



NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPE TOWN BRANCH OF THE SIMON VAN DER STEL FOUNDATION NO 1 2016

NUWE LEDE/NEW MEMBERS

Ons wil graag die volgende nuwe lede hartlik verwelkom by die Stigting Simon van der Stel:
We wish to welcome the following new members to the Simon van der Stel Foundation:

Mr C Brand, Ms B Feldman, Ms H Theunesen, Mr & Mrs L van Dessel, Ms N van't Riet, Mrs S Gladwell,
Mrs A Roodt, Mrs K Crane Briggs, Mr E Coetzee

DONASIES/DONATIONS:

Ons bedank graag vir die volgende lewenslede en gewone lede vir donasies ontvang.
We are extremely grateful for the donations received from our life and general members:

Mr & Mrs Furness, Mrs S Collins, Mrs EJ King, Mrs H Glennie, Mr R Thorp.

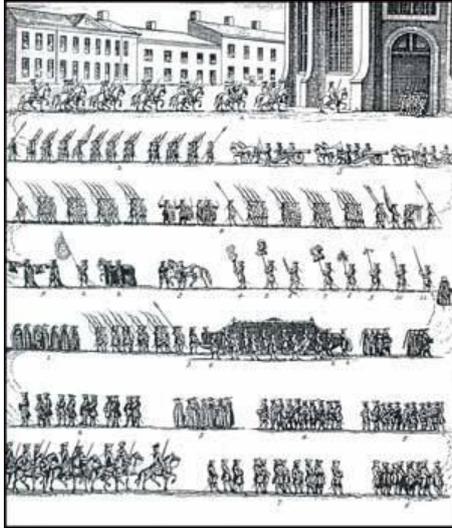
VAN REEDE VAN OUDTSHOORN VAULT

On October 1st John Muir and Steve Townsend will be leading us on a tour of the Faure / Wilkinson Street area of Gardens during which we will be seeing the outside of the Van Reede van Oudtshoorn Vault. I thought it would be interesting for members to know a little more about the family.

Baron Pieter Van Reede van Oudtshoorn tot Nederhorst,
Born the son of a nobleman in Utrecht, Pieter was Lord of Oudtshoorn, Ridderbuurt and Gnephoek, the only son of Barend Cornelis van Reede van Oudtshoorn (1690–1750) and his wife Catharina Cornelia van Eys. Pieter was also the heir of William Ferdinand Carey, the 8th Baron Hunsdon, son of William Carey and Maria de Vlamingh van Oudtshoorn, Pieter's aunt.

On 18 January 1741 in Den Bosch Pieter married Sophia Catharina Boesses, who was born to a military officer in 1720 in Bergen op Zoom, after living together since 1736. They departed for the Cape Colony aboard *de Duijff*, he as an employee of the Dutch East India Company on 7 May 1741. In 1743 then Cape Governor Hendrik Swellengrebel granted him land in the Table Mountain valley named Garden Oudtshoorn, bounded by Hof Street and Kloof Street in the present-day suburb of Gardens. After van Reede van Oudtshoorn's death the developed estate was subdivided into three separate properties named La Belle Alliance, Trafalgar and Mount Nelson where the Mount Nelson Hotel stands today. He was fiscal independent from September 1741 to September 1762, and Secunde (deputy Governor) of the Cape Colony from December 1760 to April 1766 after Ryk Tulbagh had succeeded Swellengrebel as Governor. He returned to the Netherlands in 1766, and bought the Drakensteyn castle. He was later re-appointed to the vacant Secunde position in the Cape Colony and in 1772, however, following the arrival of news of Tulbagh's death before he had departed for the Cape Colony, he was appointed as Tulbagh's successor. Sadly he became ill on the voyage out and, after 19 days of suffering, died at sea aboard *Asia* on his way to take up his post as Governor. His body was transported to Cape Town in a lead coffin he had carried aboard on the same voyage. History has it that the Captain filled the coffin with brandy (some sources say vinegar) in order to preserve the body. On 17 April 1773 he was given the first state funeral in Cape Town and buried at the Groote Kerk. A print (below) depicting his funeral procession is preserved in the Atlas van Stolk museum in Rotterdam. After the church building was enlarged in 1841, the stone that had covered his grave was attached to the church's eastern wall. Baron Joachim van Plettenberg, who had been acting Governor since Tulbagh's death on 11 August 1771, was appointed Governor on 18 May 1774.





Some of Pieter's children settled in the Cape Colony, including their son William Ferdinand who also worked for the Dutch East India Company. Following the British occupation the independently wealthy William Ferdinand (Born May 14th 1755 and died 28th April 1822) who had been a senior official of the Cape Colony before the occupation, refused to swear allegiance to the British Crown (he seems to have had 17 children!).

In 1782, Pieter's then 61-year-old widow was the subject of a scandal in the Cape Colony when she attempted, unsuccessfully, to withdraw her inheritance and elope with a 20-year-old soldier. She died in Cape Town in 1791.

The burial vault, designed by Louis Michel Thibault, contained the remains of Baron William Ferdinand van Reede van Oudtshoorn and his wives Susanna van Schoor (died 1776) and Gezina Kirsten (died 1817).

Legend has it that he requested to be buried with pen and paper so that he could communicate from 'the other side'. Ernestina Johanna Geesje, William Ferdinand's daughter and Pieter's granddaughter, married Egbertus Bergh a magistrate of the Western Cape town of George. Bergh was one of the founding fathers of the Western Cape town of Oudtshoorn, which was named in honour of his wife's distinguished grandfather. The coat of arms of the local municipality is based on the Dutch family's coat of arms. Oudtshoorn is a twin town of Alphen aan den Rijn in the Netherlands which incorporates the historic Dutch villages of Oudshoorn, Ridderbuurt and Gnephhoek

Saasveld House was originally built in Kloof Street on the Garden Oudtshoorn estate by Pieter's son William Ferdinand. All indications are that the architect was the Frenchman *Louis Michel Thibault*, and that the decorations on the building were done by the well-known sculptor *Anton Anreith*. In 1954 the Dutch Reformed congregation in Cape Town decided to demolish the building and to erect a youth hostel in its place. Attempts to prevent the demolition were unsuccessful and it was then proposed to erect the building elsewhere. In 1957 it was agreed to rebuild *Saasveld* in Franschoek (some 70 km away), next door to the Huguenot Monument, and use it as a Huguenot Museum. Some heritage minded people had preserved the decorative plasterwork and this was used in the reconstruction of the house. The museum was officially opened on March 11th, 1967. After *Saasveld* was demolished and the area redeveloped the vault fell into disrepair. The three coffins were then taken to the Huguenot Museum and put on display. However they were vandalised and the bones brought back to the vault but are now buried in the ground outside the vault. At this stage, around 1985, money was made available from the Tercentenary fund to rebuild the vault and Gawie Fagan and Dirk Visser were involved in the project. After this the Simon van der Stel Foundation took over the maintenance of the vault and did restoration work in 1995.



Looking at the 'before' and 'after' photographs above (the 'before' being an Arthur Elliot photograph) it



is interesting to note the new, much grander, front door. Does anyone know where this came from?

THE DAY 30,000 MARCHED ON CAPE TOWN

On the 31st March 1960, the newly appointed Regional Secretary in the Cape of the PAC (Pan African Congress), itself a breakaway group of the ANC, organised a march on Cape Town as part of its anti-pass campaign.

The National Party Government had passed legislation to control the movements of Africans by making it compulsory for all black South Africans over the age of 16 to carry a "pass book".

Philip Kgosana, a 23 year old Sotho from near Pretoria, assisted by youthful Xhosa speaking marshals led a convoy of 15 000 marchers in a long column past Rondebosch Common and onto De Waal Drive. After speaking to Sir de Villiers Graaff in Parliament, Eulalie Stott, a Black Sash member and Newland's housewife, established that Parliament was being protected by the army with machine guns. Determined to warn Kgosana she drove her car to De Waal Drive, past the marchers to deliver the message.

On receiving the news, Kgosana got half the column to wait under the pine trees at the top end of Roeland Street and directed the other half to Caledon Square Police Station instead of his intended protest at The Houses of Parliament.

Meanwhile, the protesters had been joined by another group who came by train and bus. The crowd had increased to an estimated 30 000 who gathered around the Caledon Square Police Station. With the help of his youthful marshals, Kgosana kept control of the crowd. Deputy Commissioner of Police, Ignatius Terblanche and two other unarmed senior police officers met the crowd who Kgosana asked to be as quiet as if they were going to a graveyard. Kgosana asked for a meeting with the Minister of Justice, Frans Erasmus.

Terblanche undertook to arrange this the following day if Kgosana took the marchers back to the townships. Kgosana rounded up the protestors and led them back along De Waal Drive without incident.

Tony Heard, ex Editor of The Cape Times, wrote in his book, The Cape of Storms, "it was one of those historic moments never forgotten, like a presidential assassination, a nuclear bomb or a moon walk. Few who were adult in Cape Town at the time, would forget where they were and what they were doing as this stunning event unfolded". Thanks to a humanitarian Deputy Commissioner of Police, Colonel Terblanche, mass bloodshed and a possible sacking of the City was averted.

That night the Government declared a State of Emergency and the Police and Army surrounded the townships.

When Kgosana and two companions arrived for the meeting at Caledon Square the next morning they were arrested. A furious Erasmus saw to it that Terblanche left the police force without any promotion. Kgosana escaped and went into exile in Sri Lanka. Eulalie Stott became a Cape Town City Councillor and served as Chairman of the Housing Committee for many years helping the under privileged before retiring with the title of Alderman. Eulalie was also a committee member of the Simon van der Stel Foundation for many years. Philip Kgosana flew from Johannesburg to speak at her funeral.

Col Terblanche became actively involved in heritage projects. At one time he was Chairman of The Cape Town Branch of the Simon van der Stel Foundation. His wife was a medical doctor at

Valkenberg Hospital and they stayed at a house in the grounds. The old Valkenberg Manor House had fallen into disrepair and he helped organise the renovation of the building and surrounds. He was also a driving force in the restoration of Coornhoop. He was prominent in raising funds for the purchase and restoration of The Sendinggestig Museum in Long Street. He became Chairman of



the Museum which was established there and is now known as The Slave Church. He was a charming and dignified man who never spoke about the events of 1960.

John Muir.

BLUE PLAQUE SCHOOLS PROJECT: final report for the 2015 awards

In concert with our Blue Plaque project, committee member Ansie Kent has been collaborating with Sigi Howes, who heads the Centre for Conservation Education, to involve local schools with connections to local history. Last year they unveiled five plaques. Here Sigi reports on the project:

'On 29 January we unveiled the Blue Plaque at the *Good Hope Seminary High School*, the citation of which reads: **'Established on this site in 1873 as the Good Hope Seminary for Young Ladies for the purpose of providing advanced education for girls.'** *Wynberg Boys' High* followed on 17 February. In view of the School's full programme for its 175th celebrations this year, the Plaque, outside the school's front entrance, reads: **'On this hill Wynberg Boys' High School has served the wider southern suburbs community since 1841. *Supera Moras*'**. On 15 March it was the turn of *Wynberg Girls' High*. The school opted to place its Blue Plaque, which reads: **'Wynberg Girls' High School. Established as the Ladies' Seminary in September 1884. *'Honour before Honours'***, on the Ballet Hall, which is the oldest building on the property. The plaque was unveiled by Simone Venter, the daughter of the poet Ingrid Jonker. Jonker was a pupil at the School. *Rondebosch Boys' High School* received a Blue Plaque in honour of a past pupil. Inscribed on it are the words: **'Allan Cormack, a former pupil of Rondebosch Boys' High, was awarded the 1979 Nobel prize for Physiology or Medicine for the development of the CAT scan'**. Our last hand-over was at the *Deutsche Internationale Schule Kapstadt* in Tamboerskloof. The Plaque reads: **'Educating global citizens since 1883 in an environment of mutual encounter of German and South African cultures'**.

Sigi Howes
Co-ordinator: Blue Plaque Project for Schools

BOOK REVIEW : THE SECRET SOCIETY

Cecil John Rhodes's plan for a New World Order

Robin Brown

Penguin Books

ISBN: 9781770229204

Format: Hardback

Recommended Price: R350.00

By co-incidence, around the time of The Rhodes Statue issue, a new book by journalist author and television producer, Robin Brown, was published.

He was brought up in Southern Rhodesia from the age of 10 and entered the world of journalism as a cadet reporter on the Rhodesia Herald Newspaper.

He gives a detailed history of Cecil John Rhodes and covers some of the characters of the time including General Gordon, Leander Starr Jameson, Olive Schreiner and Princess Radziwill.

He also gives opinion on Rhodes's private life.

In the second half of the book the author follows the influence of Lord Alfred Milner in developing his theory of a secret society in some detail.

Not every reader will agree with the inferences on the long reach of the Secret Society. It is however a fascinating story and will stimulate debate and discussion about events over the past two centuries.

The author does not cover the legacy that Rhodes left to Cape Town by bequeathing his vast estate along the mountain from Cecilia Forest to Groote Schuur, therefore protecting parts of the mountain slopes.

Reviewed by John Muir
May 2016

