VAN WYKSVLEI

Pixley ka Seme
District Municipality

On route R361, a gravel road approximately 80km northwest from Carnavon.
On route R357, a gravel road south west from Prieska.
On route R357, a gravel road east from Brandvlei.

Situated at the south eastern outer limits of Bushmanland and surrounded by quite a number of salt pans.

Origin

• The Van Wyks Vley Estate, founded in 1882, only received full municipal status a century later (1975).

Name

• Named for Van Wyk, a local farmer.

Claims to fame

• Surrounded by vast barren plains, the few inhabitants and dusty streets, the village is a perfect setting for a scene from a cowboy movie; tumbleweeds rolling down the main street before the midday duel, accompanied by the whistling of an eerie cowboy tune.

Attractions and activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Van Wyksvlei Dam</th>
<th>Situated south of the village and fed by the episodic Hartbees River and another tributary. Completed in 1883, it was the first state-built dam in South Africa. Hand-guided scrapers were drawn by animals and the soil removed by cowhide buckets on wooden poles. A canal from the dam to fields, 11-kilometre from town (De Laden), was used to grow crops. It is still utilized for irrigation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mud houses</td>
<td>Just outside town. Built from clay and straw and the oldest ones are estimated to be 80 years old. Reed and clay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Rock Art</td>
<td>Located at Springbokoog about 30km northwest of town.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CARNAVON

Altitude: 1262m/4140ft
Pixley ka Seme
District Municipality

On route R63, approximately 132 km from Williston.
On route R63, from Victoria West to the south of the Karee Mountains.

Origin

- In 1840, Reverend CW Alheit and other Rhenish missionaries started to work among the local Khoe tribes and established a mission at Schietfontein ('shooting spring').
- Some twenty years later, another was founded at Harmsfontein, about 2 km further to the east.
- Located on one of the routes travelled by early traders and explorers from the Cape colony to Bechuanaland (Botswana), the two stations later developed into a village.
- Water for the town is supplied by boreholes.

Name

- Named in honour of Lord Carnavon (British colonial secretary).

Claims to fame

Residences of poets AG Visser and DF Malherbe can be viewed

AG Visser (well known Afrikaans poet)
He was born in a tent (under a pear tree) that was especially prepared for the event since there were too many young people in the homestead. In 1877, he became the headmaster in Carnavon and after the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War he left for Scotland to study medicine. His house in the town is still standing.

Examples of Corbelled houses can be view on several farms in the district. (see Stuurmansfontein Guest farm below).

Agriculture

- Merino-sheep farming

Historical sites and monuments

| Carnavon Museum | Located in the church hall (1907)  
|                 | Exhibit covers the cultural history of the region |
|                 | Located next to the museum and municipal office (collect key here).  
|                 | It was moved stone by numbered stone from a nearby farm. |

Northern Cape Province   ©Makiti Guides & Tours (Pty) Ltd
### Old mission school
- Built by the Rhenish Missionary Society.

### Stuurmansfontein Guest Farm
- Located about 30km west of Carnavon on the R63 towards Williston and a further 30km on a gravel road that turns off north from the main road.
- Offers unique accommodation in self-catering corbelled houses.
- [053 3822 ext 2102](tel:05338222102)

### Evidence of an ‘oil rush
- Located on a farm in the district.
- A hole of 1500m deep was sunk by rig in search for oil in the Karoo, but this ‘black gold’ was never found in the region (in fact, nowhere in the Karoo!).

### Attractions and activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appie van Heerden Nature Reserve</td>
<td>Located to the left when approaching the town from Loxton (R63). Blesbok might be spotted from the road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blikkieskroeg (‘Tin bar’)</td>
<td>Located in the Carnarvon Hotel’s bar. It has a collection of 4000 beer cans and an authentic 1950s jukebox.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain tortoises</td>
<td>The Reserve is located on the farm Blaauwkrantz close to town. Contact Sheila <a href="">053 3822 ext 3002</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnarvon Fly-in</td>
<td>Annual event on the long weekend of June 16 (Youth day). Pilots come from across the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brickyard</td>
<td>Donkeys are used to turn the paddles of its mixing drums. Visits can be arranged through Tourism office.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Northern Cape Province ©Makiti Guides & Tours (Pty) Ltd
On route R63, approximately 56 south from Carnarvon and 81km west from Victoria West.

- Located at the foot of Uitspanberg (1 487 m).

Origin

- Founded in 1899 as a new Dutch Reformed congregation on A.E. Loxton’s farm, Phezantefontein (‘pheasant fountain’).
- Domestic water is supplied by bore holes.
- A dam east of town stores natural spring water for irrigation.
- Severe damage was caused to the greater part of the town when the dam wall was breached by floods in 1961.
- Most of the buildings had to be repaired and others had to be rebuilt.

Name

- Named after AE Loxton on whose farm it was founded.

Claims to fame

It is said to be one of the prettiest villages in the Karoo. Streets are lined with pear trees that blossom in spring, cypresses, pepper trees and beefwoods that was planted in 1900 with the completion of the church, school and first houses. The view from a hill overlooking the town, confirms that the residence are ‘living among the trees’. Furrows supply water to the gardens contributing to the town’s pleasant appearance.

- Excellent stargazing opportunities – locals have counted up to 20 satellites within two hours

Historical sites and monuments

| Old Hand pump | Located on the eastern side of Church Street.
|              | Dates back to around 1912 when a dam was built.
|              | It was used to supply water for travellers and their horses on the transport route. |
| San (Bushmen) Rock Art | Located on the farm Taaibosfontein. |
| Dutch castle (dates from the 1970s) | Located on the Farm Van Aswegenfontein, 22km from town. 
|                                      | The three-storey home was built in the architectural style of a 12th century castle and set among dolerite koppies. 
|                                      | A replica of a Dutch Windmill can also be viewed. 
|                                      | **Arrange visit beforehand (082 809 2949 / 053 3812 ext 1103)** |
## Buildings

- Many houses are over a hundred years old and good examples of typical Karoo architecture
- The original jail
- Hoëstoep-huisie (‘high-veranda house’) – looks like a doll’s house comparing to those next to it.
- Victorian-styled house on Church Square (opposite the farmer’s co-op).
- Die Kothuisie in Church Street with ‘broekie lace’ is the only one of its kind standing after the 1961 flood.
- Corbelled houses (dome-shaped stone building) occur in the area.

## Attractions and activities

| Karoo Endurance Challenge | Hosted annually over the Easter weekend on the Rietpoort farm. Popular for Moto-X, quad bikes, mountain bikes and 4x4. |
VOSBURG

Origin

- It was established in 1895 as a new Dutch Reformed Parish.
- The farm of the Vos family was bought for this purpose and the town gained municipal status two years later.
- Currently, it serves as a small informal trading centre for the surrounding farms and local inhabitants.

Name

- Named after the Vos family who owned the original farm.

Claims to fame

- The church architecture has been voted among the top ten most attractive in South Africa.

Agriculture

- Mainly merino sheep farming.

Historical sites and monuments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Britstown Museum</th>
<th>• Contact the municipality to arrange for a visit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| San (Bushman) Rock Art | • Located on the farm Keurfontein.  
                            • This rock art is of exceptional quality. |

On route R384, approximately 86km northeast from Carnavon and 57km from Britstown.

On Route R403, approximately 101km north from Victoria West and 95km south from Prieska.

(All the entrance routes to Vosburg are still gravel roads, which stretch over long distances).
PHILLIPSTOWN

On route R389, approximately 76km north from Hanover and 45km south from Petrusville.
On route R48, approximately 42km north east from De Aar.

Origin

- In 1863, a new Dutch Reformed parish was established on Rietfontein, a farm on the Hondeblaf ('barking of dogs') River.
- Today it is a small administration and trading centre for the surrounding farming community.

Claims to fame

Pramberg (tit mountain)
- Located to the northeast of the town on the minor gravel road to Colesberg.
- When viewed from the southwest, the conical hills have the shape of two female breasts.
- These hills feature in the town’s coat of arms.

Name

- Named after Sir Philip Wodehouse, governor of the Cape Colony (1861-1870).

Agriculture

- Mainly merino wool and mutton.

Historical sites and monuments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gereformeerde Kerk</th>
<th>Located in the centre of the town.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was built from Sandstone and a national monument.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Various Architectural Styles</th>
<th>Good examples of the Karoo houses dating from the 1800s.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The magistrate's court and office buildings display the typical architectural style of government buildings in the Great Karoo during early 20th century.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| San Rock Art | Located on several farms through the district. |
Module 5: Karoo  Component 3: Other Karoo towns

**PETRUSVILLE**  
Altitude: 1217m/3993ft  
Pixley ka Seme  
District Municipality

**On route R48,** approximately 45km north from Phillipstown and 40km south from Luckhoff.

**Origin**

- Established in 1877 by the two sons of Petrus van der Walt on the farm Rhenosterfontein (‘rhino spring’).

**Name**

- Named after Petrus van der Walt (father) who bought the original farm Rhenosterfontein in 1810.

**Claims to fame**

- It is the closest Northern Cape town to the Vanderkloof Dam, which plays an important role in the Orange River Project.

**Agriculture**

- Based on merino farming and irrigated smallholdings for maize and wheat along the banks of the Orange River.

**Historical sites and monuments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Rock Art</td>
<td>Located on several farms through the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone Trenches</td>
<td>Located in the hills around the town. Dates back from the Anglo-Boer War.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch Reformed Church</td>
<td>Displays a collection of costumes and items of clothing, which are more than a century old.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Hydrant                 | An outlet from a water main, from which water can be tapped for fighting fires (www.thefreedictionary.com))  
                          | It was made and installed in honour of King Edward VII.                     |

Northern Cape Province  ©Makiti Guides & Tours (Pty) Ltd
On route R48, approximately 20km north from Petrusville and 30km south east from Orania.

**Origin**

- Established as a base camp for construction workers involved in the building of the dam and Vanderkloof Canal Project on the banks of the Orange River.
- The camp soon developed into a village on the banks of the Vanderkloof Dam.
- The dam was built on a portion of the farm belonging to Petrus van der Walt.
- In 1980, full municipal status was granted.
- Today, it only has a few stores and is mainly a holiday destination.

**Name**

- The name is a combination of Petrus van der Walt’s name and a narrow gorge (kloof) in the vicinity.

**Claims to fame**

**The Vanderkloof Dam**

- It is the second largest reservoir in South Africa
- The dam wall is the highest (108m) in the country.

**Historical sites and monuments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dutch Reformed Church and Manse</td>
<td>Recently proclaimed a national monument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas Hey Limnological Research Station And Museum</td>
<td>Located on the edge of the dam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Rock Art</td>
<td>Located on several farms in the district.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolfontein Nature Reserve (8 000ha)</td>
<td>Located on the southern bank of the dam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The area comprises typical Karoo plains interrupted by dolerite koppies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hosts several common species of antelopes with a large population of eland. Also host to some white rhinos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than about 200 bird species have been recorded which include the blue crane and fish eagle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activities include a four-kilometre walk, viewing sites, picnic spots and wilderness hiking trails.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On route R369, approximately 21km north from Vanderkloof and 62km south from Hopetown.

Located on the banks of the Orange River.

**Origin**

- In the 1960s, the Department of Water Affairs and forestry built the camp to provide accommodation for those who worked on the Vanderkloof canal system during the Orange River Project.
- The construction of the canals was completed some twenty years later and the workers relocated somewhere else.
- In 1991, the village was bought for about R1.5 million by the Orania Bestuursdienste (Orania Management Services) under the leadership of Professor Carel Boshoff (son in law of Dr H.E. Verwoerd*) and founder of the “Afrikaner Vryheidstigting” (‘freedom foundation’).
- The town was developed as an Afrikaner Volkstaat. (describe in English)
- The adjacent farm, Vluytjieskraal (approximately 2 300 ha), was bought in 1992 for about a half million rand and divided into 48 smallholdings.
- It is not a proclaimed town, but privately owned by the Vluytjieskraal Aandeleblok Bpk (Vluytjieskraal Share Block) and all the property owners become shareholders in this company.
- The small village has two schools and some children are home schooled.

**Claims to fame**

Dr HF Verwoerd is generally regarded as the ‘architect of apartheid’.

The town’s emblem is the ‘koeksister’.
Some other Afrikaans names: koesisters, boerkaiings, dopperkaiings, wildebeeskaiings, stroppies, teekrullers (‘tea curlers’) and hondeneusies (‘dog noses’).

The Koeksister originated in Indonesia and the recipe was brought by slaves to the Cape where it was adapted to become an Afrikaner delicacy.

According to tradition, the koeksister refers to two old maids sitting on the stoep (‘veranda’) and gossiping (“koe”) in a ‘nice’ manner.

The symbolism is responsibility and endurance of the Afrikaner woman in making this delicacy to fund the building of schools, churches, orphanages etc. The tradition of baking together also speaks of how much can be achieved when the Afrikaner women work together.

**The Ora**

- The town has its own monetary system and the Ora is used instead of the Rand.
- The notes are available in 10s, 20s, 50s and 100s and are a popular collection.
The money can be obtained from Orania’s own bank, Orania Spaar- en Kredietkoöperatief (Orania Saving- and Credit card Co-operative) and is abbreviated as OSK.

- It is registered as a Credit Union, but not in terms of the Bank act.
- The main reason for using the system is to keep a substantial amount of ‘eie geld’ (own money) in the town.
- Money can be withdrawn from the bank and even at the ATM you have an option between the ORA or Rand.
- Discount is given to people using the ORA for shopping in town.
- Another ‘explanation’ for the name ‘Ora’ is as follows: The man and his wife are returning from the shops and when they pass the liquor store, the man asks his wife: “Dear, are there some money ‘ora’ (the Afrikaans slang for ‘oor’ - translated in English it would be “Is there any money left ("ora") to buy liquor?”

**Agriculture**

- Maize
- Olives
- Pecan nuts
- Tomatoes
- Green peppers
- Grapes
- Cantaloupes are grown under irrigation from the Gariep River.

**Historical Sites**

| Monument koppietjie  ‘Monument hillock’ | Erected on a hill opposite the Recreation Hall next to the town and overlooks the village.

- Busts of the following statesmen are placed in a semi-circle and from left to right (when facing them): JBM Hertzog, DF Malan, JH Verwoerd, JG Strydom and Paul Kruger.

- In front of them, a statue of a little boy is also overlooking the town.

- The inscription reads “Labore ad Libertatem- Deur Arbeid tot Vryheid” (Through Labour to Freedom). |

| Irish monument | The monument honours the Irish volunteers that fought on the Boer side during the Anglo-Boer War I.

- It was originally erected in Johannesburg (1975).

- However, it fell in disrepair and was later demolished – only the four columns could be rescued and was moved to Orania in 2002. |

| Museums | Kultuurhistoriese museum (cultural historic museum).

- Verwoerd museum. |

| Rock Art | Petroglyphs are found in the area. |

**Attractions and Activities**
### Jewellery

- Rolien de Klerk makes unique and exclusive jewellery and some have also made their way overseas.
- Her shop is located next to the Wynhusie (wine house).
On route R58, approximately 40km north of Colesberg and 5km just below the wall of the Gariep Dam on the banks of the Orange (Gariep) River.

**Origin**

- It originated when a pontoon was built across the Orange River by a Scotsman called Norval to facilitate the crossing of the British in their first campaign against the Voortrekkers in 1848. After leaving the Eastern Cape in the 1930s, the Voortrekkers had occupied this territory between the Orange and Vaal Rivers and Sir Harry Smith (governor of the Cape Colony) wanted to maintain British sovereignty over the Boers. The Boers were defeated at the battle of Boomplaats.
- The Pontoon then served to transport thousands of travellers and their cattle from one side to the other. The pontoon later sunk due to a flood and washed out. The teak wood was used to make furniture for some of the local houses.
- In 1889 the first bridge was built and a railway station followed later.
- During the Anglo-Boer War, the Boer forces blew up sections of the rail and road bridge and the British established a large concentration camp.

**Name**

- Named after the Scotsman Norval who designed and built the first pontoon to cross the Orange River.

**Claims to fame**

**Norvalspont concentration camp**

- The British erected a large concentration camp for Boer women and children from the region’s farms during the Anglo-Boer War I.
- Emily Hobhouse, British welfare campaigner, who worked in the concentration camps, noted that it was the ‘best’ concentration camp with a school and numbered tents aligned along ‘streets’. In spite of the ‘good reputation’, a memorial located in the cemetery contains a plaque with more than 450 names of women and children who died in the concentration camp. The majority (267) were children under the age of 15 and measles were the main cause of death.

**The country’s largest fish hatchery is located on the Gariep**

Tours are available of the facility that breeds Orange River mudfish, largemouth yellowfish and barbel for conservation and food (082 410 8251).

**Guided tours of the Gariep Dam**

- Gariep Lake and Wall Tours, including slide show, walking down a 1000 steps to the foundation and along some of the 13.2 kilometres of tunnels (082 801 2726 / 051 754 0001).
- Tour of the country’s first hydroelectric power station (082 925 2726 / 051 754 0400)
- Dam cruises (082 825 8666)
**Historical sites and monuments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>British Block House</strong></th>
<th>Recently converted into a home with a garden that leads to the river.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glasgow Pont Hotel</strong></td>
<td>Renovated and some exhibits relating to the Scotsman Norval.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attractions and activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Oviston Nature Reserve</strong></th>
<th>Renowned for its large and diverse game population – 48 mammals, 145 bird, 26 reptile and 9 amphibian species.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Orange Valley Guest Farm and Adventures** | Located on the R58, approximately 10km from the Gariep Dam and 15km from the N1.  
Activities include river-rafting; fly-fishing and horse-riding trails. |
Schmidtsdrif

| Schmidtsdrif | Population 3244 (census 2001) | Altitude: 1011m/3317ft | Pixley ka Seme District Municipality |

On route R64, approximately 40km east from Campbell and 69km west from Kimberley.

Origin

- Established around a 19th-century ford on the Vaal River that was frequently used by travellers.

Name

- The drift was eventually named after Schmidt who built a hotel at the crossroads.

Claims to Fame

The fording place was used by Naturalist William Burchell during his travels in 1812, and by missionaries Moffat and David Livingstone, to mention a few.

Schmidtsdrif

The demobilised South African Defence Force San soldiers who served in the Namibia 'bush war' during the 1970s in Namibia were settled in army tents. They were later moved to Platfontein northwest of Kimberley. A community radio service in two San languages began operating in 2002.
**Campbell**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Altitude:</th>
<th>1280m/4199ft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rainfall:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pixley ka Seme District Municipality**

**On route R38**, on the eastern part of the Ghaap Plateau.

**Origin**

- The London Missionary Society established a mission station.

**Name**

- Initially known as Knoffelvallei ('garlic valley') that referred to the valley located on the road to the used by the indigenous people and later by other travellers.
- It was then given the name Grootfontein ('large fountain') and later renamed in honour of Reverend John Campbell.
- From 1812 to 1814, he visited all the London Missionary Society’s stations in South Africa.

**Claims to fame**

**The first church north of the Orange River**

Located on the western outskirts of the town. It was built by missionary George Bartlett in 1831. There is also an old tree trunk believed to be the place where Moffat and Livingstone first preached.
Griekwastad / Griquatown
Pixley ka Seme District Municipality

On route R64, approximately 85km west from Kimberley and 90km east from Groblershoop.

Origin

- Originated as a London Missionary Society station in 1802.
- Leeuwenkuil (‘lion’s den’) was the site first chosen by missionaries William Anderson and Cornelius Kramer near the town's present site.
- Lions frequenting came to drink at a nearby pool and therefore, Anderson moved the station to a place called Klaarwater (‘clear water’), higher up in the valley in 1805.
- It served a community that comprised of Griquas, Tswanas and others from mixed descent.
- The missionaries often had to act as mediators between Griqua leaders such as Andries Waterboer, Cornelius Kok and Barend Barends who were continuously in conflict with each other.
- In 1813, the village became the ‘capital’ of an extensive Griqua territory stretching from Prieska in the south to Daniëlskuil in the north. The ‘republic’ even had its own flag and coinage at one stage.

Name

- Initially called Klaarwater (‘clear water’) which was a translation of the Khoe expression gattikamma, a compound of gatsi: ‘clear’ and gami: ‘water’.
- In 1813, the Reverend John Campbell renamed it to Griekwastad (Griqua’s town), with reference to its Griqua residents.

Claims to fame

- The first town to be established north of the Orange (Gariep) River.
- The first church bell to be used north of the Orange River is on display at the Mary Moffat museum. It was a ship's bell brought from Cape Town on the back of an ox.
- A variety of quality semiprecious stones, especially tiger's eye are mined here.
### Historical sites and monuments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Mary Moffat Museum            | • Housed in the old Mission House where Mary, Robert and Mary Moffat’s daughter was born in 1821 when the Moffat’s visited Griquatown in 1821. She later married explorer David Livingstone.  
                                • A pulpit made by Moffat while waiting for his wife to recover after the birth of the child and which he presented to Andries Waterboer, chief of the Griquas, is among the exhibits. There is also an organ that belonged to Waterboer. |
| Grave of Andries Waterboer    | • Located on the R325 north of town.  
                                • It is guarded by two ships’ cannons, known as Hans and Griet and presented to the chief by Queen Victoria.                                                                                       |
| Syringa Trees And Execution Tree | • Located near the old Griqua raadsaal (‘council chamber’) and Waterboer’s ‘palace’.  
                                 • The syringa trees were used for indabas (indigenous gatherings).  
                                 • The execution tree was used by Waterboer to hang those convicted of stealing his cattle.                                                                                          |
| San Rock Art                  | • Located on various farms in the district on route R313 south from Griquatown.                                                                                                                             |

### Attractions and activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earth treasures</td>
<td>• A small factory that polishes and sells semi-precious stones, including tiger’s eye and jasper.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Wildebeest Guest Farm         | • Activities include bird watching, game drivers, hiking and short geological and mineral tours on the property.  
                                • A trip to a 788-metre-deep Koegelbeen Caves can also be arranged.                                                                                                                                   |
Douglas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Altitude: 1011m/3317ft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pixley ka Seme District Municipality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**On route R357**, approximately 107km west from Kimberley and 100km northeast from Prieska.

Situated on the Vaal River, 13km east of its confluence with the Orange River.

**Origin**

- Founded as a London Missionary Society station in 1838 by the Reverend Isaac Hughes.
- It was located close to the ford Kokoullop that was used by many early travellers and explorers.
- In 1867, a group of white settlers from Griquatown successfully negotiated with the Griqua chief Nicholas Waterboer for the right to establish a town at the ford.
- A village slowly began to develop around the mission station and currently it is still a small settlement which serves as a commercial and trading centre for the agricultural activities of the surrounding farms.
- At various points in the district diggers still pan for alluvial diamonds along the river.
- It also serves as an important branch railway line from Kimberley to Prieska.

**Name**

- Originally called Backhouse for Quaker missionary James Backhouse, who was visiting the country at the time.
- Later renamed to Douglas in honour of Sir Percy Douglas, the lieutenant-governor of the Cape Colony.
- The area was also called by the local San inhabitants “Go koo fume” (‘the place where we suffered much’).

**Claims to fame**

**Confluence of the Orange - and Vaal River**
Located on the R357 towards Prieska, 14km from town at Bucklands/Die Neus.

**Douglas Wine Cellar**
Established in 1968. The cellar produces a wide variety of table and desert wines. Visitors are welcome.

**Douglas Bee Farms**
One of the largest in the country with 4000 plus hives. Tours can be arranged and the shop`s speciality is Blackthorn honey (Acacia mellifera).

**Agriculture**

- Wheat
- Luceme
• Potatoes
• Cotton
• Vegetables and fruit (including watermelons)
• Water for irrigation is diverted from the Vaal River by means of a weir 8 km from the town. It was first built in 1891

**Mining**

• Miners still pan for alluvial diamonds along the river.
### Industries

- Lucerne and wheat mills
- A cheese factory

### Historical sites and monuments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>San skeletons and artefacts</th>
<th>Reminders of the many clashes between the San (Bushmen) and Griquas in the area.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Driekops ('Three Heads) Island | About 40km east of Douglas a circular gravel road turns off south from the R357 and follows all along the Riet River towards the hamlet of Plooysburg to join the R357 again.  
The island is an extensive flat outcrop smoothed and polished by glaciers in prehistoric times.  
Over 3000 rock engravings and petroglyphs are spread over this large area of glacial pavement and depict animals that once occurred in the area (e.g. various antelope, hippo and elephant).  
There are also humans and trees and several geometric and curvilinear symbols.  
Similar engravings have been found in India and China.  
Numerous stone implements have been unearthed at the site. |

### Attractions and activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Da Riva houseboat</th>
<th>Fully equipped and based on the Vaal River 15km from town.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Douglas holiday Resort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mollie Dor barge</td>
<td>Offers sunset cruises for groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing and birding tours of the area</td>
<td><strong>Contact John Southey (052 298 1209)</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Module 5: Karoo  Component 3: Other Karoo towns

**Resources and further reading**


**Maps and Brochures**

Explorer Map South Africa. The Northern Cape – follow the sun not to the crowds.

Orania in’n Neutedop. Andreas DuPlessis (Redakteur).


**Webistes**

www.heritage.org.za/karoo_heritage.htm

www.indexmundi.com (altitudes)

www.news24.com. Business as usual at Noupoort. 01/02/2005

www.plantzafrica.com


[www.thefreedictionary.com](http://www.thefreedictionary.com)

www.wikipedia.com

**Exploration and photos**


Compiled by Maria Louise Kruger 2008