

***Bekendstelling van Die Vlakte-installasie,
Lettere en Sosiale Wetenskappe-gebou,
Universiteit Stellenbosch (US)***

Di. 12 Nov. 2015, 17:20

***Opmerkings deur prof Wim de Villiers,
rektor en visekanselier van die US***

“n Nuwe erfenis”

**Launch of ‘Die Vlakte’ installation, Arts and
Social Sciences Building,
Stellenbosch University (SU)**

Tue. 12 Nov. 2015, 17:20

**Remarks by SU Rector and Vice-Chancellor
Prof Wim de Villiers**

“A new heritage”

Let me start by saying I am glad to see all of you here. This is a historic moment when we revisit the past in order to create a different, more just future. *Ons is geëerd om in ons midde te hê mense wat ’n stuk of 50 jaar gelede uit hierdie gebied, Die Vlakte, verwyder is omdat hulle kwansuis die “verkeerde” velkleur gehad het. Dankie dat u hier is om u ervaring te deel. Terselfdertyd dink ek dis moontlik om te sê die meeste van ons deel nou die verbintenis tot ’n nuwe samelewing wat spreek van menswaardigheid en regverdigheid. Dankie ook vir daardie energie.*

This event brings us together to consider what drove us apart, so that it will never happen again. The University is reaching out to the community and saying, we apologise – for not speaking up when you were driven out, for taking what was not ours, for keeping the doors of learning closed to you for so long.

“Die Universiteit erken sy bydrae tot die ongeregtighede van die verlede.” So sê ons in ons “Strategiese Raamwerk” van 2000. En in dieselfde asem verbind die Universiteit hom ook tot “regstelling en ontwikkeling”. So, in the spirit of restitution and development I announced earlier this year we have created a bursary fund for former residents of Die Vlakte, and their children and grandchildren. More details will be advertised in local papers very soon. Please look out for that, so that people can be afforded the opportunity to study further.

The installation that is being launched today is the latest in a range of initiatives related to Die Vlakte. If you haven’t done so yet, do visit the Memory Room in the University Archives. And do visit the photo exhibition in the original Lückhoff School building in Banhoek Road.

Looking at images from those times, reading people’s stories – these things provides one with fresh perspectives. While the Group Areas Act and forced removals in Stellenbosch gave rise to much bitterness, it did not succeed in demolishing the awareness that in this town, brown and black and white people share a history that cannot be easily disentangled. On a practical level, the historic core of Stellenbosch owes much to slaves, artisans and master builders. And today, many who migrate here in search of a better life find themselves trapped in poverty on the outskirts of our town, yet they make invaluable contributions to the riches of our existence here, whether we realise it or not.

Dankie aan lede van die gemeenskap vir u deelname aan hierdie projek, wat sonder u nie sou gewerk het nie. En ons sien uit na selfs breër deelname in volgende fases en projekte. Also well done to our staff and students involved in this project. You have done solid research with social impact, which is what we are aiming for at SU.

Ladies and gentlemen, the challenge of building a new heritage for the future will not only be to foreground and make good the arrears that have accumulated in disadvantaged areas of Stellenbosch, but also to explore joint strands of history that have been deeply submerged by the debris of apartheid.

We have made a good start. Now let us continue on our journey. *Hoe lui die gesegde? Goed begonne is half gewonne.*

Baie dankie. Thank you. **Enkosi kakhulu.**