



**The way we were:** Thatch has always been a strong architectural characteristic of Pinelands, as is seen in this picture taken in the early 1930s. Photo: Supplied

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**SIMONE SEPTEMBER**

**AFTER considerable controversy over the last two months, representatives of Girls' and Boys' Town used the Pinelands Residents' and Ratepayers' Association general meeting at Pinelands High School last week to "set the record straight".**

Invited as guest speakers, Pat Roberts and Howard Stevens of Girls' and Boys' Town respectively, said they welcomed the opportunity after a rumpus over the alleged "bad behaviour and anti-social manners" of the Girls' and Boys' Town youngsters erupted among Pinelands residents.

The speakers said that they had encountered much hostility and ignorant prejudice from some members of the Pinelands community, who labelled the young people unruly hooligans when they held a fundraising fashion show at the Howard Centre last month.

Pat Roberts, development officer at the youth organisation, said that Girls' and Boys' Town was not a reformatory or a prison.

"The children are and were not criminals. They are not street children from squatter camps, but come from every walk of life. They are at Girls' and Boys' Town because family life, or foster care, has been broken down by factors such as poverty, drugs, abuse, alcohol and more."

Roberts pointed out that all the youngsters at Girls' and Boys' Town were "carefully assessed to ensure that they would fit in with societal norms regarding discipline and the way of life".

"With no bars or locks, the children

stay at our organisation voluntarily, so Girls' and Boys' Town have a proud record of turning problem children into pillars of society," Roberts said.

Howard Stevens, the Girls' and Boys' Town regional training coordinator, said, "With our wealth of experience in dealing with discipline problems - we have dealt with conflict resolution, anger management and life skills at workshops at around 200 schools over the years - we always find that management intervention, rather than punishment, is the best way of dealing with behaviour problems, which are universal."

Pinelands Ward Councillor Brian Watkyns subsequently took the podium to deliver a brief illustrated history of Pinelands as the first garden city and the first planned city in South Africa.

He pointed out that Pinelands was "world-renowned", with many overseas students coming to study it as a model garden city.

"Because Pinelands also has a unique and special character, with a rich history as the most integrated suburb in Cape Town, according to recent media reports. I have now taken the initiative to apply for the original, historic part of Pinelands to be declared a heritage area," he said.

An exco member of the Pinelands Residents and Ratepayers' Association, Riad Davids, then spoke briefly about the upcoming plans to upgrade Oude Molen.

"Ideas for the upgrade include turning the area into a green eco-village, complete with shops, residences and a recreational area. The historic Manor House could also then be used as a cultural centre," Davids.



**As we are today:**

Despite the changes that come along with the times in which we live, thatched roof homes are still a clear favourite in the Pinelands area, as is seen by this thatched roof in Central Avenue.

**Pinelands**