



GSSA Cemetery Recording News

Vol 1 no. 2 June 2003



Generaalsdraai Cemetery

A small cemetery of the Prinsloo family in the Belfast district.

Welcome

Well here we are with the second edition of Cemetery Recording News. At this point we are looking forward to a year of great movement in the Cemetery Recording Project. The rate of growth so far of the database is very encouraging.

Peter Holden – a note by Natalie da Silva

About Peter Holden - he was born 28th July 1960 and was snatched from us, as the result of a heart complaint which he thought he'd have "time to address", on 7th July 1997.

Before then in 1990 at the glittering function which awarded Peter Holden "Genealogist of the Year" and he was presented by the Germiston Mayoress with a beautiful "Tree" carved by Sculptor Russel Scott. The tree is mounted on turned Jacaranda wood and was donated by my husbands Company 'Mag Builders'. Peter had a wickedly dry sense of humour; he was very family oriented and a dedicated genealogist. He came to the first Beginners Course I ever presented just to wish me well - how nice was that!! He left the Society ALL his books on genealogy (known as the P Holden collection) (sad that some have been stolen!!!!!!!!!!!!!!) and I had the sad honour to sort them with members of his family and Peter Moss.

[“You may be disappointed if you fail, but you are doomed if you don’t try” – Beverly Sills](#)

Cemetery Recording Project – Peter and Beverley Moss A Personal History

While we were living in Zambia, Beverley started her family history - this involved long international telephone calls to the Archives in Harare, (Peter never did find out why the phone bills were so high).

When we came to live in SA in 1984, this family interest blossomed, and one weekend we went with Bev's grandmother and parents to the family farm Grootvlei, just to the south of Nylstroom. This farm originally stretched from the old main road in the west almost to the highway and Kranskop toll plaza in the east.

Of course the main focus of interest was to record the headstones in the cemetery, and we became very conscious of the neglect and damage that was occurring especially to the farm cemeteries for which there are no burial registers. They remain our special interest, and also fit in with Peter's background of motor rallying, navigating and driving around bad roads. Shortly after this, we came into contact with Peter Holden, and then Beverley was the Secretary at a National Conference, chaired by Conrod Mercer, to discuss national cemetery recording standards. (Despite a successful conference, we are still trying to decide the standards today!)

After that, we became involved with Peter Holden in managing the project documentation, and after his death in 1997 took over as Documentation Coordinators for the Project.

We will be moving back to Zambia for a few years in July, but the documentation will remain in Benoni with our son who will be staying in our house, and due to the wonders of email we do not expect any disruption to the Project.



Contributors and Volunteers

We wish to extend our good wishes to Louis Eksteen, a member of Natal Midlands branch and keen contributor to the project on his appointment as Curator of the museum in Newcastle. Thanks Louis for your past contributions and all the best for the future in your new position.

Cemetery CD

The growth in the volume of data continues at a very good pace. Typing of the records held by Peter Moss as well as new data from contributors is keeping the project very active. Volunteers that are helping with the typing are making a notable effort. We can look forward to a CD with records in excess of 107,000 in the near future.

Watch out for a Special Edition of Cemetery Recording News when this CD is about to be released.

Recording Experiences

Eastern Cape Branch – “Hazards experienced so far are snakes, bees, male Ostriches and the odd farmer”

“Hope the farmer was not too “ODD”- Ed”

Branch/Individual Contributions

Thanks to Ken Mutch for the following items.

Report in Beeld newspaper 26 May 2003.

Klerksdorp – A seven year old boy was seriously injured when a marble slab fell on him in a graveyard and is fighting for his life in an intensive care unit here.

On Monday morning doctors conducted a brain scan but were unable to tell if Theunis Beukes had brain damage.

He was admitted to Wilmed Park Hospital last Thursday and was heavily sedated until Sunday. His parents, Kobus and Marine Beukes, say Theunis moves when they speak to him. This gives them hope that he will survive, even though his condition is still described as serious.

Theunis, a grade 1 pupil of Potgietersrus, attended his great grandfather’s funeral with his parents when the heavy marble slab fell on him.

His skull was cracked from ear to ear.

“We act as though comfort and luxury were the chief requirements of life, when all that we need to make us really happy is something to be enthusiastic about” – Charles Kingley

Eikenhof local newspaper and SABC TV News

The grave of Boer War hero, Danie Theron in Eikenhof has been vandalized by unknown persons. Theron's grave was opened up and his remains removed and the steel structure surrounding the grave site toppled over.

Theron was buried in the small Neethingshof cemetery in 1903 next to his fiancé. After investigation it was found to be the work of a couple that were involved in witchcraft.

Branch News

Johannesburg Branch – Burgershoop Cemetery, Krugersdorp - Further progress was made at our visit in May 2003 and the data is already being captured from the hand-written forms. Progress is slow due to the relatively low turnout of members to assist. More visits are planned in the near future to consolidate what has been done and to continue with the outstanding work. This cemetery will have in excess of 2,000 records on the database when completed.

Eastern Cape Branch – To date have recorded about 110 cemeteries in the Oudtshoorn district and about 75 in the Mossel Bay area and another 30 or so in the Elands Valley and Loerie districts near port Elizabeth.

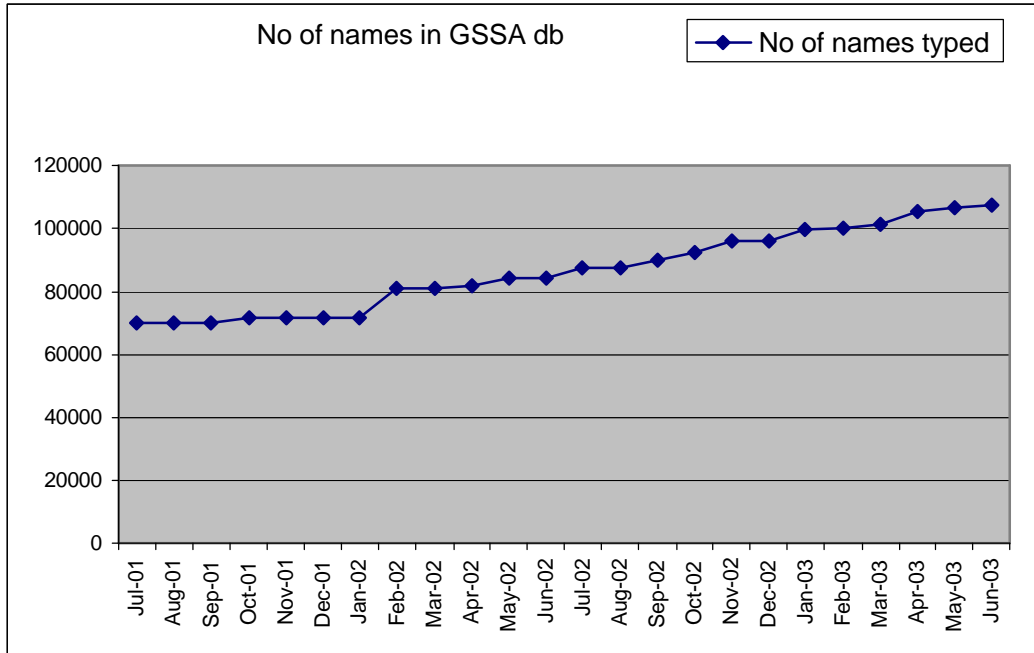
Q & A Department

We have not had any response to this column at all. Do we assume that there are no questions to be asked by anyone? Please feel free to submit any query related to cemetery recording to enable us to share with everyone else.

[“We should give as we would receive, cheerfully, quickly and without hesitation; for there is no grace in a benefit that sticks to the fingers.” - Seneca](#)

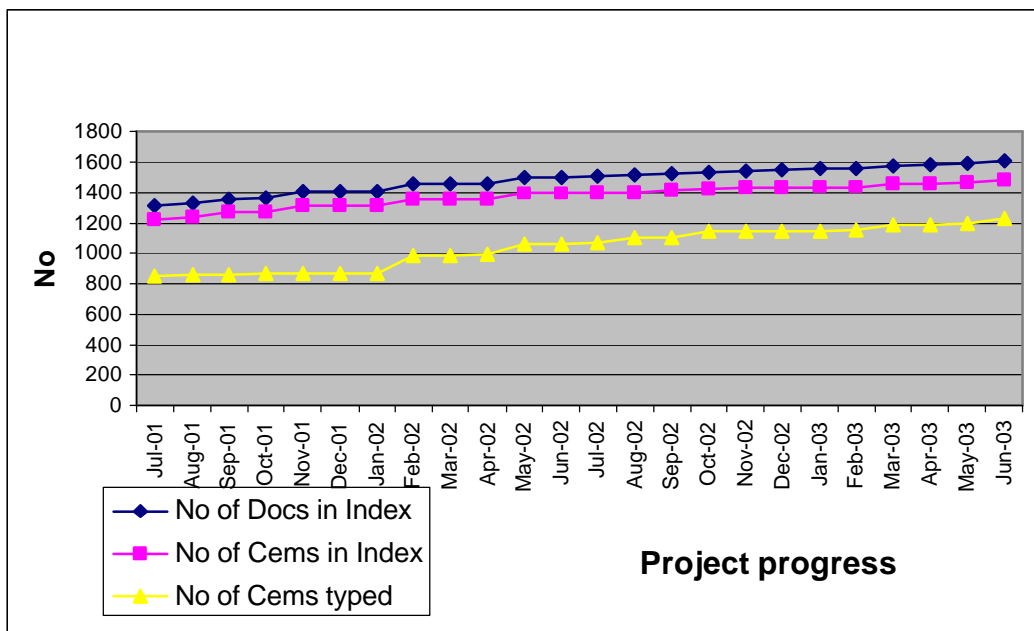
Statistics

It can be seen from the graph below that volumes of names typed up and entered into the database has increased appreciably since January 2003.



In actual figures the lines in these graphs amount to 861 cemeteries comprising 70402 names in CD1 using data as at September 2001.

At this point in time the data for CD2 will be updated to at least 1227 cemeteries and 107617 names (these figures are not final yet and could increase). There are 256 cemeteries data still to be typed and added to the system. Many of them are at present in the hands of volunteer typists and being captured.



Editor's Note

I sincerely hope that this newsletter is being well received across the branches. Please may I ask for some feedback with regards to content and suggestions for future editions? This is your medium for sharing of cemetery recording information, so please make use of it.
I look forward to seeing a busy e-mail box.

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