



# GSSA Cemetery Recording News

Vol 6 No 4 – December 2008

## Welcome

Another year has sped by and we have almost arrived at the end of 2008. Peter and Bev are doing the final data capture for CD 7, which becomes available during March 2009 and the database has been closed for all new entries. Anything you may have lodged which has not been captured, will stand over and be captured for issue in CD 8 in 2010. They are now busy with the finalization of the data for our IT people in Cape Town to produce the new CD.

This Newsletter will reflect the results of our contributors coming down the home straight.



*Part of Bethlehem Old Cemetery*

*Courtesy: John Schwartz*

## Contributors & Volunteers

Christo Viljoen, Henry Viviers, Willemine Lieuwes, Henry Northall and Johan du Plessis have joined the ranks of the volunteers.

**HAVE YOU TAKEN UP THE CHALLENGE ISSUED IN OUR MARCH NEWSLETTER? IF NOT, IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO START – THERE'S ALWAYS ANOTHER CD TO PREPARE FOR. EVERY BIT HELPS, WHETHER IT'S A CEMETERY WITH TWO GRAVES OR WHETHER IT'S ONE WITH 5000 GRAVES.**

Your Editor is planning on visiting Wellington in April/May 2009 D.V., with the sole purpose of visiting farm cemeteries in that area, in the hope that he may discover the graves of some of his ancestors who farmed in the area.

### **Country-wide Round-up (Period 01.10.2008 to 05.12.2008)**

What more is there to be said other than that which has been said in the Newsletters of 2008. Our appreciation for everyone's efforts can never be adequately expressed. The fact that even National Executive Committee members get their hands 'dirty', recording, transcribing and getting involved in the many facets of the Project, demonstrates the passion that many of us have for the project.

We are pleased to announce that, not only did we pass 300 000, but we ended on **308 026 records from 2 507 cemeteries**. WELL DONE!! To everyone who made a contribution, no matter how big or how small.

- Some graves in the **Dikhololo** Holiday Resort, near Brits, were recorded by Fanie Bignaut. Also lodged by Fanie was **Rietfontein 534**, District Vanderbijlpark (14 names).
- A list of all the graves in the church graveyard of the Dutch Reformed Church, **Somerset West** was compiled by Willemine Lieuwes and forwarded by Alta Griffiths.
- Newcomer Henry Northall sent in his recording of the Main Cemetery at **Boetsap**, Barkly West, Northern Cape (36 names).
- Amanda van Blerk has been busy again, this time with the Old Cemetery, **Bethlehem**, Free State – 171 names.
- The farm cemeteries referred to in Vol 6 No 3, which were recorded by Mieder Viviers, were all on **Kleinfontein 368**, Donkerhoek, District Cullinan, Gauteng. (39 names)
- Hentie Joubert has come to the fore again after a quiet period: The farm **De Suikerboskop 361** (2 names) and the farm **Geluk 485**, where 29 men of the Liverpool Regiment, who died at the Battle of Bergendal, are buried, are the results of his renewed efforts.
- Ferdie van Wyk of Northern Transvaal GSSA has provided us with details of **Buffelboutfontein 4**, District Jagersfontein, Free State (6 names) and **Kareepoortjie**, Kalkfontein, District Fauresmith, Free State (5 names).
- During March 2008, John Schwartz, returning from visiting his son in Plettenberg Bay, made a detour through the Southern Free State and recorded small **DR Church cemeteries in Rouxville, Zastron and Wepener**.
- On 3 December 2008, the last part of the **Old Parys Cemetery, Block D**, was added to the Project database, bringing the total headstones recorded for this cemetery to 4 200. Congratulations to Fanie Bignaut and his faithful team of helpers! Another milestone achieved.
- Meanwhile, just over the river another team has been hard at work (Well, actually they reside north of the river, but seem to be recording south of the river. Oh, what the heck.) Simon du Plooy and his merry men (and women, I hope) have completed the **Main Cemetery of Vredefort** (1193 names), as well as

- Springfontein**, District Bethulie, Free State (387 names) Well done, Simon & Kie!
- Actually, they were busy north of the river too: **Roodekop 229** (24), **Vlakfontein 213** (20) and **Witpoort 231** (44). Pushing even further, the **Main Cemetery, Niekerkshoop**, District Hay, Northern Cape, provided a further 271 recordings.
  - Last time we heard of David van der Merwe's first recordings, in Montagu. He has provided us with details of a further three in the area: **Warm Water 173** (7 names) and **Leeuw River 186** (3 names and 23 names). In addition, he has ventured further afield into Limpopo Province, recording 1 grave at **Bastaardspad 790**, District Potgietersrust and in the District Waterberg: **Doornkom 376** (13 names), **Elandsbosch 372** (27 names) and **Waterval 190** (16 names).
  - It seems to us there is an endless supply of farm cemeteries in the Reitz District of the Free State – Janet & Koos Lourens have been at it again: **De Molen 480** (3); **Vischgat 1162** (20) **Riviera 684** (2); **Klipvantyn 262** (10); **Snymanshoek 1133** (32) and **Leeuwspruit 305** (2). Keep at it – we admire what you're doing.
  - Johan Niemandt photographed the **Main Cemetery, Magudu**, District Nkomazi, Mpumalanga.
  - Vic Olivier provided extracts of records from the book, "General History and Social Life of the Cape of Good Hope" by C Graham Botha, sometime archivist at the Cape. Apparently several cemeteries were destroyed by the march of progress some 100 years ago. Botha recorded the names and thus we were provided with 39 and 181 names. Vic also found six graves at **Rehobot, Patensie**, District Humansdorp, Eastern Cape.
  - Theodorus and Karen Maree, another husband and wife team, have recorded 6 names on the farm **Goedgevonden 356**, District Klerksdorp, North West.
  - Our resident recorder from Middelburg, Peter Dickson, has given us details and photographs of 7 headstones and a memorial on the farm **Keerom**, District Middelburg, Mpumalanga.
  - Johan du Plessis has provided photos of the Piet Retief Main Cemetery (Ed No word from Alta Roux – I think she's stranded in Olifanshoek without a telephone!)

## Enquiries

Maybe one of readers could assist where we could not; for that reason we will, in future, provide the addresses of the readers from whom enquiries have been received.

- Colin Mohr enquired as to whether there had been any recording made of the cemetery at Sterkstroom, Eastern Cape. Unfortunately not. ([mohr@lantic.net](mailto:mohr@lantic.net))
- Fred Hagemann was interested in Hagemann and Nielson Graves, as he is preparing a Family History of the Hagemanns. Peter helped him with one recording in Empangeni and put him in touch with Brian Kaighin of the Ladysmith Historical Society. ([frhag@icon.co.za](mailto:frhag@icon.co.za))
- Wendel Hough is looking for information on the Hough family in South Africa. ([wildinfo@absamail.co.za](mailto:wildinfo@absamail.co.za))
- Joy Nelson is interested in graves of the Hilder family. ([joynelson@telkomsa.net](mailto:joynelson@telkomsa.net))

## Branch News

No further news has been received in respect of the Maitland Cemetery and the Braamfontein Cemetery transcriptions, but we assume that work is still progressing.

- **Boksburg Cemetery:** Recording of this cemetery was slowed by inclement weather, but South East Wits Family History Society Cemetery Project Leader, Ken Mutch, has advised us that, although the halfway mark in recording had not been reached, what was encouraging was that all the recordings done have been typed up and proofread; a total of about 8 000 names. Looking back over the past four years, this Society is achieving an amazing tempo: **8 000 names per year, recorded, transcribed and proofread.**
- As can be seen in the Country-wide Round-up, some GSSA Branches have been very active this year: to name the three most active – North West under the leadership of Simon du Plooy, Vaal Driehoek under the leadership of “Blikkies” Blignaut, and Free State under the leadership of Johan Pottas.

If all branches could get really active and produce 8 000 names each per year we would have to obtain the services of three secretaries for Peter Moss!

## Recording Experiences

The following excerpt from an e-mail received from Vaughan Holmes in the Eastern Cape during August 2008, illustrates the whole motivation for having a Project such as ours, and also underlines the absolute urgency to get as much done as quickly as possible.

**“Work pressure made it impossible to keep up this research. However, I contacted the project for several reasons, the main one being that I started researching this year for a doctorate in history (on Richard William Calverley who founded Umtata in 1869) and, upon re-visiting some of the cemeteries in the Transkei, found they had deteriorated dramatically. I also discovered that some mission stations and municipalities had lost registers containing information that was available a few years ago, particularly in respect of graves that are now unreadable.**

**I realised that, unless something is done by someone quite soon, a lot of information might be lost for ever. There is also the threat of cemeteries in the Transkei being deliberately reclaimed for low-cost housing and there are probably hundreds of private and mission cemeteries spread across the Transkei that have either never been documented, or have fallen into disrepair. There are heritage organizations, such as the O R Tambo Heritage Council, that has the potential to assist. However, the more one looks at the problem, the more challenging it becomes...”**

## General

The Editor has previously made comment on the steady growth in co-operation between the GSSA's Cemetery Recording Project and eGSSA's Headstones Photos Project.

**We are pleased to announce that at an Executive meeting held on 22 November 2008, the GSSA Executive agreed upon the desirability of increased co-operation between the two Projects; this will provide a more coherent and improved service to the genealogical community. This co-operation has already commenced, and ways are being investigated (between Peter Moss/Petro Coreejas-Brink of the CD Project and Alta Griffiths/Martin Zollner of the Photo Project) to move these projects even closer.**

## Editor's Note

It has been a good year, with progress being made in many aspects of the Project and with more people getting involved. Many have gone out of their way to put in that little extra effort. For many it has become a passion. Many thanks to you all.

May you all enjoy a wonderful and fulfilling Festive Season, and have an extremely Prosperous New Year, particularly in the trying times in which we find ourselves.

Our Sunday School Choir sings a hymn which has the following words in the chorus part, "Never give up....." Very uplifting words, when all seems gloomy around you.

## Next Issue

The next Newsletter will be issued during March 2009. Any comments, criticisms, articles of interest, etc should reach the Editor by not later than 28<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

**If you wish to unsubscribe, send an e-mail with the Subject "Unsubscribe" to [johns@timco.co.za](mailto:johns@timco.co.za).**

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Further information re the Project can be obtained on the GSSA homepage  
[www.ggsa.info](http://www.ggsa.info). Follow the menu to Projects/Cemetery Project. Information re present  
Status etc is provided via Excel files.