

Brief Overview of the Voortrekker Monument –Pretoria



1 Voortrekker Monument

1.1 Introduction:

- This monument is called the Altar of the Afrikanerdom. And is situated on what used to be the great road to the north.
- **1938** - Laying of Foundation Stone during centenary of “Groot Trek” (Great trek) (more than 100 000 people attended). Also finishing point of Torch Bearing Procession (1 from Cape Town and the second from Dingaan’s Kraal – The one in Cape Town is lit by the sun’s rays at the foot of Jan van Riebeeck’s statue.) The following articles were buried below the foundation stone of the Voortrekker Monument.
 - ✓ An enormous “Staatsbybel” or State Bible.
 - ✓ A dairy of Jan van Riebeeck (it came with the Cape Town Group)
 - ✓ A copy of the Treaty signed between Dingaan and Piet Retief (from Natal group)
 - ✓ A tinder-box containing a little stone and a flint.
 - ✓ A copy of the national anthem
 - ✓ A copy of the Vow / Covenant made at Blood River.
- When the torches arrived at the site they lit a great bon fire, which then gave the signal for half a dozen other “bon fires” to be lit around the city of Pretoria.
- A four-day cairn building ceremony took place on the celebration site. On the eastern side of the monument a large circular wall was built by the South African “Reddingsbond”. People attending the festivity were able to lay their stones at this wall. The objective of this was to symbolize unity among the Afrikaners as well as upliftment of the Afrikaner of 1938. Also to prove that the holy inheritance they received from their ancestors of 1838 will be preserved and handed over to their descendants in 2038.
- The cornerstone laying ceremony was conducted on 16 Dec by 3 women who were direct descendants of the Voortrekker leaders, Hendrik Potgieter, Andries Pretorius and Piet Retief.
- With this ceremony the crowd renewed the covenant of Blood River.
- At the same time that this cornerstone laying ceremony took place there was a similar ceremony taking place at the site of Blood River in Natal. There was radio

Information compiled by Leon Coetzee for Unlimited Prayer Frontiers (South Africa)

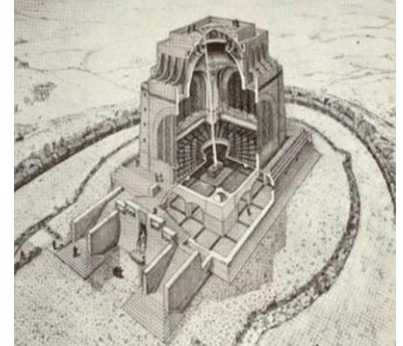
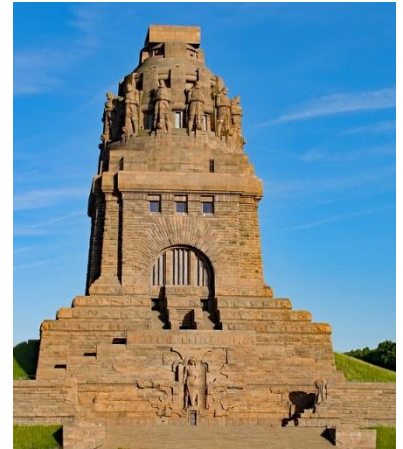
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communication between the 2 sites and greetings were exchanged.

- **1949** - Inauguration of the Voortrekker Monument (for more than 150 000 Afrikaans people this was an occasion of great pilgrimage). Remember this is 1 year after the NP came into government.

1.2 The building.

- **Architect** -Gerard Leendert Pieter Moerdyk. He was a Free Mason.
- **Design** – It shows many similarities with the Volkerschlagsdenkmal in Leipzig (photo right). The monument in Leipzig is a purely Free Masonic temple / monument.
- The Voortrekker Monument is designed according to the principles of a sun temple. In Egypt a sun temple was designed where once a year through a hole in the wall / roof the sun would fall on the sun god (Osiris) worshipped in that temple. This would then cause this god to be rebirthed for the next year to come. Take note that Osiris was also the god of death (and resurrection).
- In essence the building is designed like a Mausoleum. Originally, they intended to have the bones of Piet Retief interred in symbolic grave. It would therefor have been a Sarcophagus. This never materialized and so the symbolic grave without bones is called a cenotaph.
- Because of the Freemasonic influences and design in this monument, we see several spiritually negative influences brought over the country. For example:
 - ✓ a spirit of death and bloodshed (altar symbolizes dead people and the sacrifice of their live) = worship of the dead = commemorating of bloodshed.
 - ✓ a witchcraft spirit.
 - ✓ a spirit of racism.
 - ✓ a spirit of Nazism and Afrikaner Nationalism.
 - ✓ a religious spirit that brings spiritual death.
 - ✓ a spirit of oppression and domination.
- The doors of the monument were opened, by 12 Voortrekker children (6 boys and 6 girls) at exactly noon on 16 December 1949 when the sun's rays fell, for the first time on the symbolic cenotaph of "sacrifice".
- Dr. D.F. Malan, prime minister of the Union and leaders of the National Party delivered this historic address saying: "The hour has come. The sun's rays are resting on the cenotaph. It shines on that vow of dedication that now and always should be engraved deeply and indelibly on the heart of every Afrikaner: "We for thee South Africa".



1.3 Symbolism contained in the design of the Monument.

- **64 Wagons around the building** - Same number of Ox wagons that formed the protection at Blood River. They symbolise the protection against all foreign things that might threaten this altar and the ideals and everything that is important to the Afrikaner.

- **Mother and Children** - A primary feature / place of honour in front of the building, to honour the Voortrekker woman for her role and contribution to secure the white race in South Africa, keeping the bloodline pure. She therefore really represents white civilization that kept itself pure in the midst of the opposition of barbarism.
- **4 Voortrekker men** - Forms the corners of the huge building. It represents Piet Retief, Andries Pretorius, Hendrik Potgieter and unknown Voortrekker Leaders.
- **4 Wildebeest** - Represents the dangers threatening the white civilization – reference to Dingaan that told Piet Retief the noise he hears is his regiment of wildebeest. They are looking outward because the defeat of wild and barbaric influences is sure. The white civilized world will be victorious.
- **Buffalo head above door** - Northern Side = Symbol of defense as the buffalo is the most dangerous defender in the South African animal kingdom. It declares that the Afrikaner will still be on its guard to keep enemy / opposing elements away of this new established civilization.
- **Top Dome** - Has a whole in it, through which the sun shines on the cenotaph at 12:00 Midday, 16 December every year. This dome would be big enough to cover the whole building inside a sphere if extended. This symbolizes the greatness of the great dead commemorated. This would have presented the globe with South Africa right at the top. It was originally planned that a relief with a map of South Africa and the routes of the Great Trek would be engraved on this dome. A second inner Dome forms the walkway from where people can look down to the cenotaph and Hall of Hero's.
- **Zigzag pattern above windows** - Symbolise fertility / fruitfulness. Comes from old hieroglyph use of zigzag to symbolize water = fertility.
- **Hall or Hero's** - 100 x 100 x 100 feet in size. Historic Frieze telling the history of the Great Trek up to the independence of the 2 Boer Republics. It is said to be symbolic contract and proof that the Afrikaner is the owner of South Africa as he paid with blood, sweat and tears. It declares that this country belongs to the descendants of the Voortrekkers both physically and spiritually.
- The floor pattern of the Hall of heroes is a circular pattern moving outwards. 32 rays move out from the center. (32 is a significant number in Freemasonry). These symbolically show the influence and effect of the sacrifice for the country growing and reaching further. Also symbolizes so called white civilization increasing and growing.
- **Bottom Hall** - Contains the Cenotaph and lamp with fire that must never go out (From 1938 Torch bearing Processions). Bottom room = 130 x 130 feet in size (again the number 13 is also a significant number used in Freemasonic symbolism).
- **Cenotaph** (Altar) - Forms the center of the building and symbolizes the greatest sacrifice made by Piet Retief and his men (to die for their country?). They died at the hand of the Zulu King Dingaan. The cenotaph is a symbolic grave and resting place of these men. This altar is the center from where everything else extends concentrically. On it is engraved the words "Ons vir jou Suid-Afrika" (We [by implication will live and die], for thee South Africa).



1.4 **Recent History:**

- Yearly commemoration of the battle of Blood River between the Afrikaners and the Zulu warriors of Dingaan. 16 December each year. It consists of a church service and cultural activities with many people waiting to see the sun fall on the cenotaph at 12 midday.
 - Many other cultural activities are held on this site that is also part of a small nature reserve, in order to generate funds for the upkeep of the monuments and grounds.
 - The Amphitheatre north-east of the monument has been used extensively for political gathering during the Apartheid era, presently is used for concerts and cultural events.
 - The Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park has signed an agreement of cooperation.
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