



Some of the many picturesque historical buildings of Paarl Main Road.

Preserving the rich heritage of Paarl's buildings

The Drakenstein Heritage Foundation (DHF) has, since 1980, played a major role in preserving the unique historical character of Paarl.

There is no other town in South Africa that has as many 18th and 19th century buildings still well-preserved and in such excellent condition. The DHF has always had a large and enthusiastic membership and the active committee members have put in many thousands of voluntary hours over the years ensuring that our town remains an historic masterpiece.

The National Heritage Act allows locals to be involved and to comment on any structural developments in their area. Building or development plans that involve buildings over 60 years old must be submitted to interested and affected parties for comment before they can be approved.

This is the role that the DHF plays in Paarl and over the years, many significant goals have been achieved, especially the preservation of our Main Street which has the best collection of original historic buildings in the country.

The DHF plays an important role in educating its members about all things historical with the emphasis on enjoyment and camaraderie. There is an annual lecture series with interesting speakers on any topic from architecture, history and art to archaeology and

ceramics.

There are regular walks in Paarl and many outings to historic homes and farms. Weekend outings to towns like Barrydale, Heidelberg, Swellendam, Prins Albert and many others over the years have been unique opportunities to meet the locals and share their histories.

In 2012, the DHF hosted the Heritage Association of SA Symposium which brought over 100 heritage enthusiasts from all over SA to Paarl. That was the year we started our Blue Plaque campaign with the first plaques commemorating the forced removal sites in Paarl.

The foundation now also has the annual Greening and Restoration awards, with the Greening award, in memory of the late Dr Ivan Deacon – a long-standing and committed member of the DHF committee.

The Paarl Tuinbouvereniging and D'Grande Vredenburg were the very deserving recipients of the beautiful green plaques and the restoration awards this year went to the Clift family for the restoration of Sarnia Villa and the Public Works Department for the restoration of the new Police College Hostel in Hospital Street.

For more information or to become involved with the foundation send email to dhfheritage@gmail.com.