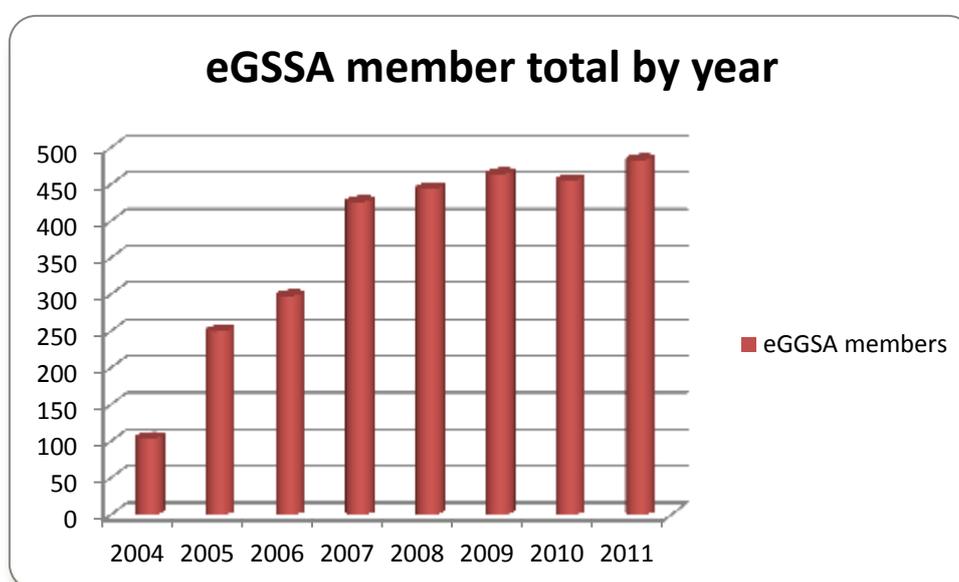


# The eGSSA Branch of the Genealogical Society of South Africa Annual Report – year ending 2011

## Membership

Membership at the end of 2011 stood at 295 eGSSA branch members and 188 members of other branches who have subscribed to Genesis and the other eGSSA services. This is a slight increase on the previous year.

The ratio of male to female members is pretty consistent over the years and stands currently at 270 male and 213 female members. The ratio of Afrikaans to English speakers is also much the same from year to year, currently 241 Afrikaans speaking members to 240 English speaking.



The great majority of our members, 387, are South African residents but we have substantial minorities from elsewhere in the world: 36 from Australia and New Zealand, 37 from Europe and 18 from North America.

## The GSSA Voters Roll Project

To support the GSSA Voters Roll project, the eGSSA Branch was allocated the letter **S** names and details to transcribe. On 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011 the **S** section was completed, all 296,668 entries. This wonderful effort was achieved by a team of 38 workers – please see the [Roll of Honour](#).

## Archive Photographic Service

Although the ban on photography at the Western Cape Archives is still in place, our service provides many document copies to GSSA members and others from the Bloemfontein, Pietermaritzburg and Pretoria Archives. During 2010 we received 246 orders for document photographs via our web site. The vast majority of these document copies will be suitable for making available in our [eGSSA Document Library](#) on the web site once volunteers have captioned them. Volunteers for this particular job are wanted badly. We hope that during 2012 this project will be re-organized and many of the files we have in reserve will be moved to the public Documents section of the web site.

## Genesis

Genesis was distributed five times during 2011 and a few new features were started: A Brick Wall column where readers can ask for help with their genealogical research; and a readers' feedback column.

During 2011 contributions, as always, were a little slow but we were nevertheless able to fill Genesis with the help of our regular contributors, to whom we are always grateful, but it would be nice to have some new ones during 2012.

The experience of 2011 has shown that producing a three monthly Genesis is difficult to achieve bearing in mind the personal workload of the team. By way of a compromise we will be distributing a full Genesis less frequently, but will produce some additional special editions in 2012.

The February issue will be distributed in the last week of February, followed by a special edition covering the weekend of the eGSSA hosted AGM. The workshop, AGM, Gala event and the Sunday grave photographing in Uniondale will be covered, hopefully accompanied by lots of photos.

In spite of the slowness of contributions we were always able to accumulate good articles from all over, some produced by members of the editorial team.

All in all we worked well as a team. I have a great team and am glad to say they are all prepared to continue as part of the team in 2012.

Judi Meyer.

## Bibles Project

This project was started in 2007 and has prospered fairly well. Towards the end of 2010 several photographing projects were set on foot by various branches of the GSSA, notably Durban and Coastal at the Old Court Museum, Natal Midlands at the Msunduzi Voortrekker Museum and at Sinodale Centre, North West at the Potchefstroom Library, West Gauteng at the Africana Library Johannesburg, and eGSSA at the Cory Library and Albany Museum. Most of these projects have now been completed and, in addition, also those of the Huguenot Museum in Franschhoek, but so far only the Durban, Old Court Museum collection has been added to the web site – volunteers are need to caption the rest.

There have also been a number of individual contributions from members and others. These records are unique and, particularly in private hands, are very vulnerable. Photographing them will not only preserve the information in them but, contributed to the [eGSSA Bible Collection](#), the photographs will make that information available to everyone.

## Newspaper Extracts

The collection of [South African Newspaper Extracts](#) was started by Sue Mackay who contributed her transcripts of 19th Century Newspapers.

Thanks to the generosity of the various transcribers, these have now been joined by extracts published on the Rootsweb genealogy mailing lists over the years, containing newspaper birth, marriage and death notices of recent years.

The list now includes: Die Beeld (Johannesburg, 2004 to 2012; Cape and Natal News 1858 to 1861; Daily Representative 1926 to 1939; Eastern Province Herald 1847 to 1856 and 1939 to 1945; Farmers Chronicle 1886 to 1891; Graaff-Reinet Herald 1852 to 1856; The Grahamstown Journal 1835 to 1853; The Independent on Saturday 2004 to 2005; Queenstown Free Press 1894 - 1898; South Africa, a weekly journal 1889 to 1922; The South African Commercial Advertiser 1824-1856; The Mercury 2004 to 2005; The Sunday Tribune 2004 to 2005; Die Burger Oos-Kaap 2005.

## The Gravestone Photograph Project

### EVALUATING THE TARGETS WE SET FOR OUR PROJECT IN 2011

In 2011 we had 3 targets to achieve:-

- Increase the total amount of published photos to 350 000
- 'Opening' 10 000 new photos every month to the public
- Reduce the turnaround time for publication to 4 months

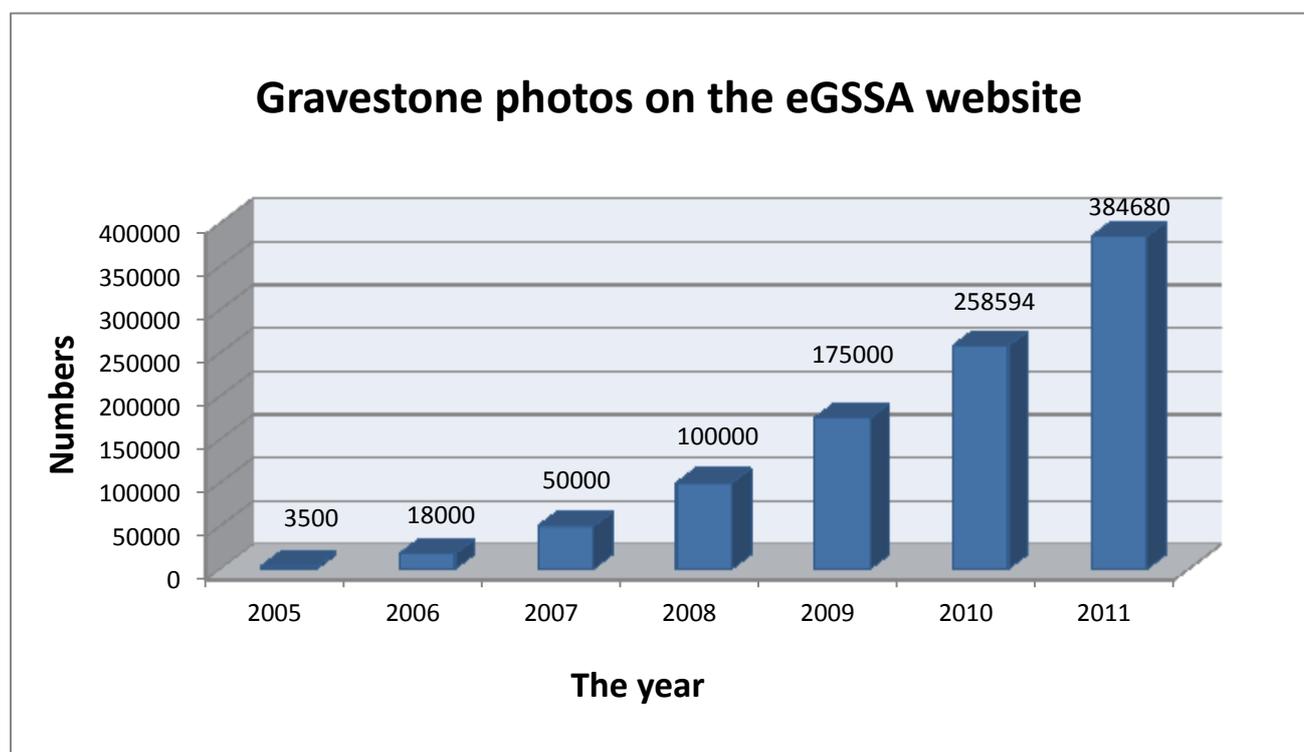
#### Did we achieve this?

On 18 September 2011 our photos crossed the 350 000 mark. We ended the year with 384 680 photos on the web. This equates to 126 086 new photos for the year 2011. We can, therefore, say that we achieved the target of opening at least 10 000 photo up a month.

As for reaching our goal of a 4 month turnaround time – that is debatable. In some instances we did manage to get it right.

Delays for publishing the photos are often related to:-

- The volume of photos arriving for the month
- The completeness / accuracy of the cemetery details provided with each submission
- The availability of the volunteers
- Computers playing up



## THE VOLUNTEERS

We should group the volunteers for the Gravestone Project in 4 categories:-

The photographers – They have done an excellent job. Apart from all the individual contributions we had wonderful support from other GSSA branches too:-

- Durban and Coastal – Stellawood, Queensburgh and other smaller cemeteries
  - Eastern Cape – the Carol Beneke contribution for Forest Hill and South End and other smaller cemeteries in and around Port Elizabeth.
  - Free State – various farm cemeteries
  - Johannesburg (Natalie mentioning our project on her radio talks)
  - Natal Midlands – couple of small cemeteries
  - North West – Potchefstroom main cemetery
  - Northern Transvaal – encouraging individual members to send their photos to us
  - Vaaltriangle – various farm cemeteries
  - Western Cape – Photographing various cemeteries in and around Paarl and Wellington
  - West Gauteng – we understood that their contribution is in the post, and looking forward to it.
- Volunteers captioning the photos.

The number of people doing all the captions – fluctuates! We started the year with about 80 captioners and we ended the year with 25. Some captioners are able to contribute many hours to this work while others can only manage less time, but all the contributions are essential to the project.

Depending on the clarity of the photos, and the complexity of the transcriptions it takes on average 3 – 5 minutes to mark one photo. Calculated at 3 minutes a photo, they spent at least 6 300 hours or 262 days last year doing the captions.

- The movers

There are 5 people moving all the photographs to the web site.

- They check the captions for obvious mistakes (we can no longer check each photo individually)
- They create sub-albums and move the photos into the ABC files.

- Lastly the indexing of the photos

Entering the cemeteries in the central Cemetery Index is time consuming on both the Photo and DVD side and this is also the place where the work bottle neck on the Photo co-ordinator's desk.

## 3. INTRODUCING OUR TARGETS FOR 2012

So what are our targets for 2012? This year we are going to take it easy!

- We are hoping to have 450 000 published photos on the web by end December
- We need to keep the volunteers motivated, so that they continue helping us on the project
- We would like to build on the relationships with the other branches to ensure that the cemeteries in their areas are recorded.

Alta Griffiths on behalf of her Gravestone Team

## **BDM Project**

This project was begun during 2009. A start was made in trying to establish where church and other registers may be found and consulted, as well as photographing and transcribing those where the custodians are happy for us to do this. During 2011 the Stellenbosh NGK transcripts (up to 1732) originally done by Ockert Malan and his team were added, plus indexes to baptisms up to 1815, as well as deaths and burials 1765-1946, all done by Ockert and Sasa Malan. We still have a number of church registers to transcribe if volunteers can be found. For more detail please see [The eGSSA BDM project](#) on the web site.

## **1820 Settler Correspondence**

This collection, transcribed and managed by Sue Mackay, is not unique to the eGSSA web site but we have tried to devise a convenient format for accessing the material, relating one letter to another, and searching the whole. Users of this site have the option of browsing the names of the letter writers and following any links to post 1820 letters or additional information on that settler, or of searching all names mentioned in the correspondence by using the Search facility. Sue has also started recently adding extra information from the Freedom of the City of London Admission Registers. [1820 Settler Correspondence](#)

## **Transcriptions - Passenger lists**

The Natal Immigration Board registers from Pietermaritzburg Archives Repository were photographed by John Deare of the Natal Midlands Branch. They consist of the following:

Volume 64 Register of Immigrants Arrived 1849-1852 (in fact only 1850 to 1852 now in this volume)

Volume 65 Register of Immigrants Arrived 1858-1874

Volume 66 Register of Immigrants Arrived 1874-1886

Volume 67 Register of Immigrants Arrived 1887-1902

Volume 69 Register of Immigrants Arrived 1903-1904

Volume 63 Register of Immigrants Arrived 1905-1910

(Volume 63 is described in the NAB Inventory as 'Register of Applications for Assisted Passages 1905-1911' but is, in fact, the continuation of the series of 'Registers of Immigrants Arrived')

Richard Wolfaardt and his team of transcribers have been very busy all year transcribing the lists of (we presume) assisted immigrants.

Published so far are the lists from 1850 to 1882 with more to follow soon.

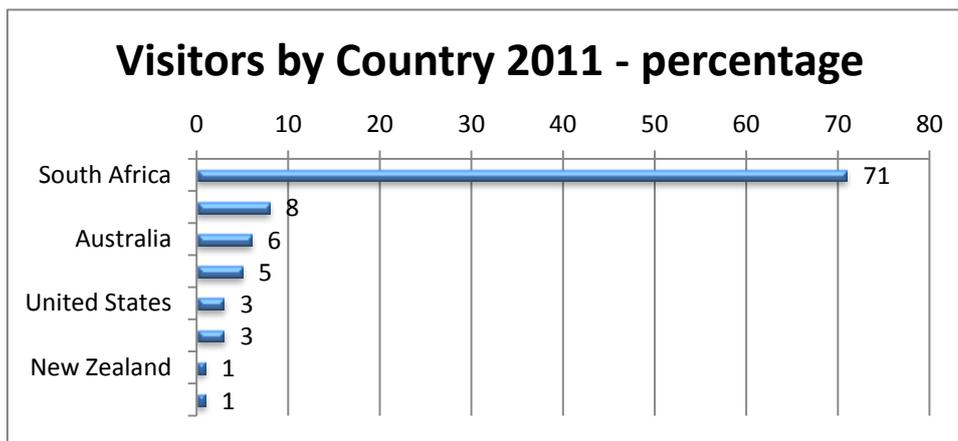
[The eGSSA Passenger Project](#)

## eGSSA Web Site

The eGSSA web site occupies about 50 Gigabytes of disk space and is housed on a dedicated server located in Chicago, USA. The vast majority of this disk space is taken up by our picture library consisting of Gravestones, Archive documents, Bibles, postcards and books.

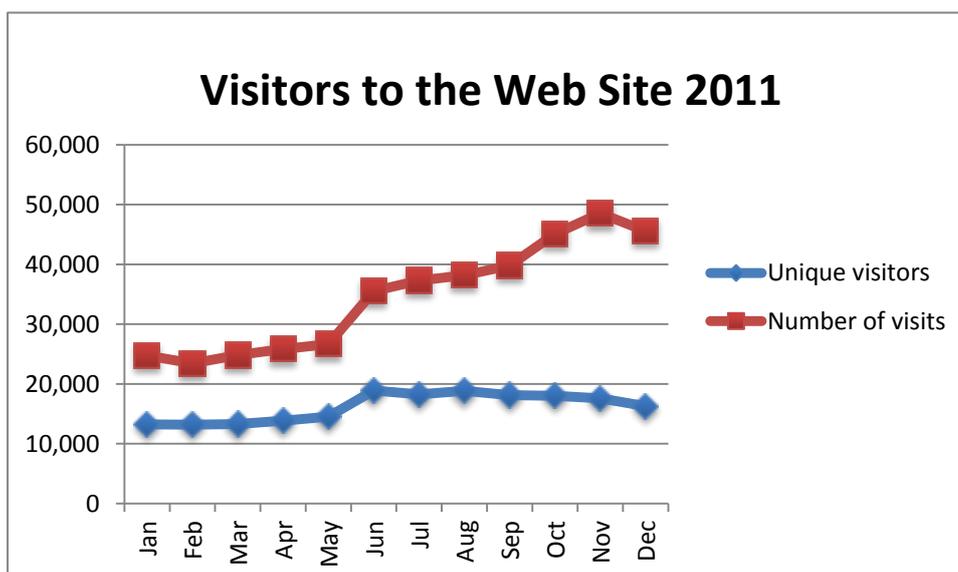
The average number of visits (one session of variable duration by one user) is currently around 1700 per day and the majority of visits are to the Picture libraries.

By far the vast majority of visitors are accessing the site from South Africa (71%), next are Great Britain (8%), Australia (6%), Canada (5%), USA (3%), Netherlands (3%), New Zealand (1%) and Switzerland (1%).

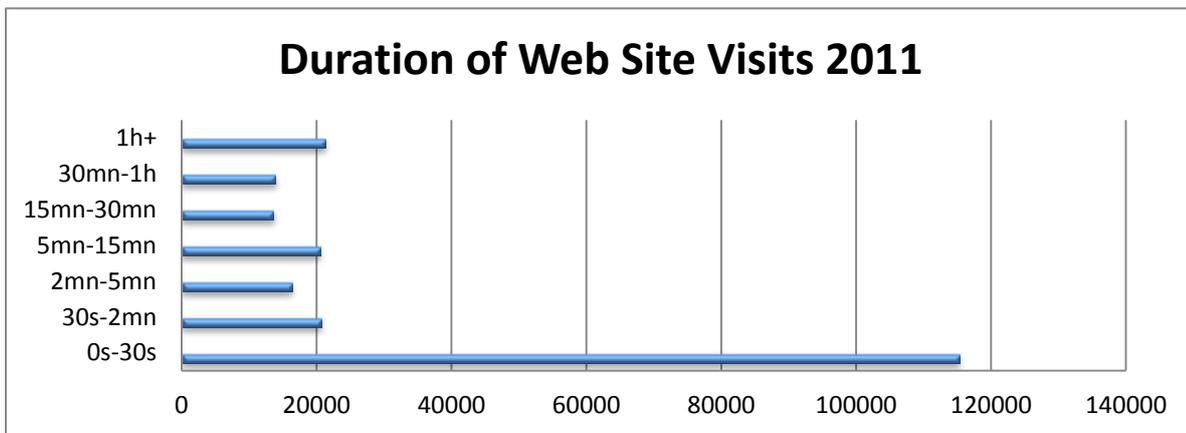


When looking at web site statistics, the important ones are the number of visitors and the number of visits. A visitor is you or me accessing the web site. A visit consists of one session of whatever duration where a visitor stays looking at the web site. During 2009 the eGSSA web site had a total of 127,405 visitors who made a total of 221,756 visits to the web site.

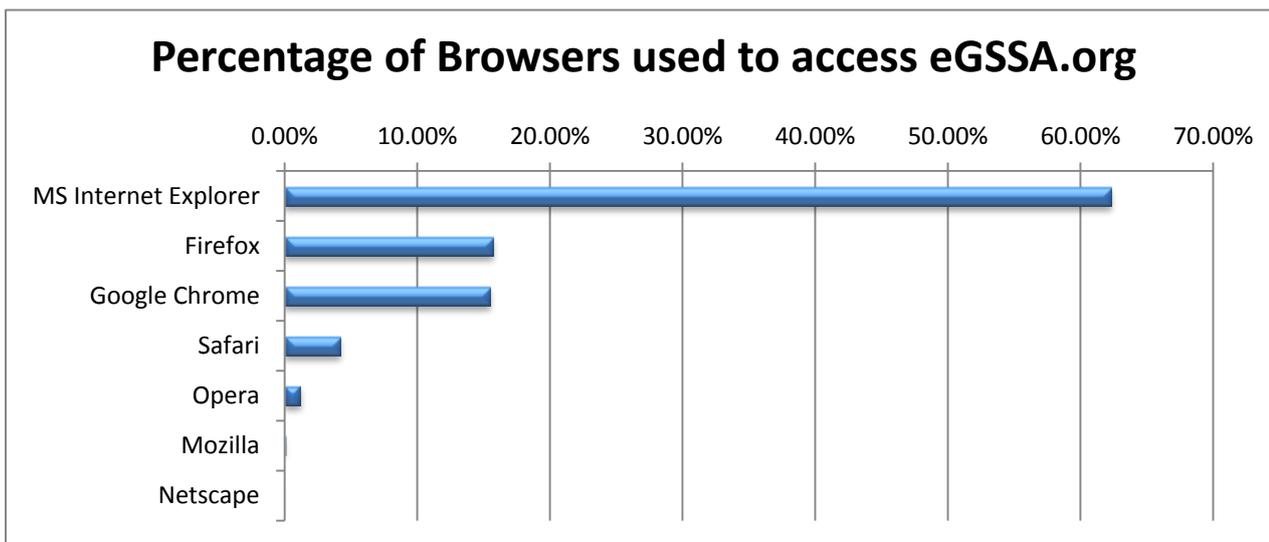
From the chart below it can be seen that the number of visitors and visits increased considerably during the year.



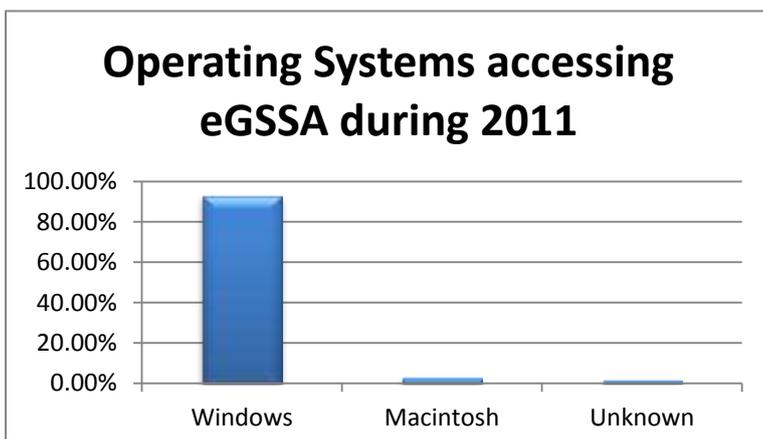
The duration of visits is very variable as can be seen from the chart below. One wonders about the large number of visits that lasted less than 30 seconds, but it is encouraging to see that at least a third of all visits last longer than 15 minutes.



There is often discussion about which web browser is better than another. Whatever may be the answer to that question it is clear which browser most of those who access the eGSSA web site are using,



And also which is the operating systems they use:



Together with Genesis and the Newsletter, the eGSSA Branch's web site is our main means of communication with our members and also the area in which our members are most easily able to contribute by providing photographs of gravestones, documents, Bibles and Postcards and also by captioning those photographs once uploaded, for the use of the whole genealogical community.

## Finances

The financial report covers the period 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2011. Both the income and expenditure of eGSSA increased during 2011 and a substantial profit of R23 147.60 for 2011 was made.

**Sale of GSSA and eGSSA Products:** GSSA products to the value of R31 294.00 (compared to R36 060.00 in 2010) were sold during 2011. The 10% commission on GSSA products has brought in a substantial amount. eGSSA CD products to the value of R16 381.00 (compared to R18 763.00 in 2010) was sold, however, a large amount of stock was purchased with the result that the profit for the 2011 book year comes to R7 822.99. We, however, will have substantial stock for sale at the 2012 AGM. It must be kept in mind that we purchase the majority of the eGSSA products for re-sale at a 10% commission. In some cases we act as a retailer selling genealogy products of private individuals and they do the packing and shipping of the items. See [Attachment 1](#).

**Archive document photos** to the value of R44 683.00 (compared to R31 928.00 in 2010) were sold and we thank our photographers who made this possible. It was also decided, during the last quarter of 2011, to increase the reimbursement of the archive document photographers for their work.

**Web Site:** The eGSSA web site cost R11 776.16 for the year (compared to R13 233.00 in 2010). This is a decrease of the 2010 cost. The cost of the website is a small amount considering that the web site is the back bone of eGSSA.

**Budget:** The budget for 2012 is very conservative with additional expenditure provided for the web site, IT hard and software to maintain the quality of the web site and the "Go Country" AGM in Uniondale the presentation of which eGSSA is responsible for in 2012. It is proposed that no increase in the eGSSA branch membership fees for 2013 need be considered.

DS Hamman  
GSSA Treasurer

## Conclusion

eGSSA has again demonstrated during 2011 that it has not only an important role to play within the GSSA, but also within the genealogical community at large.

eGSSA and its projects and functions are run by volunteers from its membership. Currently about thirty of our members help in this way and we therefore say a very big Thank You to all the volunteers who have given so generously of their time during 2011. Without you the eGSSA branch would not exist. Thank you for your hard work, perseverance and co-operation.

The eGSSA Management Team

# Genealogiese Genootskap van Suid-Afrika - eGGSA

## Genealogical Society of South Africa – eGSSA

Inkomste- en Uitgawestaat vir die Periode 1 Januarie tot 31 Desember 2011

Income and Expenditure Statement for 1 January to 31 December 2011

	2011	2010	2012
	R	R	Begroting/Budget R
<b>Inkomste/Income</b>			
Ledegeld/Membership fees 2011	7 360.00	7 205.00	7 000.00
Ledegeld/Membership fees 2012	4 120.00	4 700.00	4 000.00
Krediete - ekstra betalings vir verkope	-	-	-
Genesis 2011	8 180.00	7 370.00	8 000.00
Genesis 2012	4 270.00	4 190.00	4 000.00
Donasies/Donations	617.92	-	-
Rente/Interest	3 055.09	2 750.65	3 000.00
Argief Fotos/Archive Photos	44 683.00	31 928.00	40 000.00
Produk GGSA/Product GSSA	31 294.00	36 060.00	30 000.00
Produk eGGSA/Product eGSSA	16 381.00	18 736.67	16 000.00
Diverse/Sundry	680.00	4 926.92	500.00
<b>Subtotaal/Sub-total</b>	<b>120 641.01</b>	<b>117 867.24</b>	<b>112 500.00</b>
<b>Uitgawes/Expenditure</b>			
Bankkoste/Bank charges	2 483.66	2 156.05	3 000.00
Posgeld/Postage	2 132.36	181.28	3 000.00
Bemarking/Marketing	-	-	10 000.00
Webblad/Web page	11 776.16	13 233.80	14 000.00
Ander IT/Other IT	538.78	2 364.31	2 000.00
Telefoon/Telephone	-	-	-
Vergaderings/Meetings	4 800.00	513.00	5 000.00
Argief Fotos/Archive Photos	36 570.50	22 502.00	18 500.00
Produk GGSA/Product GSSA	28 164.60	32 454.00	20 000.00
Produk eGGSA/Product eGSSA	12 905.27	23 090.58	15 000.00
Diverse/Sundry	13 446.69	553.00	500.00
<b>Subtotaal/Sub-total</b>	<b>112 818.02</b>	<b>97 048.02</b>	<b>91 000.00</b>
<b>Netto Inkomste/Nett Income</b>	<b>7 822.99</b>	<b>20 819.22</b>	<b>21 500.00</b>

# Genealogiese Genootskap van Suid-Afrika - eGGSA

## Genealogical Society of South Africa – eGSSA

Balansstaat op 31 Desember 2011

Balance Sheet at 31 December 2011

	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>
<b>Fondse aangewend/Funds employed</b>		
Surplus oorgebring/Retained surplus	71 835.43	-
Surplus 2011	7 822.99	20 819.22
	<u>79 658.42</u>	<u>20 819.22</u>
<b>Aanwending van Fondse/Employment of Funds</b>		
Vaste Bates/Fixed Assets	Nil/Nul	Nil/Nul
Lopende Bates/Current Assets	Nil/Nul	Nil/Nul
Bankbalans/Bank Balance	77 561.16	64 585.29
Beleggingsrekening/Investment Account	50 357.04	45 000.00
	<u>127 918.20</u>	<u>109 585.29</u>
Rekeninge Betaalbaar/Accounts Payable	1 024.22	4 657.27
Rekeninge Verskuldig/Accounts Receivable	-	-
	<u>126 893.98</u>	<u>104 928.02</u>