

## SELF-GUIDED CYCLING AND HIKING AROUND TOWN

### HOW IT WORKS

- Call us in advance to arrange your briefing and outing. We can provide a guide if asked.

#### o What to do

- The "breakfast ride" is always fun – the streets are quiet and shady, with nice places to stop for refreshments and breakfast.

- The evening ride is enjoyable too, especially in summer when it cools off.

- Allow at least one hour for the town circuit by bike, two hours on foot.

- Follow the map we give you – although of course you can set your own route!

- It is advisable to carry a cellphone to call us for guidance. Our number is 056 8181814 or 082 4758767 or 084 245 2490.

#### o What to take & what to avoid

- **DO have a lock for the bike**

- **DO have a town map**

- **DO take money**

- **DO wear a helmet**

- **DO NOT ride in the main road, which is dangerous**

- **DO NOT leave unlocked bikes unattended**

- **DO take water to drink and put on sunscreen**

#### o Catering

If you require catering at the end of a long day of cycling or hiking, make arrangements with Reception. We can arrange nutritious potjies and also light meals.

### ASK FOR A MAP BRIEFING

**There are many on-road and off-road bike trails!**

**New routes are still being recorded by GPS**

**OTTERS' HAUNT**

[info@otters.co.za](mailto:info@otters.co.za) [www.otters.co.za](http://www.otters.co.za)

Tel/fax 056 8181814 082 475 8767

**2km from Parys on tar, accommodation available**



# PARYS TOWN BIKE & HIKE SELF-GUIDED TRAIL

Parys is a delightful small town which has become a tourism centre. It offers scenic walks and rides on easy roads which can be selected to avoid traffic. With its quiet riverside lanes and old irrigation community grid of roads, the town has historic appeal and contains many old buildings. A visit to the water reservoir overlooking the town offers a good view of both Parys and its adjoining township, Tumahole. (We organise township visits too with a guide).



## GET TO KNOW THIS PICTURESQUE TOWN!

Parys is genuinely the "Paris" of the veld, named by its original surveyor or after the French capital. Schilbach was a German who had fought in the Franco-Russian war of -1870 – 1871. The Vaal river somehow reminded him of the Seine! At "Petit Paris" (little Paris) on Carl Preller avenue (F-G) the famous Crater Cruise mountain bike race ends where an Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe and Obelisk are to be seen.

### IRRIGATION GRID

The large grid of squared-off roads to the west side of the town (C-F-D) mark what was formerly irrigation plots with vegetable gardens and cultivated fields. Some of the old houses that stood on those plots have been renovated as suburban houses today. A remnant of those years at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and later is the tradition of the "Lyvoor" (free water that runs in the gutters, carefully controlled by the municipality). Houseowners can tap off what they need for their gardens.

### RIVER FRONTAGE

It's pleasant to ride along the riverside (B, J-K), admiring the properties that look over the Vaal. Parys was, and remains, a retirement village with many old age homes in the suburbs. Down at the river, properties are changing hands for millions as Gautengers move in to invest or buy holiday homes.

### FIRST PEOPLE

A few remaining Bushmen or Khoi have been seen living as tramps amongst the scraggy bluegum forest near the town cemetery (near C). The Bushmen are the tragic last remnants of the hunter bands who roamed the Bergland and plains in centuries gone by and became a "problem" to later tribes and farmers because of their habit of treating stock as fair game- and were hunted themselves.

### AFRODOME

At the top end of Allenby Street (C-D) is the veterinary hospital and over the road, the Afrodome, one of the largest indoor stadiums in the Southern hemisphere. Over weekends there is usually activity, and at certain times of the year, horse shows are held here. Ride in and ask around for what is happening.

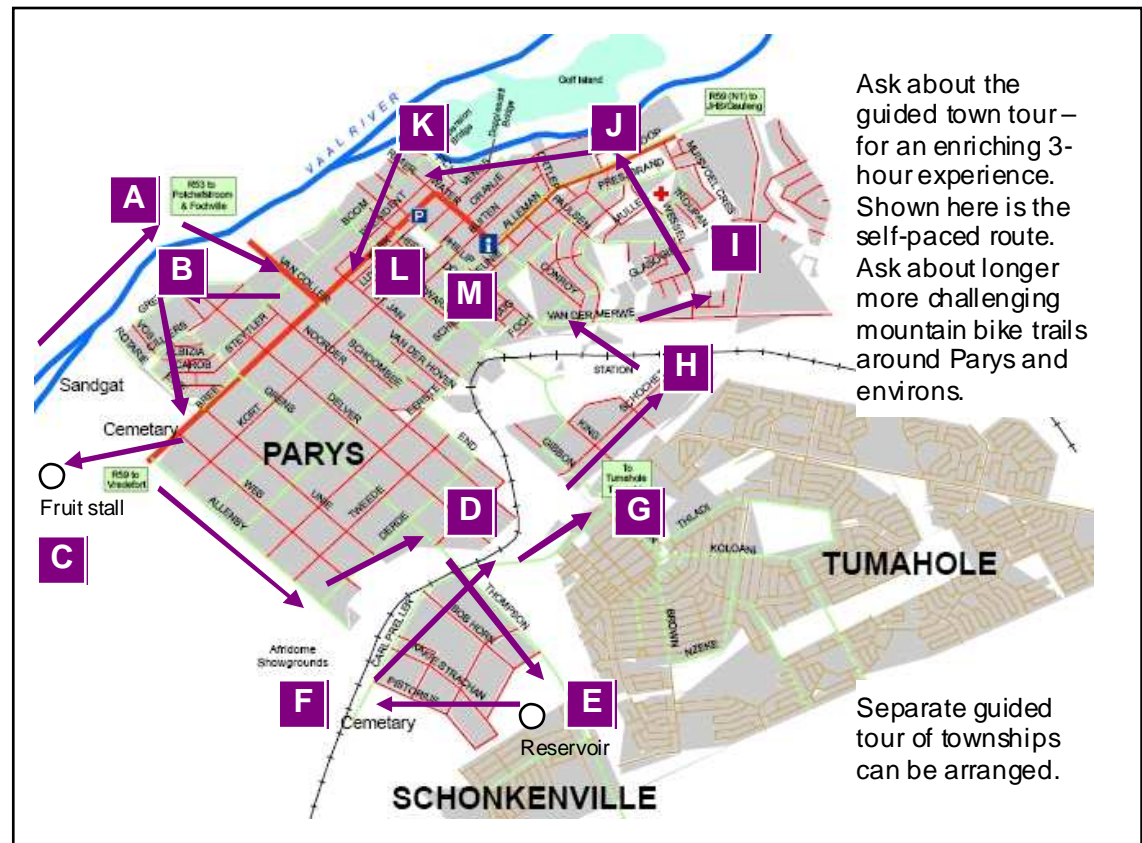
### TOWN SIGHTS

The suspension bridge at K was built in 1919, replacing the ferry, and is high enough to avoid floodwaters.

Interesting historical sites when you visit Parys include the main Ned Geref church, built in 1899. Its tower was used by British forces to spy out Boer guerillas and call down the artillery on them. Also see the tiny Anglican Church, built of blue granite by the British. There is a war memorial in front of the town hall, and the Parys museum which is run by a group of residents but lacks funding.

### ART & ANTIQUES

Many elegant old pieces of furniture are finding their way onto the market, restored or just as they were, as platteland families sell off the family heirlooms and move to the cities. The main street of Parys is a dragstrip of coffee bars, knick-knack and home industry outlets, estate agents, and museums and art galleries.



Ask about the guided town tour – for an enriching 3-hour experience. Shown here is the self-paced route. Ask about longer more challenging mountain bike trails around Parys and environs.

Separate guided tour of townships can be arranged.

## PARYS BIKE TOUR – about 1.5 hours at cruising / gazing pace

- A – Ride 3km from Otters, cross Vaal bridge into Parys
- B – Turn right into Boom Street, right again down to the river
- C – Ride up through suburb, turn right on main road, go to Fruit Stall for refreshment
- D – Ride up Allenby to the Afrodome horse stadium, then along Defoe to Grens
- E – Up Grens to the top, then to main water reservoir at top of hill (turn onto gravel)
- F – Down off-road paths past cemetery to Carl Preller, go along into lower township
- G – Turn left in township, past church, right along Schocket to open field
- H – Cross field to old railway station, then along Van der Merwe
- I – Go through suburb, missing hospital, down to the river
- J – Follow river road to end of Boom street, turn up to town
- L – Stop in town for refreshment or a meal. Many coffee bars along main road.
- M – Visit town sights such as Museum (by arrangement), NGKerk, art & antique shops.