

Magical Matjiesfontein

The Lord Milner Hotel
Transport Museum
Tweedside Lodge
12
The Laird's Arms Pub
MATJIESFONTEIN

**Discover the enchantment of
Matjiesfontein and the Lord Milner Hotel**

**Immerse yourself in a charming
village filled with fascinating facts and
stunning visuals.**

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Looking for a winter weekend getaway?

Consider the Lord Milner Hotel for your accommodation, located in the charming village of Matjiesfontein, named after the local rush, that was utilized to create early floor mats.

The village is situated off the N1 in the Karoo, a two-hour drive from Cape Town, en route to Johannesburg, and near the turnoff to Sutherland. The village boasts breathtaking views and a serene atmosphere with plenty to explore. It is the ideal choice for a memorable winter holiday.



At the time of our visit, the Lord Milner Hotel had a mid-winter accommodation promotion, which included dinner, bed and breakfast for the cost of the standard bed and breakfast, as well. It was a great deal that you would not want to miss if presented next winter.

The main street divides the village into two areas.

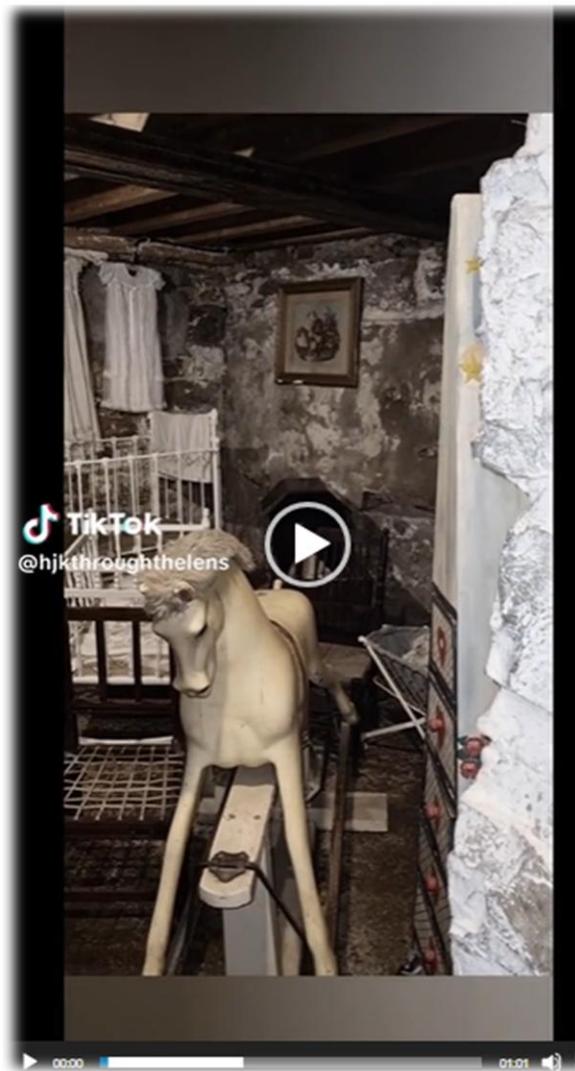
The railway line, Station Masters office, signal room, and Marie Rawdon Museum are located to the east.

The Lord Milner Hotel and adjoining accommodation, Lairds Arms, Matjies Mews, The Coffee House, The Losies Huis, Old Post Office, Old Bank Museum, The Transport Museum, Jail and Court House, Pink Church, cricket pitch, Travellers Chapel, Monument River, Raymond Cowley Gardens, Graveyard, reservoir and swimming pool are all located on the west side.

Accommodation, eateries, museums, other places of interest

The Marie Rawdon Museum

The museum is situated in the railway station building and covers the basement and ground floor. David Rawdon, the Laird of Matjiesfontein, was a frequent collector of Victorian artifacts. From personal and household items to antique war souvenirs, he collected a variety of objects. The museum is known as one of the most comprehensive privately owned museums and Matjiesfontein's second oldest.



The Railway Station

Visitors can visit the Station Master's office and Signal Room dating back to the late 1800's.

The station is no longer used as a formal railway stop, except for the Blue Train and Rovos Rail, allowing passengers to browse through the village.



The London Bus

The red Leyland double decker bus was purchased in 1976, restored and used for tours of the village. Johnny, the village entertainer, took us on one of the shortest bus tours, which departed at 17:15 from the Lairds Arms. Johnny brought his bugle to summon everyone to the bus.

The route goes along the main street, turning left past the Transport Museum, Court House and Jail, Pink Church, and the field that hosted the International Cricket Test between England and South Africa. Johnny's one-liners kept us all in good spirits.

Since our visit we heard that Johnny has passed away. A sad loss for all at Matjiesfontein.



The Coffee House

Logan's General Store was constructed in 1888 and is now home to the Coffee House. The menu includes daily servings of freshly made breakfast and lunch.

Seating is provided indoors and in the courtyard in the summer months.



The Losies Huis

Constructed in 1887 by James Logan as a hostel for travellers.

The Farm Stall is currently located here.



The Old Post Office

Olive Schreiner posted many letters from this post office and Edgar Wallace sent his Anglo-Boer War dispatches.

The Gift Shop now occupies the building and supports the local small businesses and communities.



The Old Bank Building Museum

The bank building was purpose-built by James Logan.

In June 1897 the African Banking Corporation (the predecessor to Standard Bank) opened for business.



The Lairds Arms

The interior of the place is remarkable with wooden panelling and well-worn floors that evoke a timeless feel.

The bar counter displays a 1902 cash register, and a large fireplace radiates warmth.

Johnny sat at the piano, entertaining everyone and encouraged them to sing along.



Matjies Motel and Mews

The motel rooms offer alternative accommodation to the Lord Milner Hotel, cozy and comfortable rooms with beautiful views of the gardens and the Monument River, ensuring an enjoyable stay for guests.

Room rates listed on the Matjiesfontein website.



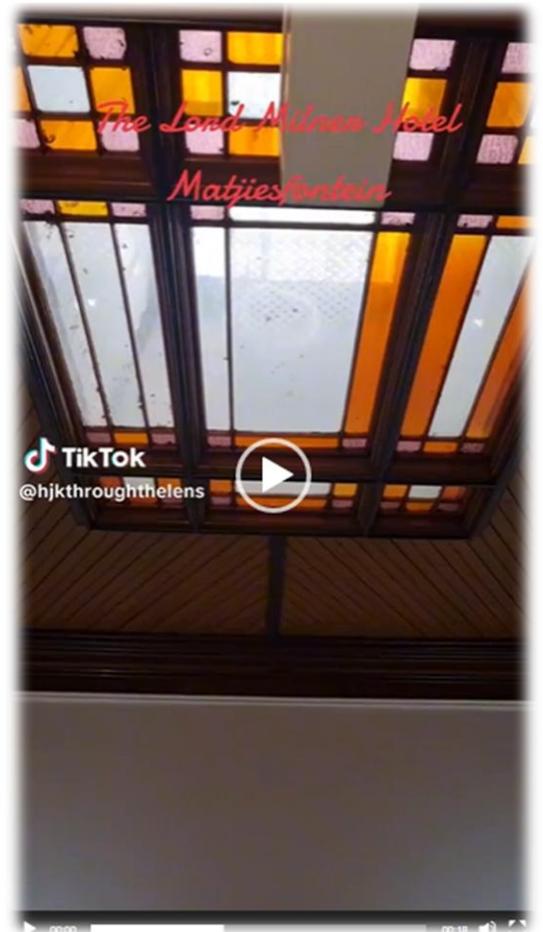
The Lord Milner Hotel

Built-in 1899 and renovated between 1968 and 1970.

The Lord Milner Hotel has a variety of rooms to accommodate a varied stay experience. The accommodation is comfortable, and the food served is entirely Karoo style. Dressing up for dinner is recommended.

The dining room ceiling has four ornate wooden panels. The dining room has a cast iron pillar that supports the ceiling. This pillar is one of only two in the world, with the other one located in Buckingham Palace.

Room rates listed on the Matjiesfontein website.



The Transport Museum

The museum is situated on the edge of the village and holds a collection of vintage cars from the 1930s to the 1960s. The cars on display range from Chevys, Dodges, and a Jaguar MK8. 2 Royal Daimlers used for King George VI's 1947 tour of South Africa. Antique bicycles, a fire engine, and fireman's outfits are on display.

A walk through the courtyard is a steam engine and carriages.



The Courthouse and Jail

The jail held the notorious Commandant Gideon Scheepers while waiting for his trial in Graaff Reinet in 1901. The jail proved its worth with two cells and an exercise yard that was protected by high walls with embedded broken glass.

David Rawdon, the previous Laird of Matjiesfontein, had his residence here.



The Pink Church

Built in the early 1900s, was the original school and concert hall for the village.

Continuing as a school through to the 1960s until the establishment of a new community school elsewhere in the village.

The church is a popular wedding venue.



The Monument River

Taking the stepping stones across the Monument River, you have arrived at the Raymond Cowley Gardens, which is where one locates the graveyard a water reservoir, and the swimming pool.



The Travellers Chapel

The chapel is in the Hotel Garden on the bank of the Monument River and was first used as the power plant to illuminate the village.

After the decommissioning of the power plant, it was transformed into a chapel and dedicated to George Rawdon.

The chapel is now a popular wedding venue.



The History of Matjiesfontein

Matjiesfontein owes its existence to the Cape Government Railways who decided to construct a railway line to connect Kimberley and Cape Town at the time of the Kimberley diamond rush. On the 1st of February 1878, the Matjiesfontein railway depot was opened.

At this time, James Douglas Logan was the superintendent of this stretch of railway. He purchased land surrounding the depot and due to his weak chest, he moved permanently and opened a refreshment station for the passing trains. He secured catering contracts from the Railways Company.

The climate of the region was conducive for people with lung issues, and Logan established a renowned Victorian Spa and Health Resort.

Points of interest in Matjiesfontein's history

Matjiesfontein was a stronghold for the British Army throughout the Anglo-Boer War. In 1899, James Logan constructed The Milner Hotel and used it as a military hospital for the British Army's 10,000 troops in the vicinity of the village.

Served as headquarters of the Cape Command. A variety of British Military Regiments, including the Seventeenth Lancers, The Coldstream Guards, and Middlesex Regiment, resided at Matjiesfontein.

Matjiesfontein was a refuge for the Jamieson Raid reformer Sir Leander Starr Jameson who led the abortive raid into the Transvaal to overthrow Paul Kruger's Boer Government in 1895.

Commandant Gideon Scheepers was one of the prisoners who were held in jail for controversial war crimes hearings.

The 1st International Cricket Match between South Africa and England was held. James Logan was one of the founding fathers of South African cricket. The English cricketer George Lohmann (1865-1901) is buried in the graveyard.

In 1947 the Royal family embarked on a 6-month Royal Tour of South Africa of which one of the stops was Matjiesfontein. The Royal Daimlers used during this stop are displayed in the Transport Museum.

In 1975 the village was preserved as a Heritage Site

Owners of Matjiesfontein and Famous Visitors to Matjiesfontein

<https://www.hjkthroughthelens.com/>

James Logan died in the year 1920 and he is buried in a small cemetery 10km from Matjiesfontein.

Famous visitors to Matjiesfontein included Cecil John Rhodes, Rudyard Kipling, Olive Schreiner, and the Royal Family on their South African Tour in 1947

David Rawdon was Laird of Matjiesfontein from 1968 to August 13th, 2010. From 1968 to 1970 he restored the property focusing on the hotel changing the name from Milner Hotel to The Lord Milner Hotel.

The village is now owned in a trust.



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Photo Exhibition

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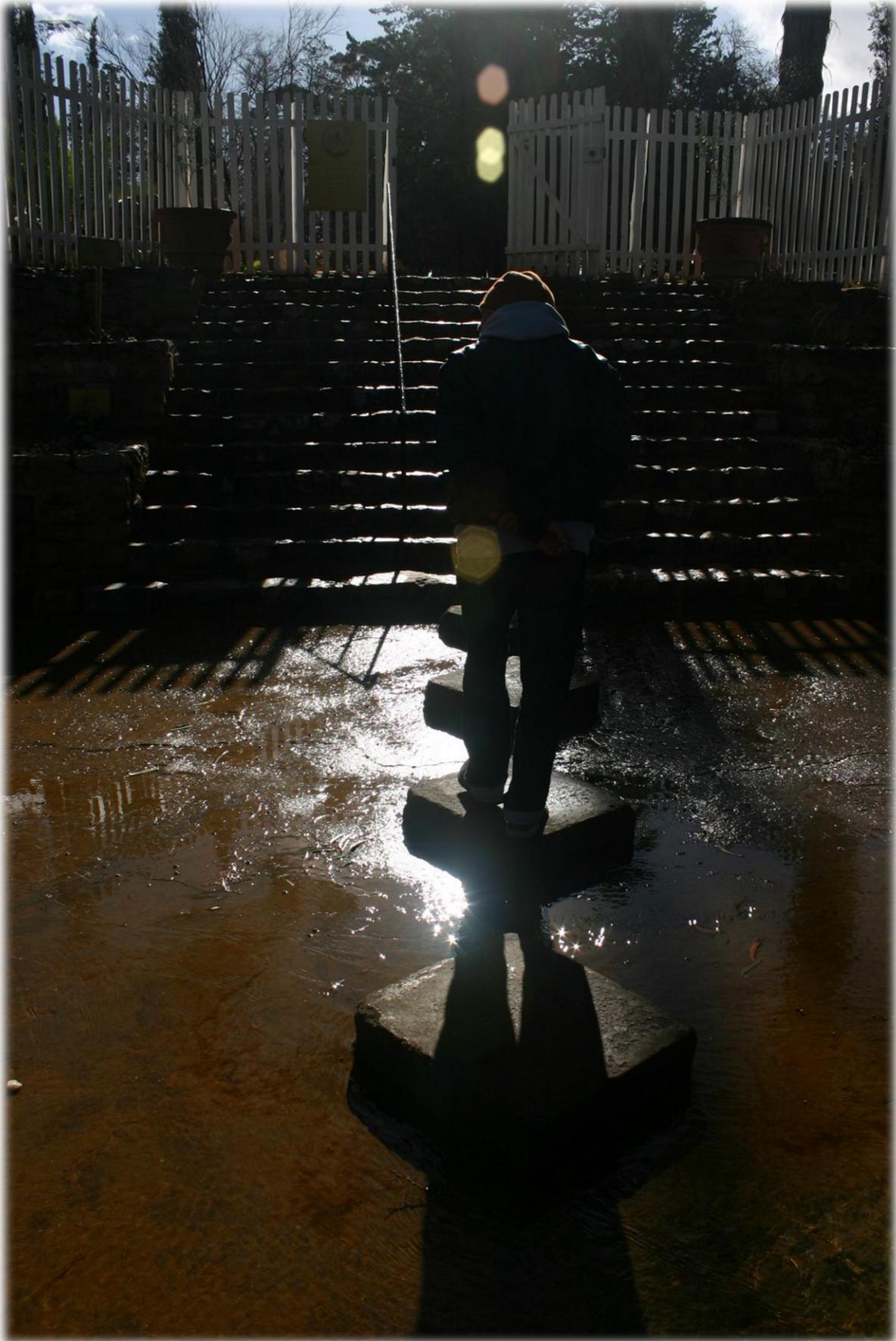


















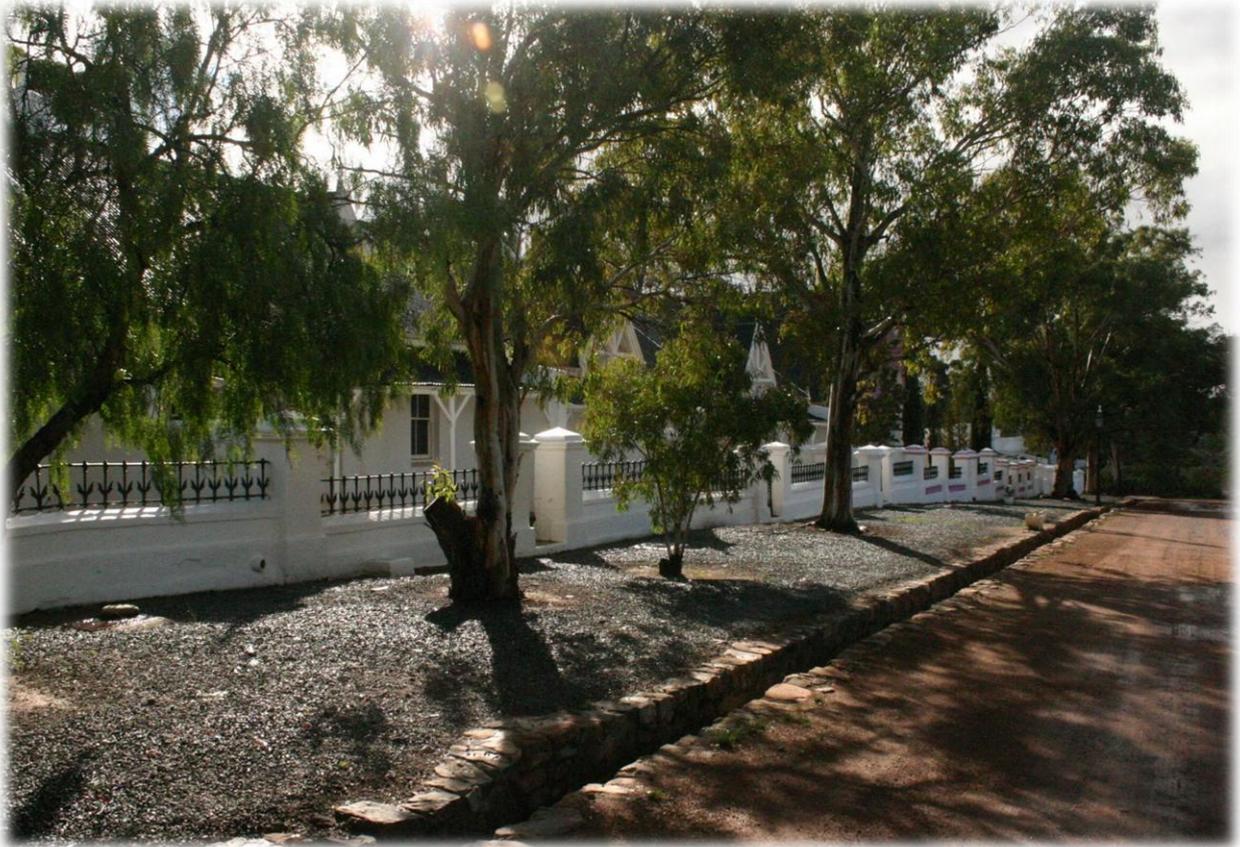












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