Herero society in Namibia continually draws from a bundle of loose characteristics - related to behaviour, clothing, ritual, food, or other things - which are combined in various ways to form stereotypes of what is considered to be 'Herero'. One of the occasions where unconnected characteristics come to be grouped together into what is defined as typically Herero is the annual Herero commemorations of the dead. This article discusses the way in which these ceremonies construct and proclaim an ideal type of Herero society. It gives a description of the 'Otjigreenie' ceremony held at Okaseta on 17 and 18 August 1991, as observed by the author, outlines the history of these commemoration ceremonies, sketches the involvement of the Herero in informal ethnographic endeavours regarding their culture and society, and describes what appear to be some of the essential features of the Herero commemoration ceremonies. The article shows that the commemorations serve a threefold function: they allow Herero society to process and overcome traumatic events of the past; they lay claims to the land; and they are a site where, through performance, an ideal type of a united and harmonious Herero society is presented.