipality	District Municipality	
Grave site of Magrieta "Hlabi" Jantjies	Block MM Row K Grave Number 29	Kameelboom Cemetery	Upington	Dawid Kruiper Local Municipality	ZF Makgawu District Municipality	Northern Cape

Central Point Co-ordinates

Points	Latitude	Longitude
Central Point	28°28'27.1"S	21°11'34.1"E