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AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS  
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/ 7March1994

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JOHANNESBURG

Dear comrade

We are writing to you in order to invite you to speak at a business forum and cocktails which will be held on Thursday 24 March 1994 at 5.45 pm.

The forum has been organised in order to target the business community of Germiston. It is essential that we address the concerns of the business sector. We hope that you will be able to attend and look forward to meeting you on the occasion.

Yours sincerely

John Morris -' :91 q-l thj (H)

Branch Secretary

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# PRIMROSE GOLD MINING COMPANY

The Primrose (Euld Minn having been dormant since 192th started npnralinns again on 13 luly 1934. under the (:nnlml 0f the Boshnff Group. Several owners haul worked on the mine nmr the thirty-year puriml prinr (u 1926.lhduy. more than fifty years Inter. Primrose! is still npnruting and the BushnH' (imup has (Alrudml muru than twenty million Hinds" north ul- :uId from (he supposedly "(I(md" mine. Thu mine Hus slnrlvtl un .1 th'slrinu huduol with about lnrlx pmmlu: lqux' Primrnsv (-mplms about 450 lwnplu uml wrurs us upuruliunul ht-ud- -4... "w

i PRIMROSE

\_ FOLD MINING C&LTD.

quarters for the Boshoff Group. which employ: more than 1 200 people. Primrose is mm of th smaller (:nmpunies quoted on the luhunnushur Stock Exchange.

The opening (zernmony 0f Primrose in 1934 wa. attended by 250 guests. and a similar number 0' gunsts recently amt-ndud the 30th anniversary 0' hnunu the guests a this funLtinn worn the Mayor and the Member 0 Parliament for (mrmismn.

In thn neurnt t(elmisiun pruumnm- "1922". MW uml spunus worn shut at tho Primrusu mine (set

Although Germiston as a settlement is 100 years old this year, the land it stands on is mentioned in official documents that are considerably older than that.

One such early mention came in 1849, when Johan George Meyer exchanged an ox-wagon for the farm Elandsfontein. named after a spring that provided water for large herds of eland.

Until Pretoria was founded in 1855, the nearest settlement to the farm was Potchefstroom.

The next mention came in 1885, when Mr Meyer rented out the farm to a person whose name has not come down to us, in exchange for ten bags of grain and twenty rolls of tobacco.

Then, in 1886, the area found itself in sudden and urgent demand, thanks in the first place, to the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand, and then to the arrival of the two men who founded Germiston. John Jack and August Simmer.

What brought these two Harrismith merchants to the area was gold fever, a fever that swept the entire country after prospector George Harrison. having discovered the Main Reef gold-bearing series in July 1886, said cautiously: HI think it is a payable goldfield

South Africa of the 1800s was no stranger to gold-rushes - in 1886, Pilgrims Rest was already booming - but the

Witwatersrand rush eclipsed them all. And of all the hopeful people on whom Lady Luck smiled, few were luckier than John Jack and August Simmer.

With the proceeds of their trading operation in Harrismith they were able to buy a half-share in the farm Elandsfontein, a bleak spot that they agreed was a natural crossroads and therefore an excellent place to start a trading station.

Within weeks, President Paul Kruger caused them to change their plans when he declared the entire Witwatersrand area public diggings.

Simmer and Jack lost no time in floating a company with a capital of £75 000, to start the first gold-mine in the area. The company was registered in August 1887 and started milling in September 1888.

Next to their mine the two men laid out a township which, in honour of John Jack's boyhood home, a farm near Glasgow. they

called Iermistoun. (The name Elandsfontein was used for the settlement as a whole until 1904.) Simmer Street and Jack Street they named after themselves. President Street was for President Kruger, Victoria Street for Queen Victoria and Meyer Street for the farms original owner. At first, these streets were lined with nothing more than a motley collection of tin shacks, dusty tents and wagons, but as the weeks went by, the nucleus of a shopping area appeared. Soon Germiston even boasted an extension called Georgetown, and several double-storied buildings, Elandsfontein Junction, as Germiston station was known until 1903, became important as a railway centre five years after town status had been granted to the settlement in 1887. In that year, 1892, the railway line between Vereeniging and Germiston was completed, followed a couple of months later by the line linking Germiston and Pretoria. The importance of Germiston was realised early and thus was the reason the British troops occupied the town on 29 May 1900, during the Anglo-Boer War. (They captured the station in full working order. complete with eighteen locos and two hundred trucks.) Growth has been steady throughout Germiston's history. In 1903 the settlement was proclaimed a municipality under its first Mayor, Mr James Blane. In 1917 it became the first local authority in South Africa to lay out its own industrial townships, Industries West and Industries East. Four years later the Rand Gold Refinery - the largest in the world - was established, followed ten years later by the Rand Airport, jointly controlled by Germiston and Johannesburg. The one-time mining settlement was elevated to the status of a City on 19 October 1950.

The South African maize wet-milling industry was established ' in 1919 in Germiston for the purpose of processing maize for the manufacture of cornflour, a wide range of starches, dextrins and glucose syrups.

The modern Germiston plant manufactures starches, malto-dextrins, glucose, maltose and dextrose syrups, dextrose monohydrate, maize germ, high protein gluten meal, gluten feed and corn steep liquor. These are produced for use in paper making, the manufacture of corrugated packaging materials, textiles, mining, confectionery production, beer brewing for baking and for the manufacture of instant coffee and coffee creamers, jams and preserves, pharmaceutical preparations, soft drinks as well as numerous AFRICAN PRODUCTS (PTY) LIMITED

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other products, including building materials. The co-products, namely high-protein gluten meal, gluten feed and corn steep liquor, are largely used in the preparation of animal feed compounds.

The Germiston Mill processes approximately 140 000 tons or 34 000 000 randst worth of maize per year and provides jobs for 450 people. It forms part of 'l

African Products (Pty) Ltd, which, with its associate mills in Meyerton and Bellville, is the largest wet-milling operation on the African continent.

We are proud that the pioneers of the wet-milling industry chose Germiston in which to build the first plant, proving how far-sighted they were 67 years ago.

In 1917,  
with war  
raging in  
Europe,  
it was  
understandable  
that industry  
in South Africa  
should have  
been booming.  
Back in 1917, when Germiston's  
city fathers laid out an industrial  
township that they called  
Industries West (which was soon  
followed by Industries East),  
they were making both history  
and pointing prophetically to  
the way in which their town  
would develop.  
They were making history,  
because until that time no other  
local authority in South Africa  
had demarcated an area for the  
exclusive use of factories and  
provided it with water, power  
and railway sidings; and they  
were pointing to the future.  
because industry has continued  
to play an important part in the  
story of Germiston.  
In 1917, it was understandable  
that industry in South Africa  
should have been booming - the  
war raging in Europe had dried  
up the supply of imports from  
overseas, putting pressure on  
local entrepreneurs to come up  
with the goods needed by,  
among others, the gold mines.  
Germiston, strategically placed  
as the focal point of rail and  
road services on the Reef - the  
city is the most important  
railway junction in the country  
- was in an ideal position to  
benefit from the ill winds of  
World War 1.  
In this it was helped  
immeasurably by its railway  
links with the rest of the  
country. The completion of the  
railway line between  
Vereeniging and Germiston on  
15 September 1892. and that  
between Germiston and Pretoria  
on 1 January 1893. sparked off a  
wave of development in  
Germiston that the town's  
position close to the biggest gold  
mines in the world did nothing  
to hinder.  
The first industry on the scene,  
apart from gold and gold-related  
services. was South Africa's  
clothing industry. This was born  
in Germiston in 1914, in a Knox  
Street factory that had four  
sewing machines. 30 popular  
did the factory's wares prove  
that it was soon obliged to  
extend its premises to cope with

the growing demand for its clothing.

Encouraged by a Government decision to impose tariff restrictions on imported clothing, other entrepreneurs soon joined the pioneer enterprise, helping form an industry that in the space of a few years had grown to number hundreds of factories in its ranks.

Other industries were not slow to follow clothing's path to Germiston. Textiles, furniture, plastics, paper, electrical and metal products all established themselves in the City, earning it the name of Workshop of the Witwatersrand.

Food-related industries, including processing plants for maize, glucose, oil, cattle-feeds and canned goods, also established themselves in the former mining settlement.

On the heavy-industry side, the city is home to vast railway structural workshops and manufacturing and assembly plants for rolling stock and aircraft.

Indeed, so diverse are the more than 1 000 industries that have established themselves in Germiston, that it would be easier to list the commodities that are not made in the City, rather than those that are!

Topping the list in importance are probably general and electrical engineering and structural steelworks, with chemicals and industrial gases and glassworks not far behind. And, of course, Germiston is also known as the place where the world's richest gold mines have their gold refined, at the Rand Gold Refinery. Through this one refinery passes three-quarters of the gold mined in the world.

Ironically, although so much gold passes through Germiston, the metal is no longer mined there in great quantities. By the end of 1962 the Simmer and Jack mine had milled about 64 000 000 tons of ore and produced 448 000 kg of gold; it stopped operating in 1964 and when it began again in 1965, it did so on a limited scale.

Gold was the reason why Germiston was born and it has played a central role in the City's development. But Germiston's prosperity has not depended on the precious yellow metal for many years. Several other factors have led to



and helped maintain that prosperity. Among them have been:

0 Germiston's central position. It borders Johannesburg and is within easy reach of both the East Rand and the West Rand;

0 The City's excellent rail facilities. Germiston is where seven main lines converge, from Durban, Port Elizabeth, East London and the Northern and Eastern Transvaal. The City's close links with rail are commemorated in its coat of arms, on which two transverse lines represent railway lines;

0 By way of the Rand Airport, to the south-west of the City, and Jan Smuts International Airport, which adjoins its northern boundary, Germiston is in quick, convenient contact with the rest of South Africa and with the world;

0 Witbank, a major source of South African coal, is only 100 km away, and Vereeniging, another source, is even closer;

0 The long-standing policy of the city fathers, as been to make their city as attractive as possible to industrialist

This policy, with

Germiston's character as an

industrial centre is still in evidence today: the emphasis now, however, is no longer on attracting heavy industry but on attracting the lighter types of warehousing, for instance. Some areas have already been zoned for this purpose. .

And so, as Germiston starts its second century, it continues to produce a mind-boggling array of goods - from metal detectors to copper capillary tubes, from wine bottles to cranes, the odds are that Germiston makes it. The odds are also that the way the City develops will continue to justify Germiston's nickname - Workshop of the Witwatersrand.

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