

A different approach

When the Swartland Heritage Foundation committee sat down at the beginning of 2004 it became apparent that because of its small size it would have to devote much of its energies towards heritage consultation.

At that stage we were unaware of the dramatic rise in applications to purchase and alter properties that fall within the Heritage Act. This has unfortunately resulted in less focus on outings and lectures, so it is necessary to illustrate some of the issues we have been concerned with so far.

Because we have a good working relationship with Swartland Municipality, plans for alterations to all properties 60 years and older are passed onto the committee for comment. We also react to published legal notices that might affect heritage sensitive areas.

Some examples:

- Malmesbury new road
Swartland Heritage believe that the area alongside the river in Malmesbury, because it contains some of the most valuable structures, should be preserved and developed sympathetically. To this end we are going to

pursue the suggestion by a member, of a 'Riverfront Project'. Details of this will be proposed to Swartland Municipality.

- New flats – Malmesbury
New residences in the town are obviously required; however, a couple of applications to construct on the site of or near heritage structures will be opposed.
- Tiger Oats Buildings – Moorreesburg
This is a complex of buildings that SAHRA have already stated will not be permitted to be demolished. However, they are not being maintained at present and are deteriorating. We are continuing to monitor the situation.
- Dutch Reformed Church – Malmesbury
A new wall of remembrance was proposed. In consultation with Heritage Western Cape permission was granted with certain provisos regarding nearby grave sites.
- Wesbank old houses (contact by Maud Goliath)
It has been revealed that a number of old houses dating from 1928 exist in Wesbank. The site was visited by committee members with a view to offering advice for future conservation.

- Nuwedrif Farm, near Koringberg
A case of a building being altered in ignorance. We were called on to make comment, and give guidance to proposed future alterations to the site

Launch of Heritage Campaign

Celebrating our living treasures in the 10 years of democracy is constitutionally protected heritage campaign supported by three tiers of government.

The first stage begins on 24 September, Heritage Day, with the major thrust in the Northern Cape. This will feature work from different cultural groups: Khomani San, Nama, !XU and Khwe, Indian, Afrikaner, AmaXhosa, Batswana and Basotho. This type of focus will also be followed in all the provinces.

"Preserving, protecting, promoting and disseminating living heritage and 'intangible cultural heritage' is what Heritage Day is all about," said Pallo Jordan, Arts Minister

**24 SEPTEMBER
IS HERITAGE DAY**

SHIPS' BELLS &

by Pam Kolbe

Cameos of the visit to three early Huguenot farms in the Franschhoek Valley by members of the Drakenstein and Swartland Heritage Foundations.

Time stands still according to the sculptured clock on the front gable of

La Dauphine,

but one look across the flourishing fruit orchards tells a very different story. Estienne Niel was granted land in the valley south of Franschhoek in 1710 where

he probably built a modest cottage for his family. But it was his Huguenot kinsman Daniel Jacobz de Villiers who built the H-shaped homestead which stands proud today with its beautiful neo-classical front gable adorned with the owners initials together with those of his wife Sara Mare (DJSM), anno 1804 (although it is thought to have been built in 1800), heavy swags and stars on either side of the inert clock face above a casement window. Instead of a neo-classical pediment there is a heavily moulded cornice ornamented with garlands and an urn. The neo-classical gable on the back façade is even more unusual. Beneath it

is a detailed plasterwork door and fanlight, complete with handle and escutcheon plate – a door that is destined never to be opened. Above this extraordinary door is a pediment, flanked by pineapples, containing an eastern, almost comic beast like a lion. An identical



La Dauphine

pediment surmounts the gable. The end gables are equally fine reaching up to an apex split in two scrolls.

Today La Dauphine is owned by Simon Malherbe, whose family have farmed here for over a century. It is always a privilege to be invited into these historic homes and to meet the owners. The beams in the centre of the house and the low doors indicate the earlier three-roomed cottage, which could have been built as early as 1735. This homestead was restored to its present state of elegance in 1968 by Gawie Fagan and is surrounded by a colourful formal garden with azaleas massed under a huge

oak tree, which has no doubt witnessed many changes in the last hundred years. A large cypress tree, planted in 1901, stands proud in one of the side courts. Traditionally, two were planted, one in each court, representing fertility and prosperity.

An old ship's bell dated 1806 hangs at rest in a white bell tower on the werf. The bell comes from the wreck of the Anna Maria von Kletsburg, and hung for many years in the bell tower of the Franschhoek DR Church until the tower collapsed cracking the bell.

Pierre de Villiers, a cousin of Daniel Jacobz, moved into the Valley, together with his brothers Abraham and Jacques, in 1694 and was granted the land, on which **Burgundy** was built, in 1713. As you enter the farm through huge wrought iron gates you are left in no doubt that this is Huguenot country. There are formal rose gardens, fountains and masses of lavender interspersed with plantings of white flowers.

Like its neighbour, La Dauphine, Burgundy started out as a three-roomed cottage and has gone through many transitions. In 1791 the H-shaped homestead was built by Jacob Marais for his wife Johanna Theron and their family. The front gable is late holbol in style with beautiful

LAVENDER

stars and vine tendrils swirling around the owner's initials. During Victorian times the thatched roof was removed and replaced by corrugated

paneling and glass. In the dining room part of the wall has been left unplastered revealing the original brick-work construction.



Burdundy

iron, raising the level of the eaves, and clipping off the lower convex curve at the base of the gable. This is how it was photographed by Elliott. Early in the nineteenth century it was acquired by the Le Roux family who farmed here for two hundred years.

The present owner, Trevor Kirsten, commissioned Len to restore the house to its former glory, and today we have one of the finest and oldest gables in the Valley. Inside the original screen has, unfortunately disappeared, and although the wall cupboard is still there the top and bottom are not a matching pair. As the house was destined to become a guesthouse Len was faced with the problem of building en-suite bathrooms for each bedroom, which he has successfully done using

The old barn has been restored for use as offices, but the "skietgate" remain, cleverly covered with glass panels, reminding one that these frontier farms were isolated and often attacked by the local San people who were after the cattle and sheep.

In order not to spoil the symmetry of the werf the new homestead for the Kirsten family has been built attached to and behind the restored cellar. There were mixed reactions to the colour of the buildings, which are painted a putty grey/brown with steel grey shutters and trim.

Jacques de Villiers moved into the Franschhoek Valley from

Paarl in 1694 and settled on well watered land below the mountains. In 1712 58 morgan were officially granted to him and at least two homesteads were built, both with the same name (identified today as **La Brie** and **La Bri**). The T-shaped homestead La Brie, which has been restored in recent years, has a simple unadorned holbol gable. The original teak front door is interesting because it has a deadlock and the escutcheon plate bears the date anno 1787, quite possibly made by Pieter Eduard Haumann who built the other La Bri. The interior is beautifully furnished and decorated but it is unmistakably a family home



La Brie

with cats lying on sunny window sills, family photos everywhere, and a child's project abandoned on a table. No doubt many generations have paused outside the front door to gaze across the vineyards towards the Klein Drakenstein Mountains, a view to both motivate and inspire one.

THE DEVELOPMENT

A PROPOSED HOUSING CO

It was recently announced that a developer wished to develop a complex of 34 houses on the outskirts of Riebeeck West. I was asked to record my impressions for the Riebeeck West Valley Association, so not all observations are strictly heritage, nor are they necessarily those of Swartland Heritage Foundation but as far as I was able, they represent the views of those present at the meeting.

MEETING HELD AT THE RIEBEEK VALLEY HOTEL REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF ERFS 84, 179, 510 and 177 RIEBEEK WEST

The meeting on the morning of 10 July was attended by between 40 and 50 residents of the Riebeeck Valley, an indication of the interest in this type of development. There was no representation by the farmer selling the land, the Municipality nor the land surveyor concerned.

Timing

The meeting was called at very short notice. This was felt to be inappropriate as possible commentators of the process were away (school holidays). It was questioned, why the haste?

Zoning

As far as can be ascertained the site is residential R1 - there are four separate erf's making up the development that falls within the edge of the village as deemed by Swartland Municipality. A number of heritage sensitive structures surround the site. The erf divisions on the zoning map were apparently apportioned quite some time ago.

Rural Character

The proposed cluster development will not add anything to the general character of the area; if anything it will create a crowded, suburban atmosphere (Tableview, etc was cited). This was not considered suitable in an area of rural character where future economic growth is deemed to be tourism. Why would a visitor come to suburbia?

Economy

Tourism, as stated above, is seen as a key future economic factor in the progress of the Valley and this will certainly not be seen as an attraction. In one particular case, the Riebeeck Valley Hotel will have its view blocked by a dense residential area and surely this will impact on its business. The local employment opportunities created by the new residents was not considered

likely to outweigh those created by tourism.

Occupancy

The type of development proposed often attracts part-time residents. Buildings that stand empty for long periods tend to become the focus for criminals - we have witnessed this phenomenon in the Valley already.

Research

When questioned about this aspect the developer mentioned that research had been done and there is a demand for smaller plots by people who wanted property in the Valley, and by elderly residents who could no longer maintain large gardens. When probed it appeared that the only 'research' was via an employee of a local estate agent. It was by no means qualitative or quantitative.

Building

It would appear that the developer is not going to build the houses; rather it will be a 'plot and plan' situation. He said guidelines would be included in the deeds of sale. When questioned who would police this his answer was not acceptable. It was pointed out that in previous discussions with the Municipality it has been stated by them that they are unwilling to impose restrictions on building styles.

P I N G V A L L E Y

M P L E X I N R I E B E E K W E S T



The site of the impending development

Sub-divison

The developer stated that he was to present plans to Council the following week and expected to have the go-ahead in six weeks. This was considered very interesting as many in the group had gone through this process and they stated it invariably took about a year. He was asked why he thought his case should be any different. He did not indicate.

Precedent

It is felt that a number of other developments are likely to occur in the Riebeeck Valley. The point was made that whatever the outcome of this project, it will be the benchmark for the future.

Development

As such it was generally felt

that development is inevitable. The general attitude is not against growth, but against the high density housing proposed. At the end of the meeting the question was posed "could it be shown by raising hands how many support the proposed development". Not one hand.

Heritage

A number of sensitive buildings are in close proximity to the proposed development. The style and quantity of the houses will in no way complement these structures. Assuming that Section 38 of the Heritage Resources Act applies, this requires the developer/s to submit an impact assessment report as part of planning.

Overall

The developer did not respond to the comments. The impression perceived was that the development is a given; if not successful he stated the site would be sold on to another (already interested) developer who would continue.

Observation

According to the developer Swartland Municipality commented that the Riebeeck West development is within their legal guidelines. These guidelines (regarding minimum erf sizes for example) are applied across the Swartland footprint. This needs to be addressed. Malmesbury, or Yzerfontein, for example, has very different requirements to the Riebeeck Valley.

Darling Museum

– a short background

by Pam O'Reilly

The Darling Museum started originally as a Butter Museum, the brain child of the local branch of the WAA in 1979. It quickly grew into a country museum reflecting life in and around Darling from 1800 to 1950 and was moved to its present site in the **old town hall** in 1989.

The area was famous for its butter and there are many items displayed which were used by the women on the farms. One butter washer was used by Mrs William Duckitt when she operated her dairy on the farm Pampoensylei around 1880.

From 1754 butter became a first rate export product of the Cape until it was ousted by wool and ostrich feathers. It was a most important source of income for the farmers. The importation of cream separators in 1888 opened the way for industrialization of this trade and the first creamery in our country followed in 1890. Two Swedes settled in Darling in 1899 and started their own creamery which was situated in Church Street (De Kar building now). The boiler from the original site can be seen in the butter museum. In 1906 the business became too big for the Swedes and it was taken over by the farmers who then formed a corporation. They moved in 1914 to the corner of Long, Fontein and Queen Victoria

Streets. In 1950 a new factory was built in Paarden Eiland.

Let's take a walk down Memory Lane. The **school room**, taken from the old school across the road, is a place to reminisce of the days when peach stones and an abacus was used instead of calculators and ink wells and pens with brass nibs splotted and splattered carefully written pages in the exercise book. Girls had autograph books with little rhymes written by their friends. During break, children played Bagatelle and Hop Scotch. The old brass bell on the desk was rung for class.

A telephone circa 1902 from Stockholm has a place in the foyer, next to the Magic Lantern. In the **parlour** mum is knitting, father has his specs and pipe ready next to his chair. The wooden foot warmer at his feet. The gramophone is playing 'Macushla' sung by John McCormack.

In the **nursery** the children have left their toys on the floor. They are getting ready for bed.

In the **kitchen** the bread has been baking, sending wonderful aromas through the house. The bread will be sliced for the family on a bread slicer. Meat has been pickled in a large tub. In this kitchen are many items to aid the housewife – even a machine to peel fruit. The fire has been lit and a huge black iron pot simmers. Behind the door hangs a Prickly Pear

picker. The irons are ready for pressing the Sunday clothes for Church.

The **Music Room** is alive with music. The candles throw a soft light onto the old song sheets on the piano. The ladies are getting ready for a ball in the Town Hall. The dresses hang in the **ladies' room** along with a bridal gown.

Out on the **farm**, father is ploughing; it has been a long day, they must go to town with their produce tomorrow and the horses will need new shoes. They must go to the blacksmith in the old forge.

It's all there for you to see. You are welcome to walk with us down memory lane seven days a week but we are closed Christmas, New Year and Easter.

Demolition stopped – a lesson for us

It has been reported in the press that the demolition of the old Phoenix Hotel in De Waterkant in Cape Town has been stopped.

This happened in the High Court after it was learnt that Heritage Western Cape had **not** granted a demolition order.

The lesson here for all of us is to be vigilant, especially if we spot an old building being modified or in the process of being demolished. It just takes a phone call or e-mail to check whether we have been notified.

Malmesbury Power Station disappears . . .



Re-usable materials being removed from the site of the old power station

The old power station (and later fire station) in Malmesbury has succumbed to progress, but it is not a tale completely without a happy ending.

In February of this year Heritage Western Cape granted permission for the demolition of the old building, subject to certain stipulations prepared by an independent heritage assessor and agreed to by Swartland Heritage Foundation.

Amongst these were that a sum of R100 000 be donated to a heritage survey of Malmesbury, and that the material recovered from the demolished building be used in other conservation projects.

Sadly the power station

had an inauspicious beginning. Recorded in *Grepe uit die Geskiedenis van die Dorp en Distrik* by JP Blaauw (1960) is the fact that 'The first power station was built in 1924 but it turned out to be a failure and the town council resolved to approach Eskom'. In a later evolution it became the fire station, and finally a base for the homeless.

The site was acquired by SASKO as part of an expansion programme, and was in fact situated directly behind the Bokomo Feeds works, and was probably unknown to most of the population of the area.

Despite the fact that it made only a limited impact on the development of

Malmesbury, it however was part of the town's history; the donation must be seen as a positive contribution to the town's heritage in that a survey of all old buildings and sites is sorely needed for future preservation purposes.

It is acknowledged that during the demolition all communication with SASKO and Swartland Municipality have been very positive. The donation has been transferred to Heritage Care and the Municipality has been exceptionally helpful regarding removal and storage of the materials in one of their available facilities.

*Excerpt from the Swartlander
23 July 2004*

DID YOU KNOW *HET JY GEWEET*

- n Joseph Jowell, who founded the Jowell Transport empire in Namaqualand, was born in Riebeeck West on 12 November 1905 in the house, with the shop attached, that his father, Hermon, bought in 1900. It is erf 1898 on the corner of Long and Voortrekker Streets, known today as Dalmar Country House, but affectionately known to the locals as Carol Annes.
- n Darling het sy ontstaan te danke aan die natuurlike soutpanne wat in die omgewing voorgekom het. In 1682 het die gebied as Groenekloof bekend gestaan. Die VOC het dit gebruik om hul vee te laat wei en om vars produkte aan hul vloot te verskaf.
- n The Heritage South Africa logo designed by Piet Boshoff shows a corbelled house. Corbelling, a building technique using layers of overlapping stone, was used by the trekboers who settled in the Karoo in the eighteenth century.
- n Abbotsdale, voorheen die plaas Olifantsfontein, is in 1856 gekoop deur die Biskop Grey vir bewoning deur lede van die Anglikaanse kerk. Een van die eerste inwoners was Joseph William Stockbridge van Ierland en die stamvader van ses geslachte Abbotsdalers.
- n The first 64 semi-detached houses were built in Wesbank, Malmesbury by the Municipality in 1928 and hired out to the occupants. In 1983 the families living there were able to buy them. They have been handed down from generation to generation and are never sold.

From our Bookshelf *van die Boekrak*

Walton, James

**Old Cape Farmsteads
Cape Town.** Human and
Rousseau (Pty) Ltd, 1989

This book covers seventeenth and eighteenth century farmsteads with plans, photos and illustrations.

The majority of the book deals with the other buildings on both wine and stock farms such as wine cellars, brandy stills, slave quarters, fowl-houses, dovecots, wolwehokke and soap houses.

There is also information on Cape longhouses and early corbelled dwellings.

Any old tips

We'd like to think that Swartland Heritage Foundation is an open forum. If you have any information, articles, requests – anything to do with heritage – please let us know. It's the only way we'll get to know more about our fascinating area.



SWARTLAND
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