Introduction to Namakwaland (Namaqua land)

The name Namaqua is the plural form for the inhabitants (Nama) that roamed the area long before the Europeans came.

It has also been dubbed a ‘Cinderella part of Southern Africa’ (Bulpin, 1999). It is prosperous (diamonds, copper and other precious stones) and welcoming, despite the hot, stony, harsh and windy conditions. The highlight is undoubtedly when colourful carpets of flowers cover the dry landscape after good winter rainfall.

The rainfall averages around 50mm p.a. along the West Coast, to less than 250 mm in the interior. Drinking water is mainly derived from boreholes and springs.

Economical activities

- Goats and karakul (non-woollen sheep) farming are the main agricultural activity.
- Lucerne and wheat are also grown under irrigation.
- Along the coast (Hondeklip Bay and Port Nolloth) lobster is collected.
- Copper; alluvial, diamonds, mica, beryl, blue agate, feldspar, tungsten and sillimanite are mined.
## TOWNS ALONG THE N7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Population (census 2001)</th>
<th>Altitude: m/ft</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garies</td>
<td>1655</td>
<td>273/896</td>
<td>Namaqualand Kamiesberg local municipality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### On route N7, approximately 112km south from Springbok and 145km north from Van Rhynsdorp.

Surrounded by bare granite outcrops which are a prominent feature of the landscape north of Bitterfontein.

**Origin**
- The owner of the farm Goedeverwagting donated the land to the Dutch Reformed Church in 1845.
- Today it is a small trading centre for the farmers in the area.

**Name**
- Initially named Goedeverwagting after the farm it was established on.
- Later renamed by former Cape Premier John X. Merriman. The word is derived from the Khoi/Khoi word ‘xaris’ that refers to the couch grass growing in the valley. It is also the name of the town’s episodic river. The latter becomes the Groen (‘green’) River as it approaches the sea.

**Claims to fame**

**Kubus Pyramid Scheme**
- The town became famous for one of the biggest scams in South Africa in the 1980s.
- The public was invited to buy the ingredient of some kind of milk, and ‘grow’ it at home.
- The ‘Kubus organisation’ would then buy the powder back at very high prices, supposedly to be used for a new range of cosmetics.
- The initial buyers made quite a lot of money, but finally the scheme collapsed in 1984 when it ran out of money.

**Historical Sites and monuments**

- **Letterklip ("Letter rock")**
  - Located on the northern outskirts of the town, along a gravel road.
  - Names of early travellers, as well as the regimental crests of British soldiers, are engraved on the large boulders.
  - This was also the site of a British fort erected during the Anglo-Boer War.

- **Anglo-Boer War Battlefield**
  - A hill, located to the south of the town.
  - Site of the grave of a British officer who died in the area as a result of serious fighting between British and Boer forces under the command of General Manie Maritz.

**Attractions and activities**
- **Spring Flowers**
  - Garies is also one of the showcases in the region in the Kamiesberg.
On route N7, approximately 25km north of Garies and 20km south from Kamieskroon.

**Origin**
A small informal settlement and local trading post.

**Name**
It is either derived from a Khoe word or an expression related to water. Translations include ‘shallow water’, ‘scarce water’ or even ‘springing water’ referring to an artesian well in the neighbourhood.

**Artesian well - Definition**
‘A well that is bored vertically into oblique strata so that water rises with little or no pumping’ (The Oxford mini-dictionary, 1991)

**Attractions and activities**
- **Annual Namaqua Wild Flower Show**
  Forms part of the annual wild flower tourist route through the vicinity.

**On route N7**, approximately 70km south from Springbok and 45km north from Garies.

The town is located at the foot of Sneeukop (‘snow head’), the highest peak (1591m) in the Kamiesberg range. The main feature of the Kamiesberg are granite domes that can also be described as enormous ‘whalebacks’.

**Origin**
- In 1864, the Dutch Reformed parish established the first congregation in Namaqualand on the farm Wilgenhoutskloof (‘willow wood ravine’).
- It was located in the Wilgenhoutskloof valley approximately 7 km north of the town.
- Soon a little village developed around the church.
- However, the granite outcrops on the side of the ravine made further development impossible.
- The village was relocated to the present site of Kamieskroon in 1924.

**Name**
- The first village, later abandoned, was initially named Bowesville after the district surgeon, Dr Henry Bowe and later Bowesdorp.
- The new settlement’s name probably refers to the disorderly manner in which the boulders and domes are scattered in the region, in other words ‘a jumble’ according to the Nama Khoe word *“th’amies”*.
- The cleft rock and strangely twisted kroon (‘crown’) of Sneeukop (resembling that of an ice-cream cone) contributes to the last part of the name.

**Historical sites and monuments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Anglo-Boer War Memorial</strong></th>
<th>Located in the town.</th>
<th>Commemorates those who were fallen during the War.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grave of Lieutenant CJ Darter</strong></td>
<td>Located about 15km south from the town.</td>
<td>The site of the Lieutenant’s grave is reputedly the smallest piece of land for which Britain holds a title-deed in a foreign country.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Module 4: Component 1: Towns along the N7

### Attractions and activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attraction/Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skilpad Wild Flower Reserve (60 000ha)</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Located about 25km north-west from town on a scenic gravel road.&lt;br&gt;• It is the most southern point of the Namaqua National Park.&lt;br&gt;• It is open from August to September during the flowering season.&lt;br&gt;• Offers a circular drive and short walking trails.&lt;br&gt;• Ablution and picnic facilities are available.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paulshoek Cultural Camp</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Located in the heart of the Kamiesberg.&lt;br&gt;• Traditional cooking, dancing and various other culture related activities are offered.&lt;br&gt;• It is built in the traditional matjieshut style.&lt;br&gt;• Contact Mr Vonkie Claassen: 027-541-1341</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Flower Photographic Workshops</strong>&lt;br&gt;• The workshops are offered during March-April and September-October in the Kamieskroon Hotel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A gravel road turns off the N7 approximately, 25km east from Kamieskroon.

**Origin**
- In 1816, Reverend Barnabas Shaw, the Colony’s first Wesleyan missionary, arrived in Cape Town.
- His vision was to establish a mission north of the Orange River.
- Apparently, while travelling to the north, he came across a Nama chief in the middle of nowhere.
- The Chief was travelling south in search of a missionary for his people.
- The Reverend must have seen this as a divine appointment. He stayed and built a mud house with a thatch roof that same year.
- In 1854, the Governor of the Cape, Sir George Cathcart, granted the land around the church to the Little Namaqua people.
- During the Anglo-Boer War, the commando of the Boer general Manie Maritz, was involved in a major skirmish with Khoe clans who inhabited these parts.
- In 1902, Manie Maritz massacred members of the Mission Community that were suspected of being British sympathizers.

**Name**
The word Lelie (lilly) is probably derived from the uilblaar ("owl's leaf") with it’s white flowers (sometimes with a shade of purple) that blooms in spring around the mission station.

**Historical site and monument**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leliefontein Methodist Church and Parsonage</th>
<th>Recently proclaimed as a national monument.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ornate Sundial</td>
<td>On display in the village.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was presented to Reverend Shaw in 1828.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Matjieshuis</td>
<td>Located at Nourvrier (&quot;Narrow River&quot;). northeen of Leliefontein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Nama constructed these huts from woven sedges. It is no longer a common sight in the region.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Namaqualand

Kamiesberg local municipality

Recently proclaimed as a national monument.
On route N7, approximately 113 km south from Vioolsdrift on the Namibian Border and 67 km north from Kamieskroon. On route N14, approximately 111 km west from Pofadder. It is 560km north of Cape Town.

The town forms the intersection of the N7 from Cape Town and N14 from Johannesburg. Situated in a narrow valley between the granite domes of the Small Copper Mountains.

**Origin**

**Mining**
- During the 1840s, some copper deposits were discovered by a German prospector, Albert von Schlicht.
- A portion of the farm Melkboschkuil ('milkweed pool') belonging to the Cloete brothers, was bought by Philips and King of Cape Town for £750.
- Two years later (1852), the first commercial copper mining operation in South Africa was initiated by the two men.
- Springbokfontein was laid out in the valley of the Klein Koperberge ('Little Copper Mountains') in 1862.

- The consequent arrival of many fortune seekers also brought some problems. During 1856, rules were set by the local magistrate and those who did not abide to these laws were put in jail.
- The growth of the town was also boosted by a smelting furnace that was built for the reduction of mounds of low-grade ore discarded by the early mines.
- However, around the 1870's, richer deposits were found 10km north of the town, at Okiep, leaving the town almost deserted.
- Mining activities finally came to an end when better deposits were discovered in the region at Nababeep and Carolusberg.
- Today, the town serves as the main commercial and administrative centre for the new mining operations in the area.
- The water from the town's spring continues to be the best available in the region and ensure the frequent further development of the town.

- The town was besieged by the Boers, under the command of General Jan Smuts towards the end of the Anglo-Boer War.

**Name**
- Used to be known as Springbokfontein due to the thousands of Springbucks roaming around the strong spring before the mining activities began.
- In 1862, it was renamed to Springbok.
- Also known as the ‘capital’ of Namaqualand.
## Claims to fame

| Prospect mining shaft | Located about 3km south from Carolusberg (west of Springbok) close to the Goegap Nature Reserve.  
|                       | The original shaft that was sunk by Governor Simon van der Stel and his party in 1685.  
|                       | A national monument. |

| Blue Mine | Located on the western side of town.  
|           | Recorded as Springbok’s first original copper mine and the first commercial mine of its kind in South Africa.  
|           | Offers some short walking trails with views over the town. |

| Anglican Church | Located next to the Post Office.  
|                 | Built in 1861, it is said to be the second-oldest church building in Namaqualand. |

## Mining and industries

A pump-station on the Gariep (Orange) River, 12 km from Goodhouse, supply water to the mines (as well as for domestic consumption) by means of a 70-km pipeline. Some of the water is also derived from the town's spring.

### Mining villages around Springbok:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carolusberg</td>
<td>10 km northeast of Springbok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spektakel ('Spectacle')</td>
<td>On route R355, 10km west of Springbok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concordia and Okiep</td>
<td>10km north of Springbok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nababeep</td>
<td>20km north-west of Springbok</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Historical sites and monuments

| Monument koppie | Located in the centre of the village.  
|               | The fort was destroyed by dynamite but the koppie still commemorates the Anglo Boer War (1899-1902). |
| Old Dutch Reformed Church | Used by the Jews from 1921 to 1929.  
|               | A national monument. |
| Jewish Synagogue (Namaqua Museum) | Located in Synagogue Street.  
|               | Built in 1929.  
|               | Since the numbers of Jews in town were greatly reduced, the community presented the building to town council to be converted into the Namaqua Museum. |
| New Dutch Reformed Church | The Klipkerk (“Stone Church”) derives it’s name from the dressed stone and slate that were used for its construction in 1921.  
|               | The cost was approximately £18 000.  
|               | A national monument. |
| Old Cemetery | Located west of town, on route R355 to Kleinzee.  
|               | Contains the graves of mining pioneers and those of men who fell during the Anglo-Boer War. |
| Old Prison | Built in 1856. |
| Several Other Monuments | Located in several places in the region  
|               | Commemorate the skirmishes during the Anglo Boer War around Springbok. |

### South of Springbok

| Old Horse Mill | About 20 km south of Springbok, turning west on a minor gravel for another 10km towards Matjieskloof.  
|               | It is still in working order. |
| ‘Council Tree’ (ngoenie tree) | Located approximately 32km between Springbok and Kamieskroon.  
|               | In the 1800s, the Nama elders used to gather under this old Milkwood tree to find solutions to tribal conflicts. |
North of Springbok

### Smelting Furnace
- Located on a short hiking trail in the direction to Okiep to the north of town.
- It was built in 1866 by the Cornish miners.
- Smelting activities ended in 1871 and since then it remained unused.
- Recorded to be the oldest of its kind in the country.
- Depicts the rudimentary furnaces built by prehistoric man.
- Declared a national monument in 1957.

### Attractions and activities

| Goegap Nature Reserve (20 000ha) | Located about 15 km southeast of Springbok on the R355.  
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
|                                  | It features nearly 600 indigenous plant species, which includes some rare succulents found nowhere else, the quiver tree, some shrubs and annuals.  
|                                  | The reserve also incorporates the Hester Malan Wild Flower Reserve.  
|                                  | Boasts about 45 mammal species which includes the Hartmann’s mountain zebra and gemsbok, 36 reptile and 94 bird species.  
|                                  | There are three hiking trails through the typical Namaqualand plains and is surrounded by some rocky outcrops and granite koppies.  
|                                  | Self drive game viewing are allowed through the reserve and although it is suitable for most 2x4 vehicles, 4x4 vehicles is recommended as some of the roads appears to be easy but turns out to be difficult, steep and rocky terrain.  

| Namastat Cultural Village | Offers overnight accommodation in traditional dome shaped reed huts, also called “matjieshuise”. |
On route N7, approximately 8km north of Springbok towards Steinkopf.

Origin

Mining
- In 1862, copper deposits were discovered.
- By 1870, the mine was ranked as the richest copper mine in the world.
- The ore had a copper content of at least 31.5 per cent.
- However, transport posed a big problem but a narrow-gauge railway (about 146km) was constructed between Port Nolloth to Okiep in 1876.
- A railway line was also built in 1927 from Cape Town to Bitterfontein, a route that was previously serviced by mules.
- At the end of the First World War, the price of copper dropped to such an extent that operations ceased by 1918.
- Twenty years later, the mines reopened when the prices increased again.

- From 8 April until 3 May 1902 (Anglo-Boer War), Okiep was besieged by Boer forces under the command of General Jan Smuts.
- This was recorded as Smuts's last engagement of the Anglo-Boer War.
- Colonel Shelton and 900 men (most of them employees of the Cape Copper Company) built nine blockhouses and were able to stand their ground against Jan Smuts attacks.
- The siege was lifted when General Smuts was assured of a safe journey to the peace negotiations in Vereeniging that terminated the war.

Name
- Is derived from the Nama word “U-geib” ("the large brackish place").

Claims to fame

Orbicule Hill
- Located to the west of the town.
- Specimens of orbicular diorite and orb shaped crystalline igneous rock can be viewed.
- It was previously believed that these rare rocks only occurred in rocky outcrops in Scandinavia.
### Historical sites and monuments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Geological sites            | • Located in the vicinity around Okiep.  
                               | • Klondike and Maga-breccia sites.                                       |
| Fort Shelton                | • It was the main fortification during the siege.                        |
|                             | • A flagstaff and some stone walls are all that remained.                |
| Crows Nest Blockhouse       | • The remains of this blockhouse are situated on a hill north east of   |
|                             |   town.                                                                 |
|                             | • The Boers were stationed here for most of the Siege before the British |
|                             |   took control again.                                                   |
| Old Cemetery                | • Located north of the town.                                            |
|                             | • 19th-century miners and men killed in the Anglo-Boer War are buried   |
|                             |   here.                                                                 |
| Cornish Pump House          | • The Cornish miners installed a steam driven pump in a stone house     |
|                             |   that was located next to a smokestack.                                 |
|                             | • It was used to pump water from the mine but fell into disuse in 1929.  |
|                             | • In 1965, it was restored and today it is a national monument.          |
Module 4: Component 1: Towns along the N7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concordia</th>
<th>Population: 4034 (census 2001)</th>
<th>Altitude: 1065m/3494ft</th>
<th>Namaqualand Nama Khoi local municipality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

On route **N7**, approximately 20km from Springbok towards Steinkopf and the Namibian Border or on route **N14**, approximately 25km towards Pofadder.

**Origin**
- The town was founded as a Rhenish mission station by Reverend Brecher in 1852.
- German mineralogist, Albert von Schlicht discovered a rich copper ore pipe line in the 1840s and he started mining the copper with the permission of the missionaries.
- The village soon developed into a copper mining village.
- In 1876, the mining company contributed to the first proper church to be built.
- During the Anglo Boer War, the Boers used the village as their Headquarters while Okiep was under siege.
- The copper price dropped significantly in the 1930s and Concordia was closed down, but it was reopened in 1949.
- Today it is a small trading community for local farmers.

**Name**
The name refers to the goodwill and accord of interests between the missionaries and Albert von Schlicht.

**Agriculture**
Mainly farming with small stock

**Mining and industries**
Copper

**Historical sites and monuments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cornish Style Houses</th>
<th>Used as a hospital by Boer commandos.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original Granary</td>
<td>Located at the Tweefontein Mine as well as the New Prospect Mine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It serves as examples of Cornish Stone Masonry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granite Ore Bins</td>
<td>Graves of the Rhenish Missionary pioneers as well as some unmarked graves of Boers that died during the four week siege of Okiep in 1902.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graveyard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Attractions and activities

| Orbicle Hill | • Located west from Concordia on the Orbicle Granite Koppie.  
• Exhibits some orbicular diorite which is a very rare rock texture resulted from granitoid magmas separated while it is in a fluid state and then forms concentric internal bandings.  
• Proclaimed a national monument. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhenish Mission Station</td>
<td>• Established in 1852.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| United Reformed Church | • Stone church built in 1875.  
• Built by Cornishmen.  
• The original organ dates back to 1915. |

- Annual Wildflower Region
  - Forms part of the Namaqua annual wild flower scenic route.
### Module 4: Component 1: Towns along the N7

#### HENKRIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Henkries</td>
<td>Approximately 13 km north of Steinkopf</td>
<td>Namaqualand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### On route N7, approximately 13 km north of Steinkopf a gravel road turns northeast to Henkries, 10 km from the Orange River.

#### Origin
- It is believed that during the First World War a company of mounted soldiers halted here to eat and to rest their horses. Their rations included dates. The date stones were either discarded or idly stuck into the sandy soil.
- By 1926 these stones had produced 38 fully grown date palms in bearing.
- In 1943 the government laid out a plantation.
- There is a strong freshwater spring west of the settlement.
- The small community includes the 'Balis', descendants of Jacob van Reenen, a white man who took a slave woman from Bali as his wife.

#### Name
- There is some different theories for the origin and the pronouncements of the name:
  - It is pronounced as Henkrees, Henkeriss and Hamneries.
  - Believed to derive from a Nama corruption for the word 'hungry'.
  - According to tradition, the locals one day came upon a strange white man dying in the veld and the only word he managed to utter was 'hungry'.

#### Claims to fame
- Boasts South Africa's first commercial date plantation.

#### Agriculture
- Mainly cultivation of dates with an exceptional flavour.
- Rainfall in this region is never more than 50 mm a year, and in summer the maximum temperature hovers around 40°C, which makes it an ideal climate for the cultivation of dates.

#### Historical sites and monuments
- **Kinderlê (“the lying of children”)**
  - Located west of the gravel road to Steinkopf.
  - It is a communal grave for 32 Nama children killed by San people during the 19th century.
  - The children were alone while their parents attended a church service in Steinkopf.

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Module 4: Component 1: Towns along the N7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steinkopf</th>
<th>Population: 7256 (census 2001)</th>
<th>Altitude: 817m/2680ft</th>
<th>Namaqualand Nama Khoi local municipality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**On route N7**, approximately 42km north from Springbok and 67km south from Vioolsdrift.  
**On route R382**, approximately 94 km east from Port Nolloth.

The road to Steinkopf runs close to the old narrow gauge railway used to transport copper ore from Springbok to Port Nolloth.

**Origin**
- The Reverend Heinrich Schmelen (London Missionary Society) started a Rhenish mission station for the local Nama tribes in 1818/1819.
- It was situated close to a valley that supplied water to the station.
- In their search for more water, the Nama later moved to Goegaas and mission relocated to Kookfontein ('boiling spring') where the first church was built.
- In 1840, a new church and school was built under the leadership of Ferdinand Brecher when the Rhenish mission station/Lutheran mission station society took over.
- The Dutch Reformed Church took control in 1934.
- Currently, the town serves as a local trade centre for the mine workers in the area and the communal stock farming community.

**Name**
- The first settlement of the Nama was called Tarrakois ('strange maid').
- The mission station was named after Dr Karl Steinkopf of London, who financially contributed to its development.

**Agriculture**
Mainly stock farming.

**Attractions and activities**
- These huts are the traditional shelters of the Namas.
- Originally, it was made of mats of woven sedge or reeds attached to a dome-shaped wooden or reed frame.
- Nowadays, Hessian or plastic sheeting has replaced the more traditional material.
- An example of these structures can be seen when leaving the town.
Module 4: Component 1: Towns along the N7

On route N7, approximately 67km north of Steinkopf and B1 Namibian road approximately 47km south from Grootplaas in Namibia.

Origin
- This was a frequented crossing between South West Africa (Namibia) and South Africa.
- During the great depression in the early 1930s, a group of unemployed people attempted to dig a furrow to irrigate some land along the banks of the river.
- Unfortunately their efforts were fruitless.
- The government however came to their rescue.
- A weir (324 m long and 6 m high) was built to supply water for the irrigation of 557ha land on the southern bank of the river.
- The canals were later lined with concrete to retain the maximum water supply.
- An irrigation settlement was eventually established in the Orange River Valley.

Name
- Named after a Nama shepherd, Viool ('Violin) who lived here in the 19th century.
- Drift (drift or fording place).

Agriculture
- Lucerne; cotton; citrus and other fruit, vegetables and grapes.

Claims to fame
- ‘Vioolsdrift Stone’ is a brightly coloured rock along the banks of the Gariep (Orange River) in the area. It is used as decorative building material.

Historical sites and monuments
- Petroglyphs
  - Definition: a carving or line drawing on rock, especially one made by prehistoric people.
  - Located about 23km from the border towards the Richtersveld.

Attractions and activities
- Scenery along the N7 from Steinkopf
  - From Steinkopf the N7 north crosses a wide plain of typical Namaqua vegetation; passes through the winding Vythmylspoort pass ('five-mile gorge') with its granite outcrops and finally reaching Vioolsdrift, an oasis in the Orange River valley.
  - In 1956, a bridge (350 m long and 12 m high) replaced the ferry that was used to cross the Gariep River.
Resources and further reading


Maps and brochures


Websites

www.indexmundi.com (altitude)
www.wikipedia.com
www.thefreedictionary.com

Photos and visits


Compiled by Maria Louise Kruger 2009.