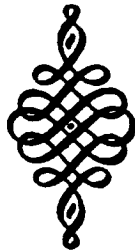




**SIMON'S TOWN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

BULLETIN



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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN THE LECTURE HALL, SIMON'S TOWN MUSEUM ON 25TH APRIL 2012.

Madam President, Vice-Presidents, Committee Members and Members I find it hard to believe that I have already completed a year in office and must now stand before you to account for the same, but with the help of a dedicated committee I believe we have achieved much.

The Society has had a busy year albeit with mostly low key activities which I will cover in this report.

MEMBERSHIP: Our membership stands at 351 paid up members and 42 still outstanding. This figure may have changed slightly since I compiled this report. As a result of a letter drop during the year we gained several new members but with losses our membership has remained relatively static. Nevertheless this is a healthy number compared with many other societies who are experiencing a declining membership base.

Thanks to subscriptions, donations, the sale of books, especially the book "Simon's Town Dockyard the First 100 Years", pamphlets and guided walks of the Historic Mile, the Society's finances are in good shape as will be seen from the Treasurer's Report.

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM: During the course of the year the Society assisted the Friends with fund raising efforts such as the successful Antarctic Lunch held at the Museum and monthly lectures. Both the lunch and the lectures were well attended and we are most grateful to those who gave their time and knowledge to assist in our efforts. Some R14,000 was raised by these activities. The Friends financial statements will be presented at the Friends' AGM to be held in June.

Here I would like to emphasise that although the Friends and the Society have been separated on paper it is really a case of smoke and mirrors as most of the work, except for a much appreciated few, falls on the shoulders of the Society's committee. I appeal, therefore, to the members to come forward with suggestions for ways of fund raising and to assist in running them. There is no need to join a committee, just assisting with one fund raiser a year would be a tremendous help.

"DUMPS" WILLIS MEMORIAL LECTURE: This year saw the 2nd Dumps Willis Memorial Lecture and we were able to prevail upon our past chairman Boet Dommis to finalise his research project on the Dutch and Huguenot Legacy in Simon's Town and present it on that occasion. The subject was extremely well researched and delivered to a bumper audience. Thank you Boet. Boet's lecture has been converted into a booklet which is available from the Museum shop.

WEBSITE: The website continues to receive a steady number of visitors; 1,000 over the last three months with an average time of 2 minutes on site, and regular research queries are received, most of which are ably handled by Audrey Read and Bill Rice. Should any member have suggestions as to what could be added to or removed from the site please e-mail the Chairman at the webmaster's address: webmaster@simonstown.org

SPECIAL BOOK COLLECTION: Books and pamphlets are still coming in and being added to our special book collection which provides an important source of information relating to aspects of Simon's Town's history. These items are kept in the Society's room at the museum and may be used for research purposes there but may not be removed.

BULLETIN AND CHRONICLE: Once again Audrey Read produced our annual Bulletin filled with interesting articles, most of which she researched herself. Audrey has been compiling and publishing the Bulletin for 30 years. This has been a heavy load on her and I would like to record my sincere thanks and appreciation for all the hard work she has done in this respect. I am sure the time will come when Audrey will wish to pass the baton to someone else and until then we would all appreciate it if members were to contribute more articles for inclusion in the Bulletin to help lighten her load. Audrey also continues to produce our bi-annual Chronicle which keeps members informed about the Society and the Museum.

PLAQUES: The Society undertook to produce two plaques in memory of "Dumps" Willis, one to be erected at each end of Willis Walk. The plaques are complete and two plinths have been obtained from the Simon's Town Country Club and are currently being refurbished before being installed.

The Lewis Gay memorial bench in the Old Burying Ground was refurbished and the memorial plaque was remounted in a more secure manner.

AERIAL ROPEWAY: To try and gauge local reaction the Society made it known that they were keen on trying to revive the aerial ropeway. No formal feedback was received, but word of mouth indicated that some residents were in favour and some against such a project. The Society wrote a "vision document" outlining how we believed a cableway would benefit the town and presented this to the Table Mountain Cableway Company. Initially they were receptive to the idea and took away as much information as possible in order for them to do a feasibility study. The outcome of their study indicated that it would not be financially viable, the projected cost of the cableway alone was in the region of R100 million. Needless to say this project has been shelved.

MEDIA LECTERN UNIT: Our planned media lectern is complete as you can see before you. The unit now houses all of the media equipment under lock and key and is much easier to connect up for presentations etc. The unit was jointly

funded by the Society and the Friends. Our thanks go to Boet Dommissie for the donation of the first reading lamp which did not work out as expected. David Erickson kindly funded the purchase of the stalk lamp which we are now using and time will tell whether it is an improvement; thank you David.

PUBLICATIONS: The Society has recently re-published an updated guide to "Paths & Tracks Around Simon's Town" and also published an eight page pamphlet entitled "A Brief History of Simon's Town". These are available on request from the Museum Shop at no charge. As already mentioned a booklet entitled "The Dutch and Huguenot Legacy in Simon's Town" by Prof. Boet Dommissie is now on sale at the Museum Shop.

ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY PROJECT: I now come to one of the more ambitious tasks that the Society has undertaken in recent years and that is the Architectural Survey Project. As you all know the Society is registered with Heritage Western Cape (HWC) as a conservation body with a jurisdiction stretching from Elsie's Peak, down the back of Red Hill, along Plateau Road to Cape Point and back up the False Bay Coast to Elsie's Peak again. The Society started a project to survey, photograph, document and grade all heritage sites and buildings over 60 years old within this area. To this end a sub-committee was formed under the capable guidance of Terry Korsten who encountered many pitfalls when trying to communicate with HWC and frustration levels were very high. Terry and I attended two workshops organized by HWC and we have had other meetings to try and iron out communication problems, but to a large extent they still remain.

We have however, continued with the project and to date have surveyed some 70 buildings, mainly in the heart of Simon's Town. The Naval Heritage Trust, also a registered body, undertook to do the buildings in the two dockyards but due to lack of resources they have asked the Society to do these buildings for them thus adding to the total number which need to be surveyed by us.

Our first completed survey forms were submitted to Metro Heritage and they were rated as A1 which to some extent makes up for the frustration experienced. The object of this exercise is for these buildings to be included in an overlay of the City's plans so that as soon as an erf number is entered into the City's computer system it will flag that the building or site is a registered heritage asset.

Boet Dommissie and I continue to serve on the Architectural Advisory Committee to provide comment when it comes to plans involving buildings over 60 years old. I must add here that our registration as a conservation body does not bestow on us any powers and in fact there is no legislation compelling HWC of the City to consult with us on heritage matters. We understand that HWC is trying to introduce legislation which would require local authorities to consult with conservation bodies in their area, but whether this comes to pass remains to be seen.

We strongly believe that this is a worthwhile project even if the results end up archived in the museum. I have covered this subject in a little more detail so as to reassure our members that we are doing everything we can to preserve Simon's Town's heritage albeit against difficult odds. Mrs Avryl-Ann Coffee has already volunteered to assist on this committee and we trust that she will enjoy working on this project. I appeal to anyone else who may be interested in helping us to please come forward and assist. A sample of our survey form is available for your inspection.

TRADERS' LIST: Some time ago a record of the traders operating in Simon's Town was started and updated when businesses changed hands. The original CD on which the list was stored has been lost. A hard copy of this list recently came into the Society's hands which included penciled in updates. There are of course now gaps in this record. We are looking for a volunteer to re-digitise this list and keep it up to date.

COMMITTEE: Finally I come to the Society's committee – our constitution allows for the election of nine officers. At the beginning of the year we had nine but David Erickson was and is still on extended absence in the UK and will probably only return some time in 2013. Graham Crimp our honorary treasurer, who has moved to Somerset West also resigned, and this reduced us to seven active members.

Fortunately Peter Ray was willing to be co-opted and volunteered to fill the position of honorary treasurer. I trust you will support his election to the committee. It is, however, with much regret that I must inform you that Terry Korsten has advised me that he will not be available for re-election this year. I will address Terry after closing this report. **SO WE ARE STILL DOWN TO SEVEN MEMBERS.** The Society has been in existence for over 50 years and has done so much good work in preserving the history of our town and there is much more to be done. It would be very sad to see it falter due to a decreasing number of people willing to serve. Please give consideration to joining the committee.

CLOSING: In closing I would like to express my thanks to the members of my committee, Audrey, Boet, Eddie, Terry, Peter, Graham, Bill and Yvonne who have guided and assisted me during my year in office and for all that we have achieved together. My thanks also go to our members and their friends who have supported us throughout the year with donations, help and attendance at our functions.

Thank you sincerely one and all.
E. MAWHINNEY Chairman

GLENCAIRN - ITS HISTORY

A.E. READ

Originally in the upper limits of the Glencairn Valley there were several small farms and there was a watermill on the farm "Oaklands" – the remains of which are now on land owned by the South African Government. Farming was not easy in this region owing to the sandy nature of the soil.

One of the farms "Welcome" was granted to J.H. Brand, the Government Resident of Simon's Town and at the time it was stated that it lay between the place of Mr John Osmond and Mr N. van Blerk (Deeds Office C.T. STQ.142 T.141/1828) when it was transferred to Mr T.B. Wools later Harbourmaster at Simon's Town. Another record states that Mr C. Brand had been granted this farm in 1811.

The farm "Hartenbosch" later became part of Da Gama Park, the naval housing area. The farm "Elsjes Baai" according to the Opgaaf Rolle of 1810 possessed a tannery. "Brooklands" on the hill between the valley and Red Hill was at one time owned by George de Stadler who at one time also owned "Oaklands". Records say that when George de Stadler Jnr owned "Oaklands" the land stretched over the mountains to Noordhoek. He is stated to have grown vegetables and wheat and run cattle.

In 1875 John Brown of 1st Warwickshire Foot who had fought at the Relief of Lucknow in India, came to the Cape, first of all living in and running a pub in Barrack Street, Cape Town. He moved to Glencairn and built his own house. He then became a road builder. He was the grandfather of Mrs Paddy Brazer of Paarl. In 1883/4 his neighbours were G. de Stadler Jnr and David Cornelius de Villiers.

The Glencairn Syndicate was established in 1901 by Donald McKay, John Cran, John Forrest, Andrew Burnett Reid, Robert Scott Whyte and Robert Williams. They paid £5,000 for part of Glen Farm, originally part of Else Bay farm. There are said to have been in the early days many *wit & rooi else* trees in the valley, hence the name Else Bay, but any trace of these has long since gone.

Of these gentlemen:

John Forrest was a miller in Rondebosch. His Glencairn house was "Monktown"
Pronounced "Monkton"

R.S. Whyte was a baker in Simon's Town and Mayor of the Town 1904-1906

D. McKay was a baker in Mowbray and had shops in Rondebosch and Rosebank.

D.A. Mitchell was a builder in partnership with P.J. Mackie an early resident.

A.B. Reid was a master-builder and one-time Mayor of Mowbray and later in 1927/28 Mayor of Cape Town. He built St Andrews Church and adjoining Manse

John Parker – a noted architect from Scotland – was another early resident – his

House was "Airlie". He was also a Councillor of the City of Cape Town and Elder of St Andrews Church.

Professor Barrie Low was a director of the Syndicate and was Mayor of Cape Town 1935/37. He married a daughter of John Forrest. She, when Mayoress, travelled to UK to help launch the CITY OF CAPE TOWN for the Union-Castle Line.

Mitchell and Mackie built several of the early houses which were originally built as holiday cottages. St Andrews Church was designed by John Parker's son – also a John Parker. It should be mentioned that John Parker Snr was a friend of William Runciman a prominent Simon's Town businessman and it was Parker who changed the face of Simon's Town's main street when he altered, at the owners' request, the fronts of many main street buildings between 1898 and 1915. He and his wife owned "The Firs" in Mowbray but lived at Glencairn in retirement.

On 7 June 1901 the Syndicate transferred the land to Glencairn Estates Ltd. It had a capital of £15,000 divided into 15,000 shares of £1 each. Of these 8,500 fully paid up shares were allotted to the members of the Syndicate in consideration of the rights purchased. On 23 November 1901 auctioneers J.J. Hofmeyr & Son offered the first plots for sale. By 1933 there were approximately 53 people with houses in Glencairn.

A 1st Class Water Reticulation Scheme was installed with a large 100,000 gallon heavy cast iron tank as the service supply. The water came from 6 or more springs known as Ohlsson's and Forrests springs and ran to a catchment pit above the present Gordon's Camp. All the cast iron pipes, specials and fittings were imported from the well-known UK firm of Stantons – including the tank. This water supplied not only all the requirements of the Valley but also the old Cape Govt. Railways and later the South African Railways and Harbours (SAR & H) with water to feed the steam engines using the Cape Town to Simon's Town Railway line. The railways drew water until the 1970s.

The Glencairn Hotel was built in 1904 for Christian Aistrup, as well as a house next door. These were designed by John Parker Snr. The hotel annexe on the Simon's Town side was designed by John Parker Jnr and built in 1930.

In 1920 Mr Webber, who was headmaster of the S.A.T.S. GENERAL BOTHA, lived on the main road opposite the railway station and with other residents persuaded the Council to build a tidal pool opposite the station. In 1937 the non-Europeans were given the use of Shelley Beach and a small tidal pool for them was built.

Not long before Mr A.B. Reid retired he supervised one of his old employees Mr Kenny Mann in building a stone sea-side house in Hopkirk Way, where Reid spent his retirement. His original workshop in Glen Road became the home of

Commander & Mrs T. Donkin when he was Harbourmaster of Simon's Town and in his retirement, before he moved to a retirement home.

Another beautiful stone house is that of the late Mr D.W. Hopkirk at the corner of Hopkirk & Squire. This was built by Mr H. Craig a master stonemason in the Dockyard. The stone was quarried and dressed on site. Mr Craig – who then lived at the southern end of Klawer Valley on a smallholding, in 1910 bought one of the wooden houses from Sir John Jackson Ltd – said to have come from Norway – and erected it on the main road at Glencairn on the plot on the Simon's Town side of Cairn Steps.

During World War I there was a barrier just opposite the station which meant people had to stop and show their passes before proceeding into Simon's Town. A soldier with his sentry box spent many uncomfortable hours in the south-east wind. During the 2nd World War the barrier was at the Quarry and naval patrols boarded the trains to Simon's Town at Fish Hoek station in order to examine the passes of those going to Simon's Town.

It is said that the first houses were built along what is now the busy main road, opposite the present station and on and above Glen Road (on the mountainside of the road). The only buildings on the right hand side of Glen Road were St Andrews Church and the next door Manse. This was originally built as a Presbyterian church and on 12 November 1923 it was re-transferred to Glencairn Estates. In 1926 the property had been declared for free use by all denominations and in 1950 the Anglican Church purchased the sited helped by a large donation from Mr St Clair Wagner.

Rudyard Kipling used the Glencairn area for his story “Mrs Bathurst”.

In 1922 a tennis court was opened by Sir Wm Thomson. Everyone in the valley had pitched in to help build it.

Among the early residents were:

Sir Wm & Lady Thomson (she was Miss A. van der Riet a daughter of Magistrate Van der Riet of Simon's Town)

Mr & Mrs C.E. Earp. (Mr Earp was a lay preacher at St Francis Church in Simon's Town and Mrs Earp was for many years a churchwarden and also a Member of the Simon's Town Municipal Council. She was a niece of the Writer Olive Schreiner).

Mr & Mrs K.F. van Breda (she was formerly Miss Hablutzel of Simon's Town)

Mr & Mrs Cartwright and their sons J.A., F.J. and T. who were the grandparents Of Margaret & Janet who have contributed so much to the Simon's Town Historical Society, the Simon's Town Museum and St Francis Church.

Mr & Mrs Kipps (he was one-time principal of Sacs Junior School)

Maj. & Mrs Wheeler The Mackie family of “Keithinch” Lady Skinner

Mr J.J. Geach (mother of Duncan) Mr & Mrs McIlwraith

Mr & Mrs Weaver (he taught Maths at UCT) Mr & Mrs Tugwell
Mr & Mrs G.H. Ollis Mr & Mrs Parkins Miss F.G. Dell
Mr & Mrs D.R. Leith of the house "Corrie" – parent of the famous London chef
Pru Leith.

Mrs F de Beer & family (who lived in the original farm house & cottage of
Glen Farm – the cottage later being the home of the warden of Gordon's –
Both having been built in the 1800s.

Captain W.D. Hare M.P. (for many years a Divisional Councillor and on the
Board of the Simon's Town Museum)

Mr & Mrs J. Kerruish Mrs McMillan Mr & Mrs J.C. Graham
Mr & Mrs Watters Mr & Mrs Eddles and not forgetting
Mr D St Clair Wagner who worked so hard to get the Simon's Town Historical
Society under way and eventually get the Museum started.

Immediately post 1945 the Simon's Town Municipality decided to survey and sell
plots in Glencairn Extension No. 1 which extended from Warner Way (opp./ the
station) to Hopkirk Way (next to Dido Valley Cemetery). Surveying must have
been difficult as it was just a vast expanse of sea sand. This township was later
extended to include land south of there and behind the cemetery. Six plots were
allocated to be sold at a reduced market rate to Ex-Servicemen.

Marine Oil Refiners were also encouraged by the Municipality to develop a factory
between the cemetery and the old Abattoirs at the corner of Dido Valley Road.
This was to give work to Simon's town folk who had during the war been
employed in the Dockyard and now in peacetime would no longer be required now
the Dockyard was not so busy. The factory closed in the late 1980s.
They had a rail spur next to Klein Vishoek house but this was taken up in 2011
when work was done on the railway line. The factory built 6 houses in Glen Road
extension for their senior management. The site has been sold to developers and
the factory was demolished some 10 years ago. It is hoped that one day in the not
too distant future we will see something elegant being built there and that horrible
mound of ground-up concrete disappearing. A stream ran through the site but was
quite polluted by the Council's rubbish dump above it – entered from Dido Valley
Road adjacent to the road which now leads in to Glen Marine Estate.

The Abattoir flourished for many years from the late 1920s. The cattle arrived by
goods train at Simon's Town and then at midnight were herded along the main
road towards the abattoir – often much to the shock and amazement of naval
officers returning from a night out in Cape Town who suddenly were confronted
by this herd of cattle! It closed in the 1950s. Later the Municipality had its Work
Dept. Yard there but with the closure of Simon's Town Municipality it is no longer
in use. It has been vandalized and is now an eyesore.

Topstones in Dido Valley Road came about as a result of a promotion campaign by
Mobil Oil. This was in 1970. When you filled up your car with Mobil you were
given a small piece of gemstone wrapped in plastic with its common name and

scientific name on a small piece of cardboard. Today they produce about 65 tons of 150 varieties of tumbled gemstone every month and its "scratch patch" has been visited by thousands of local people and tourists over the years. Bruce Bains, originally a lawyer, found himself in London and started tumbling gems. At this time he met a Hollander, Andre Tops. (who lived in Glencairn) and they formed a small company and it was Baines who took the idea to Mobil. It was not an easy beginning and then in the late 1990s China set up gem-cutting factories which made life even more difficult. The Baines used to live in that lovely house "African Dawn" on the main road but then moved to Noordhoek. Andre Tops also started Dixies on the main road opp. the station which has since been extended and become a really thriving well-known business. Andre Tops' daughter (Mrs Peter Weaver) and her husband lived in Glencairn until 2005 before moving to Sedgefield.

The Dido Valley Cemetery was opened in 1911 when the Old Burying Ground at Seaforth was closed. It has an armed forces area (looked after by the S.A. Navy on behalf of Commonwealth War Graves) and section for various churches and the Muslim community (in which latter area there are also graves of some Kroomen from West Africa who had served with the Royal Navy).

In 2005 development began in Cairnside above Hopkirk Way and entered from Squire Way. Rapid development of Mediterranean-type villas has taken place.

In Glen Road extension past the Church is Gordons holiday camp for underprivileged children. The land was originally owned by Mr W.G. Haines the founder of Gordons Institute in Mowbray. It was also originally part of Glen Farm and its earlier buildings on the site date back to the early 1800s and were for many years home to the de Beers. Haines died in February 1942 and he bequeathed the land (300 morgen) to Rotary for the purposes of development of his idea. The first unit *Smuts Hostel* was started when General Smuts laid the foundation stone in March 1948. The 2nd unit was provided by the *MOTHS (Memorable Order of Tin Hats)* in 1952 and is known as Happy Haven Hostel. The furniture and fittings were donated by the Mothwas and it is still maintained by them. Water originally came from a small spring by pipeline and this was eventually bought by Welcome farm and Oaklands.

On the mountainside above the beginning of the Expressway lies Glencairn Heights and Glen Ridge, a very popular area affording wonderful views of False Bay. It was laid out in 1973. Here also there is a small supermarket, various shops, an Asian restaurant and a Filling Station. Here Mr A Gray is remembered by Gray Road. This area was originally referred to as "Far Side" and contained a few houses originally built for the Glass Works. Mr Gray formed a small syndicate with A.B. Reid, P.J. Mackie and R.S. Whyte. He later bought them out. Some of the residents were coloured people who worked locally and there was a school built for them and others who lived in the properties on the upper reaches of Glen Road. The Rector of St Frances Church, Simon's Town (Rev. Caradoc

Davies) and the Town Clerk of Simon's Town (Mr W.S. Gillard) signed the site plan and the foundation stone was laid by Mrs E.L. Earp in August 1927. It closed in November 1969 with the removal of these unfortunate residents to Ocean View Township near Kommetjie under the Group Areas Act whereby Simon's Town was declared "a white area" despite opposition from the whole community. Part of the school was originally a hall for the glassworks and is now a private house with swimming pool.

Another resident at "The Lido" in Far Side was Mr Johann Gerhardus Stegman who came from Holland in 1890 as a road engineer to build the road from Simon's Town to Wynberg. He later went farming. His daughter Betsy Stegman married James Cunningham who installed the machinery at the Quarry. He had 6 daughters. Stegman died in 1912 and Mrs Stegman died in 1930. She had operated a small shop for the benefit of the coloured inhabitants and on her death Mrs Graham her daughter took over the running of the shop for many years. One of her daughters was to become Betsy Minnaar and she and her husband later moved to Glen Road.

Glencairn Quarry: an eyesore adjoining Glencairn Heights opened in August 1919 after lengthy negotiations between the Divisional Council and the Johannesburg firm of Strong & Moore who obtained a lease originally for 5 years. We wrote this up in our Bulletin Vol. XXII No. 2 p.67 if you would like full details. In the 1970s there were rumblings by the Glencairn residents. There had been many years of inconvenience as the Main Road had to be closed twice a day to allow a train in and out of the quarry siding (till 1957 when the line was removed after the main road was widened and re-built). This was where the barrier had been during World War II, preventing unauthorized persons from entering Simon's Town. It is now home to The Quarrymen – a fine male voice choir, and a practice area for a gun club. Mr J.C. Graham whom we mentioned previously went on to farm at Orange Kloof above Hout Bay and there looked after the pumping works of the Cape Town City Council. He was responsible for removing the engines from the wreck of the CLAN STUART as well as the deck house and captain's quarters, brought them ashore and they were re-erected alongside the Glencairn Hotel. The hotel manager lived in the captain's quarters and Admiral Woolley in retirement used the deckhouse as his studio.

Till the development of Glen Ridge there were two Divisional Council houses near the Quarry – these were demolished with the development of Glen Ridge. Originally Glen Ridge had an entrance road from the Main road but it proved to be the wrong place, totally unsafe, and all traffic now enters from the Expressway between the Filling Station and the Masonic Hall. The Masonic Hall was originally in Simon's Town opposite Old Hospital Terrace before a new Temple was built at Glencairn.

The Cape Glass Company lay between Glen Ridge/Glencairn Heights and the Else River. It was founded in 1902 and was one of the first glass factories in the world

that was established especially for producing machine-made bottles. Its registered office was 110 Canon Street, London and its directors were Algernon Leveson Elwes and John Henry Brodie (both of whom were also directors of Ohlsson's Cape Breweries). It appears to have been underfunded and in 1903 the cost of railage of the coal necessary for the boilers and the cost of manufacturing the bottles made life very difficult for the company. For its short life there were continuing difficulties and by December 1905 the Cape Argus was announcing that the "glassworks at Glencairn are closed").It was placed in voluntary liquidation and finally wound up in 1907. All the piping from the Glass Factory was snapped up by the Simon's Town Municipality so that they could extend their supply of water. The installation of the railway line did not help matters as the blown sand continued to be a problem. The railway siding to the works was used in 1901 during the Boer War to bring a "Big Bertha" type mounted gun for testing. This was known as the *Sir Redvers*. Photographs of the time in the Museum show the area round the *vlei* to be a vast expanse of sea sand and being used for football matches.

The blown sea sand is still a great nuisance today for motor car drivers and the railways. As far back at 1905 the Railways asked the Divisional Council to plant *marram* grass to try and alleviate the matter. This has changed the face of the *vlei* and the grass and bulrushes have firmly taken hold and this in turn has led to an influx of very varied bird life.

Da Gama Park: This is the S.A. Naval housing area and was formerly part of "Oaklands" and "Hartenbosch" farms. It comprises 600 morgen and 300 houses were built for navy personnel with room for a further 300 houses. Various naval workshops also exist close by. It is accessible from both Glen Road and Dido Valley Road. For years Da Gama Park did not pay rates to the Simon's Town Municipality but used its services. Till this changed it was always a bone of contention between the two parties.

GLENCAIRN – THE NAME: This was adopted from its early days BUT there was another Glencairn near Cathcart in the Eastern Cape dating back to 1880 and this caused the Post Office much confusion. In 1950 the Glencairn Civic Association took up the matter with the Post Office and a deputation of Mr L.C. Gay M.P. and former Mayor of Simon's Town for 25 years, with Messrs J.D. Low (Secretary of Glencairn Estates), D.W. Hopkirk and D St Clair Wagner, called on the Postmaster in Cape Town and prevailed upon him to cancel Cathcart's Glencairn in 1951. There is a village called GLENCAIRN in Scotland and as the Syndicate were all Scots, the writer presumes they chose the name for this reason. It is said that at one time it had been proposed that the place be known as *Else Bay* as the river is the Else River. The residents are very protective of their area and are very conservation conscious and in the last 10 years much has been done to enhance the area. In 2011 the community collected several hundred stones and assembled them on the mountain adjacent to and above the hotel to make sure visitors know they are in GLENCAIRN !

THE WILLIS NAVAL & AERONAUTICAL COLLECTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN.

The first Chairman and founder of the Simon's Town Historical Society, was a great collector of information and books and an ardent preserver of information. His special interest, however, was the naval and aeronautical fields.

R.F.M. Immelman, the Librarian at the University of Cape Town Library Special Collections had a close association with Mr Willis and advised him that his book collection would be included in the Special Collections Library and that the books would have a good home. Willis often wrote to the UCT Library staff for advice on his collection.

Willis' first donation relating to naval and maritime matters was made in February 1967. He made further donations in 1968, 1969, 1973 and 1977. It is thought that he followed Christison's work on book collecting in South Africa which provided a few pointers which Willis must have followed when starting his collection. Firstly to decide on what type of collection it would be (in this case a subject collection). Secondly, the books should be properly housed. It is obvious that Willis took particular care of his collection. He needed a dark room, a room with free circulation of air. One thing is certain is that he was aware how moisture would affect the collection, living as he did in Simon's Town.

Historical and current matters both formed part of his collection. There is material which covers the Second World War, historical assessment of naval and aeronautical engagements, books on history, strategy, ship design, as well as material covering matters such as the Royal Navy, Lord Nelson and his career, and so on. There is a computerized catalogue in the Special Collections Library itself. There are copies of *Mariners Mirror*, *Naval Records Society*, *Creuze's Theory and practice of shipbuilding (Edinburgh 1840)*, *The United States Naval Institute Proceedings (1973 & 1974)* and *Warship International (1967 & 68)*. Altogether there are approximately 2,000 titles.

The collection was transferred in batches between 1968 and 1977, the last arriving after his death. This included the Baldwin Walker manuscripts. Baldwin Walker had been an Admiral on the Cape Station in the 1840s. Special donor bookplates were printed to ensure the identity of the man who donated them. The Special Collections Library is housed near the African Studies Building in the Rare Books Collection. The library is open to all. Before visiting the library one should set up an appointment. The Library is usually open Mondays to Fridays from 09h00 – 13h00 but closed on Saturdays. Information on the Willis Collection can be found on the University Library's Web Page <http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/rarebks/>

Visitors constantly come in specifically to do research on the Willis Collection. They are students and departmental staff from the Archaeology Department

(prospective divers on wrecks); model boatbuilders; Aviation engineers and historians; general researchers and historians.

NOTE:

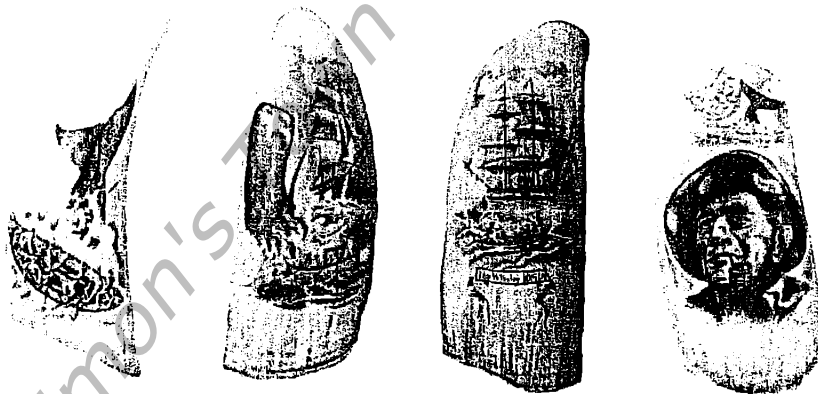
This article is based on an article by Naomi van Rooyen which appeared in the Quarterly Bulletin NLSA 58 (1) 2004. Miss van Rooyen prepared a paper towards her Bachelor of Information Science Honours Degree of UNISA 2002.

SCRIMSHAW

A.E. READ

The Dictionary gives: "1. adorn shells, ivory etc with carved or coloured designs (as sailors' amusement at sea 2. piece of such work (perhaps from a person's name)).

A visit to Horta in the Azores a few years ago led me to a modern-day maker of scrimshaw.



Some examples of Scrimshaw

Scrimshaw was an art born of loneliness onboard 19th century whaling ships. Many times whales' teeth were used. It is a disappearing art form as the supply of old teeth dating from before the ban on whaling is diminishing. The subjects or themes were of ships, the sea, whales and families left behind at home.

About 20 years ago a Hollander John van Opstal began working in scrimshaw having studied old engravings of whaling boats and other examples of 19th century scrimshaw. He obtained his supplies from divers who scoured the ocean floor near the old Azorean whaling stations in Pico and Madeira.

ROCKLANDS CENTRE, SIMON'S TOWN (Built on part of the original "Rocklands Farm")

A.E. READ

It is situated on the hillside above what is now left of the original Rocklands Farm and is a Christian Centre. Judy and Alex Rowe always had something like this campsite in mind after they bought the farm from the Lasbreds in 1976. This was encouraged by Stella (nee Mills) and Murray Hofmeyr who had known the farm in their student days as friends of Margaret Lasbrey. It has been developed far from the original "camp site" into a very modern and comfortable "Centre". Murray bought a half-share of the farm and as National Chairman of the Scripture Union was able to negotiate that S.U. purchase a portion and build a campsite. There was a pathetic lack of action by S.U. and Murray Hofmeyr was becoming irritated so in a letter dated 20 March 1984 he wrote "the shareholders have agreed that it should be transferred to a Charitable Trust to be known as ROCKLANDS CAMPSITE TRUST....." The Rowe's and Murray Hofmeyr had wanted R34,000 for the purchase of a 9.7 hectare piece of the land, probably less than half of what it was worth in 1981. In September 1984 the owners were ready to reopen negotiations and things began to move forward.

Fortuitously Mike Nolan became involved. Architect Rod Palmer joined the Steering Committee and a planning workshop was organized. Dr Chris Mulder, a leading landscape architect led the planning sessions. Early efforts at fund-raising centred on the Lombardi Trust (Mr E.J. Lombardi had welcomed many S.U. camps to his farm Applethwaite at Elgin). After a very professional presentation the Lombardi Trust agreed to donate R100,000 then and a further R50,000 in March 1986. The D.G. Murray Trust in March presented a cheque of R25,000. The Trust Deed was registered and signed in the offices of Bisset, Boehmke & McBlain at the end of October 1985 and registered on 22 January 1986. Teenagers were to be the main clients and the designs were aimed at their needs.

Site works were done in September 1986 and building began in May 1987. Legal transfer took a long time due to the sub-division of the farm, incorporation into the Municipal area of Simon's Town (from Divisional Council control) and the rezoning from farm to residential. Twelve local residents had qualms about the development but after contact was made with most of them, they felt re-assured.

The building firm of Murray and Roberts (of whom Murray Hofmeyr had been a director) began building the foundations.

Fund-raising was difficult and approaches in Canada yielded little. Mrs Carol Lombardi visited in September and pledged a further R100,000 and Les Jenkinson of S.U. and former businessman, donated R40,000. The first camp was planned for the weekend of 19-21 February 1988. When the 64 campers arrived the tents were up (and had wooden floors, with electric light and mattresses), the kitchen was operational and dining room chairs and tables materialized. The gardens were "adopted" by Dr Chris Dare, a leading founder of St Luke's Hospice and he also supplied scores of plants.

Then tragedy struck, a municipal fire break was being cleared in Murdoch Valley and sparks set alight vegetation at the Centre. The fire spread out of control towards Cape Point. The two farm houses at Rocklands Farm were saved but the S.U. storage hut was reduced to ash. Then the wind changed and the fire turned back towards Simon's Town but mercifully no long-term damage was done. Fortunately, a generous insurance company replaced the tents and equipment.

On 22 October 1988 a Thanksgiving Service was held and 150 guests joined in. Building continued on Chalet No.1 of 3 double bunks and a double bed with its own toilet, basin and shower area. By the beginning of 1990 the 2nd chalet was nearing completion and because of costs, savings had to be made as work progressed. Costs were continually escalating. In 1988 just over 1,000 campers stayed at the Centre and in 1989 this number doubled.

By early 1990 it was apparent that Murray Hofmeyr was seriously ill and he died on 26 June 1990 and in his place David his son was appointed as successor and representative of the Hofmeyr part of the Rocklands Company, owners of the Farm. There have been many staff changes over the years but great faith in the Lord has blessed the project.

In November 1996 Sir Kirby and Lady Isobel Laing (sponsors from the United Kingdom) visited the site and were shown the developments. Sir Kirby was very impressed but said that a decent road to the site was needed – would John Martin get a quote. Kevin Lee drafted a plan for the road – the work was divided into 3 phases and lo and behold in February 1997 Sir Kirby sent £40,000 enough to cover all 3 phases.

The year 1997 marked the 10th anniversary of Rocklands Centre and 200 people attended the celebration. Donations continued to come in. Another bush fire occurred in 2002 which severely damaged the adventure equipment. If the bush above the Adventure Centre had not been cut back just prior to the fire, the buildings too would have been destroyed. Camper figures for 1999 had exceeded 17,000. The 6th and final chalet was opened in February and in June the 3rd phase of the road was completed.



Looking down on the Rocklands Centre

The Rocklands Campsite Trust between 1987 and 2005 built something they can be really proud of and what they have contributed towards the future of young people is really tremendous. The audited statements for 2005 indicate that a total of R3,758,797 had been spent on the building of Rocklands Centre. The Centre is staffed by a Centre Manager and Assistant Manager and they are assisted by 18 people. Groups of a minimum of 100 people may hire all the facilities. The Centre is not for hire to members of the public.

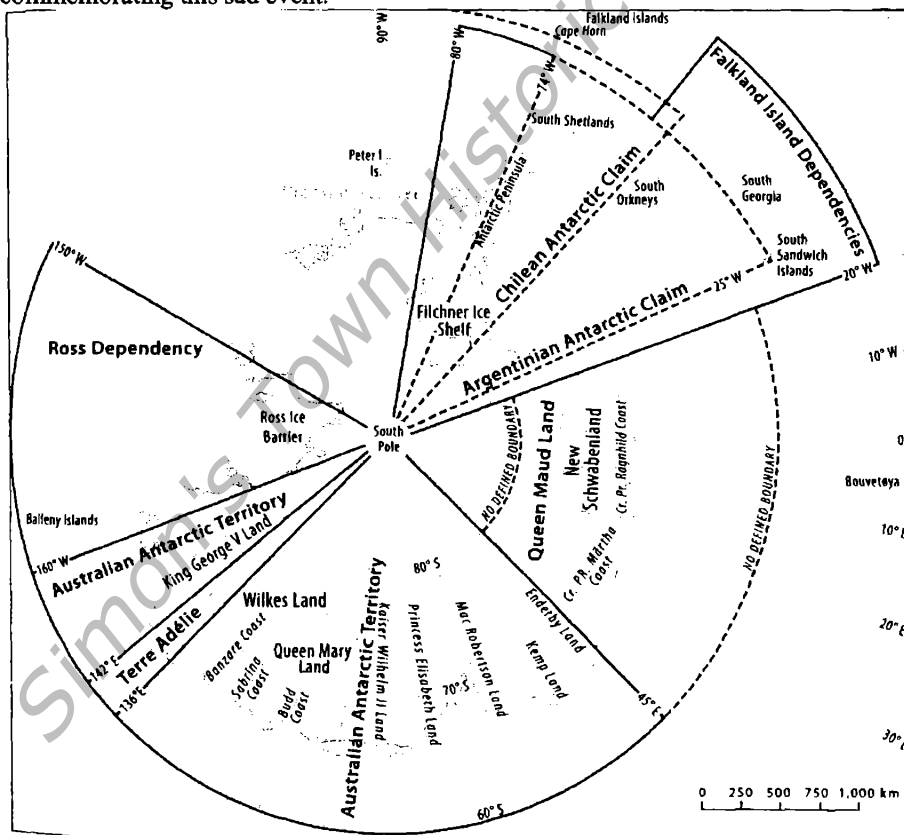
The Centre consists of Lounge (with large log fireplace); Dining Room (seats 180+); Kitchen with freezer and cooler rooms, stores and office. Laundry; Reception Foyer; Tuck shop and book shop; Reception office plus two managers' offices; Leaders' room' public ablution block and an Amphitheatre. There is an upstairs Games Room or meeting area; 6 chalets comprising 14 rooms en suite with 92 beds; 5 leaders' rooms sleeping 18 and two bathrooms. The Adventure Centre consists of 4 chalets (3 of which have 9 rooms with 4 beds each) and have individual ablution facilities. The 4th chalet has a small kitchen, single bedroom and toilet as well as a large living-room with fireplace. There is a Sports Hall with seating for spectators; Equipment rooms; a 25m x 10m swimming pool; small playing field; an initiatives course; 4 tents on wooden platforms which sleep 8 each; 2 staff houses, staff lounge and rest room; workshop and garages.

NOTE: This information was taken from a booklet produced by John Martin and published privately.

SCOTT'S LAST EXPEDITION & ITS SCIENTIFIC IMPORTANCE

A.E. READ

As you will no doubt recall it was just 100 years ago in June 1911 that Scott and his party were at their base on Ross Island off the coast of Antarctica. That was when they celebrated the winter solstice in their hut and the promise of longer days to come. This was the first Midwinter Dinner and is a feast still celebrated on the southern continent now. I am not sure if they still stick to the original menu of Seal Soup, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, flaming plum pudding and all the Christmas trimming. There was also a glorious improvised Christmas tree. In June 2011 with the encouragement of Dr Sydney Cullis, one of the Historical Society members, we at Simon's Town met in the Museum to celebrate and many people dressed in appropriate winter attire for the occasion. We stuck as nearly as possible to the menu, but just could not face Seal Soup!! Now it is almost 100 years since Scott and his companions perished and many people and societies are commemorating this sad event.



A map of the Antarctic area

What is perhaps not realized is the great contribution this expedition made to science. When Scott's body was found on 12 November 1912, the party also found rolls of photographs; a meteorological log which had been kept until 13 March – probably two weeks before their probable death; 16 kgs of fossils gathered on the way back from the Pole; as well as Scott's diary, various letters to supporters, friends and wives of his colleagues and the famous *Message to the Public*. Scott's biographer David Crane describes Scott's party which consisted of 65 men all told, including 12 researchers "as an impressive group of scientists as had ever been on a polar expedition". Scott's expedition delivered examples of 2,109 animals and fish, 401 of which had never been seen before. They also brought a huge number of rock samples, as well as emperor penguin eggs and plant fossils.



Capt Scott and some of his team outside their huts – a rare photograph

The expedition's meteorological studies led to new insights into the polar weather and how it affected the climate of Australia. Only two of the party, Thomas Griffith Taylor and George Simpson, were already established experts in their fields and many of the others were young men of 23 or so. One of these, Charles Wright, a Canadian physicist, went on to become Director of Scientific Research at the Admiralty. One of the most telling botanical items from the expedition was the fossilized *Glossopteris*, a fernlike plant known to grow in what was then called the Southern Continent (Australia, New Zealand, Africa, India). It proved that the climate in the Permian period, 250 million years before, had been mild enough to support trees. However, it was not until the late 1950s that the movement of

tectonic plates was really understood. Cherry-Garrard, Ponting and “Birdie” Powers contributed an enormous amount in their 5 week scientific expedition to Cape Crozier, a horrific journey when the temperature could descend to -75°F. It all resulted in the foundation of the Scott Polar Research Institute being founded in 1920.

Scott's son Peter was famous in his own right – he won a bronze medal in sailing at the Olympics and became Britain's most famous conservationist and ornithologist, an artist and a television favourite at his Wildfowl Trust and made his own contribution to what we have learnt. During the 1st World War Lady Scott worked at the Vickers factory and had so inspired her female workers that they were turning out as much work in 4½ days as used to be produced in 7 days. Lady Scott was also something of a sculptor and in 1915 on November 5 her statue of Scott was unveiled. She was working on the statue when Admiral Philip Dumas and his wife visited her and she was complaining that she was having trouble getting the face right. Admiral Dumas went up to the clay model and tweaked the nose into a slightly different shape and Lady Scott was delighted – it was now exactly right! A very talented family indeed.

HMS BLANCHE – 1893 ACCIDENT.

From the Nottinghamshire Chronicle U.K. of 16.12.1893

A serious accident occurred on Saturday aboard HMS BLANCHE at Simonstown while saluting the Admiral's flag. Several shots had been fired, and as the charge was being placed in the breech of one of the guns for the next shot, it ignited and an explosion immediately ensued. One of the men serving the weapon had his left arm shattered and his face and eyes were dreadfully injured. Another man was wounded in the head and it is feared he will lose his sight: and several others sustained injuries of a less severe character. The crew were about to be paid off to return to England.

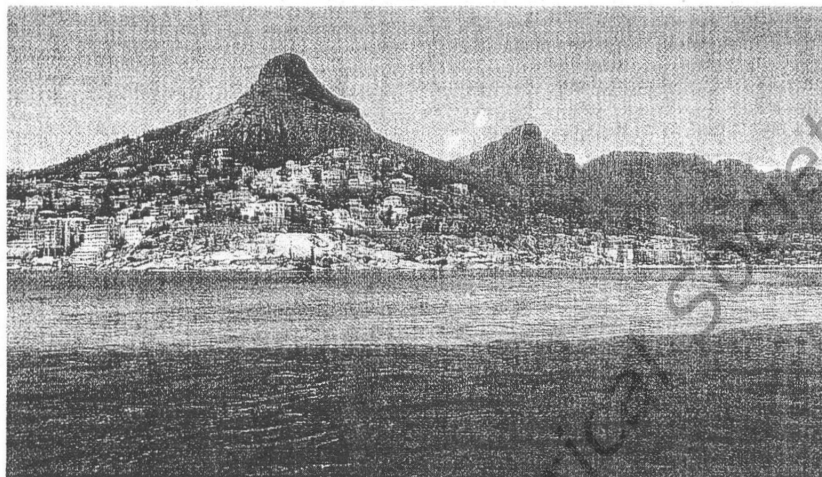
NOTE: brought to our attention by David Erickson.

RED TIDE & SHELLFISH POISONING

Outbreaks of red tide along the South African coast are reported periodically in the media with warnings to the public about the dangers of collecting and consuming shellfish in the affected areas.

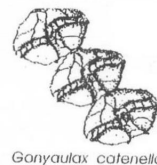
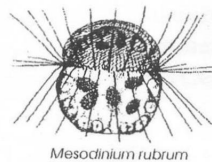
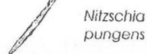
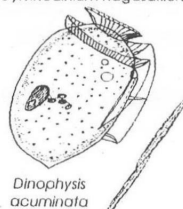
The term “red tide” is misleading, because discolourations of the water may be brown, orange, purple or yellow as well as red. These discolourations are caused

by dense concentrations of the microscopic plants of the sea, called *phytoplankton*. The discolouration varies with the species of phytoplankton, its pigments, size and concentration, the time of day and the angle of the sun.



A bloom of the non-toxic dinoflagellate *noctiluca millaris* off Cape Town. This organism is responsible for some of the most spectacular red tides and is also capable of luminescence at night.

Most red tides along the South African coast are caused by a group of phytoplankton known as *dinoflagellates*. These single celled organisms are able to swim short distances by means of 2 whip-like appendages called flagella. Their ability to swim contributes to their success as red tide organisms.



Red tides usually occur along the Cape west coast or south coast in late summer and autumn. The prevailing southerly winds at this time of year cause cold, nutrient-rich water to rise from the deeper regions of the ocean to the surface, a process known as upwelling. Swept along with this upwelled water are dinoflagellate cysts, the resting stages of the organism, which lie dormant in the sediments on the sea floor. The high nutrient concentrations in the upwelled water, together with ideal conditions of temperature, salinity and light, trigger the germination of the cysts, so that the dinoflagellates begin to grow and divide. The rapid increase in dinoflagellate numbers, sometimes to millions of cells per litre of water, is what is known as a “bloom” of phytoplankton. Concentration of the bloom by wind and currents, as well as the dinoflagellates’ ability to swim to the surface, together lead to the formation of a red tide. If conditions in the surface waters become unfavourable for the dinoflagellates, i.e. if the nutrients are depleted, or the bloom dispersed by wind and currents, the dinoflagellates will again form dormant cysts and sink to the sea floor.

Dense concentrations of red tide organisms can suffocate fish by clogging or irritating their gills, so that they cannot extract sufficient oxygen from the water. Low oxygen levels following such blooms are believed on a number of occasions to have caused rock lobsters to crawl from the sea. Toxins produced by certain dinoflagellates are some of the most potent poisons known to man. Mussels, clams and oysters are particularly vulnerable to red tides, because they feed by filtering particles from the water. Cooking only slightly lessens the toxicity of affected shellfish because the toxins are generally heat stable – meaning they are not destroyed by heat. The consumption of a single mussel can be fatal. Death is by respiratory failure and may occur within 2 – 24 hours. Mussels remain toxic for some time after the occurrence of red tide – sometimes up to two months.

NOTE: This information was taken from a booklet written by Irma van der Vyver and Dr Grant Pitcher. This was “Popular Series No. 2”. Further information may be obtained from the Chief Directorate of Sea Fisheries, Private Bag X2, Rogge Bay, Cape Town 8012

A PICNIC AT CAPE POINT IN 1892

From an account written for the Cape Times.

“To reach Cape Point, the visitor should start from Simon’s Town by hiring a horse, by private cart, or by a wagon in picnic fashion.

Two wagons, with their teams of 12 oxen, awaited the party detrained from the 7.30 p.m. A few minutes were spent stowing the provisions, the rug and pillow

which each was requested to bring, and then after a few introductions we began the ascent of Red Hill on foot; (Note: in those days the unmade track began opposite Admiralty House and was very steep – Editor) a wise commencement which allowed the individuals in our somewhat large picnic family (35 in all) to become more or less acquainted.

Arrived at the top of Red Hill we embarked in our wagons, the huge whips cracked and whistled, the oxen strained at the drag-ropes, the never-weary ever-observant Hottentots skillfully directed the leaders of the meek-eyed teams and so saved many a jar and jolt over huge boulders and stumps of trees in the rocky road, and all went merry as a marriage bell.

We had with us a banjo, and once fairly under way the possessor, in spite of many difficulties, skillfully accompanied the solos and choruses, which cheered the way. A young lady possessed of a sweet voice and retentive memory, deserves all the praise and thanks for the pleasure she so cheerfully and willingly gave to all. Ghost and spirit stories filled the intervals. By-and-by the moon rose, throwing dark, well-defined shadows on plain and earth. The pleasant and subdued light added to our enjoyment. About 11 p.m. having traveled some 7 or 8 miles, we halted, out-spanned the oxen and supped. We had shaken well down together by this time, got rid of all shyness and reserve, and the meal was a pleasant one. After 3 hours tossing and tumbling the rest was also very welcome. The majority then snatched an hour's sleep; the ladies kept to the wagons, the men camped beneath. At 1 a.m. the oxen were inspanned, a rataplan chorus from within roused the slumberers without, and we resumed our journey. Cape Point was reached at 6 a.m. The weary oxen were again outspanned and while breakfast was being prepared, many who had never seen the sunrise were able to view the morning sky from many coigns of vantage.

The steep ascent of the lighthouse was then made, and the marvels of it explained by the keeper. The wind blew very strongly, and though trying to control their skirts the ladies were the cause of much fun and amusement. The eddying gusts round the lighthouse top clearly demonstrated how unsuitable a lady's costume is for such rough usage. The outlook over sea and land was glorious. I shall not attempt to describe the many-coloured mountainous cliffs with every depth of shadow on their faces, the foam-flecked sea, the land, barren, but beautiful, nor one's sense of freedom and intoxication, the result of the loveliness of the scenes and "God's glorious oxygen" fresh and pure. I can only advise others to go through the same delicious experiences.

We next descended by a rough and difficult path to the seashore, and were rewarded by obtaining an excellent view of the mighty cliffs which rise, a sheer wall 810 ft high. We then explored a cave which ran a considerable distance under the cliffs, and though the greater part had to be traveled on one's hands and knees, by the light of matches, one young lady gallantly penetrated to the extreme end.

After these severe labours we returned to camp and lunch, had a short rest till 1 p.m., when we started on our return journey. Most of the men, and indeed a few ladies, walked during the afternoon. Many beautiful varieties of heath and African wild flowers were gathered on the way. An hour's stay was made in Smithwinkle Valley about 5 p.m.; tea was made, cakes and confectionery produced and discussed, and the oxen which had not been watered since the previous evening, had an opportunity to slake their thirst. Simon's Town was reached at 8 p.m.; the wagons were unloaded at the station, farewells were spoken and the 9.20 p.m. train conveyed most of our fellow picnickers to their homes."

I wonder how many to today's visitors who whiz down through Simon's Town and Miller's Point ever give a thought to how people got there 110 years ago????

Note: Brought to our attention by member B.Wallace-Bradley.

BUSH FIRE AT SIMON'S TOWN 1935

From: Western Morning News U.K. 11.3.1935

Five hundred bluejackets of the Africa Station, under the personal leadership of their Commander-in-Chief Vice -Admiral Sir Edward Evans, waged a desperate struggle at Simon's Town, Cape Province, for eight hours to save the Naval Hospital and Sanatorium from destruction by the worst fire South Africa has known for the last 20 years. They were aided by 150 soldiers and 200 civilian volunteers.

Within five hours the whole mountainside from Forest Hill to the Naval Sanatorium at Simon's Town, an area of about 5 sq miles, was burned out. The flames were got under control and the hospital saved. Two hours later, however, they broke out again and threatened the Naval Sanatorium on the mountain top. Military, Marine, and naval beaters were rushed to the top of the mountain in motor lorries. They found the smoke so dense that they were forced to don their gas masks. It was only at half-past ten at night that they finally got the fire under control.

Note: Brought to our attention by David Erickson.

Editor's Note: The hospital was not so lucky in a bush fire in 2000 when two of the wards were destroyed by a bush fire. At that time they were being used as housing accommodation for officers of the South African Navy who sustained great losses of their personal property but thankfully no loss of life or injuries to their inhabitants. At that time the bush fire came down to the main road and

threatened the businesses whose owners and employees were ordered to evacuate the premises. Helicopters with water buckets saved the properties.

THE SARDINE

The sardine found off the coast of South Africa is scientifically known as *Sardinops Sagax*. This same species is also found off Chile and California. They are cold water fish. According to the Encyclopedia "sardine" is the "trade name" for one-year old pilchards.

Between May and August each year they follow the cold water along the south and south-east coast of South Africa. From September to April the Agulhas current, which is a strong current, is close inshore and pushes towards Cape Point. From May to August it moves offshore allowing the plankton-rich water to flow towards Natal and form what is popularly known as the sardine run, when people on the south coast of Natal grab any container they can and rush to the shore to fill it with as many free sardines as possible!

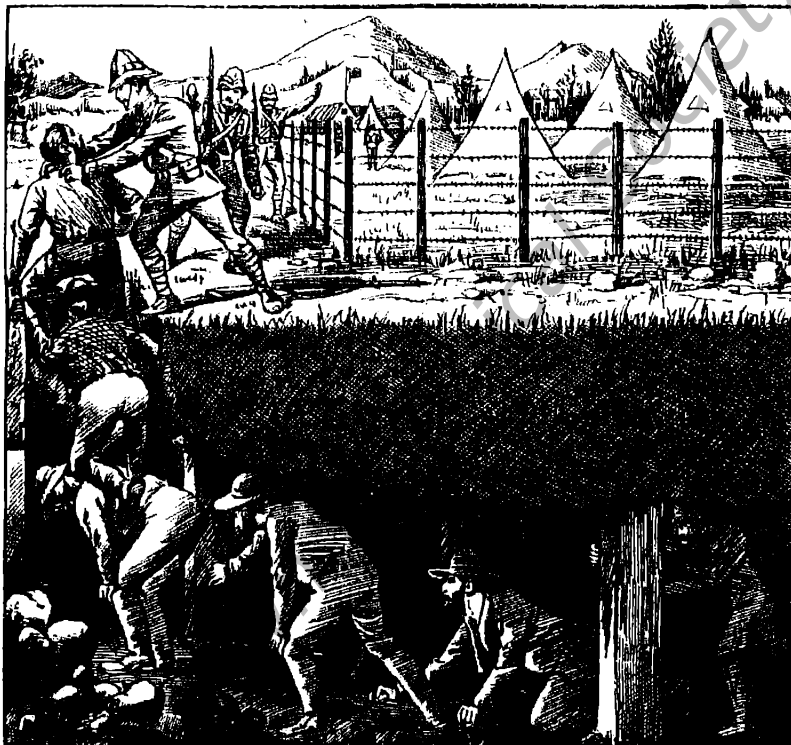
Sardines grow to about 30 cm in length. The fish is oily and a great favourite with many predators apart from us humans. It is the Cape Gannet *Morus Capensis* which favours these fish. Thousands of these birds live at Malgas Island, Saldanha Bay. They follow the shoals of sardines in their migration. Sardines can swim in shoals 15 km long and 3 km wide. You can, as a sardine, die of suffocation if you are on the inside of a shoal and can't get enough oxygen. However, it is no safer on the outside of the shoal as dolphins, sharks, whales and this Cape Gannet scoop you up. The dolphins are very good at herding sardines into a "bait ball". Then the dolphins attack in a throng, driving the sardines upwards which alerts the gannets, who in turn make a 20 second dive hitting the water at 40 kph. This dive can take them 10 metres underwater and their average stay underwater is 40 seconds. In False Bay it is fascinating to watch the white terns at work diving for their food. So next time you open your tin of sardines think about what befalls some of these tiny fish – the odds really are against them.

ESCAPE OF BOER PRISONERS FROM SIMON'S TOWN CAMP

In the London Times in April 1900 it was reported that there was a shortage of water in Simon's Town and that water supplies to the Boer camp near the Martello Tower were being cut off. This caused the 2,000 prisoners to be removed to Cape Town to board the transport ship BAVARIAN to take them to St Helena under an escort of the Cape Artillery. The next paragraph announced that Gert Bam, a Government contractor for horses, mules etc of Observatory road (as it was then

called) was arrested at his home the previous Thursday night for harbouring three Boer prisoners who had recently escaped from Simon's Town. The Boer prisoners were dressed as clergymen when discovered and were returned to Simon's Town.

No. 1901. [REGISTERED FOR CIRCULATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ABROAD] SATURDAY, JULY 21, 1900. Price One Penny.



From The Illustrated Police News , UK
Daring Attempt of Boer Prisoners to Escape

SCURVY

A.E. READ

Vitamins and minerals we must get into our bodies to give ourselves the zip and balance to sustain our daily lives. For many years scurvy was a bugbear to sea-going men. Your hair fell out, your ankles swelled, you were lethargic, had aching joints and blurred vision, your gums bled and your teeth fell out. It is suggested

that probably 2 million sailors died of scurvy between 1500 and 1850. Often on a long voyage it killed half the crew. Vasco da Gama in desperation on his voyage to India round the Cape of Good Hope in 1497 encouraged his men to rinse their mouths with urine which nothing for their scurvy and probably nothing for their spirits either!

The British Admiral George Anson in the 1740s lost 1400 men out of 2000 – only 4 of them killed by enemy action, the rest by scurvy.

It was noticed that when sailors got to port and received fresh foods they soon recovered. In the 1760s a Scottish doctor called William Stark encouraged by the explorer Benjamin Franklin tried to identify what it was that was needed in one's diet to prevent scurvy. His foolhardy experiment meant that he lived on bread and water for weeks and not surprisingly in just over six months he died of scurvy. At the same time a naval surgeon James Lind had conducted his own experiment. He found 12 sailors who already had scurvy and divided them into pairs for his experiment. To the one pair he gave vinegar, another garlic and mustard, another oranges and lemons etc. Five groups showed no improvement but the couple given oranges and lemons made a swift and total recovery.

It fell to Captain James Cook to get matters on the right course. On his circumnavigation of the globe in 1768-71 he packed a range of antiscorbutics to experiment on – including 30 gallons of carrot marmalade and 100 lbs of sauerkraut for every crew member. Not one person died of scurvy – a miracle that made him as much a national hero as his discovery of Australia. He was even awarded the Copley Medal by Britain's premier scientific institute The Royal Society. It however took the Royal Navy another 10 years before it provided citrus juice for sailors. The Navy Board used lime juice instead of lemon juice because it was cheaper and this led British sailors to become known as Limeys. HOWEVER IT WAS FOUND THAT LIME JUICE WAS NOT NEARLY AS EFFECTIVE AS LEMON JUICE.

PLATE GLASS

A.E. READ

The year 1851 saw the opening of the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park, London. The committee formed to make it come about had only 16 months or so to come up with AND build an edifice large enough and appealing enough to house the Great Exhibition. The committee consisted of Mathew Digby Wyatt, Owen Jones,

Charles Wild and Isambard Kingdom Brunel. Only the youthful Wyatt was a trained architect but as yet he had never built anything. Wild was an engineer who dealt with boats and bridges. Jones was an interior decorator and only Brunel was an engineer who had any experience of large scale projects. 254 designs were submitted to the committee and all were rejected as unworkable. The four men designed something of doom and gloom – a vast low, dark shed. It would require 30 million bricks and Brunel wanted it capped by a dome 20 ft across.

Into the picture came the head gardener employed by the Duke of Devonshire at his Chatsworth House in Derbyshire, one Joseph Paxton, then in his 50s. He realized that something like his hothouses might be the answer and quickly doodled a rough design on some handy blotting paper. It could be made of standard parts. At its heart was a cast-iron truss 3 ft wide and 23 ft 3 inches long. All could be bolted together to make a frame on which to hang the glass. He designed a mobile platform that moved along the roof supports and this enabled the workmen to install 18,000 panes of glass per week. An enormous amount of guttering was required – 20 miles of it. Paxton then designed a machine that with a small team of workmen could install 2,000 ft of guttering per day.

Just as this was happening glass became available in a way it never had before. The French had invented PLATE GLASS – the molten glass was spread across tables (referred to as plates) – enter the era of shop windows. However it had to be cooled for 10 days which slowed down production and then it required grinding and polishing. Just at this time the window tax and glass tax were both abolished. Very convenient. The finished building was 1851ft long, 408ft across and 110ft high. It required 293,655 panes of glass, 33,000 iron trusses and tens of thousands of feet of wooden flooring and cost £80,000 to complete in 55 weeks. In these days when many office blocks are made of glass, we have much for which to thank Joseph Paxton.

EARTHQUAKES IN CAPE TOWN.

In our Bulletin of July 2010 we wrote about an earthquake in Cape Town on 4 December 1809. One of our committee members David Erickson, temporarily working in London, has discovered an excerpt in The Morning Chronicle of Tuesday 20 October 1857. It tells of another earthquake in 1835 but gives no further details.

However, The Morning Chronicle quotes a report of 14 August 1857 which appeared in the Commercial Advertiser reporting on the earthquake of that date, a Friday.

"At 11.30 p.m. an earthquake of considerable violence was felt and heard over the Cape Peninsula from Cape Town to Simon's Town and as inland as Stellenbosch and Paarl, an area of about 400 sq miles. There was nothing peculiar observed in the atmosphere before or after the sound and motion. The air was still and the sky cloudless and clear. The temperature was such as we generally experience at this season of the year. The duration of the shock is variously estimated, and may have varied at different places; the sound from 15 to 70 seconds, the agitation of time which people make in different states of feeling, especially when roused from sleep, and nearly all in the dark. About the centre of Table Valley, between Lion's Hill and Table Mountain, the sound, we think, continued about 30 seconds, but it is possible that part of it was an echo from the neighbouring heights. For about 5 seconds we heard the sound as on the spot, under and all around, exactly as if a strong whirlwind raged against the house and rushed through open doors. It then ceased in the north-east and was heard as it softened towards the south-west, in which direction it seemed to have traveled, in this case much of the noise no doubt due to the vibration of the walls, floor and roof of the house. In the open air it was more distinctly perceived to be from underground."

SIR HERBERT BAKER & CRICKET

From: the Quarterly Bulletin NLSA 65 (3 & 4) 2011

Herbert Baker was one of nine brothers. The cost of their education was one factor in his father's financial decline. Herbert and his five younger brothers went to Tonbridge. Three were good all-round sportsmen, representing the school at cricket and rugby (at that time known as football) and participating in athletics and fives. Herbert, the 4th boy, described cricket as his favourite pastime and he outshone his brothers by playing for the first X1 for four years, being captain the last two. In football he played for the first XV for two years and was captain in the second year. His next brother Alfred, played for the first X1 and the first XV for three years, being captain of rugby in his last year. Brother number six Percy, played for the cricket X1 for two years and cricket formed a strong bond between him and Herbert. Alfred went on to the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, which he represented at cricket, football and athletics. He was commissioned into the Durham Light Infantry only to die in West Africa in 1899 from fever. That coast was then known as "the white man's grave".

Cricket had a long history in the village of Cobham in Kent, dating back to the 1770's and Herbert's father Thomas Henry Baker, wrote a history of the game in the village, *Fifty Years of Cobham Cricket 1850-1899*. The Hon. Ivo Bligh (later 8th Earl of Darnley) 1859-1926 of Cobham Hall, who captained the first English

side to visit Australia to recover the Ashes in 1882-83, was in his prime in Herbert's youth. In 1879 in Herbert's first full season in the Tonbridge first XI, the school played a scratch team of which Bligh, then at Cambridge University, was a member. The school won the match by 27 runs on the first innings. Herbert scored a duck and Bligh 4, so neither did very well. In his last year at school Herbert began to play for the village XI and continued to do so when his work permitted until he came to South Africa. In all he played for the village 97 times, averaging 27. In 1886 he scored exactly 100 against Rochester (Kent). In 1884 he was elected to the famous Kent Club "The Band of Brothers" which had been revived by the leader of cricket in the county, Lord Harris.

On arrival in the Cape in March 1892 Herbert was impatient to resume playing when the season began in October. Until then he had to content himself with exploring the Newlands ground, which he reported "looks a good one" and seeking out Frank Hearne, who was also from Kent. Hearne was one of three brothers who played for Kent and had the rare experience of playing for both England and South Africa. Although only 5ft 5 ins tall, he was a good batsman and a fast, round-arm bowler. He toured South Africa in 1888-89 and played in two test matches for England. He then settled in the Cape and was engaged by Western Province Cricket Club. In 1891 he had made his first appearance for South Africa in the only Test Match during the England tour, and later played for South Africa in the three Tests of 1895 England tour, when his two brothers and a cousin played for England.

Herbert kept up a constant correspondence of 14 letters to his brother Percy and these are now in the possession of Herbert's eldest grandson Michael Baker. Herbert liked to keep up with the cricket news from Cobham. Herbert found that work and other commitments restricted the time available for local cricket and he also had to visit his brother Lionel (born 1870) who firstly was in partnership with Harry Pickstone and Sebastian van Reenen, financed in part by Cecil Rhodes and known as The Pioneer Fruit Growing Company and who had bought the farm "Nooitgedacht" near Stellenbosch. Sadly this partnership was dissolved in 1893 and Lionel soon left to work in the Government Forestry Department until after a short while Lionel became manager of "Weltevreden" one of the 29 farms that were bought as Rhodes Fruit Farms Limited.

By 1895 Herbert wrote to his brother on 5 January 1895 saying that he had hurt his leg, "was seedy and made ducks so did not play in the best matches". This seems to have brought his cricket playing career to a close and it was only in 1919 he resumed his association with cricket as architect at Lord's Ground for the Marylebone Cricket Club.

THE WRIGHT FAMILY OF SIMON'S TOWN

A.E. READ

William Joseph Wright (born 1857 at Sheerness, Kent died 1935 Simon's Town). He arrived here in 1902 having left the rest of his family in England to follow him later. He became Inspector of Shipwrights in the Simon's Town Dockyard. He had married Elizabeth Ann Rixon (1860) of Sheerness, Kent in 1875 in Sheppey Kent. In 1902 she was pregnant with Herbert Frederick who was born later that year. It was decided that William Joseph should come ahead, settle in and find somewhere for them to live. With her in England were the older children William John (1876) already married with children; Sidney Charles Walter (1878); Maurice Joseph (1880) who was also married with a family and working in the Dockyard in Sheerness (he later became a reader for The Times in London); Ernest Henry (1885); as well as Maud Annie (1883) who had married David John Jones who came to Simon's Town to work on the building of the East Dockyard as construction engineer – they had a son Ion (1911).

Sidney Charles (1878) emigrated to Australia in 1920. In 1902 Ernest Henry was 17 so he remained in England to complete his apprenticeship, then joined the family in Simon's Town. That left Elizabeth Wright (nee Rixon) with Arthur (1889), Charles James (1892), Millicent (1893), Edward David (1895), Ronald Owen (1899) and the baby Herbert Frederick (1902). Considering the cramped conditions and the small ships of the time, Elizabeth was taking on quite a responsible job, setting off for Simon's Town and into the unknown with children aged 13, 10, 9, 7, 3 and a babe in arms.

William Joseph (1857) had previously served in Vancouver, Ascension Island and Bermuda. He became 2nd in command Naval Construction Department at Simon's Town at the outbreak of World War I. He retired in 1920. He and Elizabeth lived in an official house in the East Dockyard until he retired. They then returned to England but soon returned to the house in Forest Hill which he had bought on his retirement. He died in 1935 and it was remarked at his funeral that his coffin was carried by 3 sons and 3 grandsons. His nickname was "Happy Wright". Both William Joseph and Ernest were shipwrights – following a family tradition and ended up in Simon's Town Dockyard as Inspectors of Shipwrights.

Elizabeth Wright (1860-1949) was the daughter of George Rixon and Elizabeth (nee Wade) – both born in Wales. George Rixon was a boilermaker in Pembroke Dockyard where he had worked with John James Wright (1855), William Joseph's brother. Both William Joseph and Elizabeth were buried in Dido Valley Cemetery, Glencairn, Simon's Town.

Of the children who came to Simon's Town:

Ernest Henry (1885-1956) married Agnes Ewing Agnew (1886-1975) of a Simon's Town family who hailed from Newry in

Ireland. Agnes became the 1st person to be appointed Librarian at Simon's Town Municipal Library. They had three children = John Agnew (1916), Molly Agnes (1918) who did not marry and Alan Ernest (1928). More about MOLLY later in this article. They lived at St George's Villa, Queen's Road, built Barrabel for his own family.

Charles James (1892-1950) married Lilian Cruywagen and they had 2 children = Charles William (1916-1945) and Neville James (1921-1990). In turn Neville had 3 children.

Millicent Hannah (1893-1982) did not marry

Edward David "Ted" (1895) married Iris Mildred Ferry daughter of Jerry Ferry. Ferry worked on the Railways and had a son also Jerry who later became Mayor of Cape Town. Jerry Snr was the driver of the train which took the body of Cecil John Rhodes from Cape Town as far as Kimberley en route to Bulawayo where it was to be buried in the Matopos. Ted Wright went on to work at the Sturrock Dry Dock in Cape Town for South African Railways and Harbours.

Ronald Owen (1899-1976) married in 1925 Clara Ann Eddles (1902-1970) of Simon's Town. They were the parents of Phyllis (1926), Mavis (1928) and David Owen Rixon (1935-1990). For many years they lived at Montrose, next door to Ernest Henry, also built by Barrabel. Phyllis in 1952 married Guy Gates, then serving in the Royal Navy. They lived in UK for a few years before returning to Simon's Town with their family Elizabeth Ann (1953), Rosemary Eileen (1956) and Frederick Ronald (1958) and buying a house on Forest Hill from Phyllis' aunt Millicent Wright – now known as 123 Runciman Drive.

It is Phyllis Gates and her sister Mavis who have so generously provided us with all the family history and the Family Tree.

MOLLY WRIGHT: Molly was born in Cardiff Road to Ernest Wright and his wife Agnes (nee Agnew). This was on 24 November 1918. Her parents then moved to Kalk Bay to run a boarding house owned by Grandfather Agnew. They became very involved with the Methodist Church in Kalk Bay, built in the grounds of what is now known as the Bible Institute of South Africa. They did consider returning to Simon's Town but Rev. Marsh persuaded them to stay on condition he sold them a piece of his estate. It was there on what is now Ladan Road, that the family home was built in 1930. This was home to Molly until she moved in 2007 to a retirement home in Fish Hoek.

Molly began her schooling at Ms Dennis' private school in Sunny Cove and then went on to Muizenberg High School. She matriculated from Rustenberg Girls

High School in 1934 and took a course in shorthand and typing before going to work for Lennon's a pharmaceutical firm at the grand salary of £14 per month. Two years later she went to work for the Royal Navy at Simon's Town as personal assistant to the Captain in Charge of the Dockyard. During World War II the family moved back to Simon's Town as she and her father both worked for the Navy and Dockyard. Simon's Town was a "closed" area. They moved back to Kalk Bay in 1946.

When the Royal Navy handed over to the S.A. Government in 1957 Molly was transferred to Royal Navy Headquarters at Youngsfield near Wynberg as personal assistant to the Officer in Charge. Among her duties was that of Fleet Welfare Officer. She kept up her connection with the local Methodist Churches in Kalk Bay, Simon's Town and Fish Hoek. She was a Sunday School teacher; did the flowers many Sundays; and got the communion ready for almost 50 years.

Molly died in Fish Hoek aged 91 on Monday 27 June 2011 leaving 3 nieces, 1 nephew, cousins, great-nieces and nephews and a great-great nephew who had arrived just the month before. In 1974 she had been awarded an honorary MBE for her work with the Royal Navy. She retired from her service with the Royal Navy in 1976 but soon became bored. She returned to Simon's Town as personal assistant to the newly appointed Inspector General of the S.A. Navy and finally retired in 1990.

THE EDDLES FAMILY

The family originated in Bisley, Gloucestershire which overlooks the valley of the Stroud Water and River Frome. It had been a textile area which collapsed in the late 18th century when many of the inhabitants emigrated to Australia and the position was so bad that 40% of the 5,500 parishoners were unemployed – the result of the Industrial Revolution.

William James Eddles (1867-1918) came to Simon's Town in HMS PENELOPE. William's father Alfred Richard Eddles (1841 in Bisley) had moved to Torquay. He was a builder and built most of the houses and the church in St Mary's, Torquay. This area was largely destroyed by a bomb during the 1939-45 war but has all been rebuilt. William's mother was Caroline (nee Lee) daughter of a baker. On 9 December 1891 William James Eddles married in St Frances Church, Simon's Town, Clara (daughter of James and Ann Scott) who was working for the Admiral's wife at that time. They had their wedding reception in the grounds of Admiralty House. After serving his 12 years in the Royal Navy he obtained his discharge.

The children were:

Caroline Frances	(1892-1977)	married W.P. Oliver of Simon's Town
Claudius	(1894-1960)	sons Richard and Edwin
Richard	(1895-1917)	killed at Passchendal 16/10/1917 aged 22
William James	(1897-1970)	married M.E. Gumpel – daughter Ivonne
Frederick Scott	(1899- ?)	married Toni Gumpel – sons Antony & Louie
Sidney	(1900- ?)	married Ivy McKenzie – daughter Patricia
Clara Ann	(1902-1970)	married Ronald Owen Wright (1899-1976) Phyllis (1926) Mavis (1928) David (1935)
Roland	(1908- ?)	married Edith Baker – Judith 1937 Colin 1941
Penelope Agnes	(1909-2003)	married Edward Arthur Culver (1903-1991) Arthur 1934, Audrey 1939, Dorothy Clare 1941.

During the Boer War William was a Corporal in the 2nd Battalion of the Home Guard in Simon's Town. After the Boer War they moved to Lakeside where he built the attractive Pavilion adjacent to Lakeside Station. Clara, Ann, Roland and Penelope were born at Lakeside.

The family returned to Simon's Town and lived on a farm on top of Red Hill where William contracted flu in the great epidemic of 1918 and died on 12 September 1918. For health reasons Clara was advised by Dr Bull to move down to the town and later moved to Glen Road, Glencairn. Later Clara, Fred, Bill, Sid, Roly and Penelope moved to live in Forest Hill, Simon's Town. Clara later moved back to Glen Road, Glencairn to live with Roly and family. William and Clara are both buried at Dido Valley Cemetery, Glencairn, Simon's Town.

CAPE POINT (OLD LIGHTHOUSE) & ROMAN ROCK LIGHTHOUSE

(Something about the two men responsible for designing and building the two lighthouses.)

ALEXANDER GORDON (1802-1868). He was a pioneer civil engineer who specialized in lighthouse construction, especially in the colonies. He was the son of David Gordon (1774-1829) who was associated with Thomas Telford (1757-1831) also a civil engineer, the son of an Eskdale shepherd who built the Severn Bridges, several canals and improved the London-Holyhead road with the building of the Menai suspension bridge.

Alexander Gordon was born in New York, where, at the time his father resided but returned to Scotland with his father at the age of 5 years. In 1833 he introduced a polyzonal arrangement, both dioptric and catadioptric and adopted them for lighthouse purposes. He preferred using multiple reflectors, so that if through accident or carelessness one or two of the lamps were extinguished, there were still

sufficient left to maintain the light. In 1845 he patented a fumific propeller. He designed and superintended the construction of the South Australian Company's swing bridge at Port Adelaide. He was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. He died at Sandown, Isle of Wight on 14 May 1868 in his 67th year.

At Cape Point it was Greenwich Iron Works in UK who made the original tower.

JAMES DeVILLE (1777- 1846). He was born in Hammersmith, London and was the grandson of a Swiss refugee. He collaborated with Alexander Gordon on numerous lighthouses from around 1817 onwards. He was better known as a Phrenologist! A curious combination – lighting engineer and phrenology. He became very well known in phrenology and took life casts of a number of eminent people and lectured on the subject. His only son, William, was drowned in a boating accident at Hammersmith. James himself died at 367 The Strand, London. DeVile & Co continued in existence under his daughter Jane and was still trading in 1899. There is a plaque on the old Lighthouse giving their names.

We are grateful to David Erickson for finding out who deVile was and providing us with information on these two gentlemen.

----- HMS VICTORY, PORTSMOUTH

Did you know that her masts and spars are metal, not wood? They were taken from another vessel SHAH, in 1880 when the rigging was refitted.

One of her 32 pounder guns, if fired unrestrained, would recoil over 50 feet. Even restrained with two sets of block and tackle, it still moved 11 feet

s.s. WATUSSI & Harald Dawe (1936-2001)

The following is the story of the scuttling of the WATUSSI off Cape Agulhas in 1939 and how this altered the life of Harald Dawe.

On 2 December 1939 HMS SUSSEX and HMS RENOWN from Simon's Town intercepted the German-owned WATUSSI of 9521 tons, some 50 n.m. off Cape Agulhas. She was alleged in Naval circles to have been acting as a supply ship for German surface raiders. On reaching Germany it is alleged that the plan was for her to be turned into a German troopship. Having been "buzzed" by SAAF planes, the Captain ordered her passengers and crew to abandon ship so it could be scuttled rather than letting it fall into British hands.

The Chief Officer/Captain of the ship was Eduard Dawe employed by Deutsches Ostafrika Linen who plied between Hamburg in Germany and East Africa.

At the outbreak of war Eduard Dawe and his wife Margaret had a 3 year old son Harald Gustav Adolf Dawe born 1 December 1936. With the outbreak of war in 1939 Margaret decided to return to her parents home at Berkenbruck, midway between Berlin and the Polish border. Later she fled again from the advancing Russian army but took a wrong turning and Harald recalled long afterwards that his last recollection of his home was the sound of Russian soldiers smashing the family piano. Margaret and Harald managed eventually to end up in what was to become the British zone in Berlin.

Meanwhile Captain Dawe had been interned with the passengers and crew at Baviaanspoort internment camp for the duration of the war. At the end of the war, on being released, Eduard was employed as 1st Mate on a motor vessel JERO operating along the Namibian coast. He later became 1st Officer of the cargo ship PEQUENA belonging to South West Africa Fishing Industries. He wanted to stay in South Africa "for ethical and political reasons". His application for permanent residence can be found in the Cape Archives. The application was approved on 10 September 1948 and he could now bring his wife and son to South Africa.

An uncle paid for them to join Captain Dawe who was by now working for the Union Castle Line. Margaret and Harald reached Cape Town on 25 November 1949 on the EDINBURGH CASTLE. They found it hard to settle down at first. Captain Dawe died in 1967 and Harald continued to look after his mother at their Tamboerskloof home until she died in 2000 aged 97 years.

Harald attended the German School till Standard 8 after which he went to S.A.C.S. in Orange Street. He was a keen student and insisted on studying Latin as well as German. He matriculated in 1954. In 1957 he graduated from U.C.T. with Afrikaans/Nederlands and German majors and completed a Secondary Teachers Diploma in 1958. He taught Afrikaans for a short while at Wynberg Boys High. During 1959-61 he obtained his BA (Hons) in German at U.C.T. In 1962 he went to Germany on a bursary to teach English at a private school in Bremen. While there he studied French by correspondence. He returned to Cape Town in 1963 and completed the High Diploma in Librarianship and in 1964 he joined the Cape Provincial Library Service as a cataloguer, a temporary post as he was not yet a naturalized S.A. citizen, which he became in 1965.

He was not happy in his job and in September 1965 he applied for and obtained a post at the then named South African Library. He began in the Periodicals Dept and later took charge of the Africana Dept. Dawe enjoyed helping in the Dessinian Collection which consists mainly of 17th and 18th century books written chiefly in German, Latin and Dutch. He then spent 5 years re-cataloguing the Dessinian Collection having also taught himself rudimentary Greek. He completed the task before he retired in March 1997.

About 2001 he had his first brush with cancer. He died in June 2011 while his cousin Peter and wife were visiting from Germany.

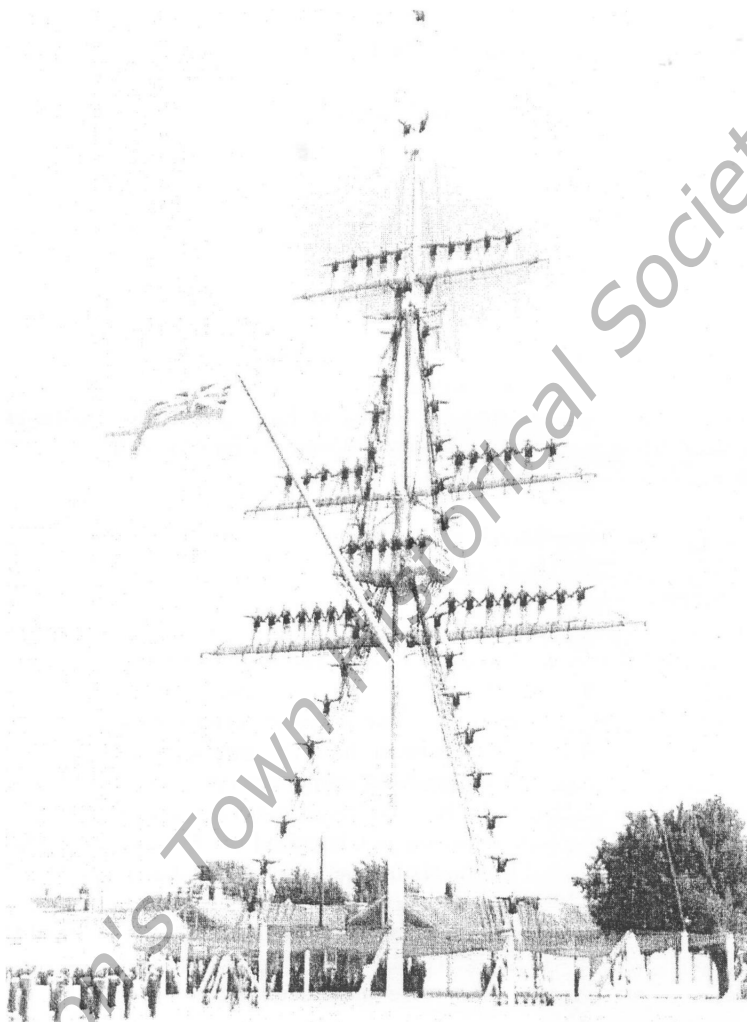
HMS GANGES Association

If you are visiting the Simon's Town Museum on a Saturday morning you may have noticed people going down the path on the south side of the Museum. These are members of HMS GANGES Association who hold their meeting in the ground floor of the Museum building in the rooms allocated to the MOTHS (Memorable Order of Tin Hats) an ex-servicemen's association founded by after World War I. The Moths donated many photographs and memorabilia to the Historical Society which formed the basis of the donations which were passed on to the Museum on its founding.

The first HMS GANGES was a 74 gun 3rd rate ship launched in 1782 at Rotherhithe, Kent; built by Randalls. She was broken up in 1816. The second ship to bear the name HMS GANGES, was a 2nd rate, 3 masted ship of 2,284 tons, 196 ft in length and pierced by 84 guns. She was launched in 1821 and built of teak in the Dockyard in Bombay. She was anchored at Mylor in Cornwall in 1866 and started a tradition of training Boy Seamen for the next 33 years during which 14,000 boys were trained. On 27 August 1899 the ship was transferred to Harwich to continue as a base for training boys until a shore training establishment at nearby Shotley Point was opened in 1905 and closed in 1976 during which time approximately 120,000 boys passed through its rigorous training.

To commemorate the good work done the HMS GANGES ASSOCIATION was formed, open to all ex-boys, instructors and those who formed the ship's company and has a membership of approximately 4,000 and Branches throughout the UK, and Divisions in Australia, South Africa, Canada, New Zealand and U.S.A. Cornwall Division erected a Memorial at Mylor in Cornwall with help from the Solent Division. The ship was famous for its Mast Manning but sadly now that the former base has been disposed of, the mast is being neglected.

The Society would like to thank Paul Daykin and the Ganges Association for the information and photographs.



Mast Manning at HMS Ganges at Shotley

VOLUNTEER ARMY DETACHMENTS 1856-1867

During this period there were many volunteer corps formed – in fact many towns in the Cape Province formed one e.g.

Prince Alfred's Volunteer Corps, King William's Town

Queen's Town Carbineers

Queen's Town Rifles

Richmond Mounted Rifles

Riversdale Volunteer Rifles

Robertson & Montagu Rifle Corps

Scotch Volunteer Rifle Corps, Cape Town

Stellenbosch Artillery

Stellenbosch Volunteers

Stockenström Volunteer Mounted Rifles

And so on. In the Military History Journal in June 1973 Lt Col Justin Hulme wrote an article on "Cape Colonial Volunteer Corps" from which we have obtained information relevant to Simon's Town.

Simon's Town, though a relatively small town even then had 3 Volunteer Corps:

Simon's Town Artillery (1857-1861): Raised in July 1857, resulting from a meeting held on 6 July (C.A. 8/7/1857) To form a Corps to act with the Wynberg & Simon's Town Cavalry. The exact date of raising was not established but the Corps appears in the Governor's list (C.A. 23/9/1857) as 19 strong on 9 September and with Lt H.M. Anderson as Commanding Officer and Fleetwood Churchill as Surgeon. Departure of the regulars to India in August caused great activity at gun drill (C.M. 15/8/1857). One officer and 10 men attended a Review at Stellenbosch on 7 October and the previous month they attended a field day with the Wynberg Cavalry and the C.R.R. By December they had a uniform 9C.A. 30/12/1857). They attended a Review at Claremont on 30 March 1859 and the funeral of Lt D. Reid, Bengal Engineers in June. On 31 December 1859 the Corps was 20 strong under Lt G.R. Budge (one-time Mayor of the town). On 30 March 1860 they were at a review and on 24 July they fired a salute for the visit of Prince Alfred to Simon's Town 9C.A. 28/7/1860) and in September fired a Royal salute in the absence of the Regulars. They were disbanded in 1861.

Simon's Town Rangers (1862-1866):

A move to form the Corps was made in January 1862 and in February it was reported as strong, having taken in the members of the disbanded Artillery and the Wynberg and Simon's Town Cavalry (C.M. 4/2/1862). Government approval was forthcoming and officers appointed were: Captain G.W. Browning; 1st Lt Patrick Dugald Martin and 2nd Lt E. L'Estrange Disney. Tenders were called for for the uniform. Long Enfield Rifles were ordered (C.A. 3/2/1862). Services of the Corps were accepted on 3 February 1862 and the uniform was approved as a dark grey tunic with waist belt; peg-top trousers with leggings; Garibaldi felt hat with feather, and the usual cap and ammunition pouches (C.A. 6/2/1862). The Corps attended a Review at Stellenbosch on 8 October under Disney and then Disney was

promoted to Lieut. *vice* Martin and Richard England Aston M.D. as 2nd Lt *vice* Disney on 18 November 1862. The strength on 31 December 1862 was 50 with officers: Capt G.W. Browning; Lts Disney and R.E. Orton; Surgeon Churchill. The Corps paraded in May 1863 for the Prince of Wales's marriage celebrations and attended a Review at Stellenbosch on 7 October 1864. It received a fair report in that year from the Imperial inspecting officer. At the end of 1865 the strength was 39 and the acting officer commanding was Lt J.B. Morris. It was disbanded in 1866.

Wynberg & Simon's Town Cavalry (1857-1861):

They were enrolled on 30 June 1857; regulations were approved on 14 July 1857; the strength on 9 September 1857 was 30. Officers were Captain Rudolph Cloete; Lt Alex van Breda; Lt P.D. Martin; Adj. Daniel Cloete; Q.M. Johan George Rathfelder. The first muster took place on 15 July 1857 at Rathfelder's Inn (at Diep River. Ed.) where the corps was drilled on foot by Adjutant Rennie C.R.R. The next parade was to be mounted. At the second parade at Rathfelder's 15 appeared in uniform – black jacket, braided on the chest, twist shoulder-knots, half red collar; red cuffs; Oxford mixture pantaloons with red stripe down the sides; belt and black cap embroidered with the letters W.S.R.C.C. In the case of the officers the stripes on the pantaloons and the shoulder-knots were of gold lace. The uniforms were made by Wilson of Shortmarket Street, Cape Town. On 14 August 1857, 16 of the Corps joined the C.R.R. (Cape Royal Rifles) at a Review on the Grand Parade in Cape Town. The low numbers were due to incomplete uniforms. Three Officers and 22 men attended a Review at Stellenbosch on 7 October 1857 and in December some attended a concert in Simon's Town in uniform. In February 1858 the Corps was called out to assist in the search for Kaffir prisoners who had escaped from Amsterdam Battery (in the Dock area of Cape Town Ed). They traveled via Constantia Nek, Hout Bay and Camps Bay on the 5th and then to Cape Town. They attended a Review at Cape Town on 30 March 1859 and the funeral of Lt D. Reid, Bengal Engineers at Simon's Town in June 1859. In September it was announced that the Corps would be remodeled as mounted rifles and there would be a fresh election of officers. The Corps attended a Review on 7 October. On 24 July 1860 the Corps paraded at Simon's Town for Prince Alfred and acted as his escort on the following day but were reported in August as being very weak and inactive. They attended a shoot on 23 November 1860. Their strength on 31 December 1860 was 24 with the same officers as in 1857 but they are noted in 1861 as disbanded.

Admiral Biermann was born in Johannesburg in 1916 and after completing his schooling he joined the S.A.T.S. GENERAL BOTHA in Simon's Town. Thereupon he served in the British Merchant Navy from 1933 to 1938. He was appointed a Sub-Lt in the R.N.V.R. (Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve) and on the outbreak of war in 1939 as a Lt Cdr he saw action aboard HMSAS GAMTOOS. The year 1946 saw the establishment of the South African Navy. In 1972 on 1 April Admiral Biermann assumed control of the whole of the South African Defence Force. He is often referred to as the "Father of the modern S.A. Navy."

He was President of the Simon's Town Historical Society from 1983 – 2000 and was very "hands on" requiring the Secretary and Chairman to report to him each quarter on the happenings of the Society. When he retired from the S.A. Navy the Admiral lived at "Canty Bay" in the Main Road, Muizenberg before moving to Cinnebar Flats at Muizenberg. He finally moved to Silvermine Village at Noordhoek with Mrs Biermann about four years ago. Mrs Biermann died there in 2009. She was formerly Margaret Elaine Cruwys and they had a son and a daughter. They had enjoyed over 70 years of married life. They will both be missed by our Society. The Admiral's funeral took place at Christ Church, Constantia on Tuesday 10 April 2012 when the eulogy was given by Vice-Admiral Robert Simpson-Anderson SAN (Retd) In his memory the Society have made a substantial donation to the Mission to Seafarers in Cape Town.

THE "DUMPS" WILLIS MEMORIAL LECTURES

In commemoration of our founder Humphrey "Dumps" Willis we began a series of memorial lectures in February 2011. The first lecture was given by Alderman Nicki Holderness, our President.

On 29 February 2012 a former Chairman of the Society Prof J. (Boet) Dommissie gave an illustrated lecture "The Dutch Legacy in Simon's Town". It was given to a record number of members and non-members. Prof Dommissie has a long connection with early Simon's Town settlers and officials. He is descended from the Roussouw, Brand and Hugo families, his mother's maiden name being Gwendoline Brand Hugo.

When researching for his talk he came across an article about Simon's Town in the Woman's Argus 5 August 1971 in which "Dumps" gave the following advice to other retired folk: "Go to the Archives and from old maps and records study the history of your particular area, then set out on foot and get to know it intimately, street by street, and yard by yard. It can be tremendously rewarding". This is exactly what "Dumps" did and the Museum is the proud possessor of all his research which has now been digitized so as to preserve it.

The Society will be erecting plaques at both ends of Willis Walk which read as follows:

**WILLIS WALK
THE BRIDLE PATH WAS RENAMED TO HONOUR HUMPHREY
“DUMPS” WILLIS**

(3.6.1902 - 23.7.1976)

His many contributions to Simon's Town

His air-sea rescue role in WWII

**His Opposition as Town Councillor to the
Group Areas Act**

**And his dedication and research as historian and
Founder of the Historical Society**

**A tribute from the Simon's Town Historical
Society.**

THE BRITISH EAST INDIA COMPANY (also referred to as H.E.I.CO)

A.E. READ

The Honourable East India Company began as a small trading venture with India and the East Indies in mind. It received its original charter at the hands of Queen Elizabeth in 1600. This was to be for 15 years but James I extended it “for ever”. The Dutch East India Company (or VOC) had preceded it by a couple of years. The first Governor of the Company was Sir Thomas Smythe and he made a voyage to the East and on his return called in at Table Bay forming a sort of friendship with one of the local Hottentot chiefs, took him on board and this man spent a year in London living with Sir Thomas, until he ached to return to a sunnier climate.

The HEICo in the beginning held a monopoly but seeing the spoils to be had a number of interlopers appeared in the late 1600s. The Company appealed to the British Crown who declared by special act of Parliament in 1694 that all British subjects had the right with the Company to trade with India.

In 1698 a new HEICo. sprang into being with the injection of a loan of £2million to the state and the Company was reorganized and reinstituted. During Queen Anne's time quarrels with the interlopers still continued and during the 18th century the rivalry between France and England extended to India but after the victories of Clive the Company rose to the position of a ruling power. However, in 1773 the Regulating Act came into being a a Governor-General was appointed by the Company after approval by the Crown. At the same time a Council of 4 was

created together with a Court of Judicature. Pitt's India Bill of 1784 created a board of control and matters of politics, finance and military passed out of the hands of the Company into the hands of the Government. After 1833 the Company ceased to operate a merchant fleet and the Indiamen found it hard to compete with other trades. They were overtaken first by the Blackwall frigates and then by the Clipper ships. After the Indian Mutiny of 1857 the Company ceased to be a trading Company and became an administrative body.

The Company ships were known as East Indiamen and often called at the Cape, even after van Riebeeck's arrival. The ships were the largest merchantmen of their time and because of their valuable cargoes were heavily armed. They were frequently mistaken for British warships. Remember they had to avoid Madagascan-based pirates and also avoid French ships going to and from Ile de France (Mauritius) and Reunion, as well as those going to French possession in India and the Far East. Only a few Company ships were actually owned by the Company; most were chartered by their owners who were a consortium led by an influential merchant or gentleman known as a Husband who had the "right" to charter ships to the Company at a most advantageous rate. The shareholders usually consisted of a couple of merchants, someone titled, the Master, the shipbuilder and the sailmaker. Command of an East Indiaman could make a captain very rich. Some of the Husbands had smaller ships (built in India) for the coastal trade. Later some of the ships became convict ships and prison hulks.

Simon's Town became the home for a few years of Captain Thomas Talbot Harington who by 1810 had made it to Captain of the SCALEBY CASTLE and who developed what we now know as Seaforth, a very large tract of land. He brought with him a couple of British tradesmen and also brought from Canton some Chinese bricklayers and carpenters, to assist in building his home. His wife was the niece of the Earl of Seaforth. Other members of the Harington family were in service in India, in the Judiciary and the Ports Authority in Madras.

In the very early 1800s the Agent of the HEICo owned Mount Curtis (known by its more popular name of The Palace or Palace Barracks) and had a large store in Simon's Town (where Pescados now is). How it has all changed.

THE SIMON'S TOWN & DISTRICT CHRONICLE

A.E. READ

When the Society decided to issue a bi-annual newsletter to its members it decided to call it "The Simon's Town Chronicle" to commemorate its predecessor. We are now up to No. 71.

Friday 11 August 1899 saw the issue of Vol.I No.1 of the Simon's Town and District Chronicle. The price was 1d. (one penny – can you believe it?) The printers were GWA Richards & Sons of 16 Castle Street, Cape Town. All managerial and editorial comments were to be addressed to Mr Timbrell. William Andrew Timbrell, founder, owner and editor of the paper later stood for election as a Town Councillor but failed to obtain sufficient support from the 189 enrolled voters.

The first three issues came out on Fridays but thereafter the paper was published on Saturday mornings to enable full reports to be given of the town council meetings held on the previous Thursdays. The Chronicle had 4 pages of 23" x 19", the first and last pages being given up for advertisements. The first issue was said to have gone smoothly and the owner patted himself on the back for its quality.

The first number contained a poem by Edgar Wallace "Evening at Simon's Town". He was at that time serving here in the British Army as a medical orderly and Simon's Town claims to have launched him on his literary career. Later on other of his poems were used – "Dreyfus" "Kimberley" and "The King of Oojee – Moojee". Rudyard Kipling was also here at the time and produced a poem "Kipling's Latest".

On 18 August 1899 the Chronicle announced that the new parsonage in Simon's Town (in Cornwall Street) was nearing completion and "is an exceedingly pretty structure". [How pleased they would be to know that 2 years ago it was restored with loving care by its new owners who went to great lengths to keep it as Sir Herbert Baker, its architect, designed it to look - Ed]

On 23 September 1899 the Chronicle reported on the laying of the foundations of the New Naval Hospital (on Cable Hill). The cost would be £7,000. The work had so far been done departmentally but it was reported that tenders would be called for at a later stage. Building was expected to take 4 years, the 3 fever wards being completed without delay. It is worth noting that in order to get a fairly level site for some of the buildings, quite a lot of excavation of the hillside would have to be done. However, this was fortuitous as fill was required to widen a track which we know today as "Runciman Drive".

On Saturday 3 February 1900 the Sailors' & Soldiers Home on a site adjoining the old Wesleyan Methodist Church was declared open by Rear Admiral Sir Robert H. Harris, Commander-in-Chief 1898-1901. The report then goes on to give a brief history of the Home dating back to 1882 "when a few Christian sailors hired a small room [at the foot of the town pier] for sleeping accommodation when ashore". In 1886 Rev. Ellis J. Williams hired a larger building. From these latter efforts the United Services Institute in the main street came into being.

There was also a dog in Simon's Town – owned by a Dutchman – who was trained to meet the Royal Marines on march, headed by their band, and howl at them. "Happily he is muzzled but he seems to fancy he could devour the whole lot" [Perhaps he was a very discerning dog - Ed]

The Simon's Town Co-operative was opened on 18 November 1899 with a capital of £2,000 in £1 shares. At the first quarterly meeting a dividend of 2/6d in the £1 was declared!

Sadly the Chronicle ceased publication with Vol. III NO. 57 of 15 September 1900. No reason was given. Thank goodness our Chronicle has had a longer life.

SIMON VAN DER STEL & THE SIMON'S TOWN MUSEUM

(With thanks to The Cape Odyssey Feb/Mch 2010)

When the Museum moved from the Simon's Town High School Headmaster's house to our present home at The Residency a very large photograph of a painting of van der Stel was put on exhibition – after all our town is named to honour him so it was very appropriate. Adjoining it is the story of his survey of False Bay. When I asked about the photograph I was told that the original had been lost in a fire.

Fast forward to the arrival of the Cape Odyssey No.82 February/March 2010. On page 5 is a photograph of a painting matching the one we have on display. What follows is an incredible story.

A couple originally from Dublin, Eire, now of Tunbridge Wells in Kent, arrived at "Caledon Villa" the home of Johan Krige in Stellenbosch which is operated as a 4-star Guest House. Mr Krige gave them a tour of the house so they could see his collection of art work. When they arrived at the lounge there was a startled exclamation from the man. On the wall was his painting of van der Stel which had been severely damaged in a fire in 1962. It appears that in 1669 the Dutch artist

JAN WEENIX was commissioned by Simon van der Stel to make a painting of him and his son Willem Adriaan. It had been passed down through the family until a widow decided in 1877 to sell it at auction.

In 1927 a dedicated Dutch photographer traveled the world taking pictures of all Dutch paintings he could trace. He built up an extensive collection which he later gave to the *Iconografish Buro* in The Hague. It was here that Leo van der Stel, a descendant, saw the photo. He embarked on a search to find an artist who could convert the black and white photo into a replica of Jan Weenix's painting. The commission was given to Simon Balyon. On one of his visits to Caledon Villa Leo brought the Balyon painting with him hoping to sell it to the Stellenbosch Municipality or another public institution. He failed in his attempt and returned to Europe with his picture. The Kriges decided to attempt to obtain the copy. An agreement was reached and in 2003 the canvas was returned, framed and placed on the wall in the lounge.

A few words about van der Stel himself. He was Governor of the Cape from 1679-1699 when he retired to his estate "Constantia". He was born in 1639 in the midst of a storm when on board the Dutch East India ship DE CAPPEL en route from Dutch East Indies to Mauritius where his father had been appointed Governor. His mother was born Monica da Costa, the daughter of a Portuguese father and a Eurasian mother. When 21 years of age Simon decided to leave for Amsterdam, staying over for 2 weeks at Table Bay with the van Riebeecks. He was most impressed with the Cape and thereupon decided to return here one day. He adapted his studies at De Atheneum College in Amsterdam to include history, geography, horticulture and chemistry as well as trade and commerce.

Meanwhile van der Stel had married and raised a sizeable family but he and his wife parted when he was appointed to his job at the Cape. He left his baby son and daughter with his wife and set off for the Cape with his 4 eldest sons and his sister-in-law.

He did so much for the Colony while he was Governor. Inter alia he is said to have had planted 100,000 oak trees. In April, May and August 1688 van der Stel welcomed the 136 Huguenot families to the Cape and spread them among the burgher population, not only to learn Dutch but also to prevent them settling in one large clique.

Van der Stel was 60 years of age when he retired to Constantia. He died aged 73 and was buried in the Groote Kerk in Cape Town – one of the few Governors who had no desire to leave the Cape.

A.A. BALKEMA - publisher of more than 400 books.

When the Society was publishing its first book "HISTORICAL SIMON'S TOWN" it was lucky enough to choose August Aimê Balkema. It is said that he helped to shape the publishing industry in South Africa his adopted home.

Balkema was born in Holland. He studied French literature and then in 1933 opened a bookshop specializing in Amsterdam. During World War II the Germans forbade the printing of books in English and French but Balkema managed to circumvent this by publishing small editions. His first publication in South Africa was for Louis Leipoldt on the occasion of Leipoldt's 66th birthday. He was highly respected both for the quality of his work and variety of subjects of South African history he chose to publish.

Balkema sold up his Cape Town business at the end of the 1980s and when he was closing down magnanimously gave our Society 90 unbound copies of Historical Simon's Town which the Chairman had bound and sold for the Society's gain. Parking was difficult to obtain near his offices in Keerom Street so I drove round the block until the Vice-Chairman, Nigel Farquharson, arrived with the first batch of books. He had to climb up to the top shelf and fetch them himself, Balkema kept a very limited staff! He went off to retire in Amsterdam where he had a publisher son and where he died aged 90 in 1996.

Since those days we have published several more books and these provide a limited but steady income for the Society.

REMINISCENCES OF WHALING IN FALSE BAY

A.E. READ

This article refers to an interview with a retired whaler Abdullah Moses who was born in Simon's Town on 9 September 1884. As a youngster, till about 1904, whaling was flourishing in Simon's Bay. He was a crew on one of the whale boats as a look-out. As soon as a whale was seen the crew would light a fire and the whaler was guided towards the whale and when the boat was in the right position the fire would be extinguished.

One Saturday morning a whale was sighted in Jaffers Bay at Cole Point (roughly where the Submarine base now is). The whaler MONARCH owned by Mr Hablutzel rowed out manned by Abdol Clark (harpooner), Jonkie Moses, Satarien Osborn, Agmat Jenkins, Sayed Solomons and Mr Marnewal (skipper). Abdol Clark harpooned the whale and the line was allowed to run free, then secured to the bollard in the whaler. The whale towed the boat toward the open water, then took

a rest stop near where the old lighthouse in the East Dockyard now is. It then ran along the coast in one long haul towards Millers Point. Everyone ran along the coastal road following the whale's route. Abdullah ran as far as Millers Point – they could not go farther as the path was too bad from there on and they were all so tired. Off the boat and the whale went towards Smitswinkel Bay. The crew were forced to cut the rope to prevent being taken towards Cape Point and certain disaster.

Later in the same month another whale was sighted near Roman Rock on a beautiful calm day. The same boat and crew set off after the whale and harpooned it. The whale went towards the shore before turning back out to sea. She had a calf with her and every time they tried to lance it, the calf got in the way. In frustration the skipper struck the calf with the lance and it sank to the sea bed. The mother went to lift the calf a couple of times, then realizing it was dead, she surfaced and let out a SCREAM. She then leapt out of the water and went for the boat. They tried to get out of its way, to no effect. It swung round and bit the boat and the crew were thrown into the water where they stayed until Mr Hablutzel in his other boat SEA QUEEN appeared 2 hours later to save them. The whale made off seawards, having escaped

The last whale caught at Simon's Town was harpooned and killed by Mr A.V. Thomas – uncle of Mrs Kaye (wife of one of the owners of Kaye and Moore). It was pulled up on the little beach in the small bay opposite The Old Well House at Froggy Pond at the 25th milestone. It was then pulled further up onto the track where it was skinned, cut up and melted down.

Seaforth Beach and also the flat rock between Boulders Beach and The Pebble were also sites where whales were treated. In fact for some years a depot ship was anchored at Seaforth by a whale owner but after objections about the awful smells, operations ceased. There are 3 blubber pots at the Museum and one on Jubilee Square. They were recovered from a site below the site of the old oil tanks at Seaforth (now an extension to the car park) where they had been covered with gravel and sand. It was easier than endeavouring to dispose of them any other way.

FREDERICK CHARLES NOTTINGHAM 1916-2005

A.E. READ

He hailed from Natal where his father had a farm. He spent much time horse-riding but one day had a fall and badly broke his elbow and shoulder. This resulted in his right arm being at least 2" shorter than his left so when he joined the Royal Naval Fleet Air Arm he had difficulty effecting a satisfactory salute. However, his aircrew always thought this great.

Nottingham left south Africa in 1937 to study aero-engineering in the UK. He had acquired a civilian pilot's license in South Africa. In February 1939 he volunteered for the Fleet Air Arm, joining No. 1 RNVR Pilots' Course. After completing his training he ferried Swordfish planes from the UK to Toulon in France and also to the Low Countries. He then joined 825 Squadron which operated from bases on the south coast of England and assisted in the Dunkirk evacuation.

In 1940 he transferred to 829 Squadron flying Albacores and embarked in HMS FORMIDABLE. It had been destined for the Mediterranean and due to Axis domination of that area sailed instead via the Cape of Good Hope and up through the Red Sea into the Med. He and his squadron fought at the Battle of Matapan and off Crete the ship was damaged. Later he was serving aboard HMS HERMES when she was sunk off Ceylon. He then went to 827 Squadron as senior pilot and saw action in the Madagascar campaign. He used to say to his crew "fly with me lads and you will live to see your grandchildren". They loved him.

He progressed to anti-U-boat operations and later to the Arctic convoys serving Murmansk in Russia. His luck ran out in the closing weeks of the war when he was shot down by Japanese anti-aircraft fire. Two of his crew were killed but his luck held again when he was picked up by the US submarine KINGFISHER, but this meant him spending the next six weeks submerged in her, including VJ Day.

He married a WREN officer Lois Talbot and returned to South Africa at the end of the war where he bought and built up a peach farm. Despite his active flying career he lived to age 88 and died on 17 April 2005.
