HERITAGE SURVEYING/MAPPING/RECORDING
ITS INTEGRATION INTO THE PLANNING PROCESSES WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND TRAINING AND JOB CREATION

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Abstract

The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) is South Africa’s official heritage body responsible for the protection of the country’s cultural heritage. SAHRA is aware of the imbalance in the sites that have been identified and the lack of involvement of black communities in heritage, given apartheid. It is also conscious of the lack of integration of environmental management and heritage into development planning. The only option is to democratize the process.

What I outline is a strategy for networking within communities, heritage and planning agencies, schools and non-governmental and community-based organizations to share and participate in this task. This includes a vigorous program of training in heritage surveying and mapping, which is linked to job creation. SAHRA’s Heritage Surveying and Mapping Kit will be used to transform heritage within the ambit of methodically identifying and evaluating and mapping sites of social, political, cultural, historical and environmental significance.

The essence of heritage work is in people valuing the environment from which they draw a sense of identity, in which they feel they belong. And in the same way, for the needs and values of communities to be recognized and acknowledged in heritage practice, people’s participation in the identification of culturally important sites is essential.

The program will be a healing process and create the space for people to tell the stories of pain and joy in the context of the identification program.

Key words: Heritage Community Training

1 South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)
1. Introduction

What is outlined in this paper has to do with the recognition that capacity building is at the heart of the kind of transformation that we need in heritage management at this point in the new South African democracy. The skilling of communities, heritage and planning agencies, schools and institutions of higher education and non-governmental and community-based organizations to share and participate in the task of democratizing heritage practice has been attained. What more powerful discourse is guiding South Africa and making it deaf to this need? The paper will also interrogate the reasons for heritage surveying and mapping not happening, when one of our strongest imperatives at the moment is our quest for nation building.

Many high powered heritage projects are emerging, which will engage us in some aspects of our heritage, but the more important task is participatory heritage surveying of our sites, traditions and environment – and everyone needs to get involved.

The paper will talk about how the Heritage Surveying and Mapping Kit has been designed to enable lay people to recognize the value of traditions and sites and environments by conducting surveys of the heritage resources in their lives.

Training and employment in heritage surveying in schools, technikons and universities and of communities is necessary as our biggest problem is the lack of heritage practitioners to assist in the surveying. This process will be facilitated by the Skills Levy which has been developed in order to overcome the structural rigidities and inequalities inherited from the apartheid era (Skills Development Levies Act, 1999) and is available to be used by and for local and provincial authorities and the national body, the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), to train heritage workers as part of the National Skills Development Strategy. These activities will then be part of the South African Education and Training Program, which creates jobs through on-site training.

How the surveying required by the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), No 25 of 1999, provides an opportunity for the integration of heritage into local planning and administration will be described. Among its founding principles are that SAHRA should establish the framework for an integrated resources conservation system throughout South Africa; and that resources should be made available for the training and education of heritage workers. We must organize, with local, provincial and local authorities, to establish community-based registered heritage bodies, so that we can use our skills levy to provide the financial resources.

The need for introducing Indigenous Building as an example of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and the imperative for its revival as part of fostering identity will be explained. This will be an important focus of the training and job creation program. It is the area in which I have been working most intensively and believe that the role of this precedent in molding new habitations in the arena of housing is inestimable.

2 The Heritage Surveying and Mapping Kit consists of a handbook explaining step by step how to carry out a survey and how to find the necessary information
Together with representatives from all the sectors of arts and culture, we were trained, over a year and a half, to write Lead Project Unit Standards for this purpose. This paper will show a sample of one that the author wrote for the Identification and Cultural Mapping Unit Standard. (Attached)

2. Reasons For Surveying

Why is it spiritually, politically and socially imperative to survey and use the Heritage Surveying and Mapping Kit as a tool to democratize heritage? Tuan (1992) defines place as “a centre of meaning constructed by experience.” Historical experience is inscribed in the memories, oral traditions, living traditions, sites and environment of every person in every community and meaning is attributed to it. David Lowenthal writes that “...remembering the bitter times even as remembering the good [is important for people]. Both were part of their entire life story and were deeply enmeshed with their sense of place”. (Lowenthal, 1985).

The rediscovery of our intangible heritage by our community identifies our place within society. This knowledge empowers communities. By situating ourselves within a cultural context we restore our identity. It has been well documented that the loss of identity leads to the erosion of cultural self esteem and alienation. In South Africa it is particularly important to work together to rebuild our identity, given our past, wherein South Africans were coerced to believe that their heritage was of lesser importance.

The heritage world, in seminars, conferences and colloquia has started the search for the significance that heritage sites convey. This search directs us towards identifying the values, social customs, beliefs or myths of which tangible heritage is the expression. In the end, the concept or social representation of the heritage site is more important than the object itself: the intangible dimension prevails. Physical heritage only attains its true significance when it sheds light on its underlying values (Luxen, 2000). Intangible heritage gives meaning to material heritage.

Kader Asmal, our previous Minister of Education, has said “the study of history nurtures a spirit of critical enquiry and has an essential role to play in building the dignity of human values within an informed awareness of the legacy and meaning of the past” (Jeppie, 2004). He explains why history and heritage are an important part of our children’s education “The old story, passing for history, which was told to justify the

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3 At the UNESCO General Conference Intangible Heritage was defined as the practice, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural space associated therewith - that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals, recognized as part of their cultural heritage. (UNESCO General Conference, 2003). The National Heritage Resources Act, No. 25 of 1999, describes living heritage as “intangible aspects of inherited culture, and may include cultural tradition, oral history, performance, rituals, popular memory, skills and techniques, indigenous knowledge systems and holistic approach to nature, society and social relationships. The description of living heritage provided by the NHRA does not include language and symbolic value.
selective advantages of apartheid, lending support to its systemic brutality, hardened into a bedrock of ignorance”. He says that we must interrogate history in the sense of “…a spirit of critical enquiry and reflection, a profoundly humanizing spirit, which nurtures historical consciousness”.

Every person has a heritage and every person needs to know that they have a heritage. “The social history of the negative attitude of white people [towards] the black people and the racist discourse started early on ... and went on to be refined into a way that increasingly denied indigenous knowledge” (Crais, 1992). The Indigenous Knowledge Systems that for part of our culture, our heritage, give depth and quality to our lives. These need to be revived, acknowledged, resuscitated, given status, recognized, valued, known, given a place in our history, art and science books at schools and places of higher education and in the community itself.

The more one delves into the subject the more fascinated one becomes by the potential that the register/inventory/listing of traditions and sites and environments can play in reconstructing the identity of the people of South Africa. The recognition of traditions and sites and environments as part of people’s heritage/memory/history/soul/psyche is essential in South Africa. An inventory of South Africa’s heritage will tell a story of ordinary South Africans who were told for hundreds of years that their heritage and identity didn’t count. Carrying out surveys will serve to uncover this neglected heritage and help to transform society and our attitudes to the environment. As recognized in psychoanalysis, until people have confronted the shadow they have difficulty moving on with their lives. The shadow encompasses the issues that lie beneath the surface and have not seen the light, issues like subjugation to colonialization and the long struggle against the oppressive authoritarian order (Crais, 2002). Along with retrieving our buried pasts, we gain a deeper understanding. We must give them a hearing (Chodorow, 1997). People need to know their parents’ and grandparents’ history to understand who they are and see what needs healing.

It is based on this premise that heritage surveying needs to be foregrounded and that our traditions and sites and environments are recognized as valuable and integral parts of our heritage/memory/history, which will help us to understand and value ourselves. “The miracle of life is cruelly circumscribed by birth and death; of the immensity of time before and after our own lives we experience nothing. Past and future are alike inaccessible. But, though beyond our physical reach, are integral to our imaginations. Reminiscence and expectation suffuse every present moment.” (Lowenthal, 1985). Recognizing them and honoring them satisfies this human cultural need to know that we have a place in the world, can feel part of the world, have been a part of creating the world.

The African Cultural Heritage Trust noted in its submission to the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG):

The conservation of cultural heritage is not merely a return to the customs of the past. It embodies the attitude of people to the future of their traditional values faced with the demands of modern technology. Its objective is not to ossify or mystify, but to ensure harmony with contemporary realities and the demands of change and development and to prevent a mindless sweeping away of our
cultural heritage, a situation which can only result in disorderly change and societal instability and eventual creation of a people completely cut off from its cultural roots. (ACTAG, 1995)

In view of South Africa’s stated aim and desire for nation-building, the spirit of the Constitution, plans abounding for the Celebration of Ten years of Democracy, it seems to me that SA would want to recognize the need for people to have a chance to identify, recognize and honor their cultural heritage and that the state would put resources into it. It flows perfectly with other social imperatives, like housing and education, where new kinds of education are happening, teaching learners to think about their world. Our government has not made it a priority. It has not provided the funds for the bodies responsible for heritage surveying to carry out this important work. There has not been a policy of putting resources into surveying and mapping South Africa’s heritage. One person in SAHRA is working on this aspect of heritage management; SAHRA has one architect and one newly appointed living heritage officer.

Given the resources, communities can do their own surveys and nominate places that they consider of local, regional or national conservation- worthiness. When sites are identified in this way, the people who identified them know their value and therefore have a stake in looking after them and getting involved in their management. We need to ensure that our guiding principles are cooperation, mutual support and democratic practices and the participation of the community in all aspects of the system.

We have, of course, always been aware of the imbalance in the sites that have been identified and the lack of involvement of black communities in heritage, given apartheid. The lack of integration of environmental management and heritage into development planning has been a constant concern. The only option is to democratize the process by involving communities and local authorities in heritage practice. In order to identify and reflect the total cultural and symbolic heritage and values of all South Africans, heritage management leadership needs to devise ways of building capacity, by networking within communities, schools and non-governmental and community-based organizations to share and participate in this task together with heritage and planning agencies.

As communities get involved in the exercise of identification, and as knowledge and skills are developed, as we produce surveys, educational material, exhibitions and

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4 In his paper to the SAMA Conference, held in June 2004, Luvuyo Dondolo says that the term ‘community’ is used in reference to a group of people who live in a common geographical area and sometimes share the same values, beliefs, norms, culture, traditions, experiences, background and history. In post-apartheid South Africa, the notion of cultural/heritage institutions valuing and consulting communities is popular, but we have not developed strategies for consultation. Often the complexity of the concept ‘community’ is not recognized. A ‘community’ has ... multiple identities that overlap and interact with each other. In some cases, there will be an ‘imagined community’ where the people, or many of them, are dispersed or no longer live together because of political or other reasons or the concept will refer to those who view themselves as the living descendants of the deceased community or connected to them in some way or another. The term ‘practising community’ refers to a group of people who still continue practising or observing their
interpretive displays, hold workshops, discussions, memorialize, so we become aware of
the special meaning of the sites, traditions environments in which we live, work and play.
Understanding our country, our culture and our society will lead us into greater
sensitivity towards our environment and to each other.

Heritage thinking is now at a point in the promotion of heritage and national identity
where participatory processes are considered essential. We now realize that any
meaningful heritage work can only come about through participatory consensus. Acknowledging that the identity of ourselves as participating in the process is requisite
for community and that is where the Heritage Surveying and Mapping Kit fits in. I will
now look at the Kit as an instance of involving communities and how the Kit provides a
means for lay persons and groups to conduct surveys of the heritage resources within
their environment.

The Heritage Surveying and Mapping Kit consists of a handbook explaining step by step
how to carry out a survey and how to find the necessary information. It provides people
with the skills to learn about their history and environment and determine what is
culturally valuable.

In order to achieve protection and management, the heritage must be methodically
identified and evaluated in terms of its social, cultural, historical, political and
environmental significance. It is then mapped and catalogued for inclusion in the
inventory of the national estate, and in the declaration of heritage areas and heritage
sites.

Because South Africa’s biggest problem of the lack of heritage practitioners, training and
employment in heritage surveying in schools, technikons and universities and of
communities is the only option. In order to do this, a vigorous program of training in
Heritage Surveying is proposed. If SAHRA, the provincial and local authorities train, it is
paid for each person trained, by the Departments of Labour and Education. These
activities then form part of the South African Education and Training Program, which is
linked to job creation. The NHRAct says that the skills and capacities of persons and
communities involved in heritage resources management must be developed and this
must contribute to social and economic development. The Act therefore provides for a
participative role of community groupings. I believe that our role is to go out into these
cultures, traditions, knowledge systems, and other aspects of living/ intangible heritage in relation
to a site, objects or intangibles per se.

5 Discussion with Luli Callinicos, Social Historian, Chairperson of the National Heritage Council, Activist. 2004

6 The map is the essential inventory tool - it is the map that represents the place. The maps provide
the most important products of a conservation study. They are produced by mapping landscapes
of traditions, symbolisms, events and lifestyles.

7 The management of sites on the Heritage Register/ Inventory is essentially the main function of
the Local Authority. Sites should be identified by means of a structured survey.
communities and provide for people to set up heritage associations for the purpose of surveying and mapping.

3. National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS)

A Skills Levy is available to be used by and for municipalities and provincial authorities as part of the National Skills Development Strategy (1999).

The Heritage Surveying and Mapping Kit, when used in conjunction with the NSDS, which has been developed in order to overcome the structural rigidities and inequalities inherited from the apartheid era and to meet the dual challenges of social development and the requirement to compete in the global economy, will serve this purpose. The mission of the NSDS is to equip South Africans with the skills to succeed in the global market and to offer opportunities to individuals and communities for self advancement to enable them to play a productive role in society.

The Skills Development and auxiliary acts promote an incentive system for the public and private sector to invest in skills development. In local authorities, it will mean that they can employ people and train them to become heritage workers and carry out their mandate to “include the identification, grading and management of the heritage register” and “present and promote places of cultural significance” (National Heritage Resources Act). The National Skills Development Strategy, by providing opportunities to individuals and communities for self-advancement, thus facilitates local government in integrating heritage management into local planning.

Together with representatives from all the sectors of arts and culture, we were trained, over a year and a half, to write “Lead Project Unit Standards for this purpose”. Attached is a sample of one that I wrote for learning the subject Identification and Cultural Mapping.

4. Integration of Heritage into Planning

Heritage management has not been effective because it has been segregated from planning. The implications of the National Heritage Resources Act for local authorities are significant. Not only does it place obligations on the Local Authority to carry out heritage management functions, providing for a more holistic and more efficient management of those resources that are of local significance, but, with greater responsibility comes greater self-sufficiency (Hart, 2004). The requirements include the identification, grading and management of the Heritage Register/Inventory and the presentation and promotion of places of cultural significance.

At the moment the Act ensures that structures older than 60 years may not be altered or demolished without a permit issued by heritage resources authorities. This onerous catch net may be lifted once a heritage survey has been carried out, and those sites worthy of conservation placed on the register or declared national or provincial heritage sites.
This is a huge incentive to ensure that surveys are carried out. It will reduce significantly the number of plans awaiting heritage scrutiny.

Specific requirements are placed on state supported bodies and local authorities. Local authorities must, within 10 years from the commencement of the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999, compile and submit to SAHRA, information on, and an inventory of the heritage resources within their areas of jurisdiction.

5. Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Indigenous Knowledge Systems manifest in sociocultural, spiritual, religious, ecological, economical, political and historical dimensions. For many centuries ways of knowing and people’s systems of knowledge were viewed as backward and uncivilized by settlers, colonial and apartheid officials. I am using Indigenous Building Knowledge as an example of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Its revival in training and job creation as part of nourishing and promoting our identity will change the face of mass housing in South Africa.

Earth has been one of the most widely used building materials ever since people began to build homes and cities 10 000 years ago (Freedman Townsend, 2004). Earthen architecture is the world’s most ancient and most prevalent existing architectural expression, yet the history of earthen architecture is perceived as unimportant despite the fact that in most places in the world, earth is the conventional building material. From an ecological point of view, in terms of pollution and degradation, earth does not consume any non-renewable energy, it uses very little water, it produces no industrial or chemical waste, it is almost entirely recyclable. Green architecture is a climatically, geographically and culturally appropriate way of architecture and building (Horn, 1998). South Africa is beginning to recognize the value of its earthen inheritance and within SAHRA this building tradition is coming to be acknowledged as an indispensable part of our rich heritage and the value of its revival.

Continuing the culture of building with earth will help us to understand how to conserve; and valuing and conserving our earthen architectural heritage inspires the use of it in new buildings. Careful examination of traditional earth structures reveals the skill of their architects in solving the serious problems involved in conserving the durability of structures exposed to water risks. These are tricks of the trade and are ingenious and often amazingly effective.

Through the production process, earth creates employment. It requires simple production and application tools, like moulds, presses, shuttering and masonry tools that are accessible to a wide population of masons and self-help builders. It allows local populations to take charge of their built environment themselves and thus contributes to the expression of the democratic right to control our living environment.

The survey of traditional architecture will be an essential part of this program. Architecture is understood in terms of meaningful symbolic terms. Architecture translates natural, human and spiritual meaning into form.
Traditional South African architecture is mostly built with earth and this culture of building with earth and our valuing and conserving our earthen architectural heritage inspires confidence in our ability to act on traditional knowledge and the use of it in new buildings. By building in earth we are acknowledging and validating that traditional building methods form part of our indigenous knowledge. We acknowledge too that it is a healthy tradition. For instance, earth has thermophysical and hydroscopic properties that contribute to the regulation of temperature. The comfort levels are high: buildings are warm in winter and cool in summer.

6. Why Community-Based Heritage Surveying has not happened

Twelve years ago a press release was placed in community newspapers and journals across South Africa offering a "Conservation Surveying Kit", which was made up of booklets and forms, to be used by lay people, schools and communities, for identifying our heritage. The interest from teachers, community groupings, schoolchildren and non-governmental organizations all over the country was staggering, and it indicated clearly to me that people do want to play a part in the conservation of their heritage environment. But there was no infrastructure in place or staff for dealing with these groupings, and creating an inventory remained far from their daily preoccupations. The digitalization process for the inventory is being explored.

At that stage the staff of the heritage organizations were not able to find the time outside the application of the section of the National Monuments Act known as the "fifty year clause".

In terms of the legislation, the National Monuments Council (NMC) was responsible for the protection of sites over fifty years old. In addition, it was extremely understaffed since the budget for heritage until 1999 was equal to the cost of building one kilometer of national road. Since then SAHRA’s grant has tripled. The problem is that there were, and still are, numerous sites that fall into this very broad age category and our provincial staff members therefore spent much of their time in meetings and processing the permit applications. This situation continued into the transformed NMC, which emerged in 2000 as SAHRA. These legislative frameworks did lead to important parts of our heritage environment having been saved from alteration or destruction, but it diverted the resources of the NMC, and then SAHRA from the really important work: the work that leads to systematic identification, mapping and cataloguing of our heritage by communities together with SAHRA and the local and provincial authorities. This must lead to the protection that is needed to conserve our heritage and a coordinated heritage management system integrated into the planning processes.

High on the agenda of the new legislation is an emphasis on enabling and encouraging communities to nurture and conserve their legacy, "...it helps us to define our cultural identity and therefore lies at the heart of our spiritual well-being, it has the potential to affirm our diverse cultures, it facilitates healing and material and symbolic restitution and it promotes new and previously neglected research into our rich oral traditions and customs" (Preamble to the National Heritage Resources Act). The Act is based on the
premise that heritage resources form an important part of the history and beliefs of communities and must be managed in a way that acknowledges the right of affected communities to be consulted and to participate in their management. Various sections of the Act refer to developing the skills and capacities of persons and communities involved in heritage resources management, specifically the process of identification, and the need for it to contribute to social and economic development.

And yet SAHRA too continued for two or three years before the handling of permits ended, and now the SAHRA provincial staff get involved in individual projects with no policy or strategy for the training or involving of community members in heritage surveying.

The cornerstone of an integrated heritage program is the survey and publishing of documentation: an inventory and maps of conservation-worthy cultural property, with the power to protect them delegated to local authority level and included in physical planning ordinances. These authorities need to understand that conservation does not stand in the way of progress, but encourages the sensitive use and adaptation of the heritage so that future growth is linked to the past. A published and well-publicized inventory and map of conservation-worthy property will ensure that conflict between development and cultural conservation is minimized. The inventory would be available to forewarn developers of the heritage status of a site before they buy that site. In many countries the historical environment is protected by planning controls and is fully integrated with planning. We must follow their example.

7. Conclusion

At the outset, the paper tried to articulate clearly how to embark on a community education and training based conservation path towards getting the villages and towns and traditional methods in our country surveyed and protected by the authorities. The process has to encompass the very people who have a stake in the sites, traditions and environments which are a part of, and tell the history and traditions of their lives.

It is important that we work together to define a vision for training in heritage surveying, create support structures, organizational mechanisms and initiatives in capacity building. We must identify joint ventures among groups and individuals to establish local, provincial and national networks as vehicles for the exchange of ideas and communication and information. Programs must be coordinated and the effective use of resources improved upon.

In addition, the growing pace of urbanization, the forces of market globalization, increasing poverty and related social exclusion are threatening the survival of the qualities that give character to our historical cities, towns, villages and traditions and define the identities of their citizens.

People want to know, understand and be a part of their heritage. It gives meaning to their lives; the meaning which our previous government tried to deny, belittle and negate.
Now is our chance to let ourselves all find meaning in traditions, stories, dance, sites and find ways of commemorating them.

**LEAD PROJECT UNIT STANDARD**

*By:* Lesley Freedman Townsend  

*Title:* Identification/ Cultural Mapping of Sites of Cultural Significance  

*Level:* NQF4  

*Field:* NSB02: Culture and Heritage  

*Subfield:* Heritage  

*Purpose:* The learner credited with this unit standard will have an overview of the central issues around and methods of identification techniques/ cultural mapping. It is designed for conservationists to develop the skill of conducting site inspections to examine the actual evidence in order to determine cultural significance.  

*Learning Assumed:* NQF level 3 or equivalent or prior learning in the human and physical environment  

**Specific Outcome 1:** Understand the historical context of cultural mapping in South Africa by interrogating current definitions  

**Specific Outcome 2:** Redefine the task of cultural mapping within the new context in terms of multiculturalism and cultural diversity  

**Specific Outcome 3:** View a site and through examination of the site identify its cultural, historical, social and environmental significance  

**Specific Outcome 4:** Be familiar with the White Paper and current legislation affecting cultural mapping  

**Assessment Criteria:** The candidate will demonstrate this specific ability by the following quality and standards of achievement:  

- relevant stakeholders/ community members are consulted and interviewed in order to identify possible sites  
- a history of the area is compiled  
- sites are viewed and assessed in terms of their history, importance to the community, social, political and environmental qualities  
- local and provincial authorities are consulted and surveying maps, erf numbers, zoning information obtained
- resource centers are visited to source early maps, photographs and paintings of the area to be surveyed

- the information in the surveying forms are coordinated with the research carried out in the libraries, archives and museums

- maps of the survey findings are compiled:

**Essential Embedded Knowledge**

- Map reading
- Knowledge of architectural periods and styles
- Interviewing skills
- History

**Range Statement**

Libraries, archives and museums are visited to source early maps, photographs and paintings of the following maps of the survey findings are compiled:

- the area to be surveyed
- dating map
- use map

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