

# The Weekly

## KOPANONG SPENDS THOUSANDS TO FENCE CEMETERIES

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Protecting the dead ... The Executive Mayor of Kopanong Local Municipality, Xolile Matwa with workers in a cemetery

The executive mayor of Kopanong Local Municipality, Xolile Matwa, has taken it upon himself to re-inculcate a sense of respect for the departed. Matwa visited cemeteries in the towns of Trompsburg, Phillipolis and Reddersburg this week, to assess the progress made in fencing and protecting the burial sites.

He pointed out that cemeteries are a symbol and a constant reminder of markers of human history, of all the love, sweat, toil, tears, joys and triumphs of the past.

“They are our links to the family members we never knew; they are a fountain of history and they tell us a lot about ourselves culturally and socially. Therefore, there is nothing sadder than seeing graves uncared for and degenerating.”

The project to fence the three cemeteries cost more than R600 000. The graveyards had been desecrated by both people and stray animals.

Matwa urged people to learn to respect the dead and stop trampling on graves and defacing them. “We have taken the first step of fencing and protecting our cemeteries, so we now plead with the community to join in the party by cleaning the yard, as a way of showing that respect for our departed loved ones. If people appreciated the sacredness of sepulchers, they would not use cemeteries as thoroughfares, and they would not leave their animals to graze on the burial grounds.

“In any event, I am happy with the progress of these projects. In Reddersburg, the job is between currently 60 percent done, while Trompsburg is 40 percent and it has only commenced in Phillipolis,” added Matwa.

About 60 jobs were created with 45 unskilled and 15 skilled people on site.

A local resident, Nandipha Sicketshe, told The Weekly that most families will be relieved after the fencing of the cemetery.

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“Although we haven’t experienced the problem of having our family graves vandalised, I really feel for those who have lost thousands in rebuilding their sarcophaguses.

“My neighbour slaughtered three sheep during a ritual to rebuilding her grandfather’s grave last year. We do not know if the grave had been destroyed by people or animals, but it cost the family a lot of money to fix it. The municipality is doing a good job here and I would like to thank them,” Sicetshe.

[Source: [www.theweekly.co.za](http://www.theweekly.co.za)]