



Newsletter of / Nuusbrief van GGSA Vrystaat in Bloemfontein

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NEED TO KNOW MORE?

Still not sure how to get started? Don't feel alone. Many are still just dipping their toes into the water. To help you take the plunge GGSA Free State's next meeting on Monday June 12, will cover the computer programmes available to genealogical researchers and how to use them. There will be discussions by those using the programmes and some will be demonstrated. "Among these will be Brother's Keeper, PAF, Family Origins and the like," said chairman Johan Pottas. "The ins and outs of each will be discussed and the special tricks needed to wend your way through them will be highlighted. When starting out on genealogical research it is best to do it right. My advice is always to begin using a computer programme that will allow you to easily access information quickly as your database grows. Then in the long run, when you decide to publish your findings, and you will, this task will also be much easier to accomplish." The June meeting thus promises to be an interesting one and should not to be missed. Diarise the date: **Monday, June 12, 2006.** The Place: **Provincial Archives Auditorium in Badenhorst Street, Universitas,** and the Time: **18h30.** (Committee Members please note there will as usual be a meeting at 18h00 on the same day.)

CATCHY NAME DID ITS JOB

The name *Maires* certainly caught the attention of readers. I asked the former editor what it meant and he said he did not know (he even secretly admitted to having used it spelled incorrectly on one or two issues when he was producing the newsletter.) So, I turned to Professor Louise Celliers, head of the Department of English at the University of the Free State and asked her. Her reply was simple. "The word '*Maires*' is Latin and means 'ancestors' or 'forefathers.' This makes it an excellent choice and a very fitting title for a genealogical newsletter!" I am not sure who designed the title block, but the "family trees" drifting away into the distance and getting fainter all the time also make a nice touch – **Rose Willis, editor**

SOME INTERESTING WEBSITES TO CHECK

Genealogical researchers, with access to computers and the Internet, may find interesting information on the following sites.

- ✓ Those searching for Jewish forefathers and relations may find the following site helpful - http://www.jewishgen.org/SAfrica/gardens_shul-deathregisters.htm
- ✓ An interesting site covering people drowned in ship wrecks along the South African coast is <http://www.sagenealogy.co.za> It also has some interesting passenger lists
- ✓ For general information try <http://freebmd.rootsweb.com> or <http://search.ancestry.com>
- ✓ Need to know more about an ancestor who fought during the Anglo Boer War, who was captured, banished, killed in action, wounded, try discussing this with Elria Wessels at the War Museum in Bloemfontein – Tel No 051-447-3447 ewessels@anglo-boer.co.za or museum@anglo-boer.co.za

WHAT THE READERS SAID

The reaction to our “first” newsletter was most encouraging. The revamped “*Maiores*” got a pat on the back from many sources and proved it was on the right track as far as readers were concerned. There have even been requests for follow up information in some instances and for longer articles with photographs to be sent to *Familia*. The committee was so encouraged and delighted by this response that it decided to share some of the comments with readers. They appear to confirm that we are moving in the right direction, but please, don’t lose touch now - write and tell us more about yourself and the research projects you are working on.

Ons was verheug. Ons “eerste” nuusbrieff was ‘n sukses. Briewe van waardering is van heelwat lesers ontvang en volgens kommentaar het ons die regte pad gekies. Dankie almal vir die briewe wat ons lof toeswaai en geluk wens op ons eerste uitgawe van “Maiores.” Ons vind die kommentaar nogal motiveerend, maar, moet nou asseblief nie van ons vergeet nie, skryf in en vertel ons meer van juiself en die navorsing waarmee julle besig is.

Fred Myburg wrote: “A sincere thanks to you, Deansie (Edwards), for the excellent job you are doing as secretary! Congratulations also to Rose for the first newsletter of our branch for 2006. With people like Deanise and Rose we will cross the Drankensberg Mountains barefoot every time!”

Petro Coreejas-Brink skryf: *Dit het jou sekerlik 'n hele paar uur geneem om die nuusbrieff saam te stel. Dit lyk heel goed. Daar is lekker leesstof - amper genoeg vir 'n tydskrif vir die Vrystaat. Ek dink julle gaan mense wat nog nie betrokke is by julle groep nie sommer gou aan die gang kry, maar sterkte met die groot taak. Dankie vir 'n kyk in die lewe van die Vrystaat tak. Groete uit die Kaap.*”

Lucas Rinken skryf: Veels geluk met die eerste uitgawe van julle taknuusbrieff! PUIK! Maar hoekom vertel julle ons nie waar die naam vandaan kom nie? Ek het amper gedink julle gaan 'n Haka doen met so 'n snaakse woord! Groete en gelukwensing ook namens die Wes-Gauteng Tak. (*Dankie Lucas, sien bl 1 vir verduidliking van die naam.*)

Richard Y Ford, van Randpark Ridge, skryf: Geluk aan jou en jou span met die eerste uitgawe van julle nuusbrieff. Is daar miskien 'n storie vir Familia oor SYMINGTON soos bevat in die drie paragrawe in Maiores? Ook SQUIRE. Die briefwisseling vind ek interessant. Daarbenewens sien ek uit om nog bydrae van julle te ontvang. Terloops, geluk met die herstigting van die nuwe tak en dit tot die Vrystaat te beperk. Groetnis.

Simon du Plooy skryf: Dra aan jou Redakteur GGSA-Noorwes se komplimente oor. Baie Genealogie en interresante artikels “Doet so voort”.

And, from **Alta Griffiths**: Thank you for the ‘exposure’! I was reading the Free State GGSA newsletter last week with great interest and I nearly fell of my chair when I saw my name in it! I got such a fright – I sommer closed the letter! On a more serious note – I have not been able to discover anything ‘new’ on the mystery of the Fourie / Moller graves, but I have found out that Mrs Fourie has TWO graves – I suppose that in itself is interesting enough!

Maureen Anders from Randburg, Gauteng, writes: I received a copy of your April '06 newsletter and was very interested to learn you have got things going again so well in Bloemfontein. I would very much like to receive your newsletter on a regular basis

SEARCHING FOR FREE STATE VAN DYKS

A branch of the Van Dyk family moved to the Free State in the late 1800s and now Maureen Anders is on their trail. She is searching for information on ancestors from her grandmother's side of the family. "They trekked to the Free State and lived there for years," says Maureen. "My grandmother was Anna Catharina Philippina Van Dyk and she was born on December 11, 1899, shortly after the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War. I wondered whether perhaps another GGSA member in the Free State may also be researching the Van Dyk family and willing to share information with me. If so, I'd love to contact them. I am at present also trying to find out more about my great grandfather, Joseph Jacobus van Dyk. He married Maria Gertruida Smit (born Brits) after she was divorced from Smit. Joseph Jacobus's father, Sybrand Lukas Johannes van Dyk, known as Jacobus, was born in Graaff Reinet on May 31, 1820, and he married Anna Catharina Philippina Pretorius in Marquard. I have no idea of where nor when Joseph Jacobus was born. I estimate it to be between 1865 and 1868. During the Anglo-Boer War, on July 30, 1900, he was captured at Fouriesburg and sent to Ceylon as a prisoner of war. His POW number was 8829. He died in 1909. I recently found his Deceased Estate Number D747 (1909 OFS). I am currently trying to follow up on this through the Free State Provincial Archives." Maureen is a member of GSSA and has been an e-GSSA member of the Johannesburg branch since 1989.

TRACING THE STEPS OF A NATION

Towards the end of the 1940s a young journalist travelled across South Africa in search of Jewish families and their stories. The *S A Jewish Times* commissioned Arthur Markowitz to write a nation-wide survey entitled *They Helped to Build South Africa – The Story of South African Jewry*. In two years he travelled 10 000 miles visiting homes, shops and Shuls in 117 towns and villages. He interviewed hundreds of people, discovered long-forgotten details on old gravestones, examined books, journals, diaries, relics and photographs. He also drank innumerable cups of coffee on countless "voorstoeps" between 1947 and 1949 and in the end a magnificently interesting series was produced. Yet when Arthur arrived in South Africa from Europe, 20 years earlier none of the languages he knew were of any use to him. Nor was his "inheritance." Arthur, who had been born in the Baltic, was in his late teens when he arrived in South Africa with his mother, in 1928. They had "suitcases full of useless roubles," but no English. During World War I they changed their citizenship seven times. While completing his schooling in Durban, Arthur used his chess-playing skills to help him learn English. To get money he worked as a lorry driver, a police-dog trainer (a skill he had acquired at the age of 8) and a wool and skin sorter. Within two years he had a job as a journalist. The aim of the *Jewish Times* assignment was to discover how the Jewish Community lived and worked, its economic, political and social roles, and more about concerns, achievements and ambitions of individuals "from the Cape to the Congo." "In a land of bright sunshine, the shadows are bound to be deep," he wrote. "I shall try to avoid being blinded by one, or frightened by the other."

HOW TO USE THE UK INDEX

On July 1, 1837 a civil registration system for births, marriages and deaths was introduced in England and Wales. Registration was undertaken by civil registrars, who reported to the Registrar General's office in London. "This is now part of the Office for National Statistics (ONS), which issues copies of UK birth, marriage or death certificates, to the public and these are of great value to genealogical researchers," says Mark Herber, of Ancestral Trails, a genealogical publishing company. "Obviously the originals will not be made available, so a deal of research is necessary to obtain a copy. Researchers can access information by first searching the national birth, marriage and death index." The indexes, which are divided into quarterly sections and districts, were last updated in March 2006.

FOREFATHER STARTED A SKATING CRAZE IN THE KAROO

“My husband's great great grandfather's brother started a roller skating craze in the Karoo in the 1800s,” writes Kathy Kromm from England. “He was Johann Bernard Kromm, who with his brother, Henry, moved from England to South Africa and, once there, became involved in a diamond syndicate. Both later bought and ran hotels in the Karoo. Henry ran the Drostdy in Graaff-Reinet and Bernhard bought both the Royal and the Masonic Hotels in Beaufort West. Soon after arriving in town he leapt in, hired the town hall from the municipality at 7/6d a day, and set up a temporary skating rink. It became known as "Kromm's Elite Skating Rink" and the opening was said to be a “festive occasion,” according to the local newspaper, *The Courier*. The entrance fee was 6d and it cost another 6d to hire skates. Interest in the sport grew to the extent that Kromm had to limit morning sessions to women and children only, but he proudly advertised that music was played at his rink throughout the day and night. Young and old alike used this skating rink. When he purchased the Masonic Hotel in 1892, he instantly laid an indoor skating rink there and it became quite famous in both the town and throughout the Karoo. By then there were skating rinks at the Lyric and Coronation Halls. Competitions flourished and some were so expert on their skates they were a delight to watch. Skaters and supporters from surrounding towns regularly arrived in Beaufort West to take part in the competitions. Then, oddly almost just as quickly as it started, interest in the sport waned and vanished. P J Alport's Coronation Hall was then converted into Beaufort West's first cinema.

TRAGEDY STRUCK AT SEA

The Kromm family was stuck by tragedy in the late 1800s when a family member was lost and drowned at sea. “Tragically, there are reports of one of Bernard's male relatives being lost, along with nearly 200 other people when the *RMS Teuton* sank in 1881,” writes Kathy Kromm. “Bernhard was lucky enough to be one of 34 survivors of this terrible shipwreck off Port Elizabeth and gave an eyewitness account of the disaster to a local newspaper. He later married Pauline Marx in London, in 1875. She died at the age of 50. Should anyone wish to know more about the Kromm family I am researching their history, having married into it. So far I have discovered that Henry returned to England before 1891 to put his son and stepson into a private school in Harrow. I would love to hear from other researchers or interested family members,” says Kathy Kromm. Researchers may contact her at thekromms@tiscali.co.uk

ALL ABOUT THE SHIPWRECK

The *RMS Teuton* sailed from Plymouth on August 6, 1881, at 14h00, for Madeira. She left there on August 10, at 23h00, for Cape Town, where she arrived on August 29, at 06h00. After leaving Table Bay on the evening of August 30, the *RMS Teuton* struck an object off Quoin Point, between Danger Point and Cape Agulhas, on the South African south coast, at about 19h30 in the evening. Passengers were ordered to the poop deck and the lifeboats prepared. Captain Manning, however, was so convinced that the *RMS Teuton's* six compartment hull would keep the ship safe from flooding, that he kept the vessel underway until the bow had sunk so low that the stern was out of the water. At about 22h30pm the captain ordered the women and children into a lifeboat. Then, as other passengers were preparing to abandon ship, she suddenly dipped at the bow and somersaulted. A local newspaper reported that eyewitness, Bernard Kromm said: "She went down like a streak of lightning. I would not have believed it possible that a vessel could go down so quickly. I am almost certain that the boat with the women and children in it was still fastened to the vessel by a rope and that it did not clear the vortex." Bernard, who could not swim, miraculously survived by jumping from the poop deck. After being dragged under the surface of the water by the suction of the sinking ship, he managed to grab hold of a piece of wreckage. He was later hauled aboard one of the life boats. “Sadly one of his brothers Philip or Charles was drowned,” says Kathy. “They were they all en route to South Africa.”

MEET THE COMMITTEE No 2

DEANISE EDWARDS AND ROSE WILLIS ...

Sisters, who are GGSA Free State's Secretary and Editor of *Maiores*

Rosalie Willis was born in Kroonstad on August 26, 1942. She is the eldest daughter of Harold Dean Willis and Rosalie May McCarthy – they had three daughters – Rosalie Mary Dean (Rose), Loma Ann and Deanise Eileen. Rose grew up in Kroonstad, where her father worked on the Railways and her Auntie Alice (Willis) was a well known member of staff of the local municipality. She attended the English Primary School there, but completed her schooling at Eunice, in Bloemfontein. She then went to work for the Friend Newspapers and when their magazine division was transferred, Rose moved to Johannesburg to a career of public relations and industrial editing with the multinational Philips organization. For a time she also worked for this organization in Europe. Later in Johannesburg she worked for several other industrial giants and then started her own public relations and advertising company. In the late 1980s she and her life partner, Wally Kriek, decided to “drive down the road, find a house they liked, buy it and live there.” Of course, this statement highly amused their friends, but that is exactly what they did. They found a magnificent house, designed by Sir Herbert Baker for a local attorney and the first secretary of the old Divisional Council in Beaufort West. When he had this house built in 1905, he re-vamped the town ensuring that public institutions, like the prison and hospital were placed right on the other side of the village. The house had every elegance of a “Victorian” home, including fire places in the bedrooms, a smoking room, a “nanny’s room” off the kitchen, a coach house and stables at the end of the property. But, it had been vandalized by modern “revampers.” Rose and Wally intended to “restore” the house and move on. They stayed 13 years and only when Wally died on February 26, 2002, did Rose return to her family in Bloemfontein.

Rose is a free-lance journalist and during her time in the Karoo made a name for herself putting the region and tourism on the map. She also started a newsletter called *Rose's Round-up* in which she used the history and happenings of the Karoo to promote the area. It became so popular, developed a huge following, an international readership, and earned her some top communications awards. She still produces it from Bloemfontein. Here too she has started a little e.mail magazine for the Von Prophalow Society and others interested in the history of Bloemfontein. It is called the *Buzz and Babblor*. In the Karoo Rose served on ministerial advisory and tourism promotional committees. In Bloemfontein she serves as a councillor on the Provincial Archives Council (the first body of its kind to be established in South Africa). She is also chairman of the Von Prophalow History Society, Chairman of Town and Country, a committee member of the Friends of the Boer War Museum, a committee member of GGSA Free State and editor of *Maiores*.

Deanise Edwards (nee Willis) was born on February 10, 1950. She is the youngest of the Willis sisters. She attended Eunice from Sub A to Matric and qualified as a teacher in Bloemfontein in 1971. Deanise is, in fact, qualified to teach children of all ages - from babies to matrics. And she certainly has tried her hand at teaching every level from pre-primary, where “every day is an adventure and everything in the world is new,” to matric, where “they all know it all.” Little surprise then that in the last five years she has opted to teach the pre-school level, where “all they want is to learn something new each day and all they have to give is love.” “There’s very little smart-alecky back chat at this level,” says Deanise, “but there is some profound and incredible reasoning.” After qualifying as a teacher Deanise taught in Bloemfontein primary and high schools, then opted to widen her horizons and travelled to Europe to study and see places and art works which, till then, had made up her lesson material.

INTEREST IN ANGLO BOER WAR STEMMED FROM HOTEL

After returning to South Africa Deanise worked for IBM until that company left the country. She was then approached to apply her home economics and needlework teaching skills (combined with her office management experience) to training staff for a small hotel in the Estcourt area. “The hotel belonged to ToCH and lay in a beautifully scenic spot in the Natal Midlands, right alongside the site of the site of the Anglo-Boer War Battle of Willow Grange. In fact, the hotel was called Willow Grange,” says Deanise. “The pristine beauty of the area allowed me to indulge my interest in the ecology and my love of nature. Here I also developed a new interest - in the Anglo-Boer War and the battlefields of Natal.” Deanise met Gavin Edwards in Estcourt and they returned to Bloemfontein to marry (on February 6, 1988) and start a family. Before and after the births of her daughters (Melissa, now 16, and Angela, 14) Deanise returned to teaching. Then, when they had been married for only eight years, Gavin was killed in a road accident and Deanise took on the management of a pre-school and day-care center to support her daughters. She still is a pre-school teacher. Her hobbies include collecting thimbles, owls and teddy bears. She also loves sewing, reading, knitting and historic research.

AN ALMOST INVISIBLE FAMILY

Deanise and Rose are researching one of the most invisible families in the whole of South Africa. Well they think so anyway. “None of our ancestors seem to have fought in a war, had an argument that led to a court case, stolen anything and landed in jail, been banished, done an act of profound bravery for which they were awarded or knighted. In fact they don’t seem to have done anything that lifts them above the general thong and makes them visible enough to find,” says Deanise. “My grandmother, Mary Brander Dean came to South Africa with her parents, brothers and sisters in 1860. Her father was William Dean and her mother Jessie Edwards. “This amuses me,” says Deanise, “because I eventually married an Edwards.” William (Willie) was born in Elgin, Scotland in April, 1841. He seems to have married Jessie there. He died in Kroonstad on October 20, 1923, aged 82 and six months. William and Jessie had two sons William (Willie), who was born October, 1866, and died on May 18, 1925. He worked in the Maintenance Department of the SAR in Kroonstad and John, who moved from Kroonstad to take up a job with the Municipality in Johannesburg, and typical of this family, vanished. Their daughters were: Mary Brander (my grandmother), who married George Willis, who died in 1928, Isabella (Bella) who married George Smith of the SAR, Kroonstad; Jessie who married Harry Simpson, Margaret (Maggie), who married William Gooding and moved to Stanford Hill Road, in Durban and Jeanie, (One of a twin – the other died young), who married James Tindall and, according to one document we found, was living at Union Club in Johannesburg. My grandfather and great grandfather won the contract to erect Kroonstad’s suspension bridge across the Valsch River. It was a beautiful structure and central to life in the early town. Shortly after that, my grandfather, who was a blacksmith, stepped on a nail, contracted blood poisoning and died. And, that in a nutshell is all we know about him, apart from the fact that in his will he is listed as the youngest son of John and Margaret Francis Willis of Pear Tree Court, Middelsex.

“An intriguing part of our research reveals our great grandmother’s brother owned half of the ground on which New York is built. Way back in the 1800s he was drowned when the ship on which he was returning to Scotland, ran aground and sank. Today hundreds of people around the world seem to be claiming to be related to him. The statute of limitations on this ground, I believe, ends this year and, according to several Internet sites, many of have paid hundreds of dollars to register claims.”

On their maternal side Deanise and Rose are researching the Swan and McCarthy families. “Both appear to be as invisible as the Willis side of our families,” said Deanise.

DIE STORIE VAN DIE GRAF OP DASSIEKRANS

Deur Johan Pottas

Op die plaas Dassieskrans is 'n klein familie begraafplaas van die Stroebel familie aan wie die plaas behoort. So besoek ek en my vrou die begraafplaas toe ons by haar "neef" gaan kuier op 20 April 2006. Daar aangekom sê Stroebel dat daar slegs een graf is wat nie deel is van die familie nie. Toe ek egter die name lees op die steen sê ek vir hom, luister, ek ken die vrou, ek is 100% seker dat sy iewers op my databasis is en dat ek beslis meer van haar weet. Terug by die opstal het ek my skootrekenaar aangesit en ja, ek het haar daarop. Hier is die verhaal van die graf. Die steen is van sandsteen en is nog in 'n baie goeie toestand.

Daar is die grafte van Maria Elizabeth Coetzer, * 25/07/1875 + 10/12/1918 op die plaas Zevenjaarsfontein, Rouxville, toe sy haar suster gaan oppas het gedurende die Groot Griep van 1918 en self aan die Griep gesterf het. Sy is die dogter van Hendrik Johannes Coetzer en Martha Dorothea Botha. Maria is getroud op 28 Maart 1893 in die NGK, Rouxville met Johannes Christoffel Stroebel, * 29/03/1870 + 21/11/1944 Rouxville, waar hy ook begrawe is. Haar vier kinders wat almal jonk oorlede is. Die vier se grafte is nooit opgemaak nie.

Die graf van Johannes Christoffel Stroebel (jnr) die kleinseun van bogenoemde Johannes Christoffel Stroebel en die seun van Joannes Christoffel Stroebel, * 29/06/1894 + 24/10/1967 getroud met Anna Margaretha van Zyl. Dan is daar ook die graf van 'n vrou, wat niks met die Stroebel familie te doene het nie. Dit is die graf van Agatha Geertruyda Dry (Swanepoel), * 24/05/1877 Rouxville distrik + 25/12/1925 Kraaifontein, Rouxville. Sy word begrawe op die plaas Dassieskrans. Sy is die dogter van Jan Abraham Christoffel Swanepoel en Anna Catharina Gesina Botha. Sy is getroud op 25 November 1896 met Gert Christiaan Dry, * c 1873 + 28/09/1936 Uitkyk Vryburg, waar hy ook begrawe is.

Gert en Agatha het 6 kinders gehad by name: Anna Katrina Gezina; Johanna Katrina; Agatha Gertruida; Jan Abraham Christoffel (meer oor hom later); Gert Christiaan en Sarel Marthinus Johannes

Jan Abraham Christoffel Dry, * 24/03/1909 + 27/11/1967 is getroud met Martha Magdalena Jacobs, * 28/07/1910 + 26/05/1980, die dogter van Lourens Marthinus Jacobs en Anna Sophia Brits. Hulle het die volgende twee kinders: Anna Sophia, later meer oor haar en Gert Christiaan * 16/03/1939

Anna Sophia Dry * 02/07/1933, noemnaam Dottie, is getroud in die NGK op 4 Maart 1952 met Joseph Benjamin William Pottas, * 01/05/1930 Vryburg. Hy is die seun van Willem Roelof Johannes Pottas en Beatrice Dominy. Willem Roelof Johannes Pottas is die neef van Johan Jacob Pottas, *29/04/1926 Excelsior, noemnaam Skerf.

Skerf se seun Johan Jacob Pottas * 13/04/1961 is getroud met Eureka Dannhauser Smith, * 26/02/1961, die dogter van Gert Hendrik Dannhauser Smith, *17/04/1911 + 27/10/1983 Trompsburg en Maria Elizabeth Botha, * 09/12/1926 Swakfontein, Jamestown. Maria Elizabeth Botha is die dogter van Marthinus Johannes Jacobus Botha, * 13/03/1893 Dordrecht distrik + 30/09/1926 Swakfontein, Jamestown en Cornelia Wilhelmina Stroebel, * 12/11/1898, Dassieskrans, Rouxville + 10/07/1975 Rouxville, noemnaam Willie. Cornelia Wilhelmina Stroebel is die dogter van Johannes Christoffel Stroebel en Maria Elizabeth Coetzer, hierbo vermeld. So deur 'n paar geslagte is daar dus nou 'n familie skakel tussen Agatha en Maria wat

in die begrafplaas begrawe lê. Daar is egter ook nog 'n verdere verhaal te vertel oor die graf, uit die oorlewering van die Stroebels die volgende.

Die graf gegrawe op Dassieskrans was klaarblyklik vir my vrou Eureka se ouma gegrawe wat self dodelik siek was in 1925. Agatha sterf egter op die buurplaas Kraaifontein en Willie se pa bied toe die klaar gegraafde graf aan Gert Dry om sy vrou daarin te begrawe. Toe die kis egter van Rouxville op die plaas aankom was hy egter te klein vir Agatha. So sit twee van die mans in die omgewing toe weer die 20km in Rouxville om 'n groter kis te kry. Daar gekom was daar nie 'n groter kis beskikbaar nie en vra die twee toe ystersmit om die kis bietjie groter te maak. Hy willig in en terwyl hy daarmee besig stap die twee oor na die hotel en kroeg om die tyd om te kry. Toe die kis klaar is, was hulle egter ook nie meer in staat om die kis uit te vat plaas toe nie. So is die kis uit plaas toe, Agatha begrawe en en die twee het die begrafnis gemis. Toe ek en Eureka die begrafplaas op 22 April 2006 besoek het, het ek nie besef dat ons 'n verbintenis via die graf sou vind in ons voorsate nie.

Bronne: Sterfkennisse van die VAB en KAB; Die Swanepoel Register van Adriaan Swanepoel; Huweliksregisters opgeteken deur Niel Botha; Joseph Pottas; Maria Botha; Johan Stroebel; Johan Pottas

SKAARS BRONNE IN DIE VRYSTAATSE ARGIEF

In 'n uiters interessante praatjie laas maand het argiefis Donald van Wyk vir GGSA Vrystaat lede ingelig oor skaarsbronne in the Vrystaatse Argiefbewaarplek. "Baie van hulle kan van belang wees vir genealogiese navorsers," het Donald gesê. "Onder hierdie bronne is rekords van die Meesterskantoor, wat vanaf 1838 tot 1950, dateer en inligting oor boedels en insolvente boedels bevat. Die laaste is 'n bron wat min mense van dink as hulle navorsing begin doen. Navorsers moet onthou dat tot 1906 vrouens se noemenswaardige is vir boedels gebruik, vanaf 1923 tot 1948 is slegs syfers gebruik as boedelnommers en vanaf 1949 is die jaartelle gekoppel aan boedelnommers." Ook onder die bronne wat Donald bespreek het is land- en ereregisters, inligting van geboortes, huweliks en sterftes vanaf Binnelandse Sake, inligting van die Staatsprokureur, hoofgeregshof, polisie en berede polisie. Inligting van die "Free State Police (FSP)" bevat persoonlike inligting van persone wat by die polisdienste aangesluit het tussen 1895 en 1939. Rekords van "The Provisional Mounted Police" strek ook die tydperk van 1900 tot 1901 en dit is meestal persoonlike inligting. In die agriewer is daar ook heelwat inligting oor die ABO Konsentrasiekampe en "The Administrator's of Relief." Die laaste bevat baie interessante inligting oor eise en uitbetalings wat na die Anglo-boereoorlog gedoen is. Dan is daar natuurlik ook inligting van die registrateur van geboortes en sterftes vanaf 1901 tot 1917, swart boedels en 'n wonderlik reeks fotos." Die Vrystaat Argief het ook 'n biblioteek en Donald het 'n beroep op navorsers gedoen om voltooid (en ook half-voltooid) navorsing stukke te skenk sodat hulle in die in die leeskamer beskikbaar gestel kan word vir die gebruik van ander navorsers.

WIE WAS OUPA?

Heelwat mense stap in by die Oorlogsmuseum en vra vir inligting oor hulle oupa wat in die Anglo-Boereoorlog geveg het, maar hulle ken nie eers sy naam nie. GGSA lede kon dit amper nie glo nie, maar dis waar het Elria Wessels vir hulle vertel tydens 'n praatjie by die Mei vergadering. "Julle sal nooit kan glo watter snaakse vrae kry ons by die museum nie, en ek probeer my beste om almal te help, maar ek het tenminste 'n naam nodig." het sy gesê. "Toe ek by die museum begin het 27 jaar gelede was daar net vier blou boeke met die name van 32 000 krygsgevangene daarin. En, hulle was nie eers alfabeties gerangskik nie. Boonop was die name deur Britse klerke opgeteken wat nog nooit in hulle lewens Afrikaans van gehoor het nie, so 'n mens moet vyn dink om op al die variante van 'n naam uit te kom, maar die lyste het darem met Alberts begin en by Van Wyk geëindig!" se Elria

DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE WAR

Over the years tremendous strides have been made regarding records available at the War Museum. While she started with 32 000 names in four Blue Books, historic researcher Elria Wessels now has computerized all information regarding Prisoners of War sent to camps in India, Ceylon, Sri Lanka and Bermuda. “No easy task,” she says, “because prisoners were moved between camps. At times a great deal of detective work was needed to find out just who was sent where.” Now, each POW’s number, age, address, the district from where he came, where he was caught and when and to which camp he was sent is all on computer and quite easily accessible. “This project revealed many interesting facts. For instance, when the Cape Rebels were caught they did not give their correct names and addresses, so the information printed in the newspapers of the day is useless.” Elria is also currently working on a major task with David Gordon, head of research at the museum in Bermuda. They are capturing detailed information on all 4000 POWs sent there. This too has paid dividends and Elria she can now give researchers a great deal more information on them, including the names of the ships on which these POWs were transported. She has full details on POWs sent to Ceylon, but India is an immense problem because most records have been lost. Details on prisoners taken at Brandwater Kom and Paardeberg are also fairly scanty. “So many were taken prisoners here that the clerks could not efficiently record their details,” said Elria, “Some people simply slipped through the cracks.” This too is the problem with some local concentration camps. All the records for the Kroonstad camp, for instance, have been lost. Fortunately, however, Cape Town researcher, Dr Elizabeth van Heyningen, has made her full database on the Concentration Camps available to the museum. “This is an immensely valuable resource,” said Elria. She mentioned that records of the “*Oudstryders*” are currently being computerized, as well as on the soldiers who applied for medals after the war. “On-going work is being done to capture data of those who went to Portugal, as well as on specific groups, such as “*hensoppers and joiners*,” said Elria.

MYSTERY OF CEYLON AND MEASLES SOLVED

When Elria Wessels came across a group of POWs all listed as having been sent to Ceylon in the official files, she almost screamed: “Impossible!” The Ceylon POWs lists were complete. Then she discovered these men had been dispatched from Cape Town “bound” for Ceylon. On board ship disease broke out, so the vessel was re-routed to Durban. “The British personnel were inoculated and recovered, but the Boers weren’t going to let anyone vaccinate them, so they were sent back to Cape Town. Most recovered en route, and once back in the Cape these POWs were loaded on another vessel bound for India. The official lists, however, were never changed. As I said – you need to be a good detective to find your way through historic lists!” Elria also mentioned that measles spread through out the concentration camps because prisoners were moved from place to place. “Research revealed that there was an outbreak in one of the camps, but it was thought to have been contained, however, people still in a stage of incubation were moved from one camp and to another and measles spread like wildfire.” Without doubt Elria’s job is a fascinating, challenging, but enjoyable one. However, now, more than a century after the war ended deciphering records is becoming difficult. “Many British clerks recorded vital details in pencil. Over the years it just gets fainter. We’ve reached a stage where some old records are simply vanishing and we are working hard to get such data captured.”

**"Personal hatred and family affection are not incompatible;
they often flourish and grow strong together."**

Willa Cather, who died in 1947, aged 73, was considered an odd character. Raised in a small Nebraska town, she never quite fitted in, with her crew-cut hair, fondness for dressing as a male, and dreams to do “something special with her life.” Perhaps she accomplished this, some of her novels did become famous.