

## A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE ORIGIN OF CERES GR 4



### FIRST INHABITANTS

The San were the first inhabitants in the Ceres Valley and Koue Bokkeveld area. They made special drawings, known as rock art and these can still be seen if you walk in rocky areas in the Warm- and Koue Bokkeveld.



### ROAD THROUGH THE SKURWE MOUNTAINS

The Mostertshoek Pass was built by a farmer, Jan Mostert, of the farm Wolwekloof in 1765. This road was used until Michell's Pass was completed in 1848. It was the first route into the valley.

The wagon wheel tracks can still be seen in the rocks today.

In 1846 to 1848 Andrew Geddes Bain built Michell Pass. Remnants of the road can be seen along the rebuilt Michell Pass. The pass made it easy for Ceres to emerge as a town as the Valley was much more accessible now.

The pass looks different today, because it has been widened and tarred (1988-1992).

About halfway up Michell's Pass stands the old historic Toll House. The Toll House was built after Michell's Pass was completed. From 1 January 1849 toll charges were collected here on animals and vehicles, just like at Du Toitkloof tunnel, where you have to pay a toll fee to use the road through the tunnel. The Toll House was declared a National Monument in 1972.



### AGRICULTURE

The first European farmers acquired farms in the Ceres valley from 1728. Among the first farms were Bokrivier, Leeufontein, Rietvallei, Ezelfontein, Houdenbek, Moerasvlei (Boplaas). Its important to note that at first farmers farmed with **livestock, grain, vegetables**, and that fruit trees were planted for their own use. The fruit industry only developed further from 1910.

### DEVELOPMENT OF CERES

Ceres evolved in two parts. During July 1849, the first plots of land was sold on the west side of the Dwars River, the area where the SPAR, ABSA Bank, and Court house stand. But then 5 years later the town was further expanded by cutting up plots on the east side of the Dwars River. It was part of the farm Rietvallei. I wonder if you know that the river that divides Ceres in two is called the Dwars River? The land on the east side of the Dwars River is where Standard bank, the Museum and Giovani's Fisheries are located. The founding date of Ceres as a town is 29 October 1849

Everywhere we read that Ceres is named after the Roman Goddess of Fertility, but research has shown that Andrew Geddes Bain, who built Michell's Pass, gave Ceres its name and that it refers to the village of Ceres in Scotland, close to where Mr Bain lived.

In 1969, a destructive earthquake took place in the Boland area including Ceres, Tulbagh, Wolseley, Prince Alfred's Hamlet. The strength of the tremor was 6.3 on the Richter scale. Roads, houses were damaged, and some destroyed. In the Ceres area, 1 person, Anna Witbooi, passed away. She lived in the Witzenberg Valley on the farm Ouplaas.



### WELL KNOWN PEOPLE FROM CERES:

There are some famous people who come from Ceres and its surroundings or lived here for some time:

*Dr Christiaan Barnard - Was the first person ever to perform a heart transplant. He was a heart specialist. Breyton Paulse - Springbok rugby player; De Wet Barry – Springbok rugby player Yolani Abrahams - TV chef; Simon Rademan – designer; Boerneef - famous author; Suzaan Steyn – TV and Radio personality; Ernst van Dyk – wheelchair racer and hand cyclist. Adrian Wildschutt – Athlete ; Jaiden Baron -Seven's Springbok rugby player.*