

Lapalala Wilderness School officially opens new school building

More than 30 years after the Lapalala Wilderness School was founded by Clive Walker and Dale Parker, it officially opened its doors to the new school building on Saturday, 26 November 2022.

The superb eco-built campus has been funded by the Parker family and the Mapula Trust, under the guidance and direction of Duncan Parker, son of Dale Parker, with the assistance of Gianni Ravazzotti and the Italtile Foundation.

The sustainable design of the new school building makes efficient use of space and energy, with minimal impact on the natural surrounding landscape. Beautiful, rammed earth walls made with soil from on-site excavations are a feature of the campus.

The official opening was attended by the Patron, Clive Walker, the Parker family, existing clients and donors, board members and the media. A choir from

the local Mphari High School entertained guests and distinguished thought-leader, entrepreneur and academic, Dr Reuel Khoza, gave a powerful keynote address.

"Education should be diverse and varied. That is good for human development. There is also massive capacity for education that is focused on conservation and enjoys greater resonance with the wilderness. Attention should also be given to industrialisation and commercialisation. The healthy balance among these constitutes what in governance terms is seen as the interplay among People, Planet and Profit; a requirement for human sustainability.

The Lapalala Wilderness School is, in this regard, a small but significant

project," according to Dr Khoza.

After Dr Khoza's address, the ribbon was cut by Clive Walker and Duncan Parker and a plaque in memory of Dale Parker unveiled, followed by a guided walk around the new school grounds.

The Mission Statement of the school is: "To help our children and young adults discover the value of biodiversity in our natural world and our place within it and to identify and nurture Africa's future conservation champions."

Children from neighbouring local communities are fully sponsored, and fee-paying schools come from various parts of South Africa to attend courses at both primary and secondary levels.



Two Mayors listening to the opening address: Nico Pienaar Mayor of Lephalale Local Municipality and Marlene van Staden, Mayor of Modimolle/Mookgophong Local Municipality

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