



SIMON'S TOWN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN



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OUR BULLETIN OF 48 PAGES IS PUBLISHED ANNUALLY

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT SIMON'S TOWN MUSEUM ON 20TH MAY 2023.

Welcome.

One minute's silence was observed for the loss of two stalwarts, Audrey Read and Yvonne Mawhinney.

Cannon formerly opposite Admiralty House: Having been badly damaged the cannon is to be moved to Jubilee Square. It has been refurbished and the granite for plinth is already on site.

Old Hospital Terrace: The application for Provincial Heritage Status has been ongoing since 2021. Another request for resubmission of the application and proof of payment of fees was received on the 9th March 2023; this following yet another enquiry from us into the status of the application.

The Old Burying Ground: The collapsed walls still await repair notwithstanding promises from the City. Harry Croome continues fixing damaged gravestones as well as general maintenance.

Just Nuisance's Grave: Harry Croome continues to maintain the grave and surrounds.

Plaques: The manufacture and fitting of new and replacement Blue and other plaques giving the history of various buildings, sites and trees is ongoing, thanks to Roy Burnie.

Boer War Post Stone in Bellevue Road: Harry Croome will be placing a new plaque on the stone.

The Ventura Air Crash site near Miller's Point: Roy Burnie has prepared a plaque which will be mounted at Miller's Point Restaurant

Digitisation of the Museum's vast collection of Glass Plate Negatives: This is presently being undertaken by Mr. Harry Harrison.*

Museum Maintenance: We assisted the Museum in repairing the sagging floor above the Snoekie Shellhole and with the external painting of The Residency.

The Wall of Memory along St. George's Street: Thanks to Diana Reekie the history of the Methodist Church has been mounted and she is now working on a panel depicting Simon's Town in the Boer War dedicated to the memory of the late Mrs. Audrey Read.

Heritage Resource Survey: Eric Mawhinney has been doing a sterling job getting this up to date. It is an invaluable source of reference.

Society's Website : simonstown.org: Eric also looks after our website. He has included a Walking Tour of the Historic Mile with photographs and the history of each building.

The Heritage Protection Overlay Zone: Much of Simon's Town on and behind the Historic Mile lies within the overlay zone. There is a guideline for all construction work for both alterations and new building work within the zone. Plans for work in the area must go to the Architectural Advisory Committee for comment and support prior to the City passing construction plans. The Society is represented on that Committee.

Signage and Pavement Clutter: We are in constant contact with the City in an effort to minimise this problem. In a recent initiative we are hoping to team up with the Business Association to address our concerns.

The Submarine Assegai Project: Arné Söderlund keeps us up to date with progress on the project which is progressing and will hopefully be open to the public by 2024.

Members' Tour: We had a tour of Arné Söderlund's private museum on the 3rd September 2022 which was appreciated by all present. If you have not done the tour, it is to be recommended.

The Royal Navy Water Tank between Cornwall Street and Chapel Lane: Is falling into disrepair and it is thought that the building could be upgraded and become a useful asset to the town. Ownership is proving difficult to trace.

The West Dockyard Gate: has been tucked away outside the Naval Museum for some time. John Newton has drawn up a proposal for its restoration and refit together with protective bollards on the pavement and kerb realignment. Funding and ownership are an issue.

Sayers Lane Human Remains: Were stored in the Museum for some time pending their reburial. This has now taken place in the Old Burying Ground, where the grave can be seen in the Dutch Reformed section.

Winter Lectures: We are aware that our lecture evenings should be reinstated and plans are afoot in this regard.

1861 Watercolour of Simon's Town: We have recently purchased from a dealer in the UK, a watercolour of early Simon's Town by a Royal Naval Officer serving on *HMS Narcissus*. It will be exhibited at a planned exhibition, in conjunction with the Museum, from 21st June to 18th July.

My thanks go out to the committee for their work and dedication over the past

year : Eric Mahwhinney, Cherry Dilley, Roy Burnie, Arné Söderlund, Diana Reekie and Harry Croome.

Roger Bagshaw : CHAIRMAN.

**Warrant Officer David Harrison SAN.*

A RUSSIAN VISITOR :

History is generated on a continuous basis and this year Simon's Town was visited by a small Russian cargo ship which will be part of its history for years to come.

The motor vessel *Lady R* arrived on 7 December 2022, presumably in distress, and berthed in the Outer Basin, watched intently by residents on Runciman Drive and on the mountain side above and commented on by e-mail and twitter. Merchant vessels do call in at the Naval Dockyard to make use of the Selbourne Graving Dock but this one showed no sign of moving from her allocated berth in the Outer Basin.

M V Lady R berthed in the Outer Basin at Simon's Town Dockyard with hatches open to receive cargo. Photo: S A People News.



Interest in the ship increased when she started loading cargo under cover of darkness and residents speculated that she might be taking on board weapons to help the Russians wage war against Ukraine or that our President Ramaphosa might be sending Russian President Vladimir Putin a gift of biltong and droewors or samp and beans. They were none the wiser when the ship sailed in the early hours of 9 December and perhaps the truth never will be known. However, *M V Lady R*, a 122 metre cargo motorship of 7 630 tons deadweight with IMO recognition number 9161003 is now undoubtedly part of Simon's Town's history.

RAYMOND STEWART JONES OF CASTLE ROCK (26 MARCH 1918 – 7

SEPTEMBER 2014) –BASED ON HIS OWN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES, EDITED BY HIS DAUGHTER, MRS CHRISTINA MITCHELL.

William Ernest Jones emigrated from New Zealand to Scotland where he married an Edinburgh girl, Christina Catherine Stewart. They sailed for Cape Town where William opened a dental practice in Rondebosch. Their son Raymond Stewart Jones was born in Rondebosch and attended the local nursery school and Diocesan College (Bishops) before being sent to Edinburgh in December 1935 to study Dentistry. By coincidence he sailed from Cape Town to Southampton aboard the *RMS Edinburgh Castle*, a ship he encountered during World War II when she was serving as a depot ship in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Young Ray did not take to dentistry as a career and managed to persuade his father to enrol him at the Air Service Training, at Hamble, near Southampton, in Hampshire, for a three-year course of pilot training and aircraft maintenance. There Ray achieved his private and commercial licences and joined the RAF Volunteer Reserve as a sergeant pilot. This enabled him to get additional flying hours and extra pay for flying at night to train searchlight operators along the South Coast of England.

Called up in 1939 he spent most of his time for the next couple of years training pilots for the RAF, many of them from the USA, Canada, South Africa and the Northern and Southern Rhodesias. During the War he progressed via Warrant Officer to the rank of Flight Lieutenant and was posted in 1941 to No 5 (Pilot) Advanced flying Unit at RAF Tern Hill, at Ternhill in Shropshire, where he trained RAF recruits to fly in single engine Miles Masters. Each instructor had four pupils on each course, keeping him very busy.

One of his pupils was Al Hay, a South African who, like the more famous Adolph “Sailor” Malan, had matriculated at the SATS General Botha before joining the Merchant Service, and later the RAF. On completion of his flying training, Hay joined a catapult armed merchant ship, or CAM ship, as pilot of

the Hurricane fighter. The fighter was mounted on a catapult forward and was blasted off to shoot down enemy aircraft approaching the convoy. The pilot then had to bale out or “ditch,” hoping that a ship would pick him up. Al Hay was awarded the DFC but, unfortunately, did not survive the War.

From June to August 1942 Ray underwent a conversion course, learning to fly the twin-engine Bristol Blenheim. During this period he was granted 48 hours leave to marry Freda Bodenham on 12 August. A month later he was flying the twin-engine de Havilland Mosquito, known as “the wooden wonder” because of its speed and plywood construction, which involved operational postings to Malta,

North Africa, Sicily and Italy.

In May 1943 he returned to the UK, flying Mosquitos of 605 Squadron from Bradwell Bay (Essex) and Manston (Kent) before moving to High Ercall, formerly known as Ercall Magna, in Shropshire, to teach qualified pilots to fly Mosquitos.

A brief spell flying Spitfires at RAF Catfoss, in Yorkshire, was followed by a spell in hospital and convalescent leave before returning to RAF High Ercall, again training qualified pilots to fly Mosquitos.



Flight Lieutenant Raymond
Stewart Jones RAF.

He then sailed from Liverpool to Cape Town aboard the former Royal Mail liner *Andes*, a 21 knot ship which sailed unescorted, calling at Freetown, Sierra Leone en route to Cape Town.

With the war in Europe over he was sent to SAAF Bloemfontein, and later SAAF Durban, to train pilots qualified on single engine aircraft to fly Lockheed Venturas in order to repatriate South African servicemen serving in Italy and North Africa.

After the War Ray, who had earned the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Efficiency Award, the 1939-45 Star, Aircrew Europe Star, Africa Star with North Africa Clasp, Defence Medal and War Medal 1939-45, elected to resign his commission. He was de-mobbed in South Africa and was allowed to retain his rank.

Back in civilian life he joined Edgar Donald Importers, a company he was to serve until he retired.

Ray bought a property at Castle Rock, South of Simon's Town, first as a holiday home for his family and later as a place to spend his well-earned retirement, and he and his family spent many very happy weekends and holidays fishing and walking on the mountain.

He did a great deal to develop and improve his property, often doing his own stonework, brickwork, and carpentry. He also did plumbing and drainage and installed solar water heaters. Before the Municipality connected Castle Rock to the main electrical supply in 1987, Ray used a farm generator, solar photovoltaic cells and batteries to power lights, television set and a refrigerator.



The cottage at Castle Rock, South of Simon's Town. – Photo courtesy of Mrs. Christina Mitchell.

For many years Ray and Freda were well known and popular members of the Simon's Town community.

Sadly, Freda suffered a debilitating illness and Ray nursed her at home and later in Peers Retirement Village in Fish Hoek, where she died in 2002. Ray continued to live in his cottage in the Village until a month before he died in the Health Care Centre on 7 September 2014. By coincidence Ray's daughter Christina Mitchell, a former choir member at St Francis Church, and her husband Alan, now live in Peers Retirement Village.

Flight Lieutenant Raymond Jones RAF (Retired) is survived by three children, seven grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

FAREWEL TO SIMON'S TOWN POST OFFICE :

A vital link was broken when Simon's Town Post Office closed its doors for the last time on Saturday 15 October 2022 and the staff were "redeployed" to other post offices. The Post Office in Fish Hoek Main Road is now the only one south of Retreat.

In 1803 the Dragoon Postal Service linking Cape Town and Simon's Town was established. This was a military service which operated in the winter months when ships of the VOC anchored in Simon's Bay. Three years later, on the first of April in 1806, the first official mail service between Cape Town and Simon's Town was established. Mail was carried thrice weekly by relays of Khoikhoi runners and on 10 July 1807 horse posts, known as "Post Orderlies" replaced the runners. sahistory.org.za – Copyright francofrescum.co.za.

CLOSING TIME AT THE LORD NELSON INN :

One of the prominent buildings at the North end of Simon's Town, the Lord Nelson Inn, (Nadima Smith Proprietor), closed its doors for the last time at the end of January 2023.

According to the Simon's Town Historical Society records the first grant for the Inn was to William Hurter in 1798. He built a tavern on the site and sold it to Mr. Wolke, who kept the toll gate at the entrance to the town, in 1829. By this time a lodging house had been built on the site and in 1840 it was purchased by William Cogill and operated as the Cosmopolitan Hotel.

Ohlssons Breweries purchased the property in 1880 and it was rebuilt in 1929. Generations of Royal Navy and South African Navy sailors frequented its bars over the years.

The property is presently being utilised as a Healing and Rehabilitation Centre for patients from the Netherlands.

This item is based on an article by Yolande du Preez which was published in the **False Bay Echo** on Thursday 9 March 2023.

H M DOCKYARD KNYSNA :

According to Wikipedia Knysna, the name probably derived from a Khoikhoi word meaning "ferns," is a town of some 76,000 inhabitants situated in the Western Cape Province of South Africa and is one of the "gems" of the "Garden Route." It lies 34 degrees South of the Equator and is 72 kilometres east from the town of George and 25 kilometres west of Plettenberg Bay on the N 2 National Road.

The Knysna Lagoon, entered from the Indian Ocean by a narrow, turbulent

channel between the North and South Heads, could provide shelter for up to 50 sailing ships, and the region's abundant timber was exported from this bay as early as 1787. The principal landowner George Rex (1765 – 1839), who landed at the Cape in 1796, played a significant role in the town's early development and is considered to be the town's founder. Knysna being a difficult port to enter, a harbour pilot was employed to assist large vessels. One of the better-known pilots was John Benn, a Deptford Dockyard trained Shipwright and Boatbuilder who had served as a Warrant Officer in Simon's Bay before moving to Mossel Bay. He was summoned to Knysna in 1855 to attempt to salvage the 27-ton ketch *Musquash*, which had grounded on the rocks at Coney Glen. By the time he arrived the ketch had broken up. In 1868 John Benn, aged 43, settled in Knysna and accepted the post of Harbour Pilot, a post which was to be held by members of the Benn family for many years.

The Napoleonic Wars, which had locked Britain and France in combat since 1803 came to an end with the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte at Waterloo in June 1815 and many men who had served faithfully and gallantly in the British Army and the Royal Navy became unemployed. Many could not find gainful employment and according to some reports, heroes of Trafalgar and Waterloo were found guilty of vagrancy and petty theft and were imprisoned or hanged by magistrates in various parts of the British Isles.

Rear Admiral Sir Jahleel Brenton was appointed Commissioner at Simon's Town in 1815, the year in which the Royal Navy transferred its South Atlantic base from Table Bay to the more sheltered anchorage at Simon's Bay. One of the tasks of the squadron based at Simon's Bay was to supply the garrison at St Helena Island, where Napoleon was imprisoned, and to oppose any attempt to free him.

Brenton proposed to settle retired sailors, veterans of the Napoleonic Wars, and their families at the Knysna in order to develop a hemp growing industry to supply the Royal Dockyards with this commodity, vital for rope making, which they currently obtained from Riga, then a Russian port on the Baltic Coast. This project was unsuccessful as, sadly, the variety of hemp grown in Knysna was eminently suitable for smoking but not for rope making. However, some eighty acres of land for the construction of a Naval Dockyard and a village to accommodate workers was acquired from the Colonial Government on the North Shore of the Knysna lagoon in 1820, a year in which many soldiers and sailors, and also officers on half pay, took up an offer of land in the Eastern Cape, where they were to be a 'buffer' between the Colonists in the Western Cape and the African Tribes in the Eastern Cape, becoming known as the "1820 Settlers."

The first Dockyard Superintendent was Antonie Fauconnier, a native of Flanders who had married a local girl and was living in Plettenberg Bay, to the East of

Knysna. Fauconnier had been serving as a Lieutenant in the First Battalion the 60th Foot, one of the British Army's more troublesome regiments, which was removed from the Cape in 1819. Finding himself unemployed, Fauconnier was very happy to obtain another Government Appointment in the Southern Cape.

Soon after the establishment of the Naval Dockyard four Dockyard employees suffered a terrible fate according to a tale related by the Knysna pilot to James Scott, Master of the Schooner *Wakefield*. It appears that the four men were out on the lagoon when their boat was caught in the outgoing current and carried out through the "Heads" into the Indian Ocean. Onlookers were helpless as they watched the distress of the poor men and heard their agonized screams. Soon they were swept far out to Southern Ocean and were never heard of again.

The Dockyard was plagued with problems, suffering two disastrous fires whilst Fauconnier was in charge. The first occurred in 1821 and destroyed the Dockyard buildings and also a brig, which is described as being "half built." There are no details of the brig available, but it might possibly have been one of the *Cherokee* Class, of which 117 were ordered by the British Admiralty between 1807 and 1827.

The Naval Dockyard project suffered a major setback in 1821 when Napoleon died, with a consequent reduction in the importance of the Simon's Town Base and appointment of Admiral Brenton to a post in the UK and it is recorded that On 23 January 1822 H M Transport *Borodino* (Master R. Park) arrived in Simon's Town carrying the remaining stinkwood timber from the brig which had been under construction at the Knysna Dockyard.

Following the end of the War the Admiralty lost interest in the establishment of a Naval Dockyard at Knysna and was not making much, if any, use of the site. Certainly, when a second fire occurred on the night of 13 November 1824, destroying the Dockyard buildings, it was reported that they contained upwards of ten thousand Rix dollars-worth of goods belonging to local merchants John Murray and Robert Haly, who had rented them as warehouses for their clothing and furniture trading business.

In 1825 the Cape Government proposed to start a settlement adjacent to the Admiralty land. The Admiralty had no objection provided that the houses did not encroach on the "Dockyard Reserve" on the edge of the lagoon. The area was divided into 207 Lots, or Erven, to use the Dutch term, of which Lots 201 to 206 plus a piece of riverside land 400 by 100 Cape Feet was designated the "Dockyard Reserve." One Cape Foot is equal to 1,033 "British" feet or approximately 0,314856 metres.

The new village was named Melville, in honour of Henry Dundas, First Viscount Melville (1742 – 1811) a Scot who served from 1742 until 1801 as Britain's first Secretary of State for War and from 1802 until 1806 as First Lord of the Admiralty.

The village of Melville had seven streets running approximately East to West. Rex Street bordered the Admiralty Reserve with Gordon Street, Trotter Street, Rawson Street, Nelson Street, Melville Street and Fichat Street running parallel. Grey Street, ran through the centre of the village at right angles to the other streets. Today Fichat, Nelson, Rawson, Trotter and Gordon streets are still to be seen but Melville Street has become Main Street (the National Road, or N 2) and Rex Street is now Waterfront Drive.

In 1856 John Benn was commissioned to build a 60-ton ketch for Mr. Horn to replace his previous command, the ill-fated *Musquash* and she was laid down on the Admiralty slip, previously occupied by the Naval brig, and completed and put into the coasting trade. This schooner, named *Rover*, appears to be the only vessel to have been launched from the Knysna Dockyard. John Benn built a 50-ton schooner named after his wife, Annie Benn, but in this case, he took over an incomplete hull that had been laid down at the mouth of the Salt River. John Benn died in 1877 and his widow, continued to rent Lots 205 and 206, part of the old Dockyard, for the use of her family.

With the coming of the railway system the Colonial Government established a factory to manufacture sleepers and coat them with creosote. On 24 August 1888 J Gordon-Sprigg wrote from the Minister of Transport's Office to the Governor of the Cape requesting that he enquire of the Rear Admiral Commanding at Simon's Town whether or not there existed any objection to the lease of lots 205 and 206 to the Colonial Government for stacking sleepers and for other purposes. The writer stated that the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works understood that the land was leased by Mrs Ann Benn but was not being used.

Almost twelve months later, on 9 July 1889 Mr T. S. Veale, Naval Storekeeper at Simon's Town Dockyard, replied stating the following concerning the "Dockyard" land :

Lots 201 – 203 (rented) To T. Prince & Co. – Agreement dated 1 Jan. 1863

Lots 205 – 206 (rented) To Ann Benn – Agreement dated 23 June 1883. Rent paid to 30 ultimo. Annual rent for 1890 now due.

A piece of ground measuring 400 x 100 feet (from) Gray Street to River leased to the Wharf Co. Agreement dated 1 Jan. 1883. This company being insolvent and in arrears with rent the requisite steps to recover the property are in the hands of the Admiralty Proctor by the C-in-C order of 4

April last.

On 24 August 1888 Mr Veale wrote “I beg to report, with reference to my reply of the 9 instant, to the C-in-C minute of 8 Idem. that I have this day received from Mrs. Benn one shilling in postage stamps for rent for Lots 205 and 206 of the Admiralty land at Knysna for the year ending 30 June 1890.”

On 5 October 1891 Mr. Veale wrote to John Benn, the Knysna Pilot, stating “You are informed that the tenancy on sufferance by your late mother Mrs. Ann Benn of a plot of Admiralty land at Knysna at a nominal rent of one shilling per annum terminated at her death and will not be extended to any of her heirs or representatives.”

In 1882 the hamlets of Melville and Newhaven amalgamated to form the town of Knysna and the land on which the Dockyard was built is now occupied by the Featherbed Ferry Terminal.

Although the Naval Dockyard at Knysna never built a ship for the Royal Navy, local boatbuilder Thesens built eleven 112 ft / 34 m Fairmile Type B motor launches and numerous sailing whalers and other small boats during World War II.

References : Knysna the forgotten port – Margaret Parkes and V. M. Williams; Timber and Tides – Winifred Haw Tapson – Juta 1961; C-in-C correspondence registers (Guard Books) held by Simon’s Town Museum.

MARIAN MINNIE ROUSE : (1934 – 2022) – KAREN PRETORIUS

MARIAN MINNIE ROUSE (nee Roberts) was born at the Peninsula Maternity Hospital in Cape Town on the 13th September 1934.

Her parents William Roberts and Magdalena Lilla Roberts (nee Grace) lived in Crawford, a suburb of Cape Town, but later moved to Forest Hill in Simon’s Town where she grew up with her sister Pamela and brother David.

She attended Simon’s Town School until Std.8. (now Grade 10) after which she studied shorthand and typing at a Secretarial College. Her first job was with the Mobil Oil Company catching the then reliable train to Cape Town every day. After her marriage in 1958 Marian did not work again until 1980 when she was employed at the S.A. Navy’s Logistic Base which she thoroughly enjoyed.

Marian spent a very happy childhood with her friends, many of whom had come to Simon’s Town from the United Kingdom under the Home Agreement Scheme, playing in the Old Burying Ground and swimming at Seaforth Beach. She loved swimming and was known to say she could not function without her daily swim. Throughout her life she remained in contact with her Home Agreement friends, Nina and Sheila Walters, Sheila Rushin (Brown), Pamela Shelton (Buckham),

David Bryce and Peter Salter amongst many others.

She met her husband Brian Lesley Arthur Rouse, a Royal Naval Rating, when his ship was based in Simon's Town. They became engaged and Marian travelled to Emsworth in England to join Brian and his family. They were married on 6th December 1958.

They remained in England for nine years during which time their children were born; Gregory David in 1962 and Karen Irene in 1965. Gregory now resides in Wales and has three children - Jamie, Danielle and Colin. Karen (Pretorius) lives in Capri Village and has two children - Shaun and Katie.

In 1967 Brian retired from the Royal Navy and the family returned to Simon's Town and he was employed as a civilian Electrical Technician Designer by the South African Navy. The family initially lived in Whalers Way, Seaforth but in 1970 moved to Bermuda House, Gay Road, Seaforth. Sadly, Brian passed away suddenly in 1995 at the age of 59.

Seaforth Beach played a major role in Marian's life and she spent a great deal of her time on the beach with family and friends, always meeting in a special area they considered as "theirs." Being very Civic-minded Marian naturally wanted Seaforth beach and surrounds to be well maintained so she made it her mission to look after the area, frequently rushing down to the beach to ensure that workers were doing their job properly and phoning the Municipality when seaweed required clearing and litter picked up or ensuring that the raft was kept in good order.

She was also involved with the Ratepayers Association, acting as Secretary for some time. When the Simonsrus Association was formed in 1980 with the mission to build an Old Age Home for the elderly residents of Simon's Town she served on the committee and assisted in many fund-raising events for the project which sadly did not come to fruition. She was also a volunteer at Simon's Town Museum for many years and was a long-standing member of the Simon's Town Historical Society.

The Girl Guides formed a very important part of her life having been a Brownie, and Guide herself, she became a Guider and eventually District Commissioner. She ran the Guide Company in Da Gama Park for many years and was very involved in organising the building of the Girl Guides Hall in Seaforth which was recently named "The Marian Rouse Guide Hall" in her memory.



Marian seated in the former
Simon's Town Mayoral Chair
at the Museum.

She loved dancing, regularly attending dances at the Fish Hoek Civic Centre and two of her favourite things to do were visiting The Sweetest Thing Patisserie to enjoy their scones, jam and cream as well as The Salty Seadog for fish and chips.

She will be greatly missed and remembered by her family and friends who knew her as a very special person. A true Simonstonian!

SAAF LOCKHEED VENTURA 6491: ROY BURNIE

During and after World War II the Royal Air Force and other Commonwealth air forces flew American built Lockheed Ventura patrol aircraft. The SAAF used these aircraft, allocated to 22 Squadron, for maritime patrols and transport duties.

On Friday 8 March 1957 Ventura 6491 (recognition letters MS – O) flew into mist and crashed into the summit just above Millers Point, killing all five airmen on board. Apart from the pilot Captain C.A.P. Crisp the casualties were Lt. R. C. Palk, 2 Lt S. J. Meyer, Air Mec. C. E. La Cock and Air. Mec. S. A Theron.

The Historical Society Committee Member has arranged for a commemorative plaque to be mounted at the Black Marlin Restaurant at Millers Point, just below the crash site.

One of the former SAAF Venturas, No. 6498, has been restored and is on display at the SAAF Museum at the Ysterplaat Air Force Base.



Lockheed Ventura 6498 with SAAF World War II roundels at the SAAF Museum at Ysterplaat. - Photo : Dean Wingrin.

ACHMAT SONI : PAINTER AND SIGNWRITER : ISLAMIC ARTIST : SHEILA RICE.

Achmat Soni's father emigrated from India to Durban and, aged nineteen, moved to the Cape and registered as "Cape Malay." He met and married Ayesha Bhayat, whose brother he had met in Durban. Due to financial constraints, not unusual in those days, Achmat left school at 16 years of age to find work. Following the recommendation of a friend, Malcolm Domingo, he took the competitive examination for entry into an apprenticeship in Simon's Town Dockyard. Because of his colour the only trades available to him were those of Blacksmith or Painter and he chose Painting to be his career because it was "cleaner."

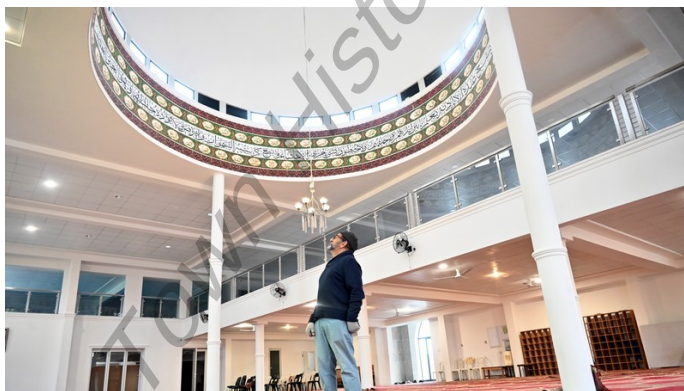
Working in the Dockyard meant leaving home at 04:30 to catch the 05:10 train to Simon's Town.

On day-one of his apprenticeship his Foreman, Fred Graney, dubbed him "Tiny," a name that was to be attached to him throughout his Dockyard career. In addition to general painting, he was taught signwriting by Cyril Visage and Desmond Kallis and became the first Dockyard painter to write a trade test in signwriting. Much of his work involved painting ships' badges and name boards, for which he had to master the art of applying gold leaf. His assistance was often sought by Warrant Officer (Shipwright) Ken Briscoe, the "Admiral's Chippie," who had to manufacture decorative items to be presented by the Chief of the Navy. Meanwhile he was attending technical college in Cape Town and achieved an NTC 3 pass in two and a half years instead of the usual five.

Fred Graney appointed him Trade Training Officer and he trained forty apprentices in six years before the Dockyard stopped recruiting apprentice painters. He was also the acting (unpaid) foreman general painting, signwriting and shot blasting before being retrenched in 1990.

Achmat Soni has very positive and happy memories of his years in the Dockyard and in Simon's Town and still keeps in touch with friends from those years who are now living elsewhere – Ocean View, Dido Valley and some now in Durban.

Before being retrenched he became involved with creating Islamic art and was asked to decorate the interior of the dome of the Gatesville Mosque; an incredibly intricate task which he completed with great success. This took a year to complete, as it was being done in his spare time. Following his retrenchment in that year, he became immersed in Islamic art and particularly the decoration of the interior of the domes in mosques throughout South Africa. This is particularly intricate work as it is done in sections, following precisely taken measurements, on prepared canvas panels which had been mounted on hardboard. The Arabic words in praise of Allah have to line up perfectly, as has the intricate decoration above and below the script. These boards are then attached to timber battens mounted inside the dome. This has now been carried out with great success in something like twenty seven mosques. In addition he has painted many meghrab, panels and inscriptions.



Retired Dockyard Painter and signwriter Achmat Soni with his work.
Photo : Ayanda Ndamane/African News Agency (ANA).

Following his success in painting the domes in the mosques, he has been invited to visit several countries including Turkey, Pakistan, Syria and Tunisia. He has also made the pilgrimage to Mecca on several occasions.

Achmat Soni also paints individual artworks which have been extremely well received and he is a dedicated artist, working throughout the day, every day. He recently had a very successful two-week exhibition at Cape Town Castle. His family has always been totally supportive of his work and his sister Zaitoonisa Soni-Abed, has produced a wonderful biographical book about his life and art, with beautiful illustrations. His eldest son is now following in his footsteps and is producing Islamic art with a more modern interpretation.

It is quite moving to realise that this amazing career all started with a 16 year old's job in Simon's Town Naval Dockyard. He has certainly made full use of all his talents.

Based on the biography Portrait of an Islamic Artist – Achmat Soni by Zaitoonisa Soni-Abed – printed and bound by Formeset Print.

YVONNE JOAN MAWHINNEY (Nee Luyt) - 4 August 1944 -30 October 2022 - Eric Mawhinney and Family:



Yvonne Joan Mawhinney (Nee Luyt) was born in the Windsor Hotel, Hermanus, on the 4th August 1944, the youngest daughter of Alex and Evelyn Luyt who were part of the well-known Luyt hotelier family of Hermanus.

Both parents were direct descendants of German mercenaries who were employed by the Dutch East India Company in the 1700s. On her maternal side, Yvonne is descended from Gerhardus Munnik, brother of Jan Hendrik Munnik who was the one time owner of the property now known as Admiralty House. Her great-great-grandfather, James Barry Munnik, was delivered by the first caesarian operation carried out in South Africa by Dr James Barry*, who became the child's godfather.

Yvonne started her education at the Hermanus Primary school and later, when her father was acting as a relief hotel manager in Paarl for the South African Breweries, she moved to the Lorretto Convent in the Strand where she completed her Junior Certificate. The family moved to Cape Town and Yvonne continued her education at the Cape Technical College where she Matriculated with a Secretarial Diploma. Her first appointment was secretary in the Deceased Estates Department of Syfret's Trust. It was while she was working at Syfret's that her father took over the management of the St George's Hotel Simon's Town, which resulted in her meeting her future husband, Eric. Yvonne and Eric were married in St Francis Church, Simon's Town on the 28th August 1965 and soon settled down in a house they built in Murdock Valley. It being too far to travel to work in Cape Town, Yvonne took up the position of secretary to the Town Clerk of the then Simon's Town Municipality and she remained in that post until the birth of their first child, Bryan, in April 1971.

Yvonne then decided she wanted to be a "stay at home" mother and left the Municipality. Yvonne was a devoted Methodist and was active in various groups at the church and, in addition, when Bryan started at the Simon's Town Secondary School, she became an active member of, "Ma's Den", the school's tuck shop. Later, she also studied and qualified in Xhosa at matriculation level at the Muizenberg Technicon.

In 1979, when the company Eric worked for was relocated, the family moved to Durban. Not long after the transfer, their second child, Claire, was born. Here again Yvonne soon became involved with the Westville Methodist Church in various capacities and for many years compiled and produced the Westville Methodist Church newsletter. She became involved in the Pitlochry Primary School tuck shop and also took a course in a library cataloguing software program and then undertook to transfer the school's library from a paper management system to a computerised one. After the children had completed their education, her involvement in the schools ceased but she continued her activities at the church. In 2004, after retiring, Yvonne and Eric moved back to Simon's Town.

Yvonne immediately got involved in civic affairs and during her time back in Simon's Town, she tirelessly gave her time to :

Simon's Town Civic Association - secretary and Exco member.

Friends of the Simon's Town Museum- Friends Representative and Treasurer

Simon's Town Historical Society - Hon. Secretary and Membership Secretary

Simon's Town Methodist Church -Volunteer

Simon's Town School - Liaison with STCA and other organisations

Simon's Town Community Police Forum - Treasury and Secretary

Simon's Town Trust – Secretary

In 2013, in recognition of her service to the community, she was awarded the 'Citizen of the Year Award'.

Sadly, whilst on an extended holiday in England, Yvonne took ill and passed away suddenly on the, 30th October 2022.

She is sorely missed by her husband of 57 years, Eric; and her son, Bryan; her daughter, Claire, and her 4 grandchildren.

** Post mortem examination of Doctor James Barry revealed that “he” was, in fact, a woman, identified as Margaret Bulkley, born in Cork around 1790. – Ed.*

SIMON’S TOWN: WHERE WOULD IT BE TODAY WITHOUT THE NAVY? : BILL RICE.

In the late 1700s Simon’s Town was a place with much going for it. Fishing and whaling were industries which occupied many of the townspeople. There was an abundant supply of fish and shellfish, the shells of which could be roasted to make the limewash with which the houses and cottages were coated to reflect the heat of the sun. Lady Ann Barnard who arrived at the Cape on 4 May 1797 with her husband, who had been appointed to the post of Secretary of the Colony, remarked on the white painted cottages on the hillside following her visit to Simon’s Town.

Ship repair and boat building were important industries in the Town. Often ships which had difficulty weathering Cape Point would call in for repairs or supplies before continuing their voyages. Some could go no further and were sold for further trading or for demolition. Simon’s Town always had a stock of salvaged masts, yards, blocks and sails and replacement boats could be built to order.

In 1796 a damaged American Brig was lying in Simon’s Bay, unable to continue her voyage without repairs. Admiral George Elphinstone arranged for her to be purchased and refitted. The brig was commissioned as HMS *Euphrosyne*, in honour of the Greek Goddess of good cheer, joy and mirth. In 1799 she was used to survey False Bay, leading to the discovery of Whittle Rock.

In 1814 the Royal Navy decided to set up a permanent base at Simon’s Town, taking over the former Dutch East India Company facility now known as the West Dockyard.

The move was not without its problems. When boats crews landed at the Town Jetty their first stop was at a tavern across the street. Instead of ordering his officers and petty officers to take charge of their men the Admiral ordered the tavern keeper to shut up shop and move to the other end of town where there was much less trade. Not a good start to the relationship.

In the late 1800s with steam powered steel warships having replaced sailing ships it was necessary to improve the Royal Navy’s support facilities throughout the

world. As well as developing the “Home Dockyards” it was decided to provide suitable facilities at Simon’s Town and Singapore.

A site for a new Dockyard, complete with a sheltered basin, workshops, and a dry dock capable of accommodating the largest ship in the World, was chosen at the Eastern end of town, below the Martello Tower.

The Provincial Government agreed to purchase the property on behalf of the Navy so the land and about twenty buildings, some very substantial, which occupied the site, became Admiralty property and no longer contributed to the rates. Not only did local people have to vacate their bayside homes but they had to stand and watch while these properties were occupied by Admiralty Staff and their families, brought out from Chatham, Portsmouth and Devonport to oversee the construction of the new yard.

That part of the Bay offshore from the Dockyard site was designated a Naval Area and local fishermen and others with boats moored there were directed to vacate the area and moor elsewhere. This greatly reduced the area controlled by the Simon’s Town Harbour Board, reducing that body’s annual income considerably. The acquisition of a large section of the shoreline also meant that there was much less space available for boatbuilding and the repair and demolition of ships.

When electric lighting was installed in the Dockyard in the early 1900s a cable was led across the wall from the Dockyard Power Station to two lights to illuminate the Town Jetty. Although this benefitted all who used the jetty at night it was carried out at a cost to the Municipality of £5 plus materials. Simon’s Town Municipality then paid the Admiralty approximately £15 per annum (at eight pence per unit) for electricity for the two lights.

The contractor appointed to construct the “Dockyard Extension” was Sir John Jackson, a hard-headed Victorian engineer who would not pay a penny if he could get away with a halfpenny. The Municipality offered Jackson sites on which to set up his “Works,” and accommodate his staff but instead he persuaded the Naval Authorities to allow him to use “Crown Land” and so avoid paying rates.

Several of Jackson’s Managers obtained permission to build houses on Crown Land at the Southern end of town, just beyond Seaforth.

Many cargo ships visited Simon’s Town to deliver explosives, cement and also granite blocks from Norway. They anchored in Admiralty waters and so contributed nothing to the Simon’s Town Harbour Board, which was forced to file for bankruptcy.

Not content with making a handsome profit from his construction work, Jackson opened a Company Store (like the one mentioned in the song “Sixteen Tons”), more or less opposite Flora Cottage. Goods would have been shipped out on Company Cargo Ships at practically no cost and were purchased by Jackson’s staff before they headed home to Seaforth and beyond, without going near the

local shops. The Admiralty workers living in the Dockyard Extension site would also have enjoyed having a shop selling goods from “back ‘ome” right on their doorstep.

Then there was the noise and dust; daily detonations as sandstone was blasted in the quarries above the Town and granite was blasted at the graving dock site to provide a flat surface on which to build. It was not unknown for rocks from the quarry on the mountainside to land on properties below. One can imagine that the South Easter would have spread the dust far and wide.

There is no doubt that some sectors of the local community, particularly the hotel owners, benefitted greatly from the fact that Simon’s Town was a “Naval Town.”

For instance, in 1908 the Town was visited by a squadron of cruisers commanded by Admiral Sir Percy Scott. Between them the four ships, *Antrim*, *Devonshire*, *Carnarvon* and *Good Hope* (Flagship) were manned by some 2400 officers and men who went ashore and contributed to the takings of local clubs and hostleries as well as buying tickets for the Cape Government Railways trains which took them to see the sights and bright lights of Cape Town.

When the East Dockyard, complete with the drydock, was commissioned in 1910, visiting ships and those based permanently at Simon’s Town could be berthed in the basin, making it easier for the Officers and Men to get ashore and sample the delights of the Town. Between the two World Wars a cruiser and two sloops, with a combined complement of around 840 were based at Simon’s Town, spending an appreciable amount of their naval pay in the town.

The Dockyard (comprising the East and West Yards), provided work for local tradesmen, clerical staff and labourers but middle and upper management posts were filled by “Home Agreement” men sent out from the United Kingdom, accompanied by their families, for three-year stints. Local tradesmen could take the competitive Inspectors’ and Draughtsmans’ examination leading to promotion, but if successful, would have to transfer to one of the “Home Dockyards.”

In 1914, some four years after Jackson had completed his task and moved to a new project in Singapore, Great Britain and Germany were at war. Simon’s Town, home to the South Atlantic Squadron of the Royal Navy, was isolated from the rest of the country and entry was by permit only. The same situation occurred when the Second World War broke out in 1939, isolating Simon’s Town from the rest of South Africa.



Permit issued to Miss Irene Atkins of Goede Gift during World War II. – Courtesy of Simon’s Town Museum.

The Naval Base and Dockyard were to be handed over to the South African Government in 1957 in terms of the “Simon’s Town Agreement” and S A Naval personnel moved from Salisbury Island, in Durban, to the Simon’s Town facility. The Municipality identified land suitable for the construction of Naval housing and advised the Department of Community Development. However, DCD had other ideas and purchased a farm outside the Municipal Boundary to build the Naval Village, Da Gama Park. Not only was Da Gama Park outside the Municipal Boundary, it was half-way to Fish Hoek so many Naval families did their shopping at A P Jones and OK Bazaars instead of at Harry Kalidas, Patel Brothers and Central Supply Store.

Then there was SADFI, the South African Defence Force Institute, formerly known as the Permanent Garrison Institute (PGI). This organization was founded to set up stores at military bases, some of which were remote from local towns and shops, to allow service families to buy household goods. Being a non-profit organization SADFI managed to offer very competitive prices. Simon’s Town had two SADFI outlets, one at Palace Barracks and the other in Da Gama Park, competing with local traders.

Following the riots in Sharpeville it was decided to relocate the African population of Simon’s Town to Gugelutu on the Cape Flats. Some of the local Africans worked for the Municipality which had to recruit Coloured people, who were paid slightly more, to fill the vacant posts.

In the late nineteen sixties the Coloured population was relocated to the other side of the Peninsula in terms of the Group Areas Act. In addition to causing distress and hardship to a large section of the local population it left a number of properties, some of them fairly large, unoccupied, reducing the revenue provided by Municipal Rates and left the Town worse off financially.

The Municipality stretched, in a fairly narrow strip, from Murdock Valley (South)

to Glencairn and had to maintain roads and provide services to the residents with a relatively small number of ratepayers and with much of its prime land occupied by the South African Navy and therefore not contributing to the rates.

The “crunch” came in the mid ‘seventies. The Navy was expanding and the Officers’ Mess, the Wardroom at Palace Barracks, was becoming uncomfortably crowded.

In order to accommodate the existing unmarried officers and to allow for expansion the Defence Force purchased Rhodesia by the Sea, the largest hotel in town. When this building no longer contributed to the Municipal Rates the Town faced a severe loss of income.

Discussions between the Mayor and Councillors and the Naval Officer in Command led to an appeal to the Chief of the Navy for permission to make a financial contribution to the running of the Town. The Treasury agreed to contribute to the rates in return for seats on the Town Council and several Naval officers became Councillors. Commodore Charles Sanderoff went on to serve as Mayor after retiring from the Navy.

In the year 2000 Simon’s Town Municipality ceased to exist and the town became part of the South Peninsula Municipality before being absorbed by the Unicity of Cape Town. Strangely, Prince Edward Island, deep in the Southern Ocean, is part of Ward 5 of the City of Cape Town. Because of the improved road system travel to and from Cape Town became much easier and quicker and many more people decided to make Simon’s Town their home. Had it still been an independent Municipality it would probably have been a very wealthy one.

It could be argued that Simon’s Town today owes more to the construction of the Blue Route and the Glencairn Freeway than to the fact that it plays host to the nation’s major naval base.

However, it is still a great place to live and is a very valuable component of Greater Cape Town, its ratepayers contributing considerably to the upliftment of their fellow citizens.

Where would Simon’s Town have been today without the Naval Base? It is an interesting question and a very difficult one to answer.

SIMON’S TOWN IN 1861: BILL RICE

Thanks to a bequest by the late Mrs. Audrey Read, Simon’s Town Historical Society was able to purchase a watercolour painting of Simon’s Town in 1861 by Captain John Tunstall Haverfield who was serving in *HMS Narcissus* at the time. Haverfield, a noted artist, was born in Devon in 1825; served in the Royal Marines until 1868 and died at Westbourne Terrace, in London, on 8 February 1885.



His painting was displayed at an exhibition entitled *Simon's Town Through the Ages*, which was organized by former Curator Ms. Cherry Dilley and the Museum Education Officer Ms. Tazneem Wentzel, held at the Museum from 21 June to 18 July 2023. The exhibition included paintings by the late Dr. Peter Clarke, Ms. Bev de Meyer, Maarten Mauve, Janine Strugo, Shona Bettison and Marelise van Wyk – *False Bay Echo* Thursday 22 June 2023.

THE FIRST NAMING OF OUR STREETS : Based on an article by F.P. Chapman, a former Bulletin Editor.

Prior to the Census held in April 1891 it was decreed that "all streets, roads, lanes, and public passages should be capable of clear description for the instruction of the Enumerators and that all houses should be numbered."

However, a dozen or so streets and lanes had already acquired informal names. Given rise to by buildings, for instance, were Arsenal Road, Chapel Hill Road and Hospital Lane, and by the owners or occupiers of houses or tenements were Glynwright's, Hablutzel's and Wilshire's Lanes.

A locality might be indicated by reference to a person, such as "Billy the Barber." Names which frequently occur, together or separately, and which were sometimes used to indicate a locality were the Front and Back Buildings, known more recently as the Sayers Lane Cottages. There were two rows back to back of these semi-detached houses, the Front Buildings facing Waterfall Road and the Back Buildings facing the Brook.

Turning from the Minutes to the Simon's Town "Trades Directory" in "The Argus Annual and South African Directory" for 1893 we find that where an address was given it was almost always Main-street. Other addresses include, Hablutzel's-lane, Judge's-lane, Bower's-Cottage, Front-buildings, near Infant School, Beach

(the Blacksmith), Steenbras Bay, Kloof and Mount Pleasant.

Squeezed in between a mountain and the sea, Simon's Town could not develop the normal pattern of streets and cross streets or roads; still the number of houses grew and with them roads or lanes of sorts here and there. This led Councillor R.S. Whyte to mention at the regular fortnightly meeting of the Council on 8th December 1898 the advisability of naming the streets, but he did not propose a motion for this.

Councillor Whyte waited a few months and then on 8th June 1899 he "gave notice to propose at next meeting that all streets and lanes within the Municipality be named and plates fixed and the houses numbered."

ALFRED LANE : Named after the double-storey Royal Alfred Lodge at the top left-hand side of this Lane, extending through to Wickboom Lane. The main premises consisted of Small Hall, Lodge Temple, Supper Room, an Ante Room and several small rooms. The Lodge Temple upstairs had a blue ceiling on which constellations were painted. The Royal Alfred Lodge of the Scottish Constitution of Freemasons was apparently established in 1863 and was named after Prince Alfred, Queen Victoria's second son.

This Lane had earlier been known informally as Hablutzel's Lane after Hablutzel and Co.

ARSENAL ROAD: So named because the Royal Navy Ordnance Depot and Arsenal were in this Road, which had indeed led to the use of the name informally years earlier. Thus in May 1892 the Town Clerk, W.S. Gillard, reported to the Council that "the Arsenal Road has been repaired by the prisoners." - in those days the Town had a Gaol. The former Arsenal Road School on the left of this Road going up was one of the schools providing a team of six scholars for the planting of a Palm Tree on Jubilee Square in celebration of the Silver Jubilee of King George V on 6th May 1935, at which time also the Square was so named.

Slightly farther up on the right and at the highest point of the Road is a truncated square pyramid of concrete about nine feet high. Here starting at 2.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 5th November 1946 a notable event in the Town's Municipal achievements took place; the declaring open of the fifty-four flats forming the first stage of the Waterfall Road Sub-Economic Housing Scheme. The flats consisted of three living rooms and a spacious kitchen each, though it had not yet been possible to procure the baths and certain electrical fittings. The massive concrete plinth was covered over and about it was an ornamental rock garden with a seat from which there was a magnificent view of the Waterfall and Kloof. The Mayor, Mr L.C. Gay, who presided, said that a start had been made on the second stage, which would provide besides ninety-two more flats, a public laundry, a playground, a children's clinic and a welfare centre. More schemes would follow until the Town was cleared of slums. Today the flats form part of Waterfall Naval

Barracks.

BARNARD STREET : Named after Mr E. A.W. Barnard, Civil Engineer in the Royal Navy Dockyard between 1896 and 1900, who had frequent dealings with the Council, often in connection with the site and preparations for the new Naval Hospital in Mount Pleasant. He may also have had to divert this Street to some extent to bring it wholly outside the Hospital site.

One may wonder if any use was made of this short but very steep street in the days of animal-drawn vehicles. Even now it appears little used. Possibly its steepness was added to by the reducing in 1900 of the steep gradient of Cornwall Street between the foot of Barnard Street and the Wesleyan Parsonage, which the Navy had proposed as being to the mutual advantage of themselves and the Municipality.

BARRACK STREET : Named after the Main Barracks, since demolished, which was on the lower, seaward, side of the street.

In it were housed a Company of the Royal Engineers, the Army Service Corps, the Master Gunner and Store of the Royal Garrison Artillery, and the Army Telephone Exchange. The Headquarters of the Officer Commanding Troops was attached to the Arsenal factory and faced Arsenal Road and St George's Street. No Infantry has been stationed in the Town during the Twentieth Century. The Arsenal itself was run by the Dockyard, with a Naval Officer in charge and civilian artisans.

BREDA STREET : Named after Dirk Gysbert van Reenen van Breda whose house was in this Street. He was a Greengrocer whose shop in St George's Street was later occupied by Mr Ajam's Standard Supply Store. He later moved to the old Dutch East India Company house at Oatlands Farm and afterwards bought Klein Vishoek, where he carried on trek-fishing, as after his death did his son Kenneth Peter van Breda, three times Mayor of Simon's Town,

The steepness of this Street did not deter cows from going up and down it, as recorded in a letter of 1st March 1922 to the Town Clerk from the tenant of Breda Villa. "Each day for the past fortnight two cows, one brown and the other black and white, had between 12 noon and 1 o'clock made a perambulation outside the residence. To assuage the pangs of hunger they have acquired a taste for chrysanthemum tops and blue flowered creeper, of which up to the present I have congratulated myself on possessing quite an imposing show. " As the writer wished to retain in the garden what was left after their repast that day, he asked that steps be taken against the owners of the animals, as otherwise he would be "reluctantly compelled to take some punitive measure against the cows themselves," The Town Clerk found out who the owner was and sent him a warning that if the cows were found in the neighbourhood again they would be

impounded and he prosecuted.

BUDGE'S LANE : Named after George Ryall Budge, the Municipal Council's first Chairman, which title was later changed to Mayor. His house was actually at the corner of Arsenal Road and Wesley Street, but his five pieces of ground here, totalling up to 66,5 Acres (7955 square yards), seem to have extended back to the Lane. Part of it he had planted with bushes to keep out intruders. Budge's Lane is given in the address column of the index to the Letter Book containing a copy of the Town Clerk's reply to a letter of 1902 from Mrs Budge on behalf of her husband, the letters themselves both having simply Simon's Town as the address. The Group Areas Act left the houses in the Lane and nearby empty, resulting in their becoming derelict. Later they were bulldozed and the plots on which the houses stood have become so deeply covered in vegetation that one cannot make out the Lane underneath.

CARDIFF ROAD : This Road was so named because of a number of Welshmen living in the Road or vicinity.

Messrs Barraball and Squire were Builders and Contractors with a shop in St George's Street and houses at the corner of Cardiff Road and Cornwall Street. Mr Benjamin Holton's house at the other end of this road was known as the old Wesleyan Parsonage and the ground was at one time infested with prickly pear, as was much other land in the Town.

In the "Mayor's Minute of Municipal Progress in Simon's Town" for the year ended 31st July 1901 it was reported that "an entirely new street has been constructed at Mount Pleasant, namely Cardiff Road. This work has been entirely at the cost of the Council, in order to close the adjoining old road, which passed over certain lots of land now available for sale,"

CHAPEL ROAD : Because the Wesleyan Chapel (now Methodist Church) was on the hill up this road, this became known informally as Chapel Hill Road. At the first naming of the Streets in 1899 this was shortened to Chapel Road, though the longer name was still occasionally used afterwards.

The character of the building, opened for Divine Service on Thursday, 9th October 1828 was largely destroyed by alterations in 1905, when the bell tower was demolished. "The Methodist chapel occupies the most commanding station in the town," wrote Captain G.C. Mundy, who called here in 1830, in his "Pen and Pencil Sketches." Beside the Church are the former Wesleyan School and Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, the latter of which was opened by Rear- Admiral Sir Robert H. Harris on 10th February 1900.

In places the concrete foundations had to be carried down to a depth of 4,9 m before solid bottom was reached.

To assist members of the Congregation going to Services, steps about two metres apart were built part of the way up. The rail of pipes at one side erected by the

Wesleyans at the beginning of this Century or earlier is an amenity much appreciated, and that not only in windy weather.

CHURCH STREET : Named after the Dutch Reformed Church at the corner of this Street and St George's Street. Before its erection Services were held for 31 years in the Methodist Church and for 17 in the Anglican. On 10th December 1855 the Commander-in-Chief, Commodore H.D. Trotter, laid the Foundation Stone of what would be a building in simple Gothic style with a striking entrance porch. Exactly a year later Dr P.E. Faure of the Wynberg Dutch Reformed Church and Relieving Minister here conducted the Inauguration ceremony.

It was while he was Minister of this Church from 1919 to 1930 that Ds. M. L. de Villiers composed the melody for "Die Stem van Suid- Afrika," the words of which were written by C.J. Langenhoven, the celebrated Afrikaans Poet and Writer.

CLUB STREET : So named because of the Peninsula Club at the right-hand corner of this Street and St George's Street, the site now occupied by the Shell Garage and Arcadia Flats.

The Club may once have been an attractive place, but in 1901 it certainly was not. This was all the worse because of the Bubonic Plague epidemic in the Town and elsewhere. Following an adverse report by the Plague Medical Officer and a resolution of the Town Council the Town Clerk on 4th April sent the Directors of the Club an extract from the report. He added that he had been "instructed to call upon you in terms of the 116 Municipal Regulation to attend a meeting of the Council to be held on Thursday the 11th instant at 7.30 p.m. to show cause why an order should not be made by the Council to declare the Peninsula Club unfit for human habitation." When the Directors did not attend the opinion was expressed that the letter should have been sent to the owner of the building. Presumably there was not a suitable building elsewhere, as the life of the Club came to an end. For several years the Town Council discussed the building of steps leading from this Street up to a point on Chapel Road at an estimated cost of £160, which would be a great convenience to a large number of people living in the area. The Ratepayers in 1927, however, refused to sanction the work. Still, this was approved at some later date, for there are now fifty-one steps to join up with Chapel Road.

COLE POINT ROAD : This Road up to St George's Street was clearly so named because it goes up from Cole Point or its vicinity. The Point was presumably so named when Sir Lowry Cole was Governor at the Cape between 1828 and 1833, but why is not known.

The Road was on land held by the War Department under a Title Deed of 25th November 1844 and was closed once a year to preserve the Department's rights. The Road and vacant area between it and the sea have since been taken over by

Dockyard/Naval Base.

CORNWALL STREET : From Arsenal Road to Goede Gift is Cornwall Street, so named because a prominent householder and property owner in this Street, Councillor John Squire, a Builder and Contractor in partnership with P.C. Barraball, hailed from Cornwall.

The Assynt Villas at the corner of Wilfred Street were named after Loch Assynt in south-west Sutherland in Scotland. Near the eastern end of the Loch are the ruins of the 15th Century Castle Ardvreck where the Marquess of Montrose and his small force were captured while making a final effort for King Charles II against the Covenanters in 1650, two years before the establishment of the Dutch East India Company's victualling station at the Cape.

DEVON STREET : Probably so named because of householders from Devon in the Street, W. T. Belding, the Chief Coppersmith in the Dockyard, being one and possibly J. Williams another.

Opposite the Barnard Street end of this Street is in the grounds of what used to be the Naval Hospital the large metal structure which was Landing Stage No. 1 of the Aerial Cableway. This took patients and stores from beside the sail loft Church in the West Dockyard up to the Hospital and then on to the Naval Sanatorium on the top of the Hill.

It was in the house in this Street nearest the Hospital that an early Town Clerk, William Smale Gillard, lived after a period in Cornwall Street. He retired on Wednesday, 19th September 1928, after about forty years' service as Town Clerk.

GOEDE GIFT ROAD : Named after the flat-roofed house to which this road led, which had been a farmhouse. The farm of which this area was part was granted in the 18th Century. The magnificently situated house and farm are clearly shown on a panorama of about 1780 by Colonel R.J. Gordon and on a plan of 1798 by Major W. Kirsteman. The house no longer exists as a result of the Group Areas Act.

During 1896 correspondence took place between the Town Council and the Trustees of The Wesleyan Church Property, over a proposed exchange of Church ground for a strip of Crown land. Then on 4th January the following year Town Clerk Gillard was able to write to the Trustees that His Excellency the Governor (Sir Hercules Robinson) in Council had been pleased to approve the expropriation by the Municipality of Simon's Town of that portion of the Wesleyan Methodist Church ground, over which the present road to Goede Gift leads, for the purpose of making the road a permanent one to that locality."

HOPE STREET : Why this Street was so named is not known. However, it may refer to the name of the owner of property or householder in the Street at the time or it may be the Christian name of the wife or daughter of a property owner or householder.

In February 1902 it was decided to go ahead with the building of a retaining wall for which plans had been prepared some time previously. It was pointed out that a very material difference in the cost of the work would ensue if the new wall could be built on the wall of Mr D.C. Urquhart. This was at the back of Assynt Villas in Cornwall Street. Mr Urquhart agreed to this provided he could extend this wall in connection with an additional building he was proposing to erect. This wall on a wall was completed in July as well as a wall in Wilfred Street.

HOSPITAL LANE : The name for the lane at the side of the old Royal Naval Hospital on St George's Street had been used informally long before the official naming of the Streets. The Hospital was erected in 1812 or 1813 in preparation for Simon's Town becoming the year-round Naval Base instead of only in the winter months when Table Bay became too perilous for shipping because of the north-west gales and remained in use for about ninety years until replaced by the Hospital above Cornwall Street, with a Naval Sanatorium at the top of the hill. This earlier Hospital is now used for Naval Offices and the three houses adjoining on the left for Hospital staff are now Naval residences, being known as Old Hospital Terrace.

It was at this Hospital in 1872 that the apparently first two operations in South Africa were carried out according to the revolutionary principles of antiseptic surgery Dr Joseph Lister had announced five years previously.

JUBILEE STREET : From Toll Bar to foot of Red Hill is "Jubilee Street."

That Jubilee Street should be so far from Jubilee Square is sometimes remarked upon, but so too in time were the Jubilees resulting in the names. The Square was named after the King George V Silver Jubilee in 1935 and at that time the Street's name was due to Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887, but only indirectly and was not given until the first naming of the Streets a dozen years later. In the Golden Jubilee year Charles Jones, a Livery Stable proprietor, had built the block of five double-storey semi-detached houses at the St George's Street corner of this Street. This group he called Jubilee Terrace, which led to the giving of the name Jubilee Street in 1899.

The Toll Bar in St George's Street near the bottom of this Street was removed on the abolition of Tolls in the Cape Division on 15th August 1901. Access to the old very steep Red Hill Road was through Jubilee Street.

MISSION LANE : The lane running through the middle of the Brook was named "Mission Lane" because of the old Wesleyan Mission House in the Kloof.

When in 1907 tenements on the Lane were being made habitable the Council wrote to the owners, Messrs Bosman, Powis and Co., Wine and Spirit Merchants of Cape Town, that the time was opportune to remove a flight of steps that encroached on the Lane. After investigation the firm replied that they had a prescriptive right to the steps, which they had found had existed for over forty

years. Steps to Mission Lane, presumably from Waterfall or Riverside Road, were built by the Council in 1908. The Lane ceased to exist when in 1946 and 1947 the Municipality in terms of its Sub-Economic Housing Scheme replaced the slum dwellings between Riverside and upper Waterfall Roads by large two to four storey blocks of flats, now the Navy's Waterfall Barracks.

MOUNTAIN ROAD : This opening between the Roman Catholic Church and the Municipal Library no longer exists as a road, so we are fortunate that the description of it in the 1899 Minutes is sufficiently detailed for us to know precisely where the Road was, at that time the "opening between R.C. Church and High School property." At an earlier date the area was known as Black Town and here dwelt some families descended from freed slaves.

PARADISE ROAD (Formerly the ROAD TO PARADISE) : This was so named because the area in which it is situated had, for some reason, become known as "Paradise." Thus mention is made in the Council Minutes for 6th March 1885 of a "letter from certain persons in Paradise dated 19th ult. anent the bad state of the road in that locality," while on 16th July 1891 the Mayor, Councillor F.H.S. Hugo, asked "permission for the road leading to Paradise to be repaired." Up a short passage from the Road and some steps is the house "Fairview" on land granted in April 1819 by the Governor, Lord Charles Somerset, to Barrack Sergeant John Tilt. (*"Fairview" featured in an article by Justin Fox in the 2022 Bulletin – Editor*).

QUARRY ROAD : The name Quarry Road had been used informally before the first official naming of the Streets. Thus on 3rd February 1896 the Dockyard Consulting Engineer wrote to the Town Clerk that "an easier access to the hills above the town is very much needed, and if the Council have no objection, I propose making a path about 4 feet wide starting from the highest point of the Quarry Road and climbing at an easy gradient up the hill side." As the road was partly on the site on which the Navy wished to build a new Hospital they constructed a deviation in 1898 and early 1899.

This they handed over to the Municipality on 12th June 1899 as a public road.

A fortnight later came the first official naming of the Streets of the Town.

Among the names given by the Council was Quarry Road. This, however, went to quite a different road, that which crosses the bed of the old quarry behind the then Naval Recreation Room from which the Navy had obtained filling for reclamation purposes and the Municipality gravel and clay for road making. This Road goes from Chapel Road, up some steps and just after passing in front of the "Three Bears" ends at steps at the side of this house leading from Smith's Lane to the Goede Gift area, The steep upper wall of the quarry is still there, while six garages and a parking area are now on part of the quarry floor.

On 29th December 1904 there came a change as this extract from the Council

Minutes of that date shows:

"Councillor Runciman moved that the resolution passed on the 6th July 1899, naming 'Quarry Road' be rescinded and that this road be now named 'Reservoir Road' and that the road leading to the Municipal Quarry be named 'Quarry Road', seconded by Councillor Budge.

This new official Quarry Road is clearly shown and named on a small map sent with letters of 1926 from the Navy to the Town Clerk. It was the earlier informally named Quarry Road going up alongside the Hospital from the top of Barnard Street and then the Jubilee Tank. The first officially named Quarry Road, that behind the Naval Library (formerly the Naval Recreation Room) is also clearly shown and named, but instead of being Reservoir Road it is Highlands Road.

It is the self-same Highlands Road alias Reservoir Road alias Quarry Road that goes from Chapel Road to the "Three Bears". Clearly, we have in Simon's Town a Street name, Quarry Road, of no fixed abode and a road along the hillside with a changing name down through the years.

QUEEN'S ROAD : From the foot of Cemetery Hill onward to Municipal boundary is "Queen's Road," named after Queen Victoria, whose Diamond Jubilee had been celebrated in June 1897.

A new Municipal boundary was fixed by Proclamation No. 260 dated 7th October 1899, four months after the naming of the Streets

It is near the end of this Road towards Seaforth that a road (MARTELLO ROAD) leads down to the Martello Tower erected in 1796 to serve the South Battery as a means of defence from attack from the landward side.

RECTORY LANE : So named because of the then Anglican Rectory on the left hand corner of this Lane and St George's Street. The story of this building, erected in 1814 is told on a bronze plaque on the wall of the former Barclay's Bank, (now Willetts Hotel – Ed). The present Rectory is in Cornwall Street.

Before 1899 the Lane had two informal names, Wilshire's Lane and then Judge's Lane, despite the fact that Rev. E. Judge was the predecessor of Rev. H. M. Wilshire, who died in 1885. The Lane does not appear to have been named after Rev. J. Eedes, who was Rev. Wilshire's successor.

On 22nd August 1884 Councillor Henry Twogood gave notice that at the next regular meeting of the Council he would move that a Committee of three "be appointed to inspect and report upon the practicability of opening up a new road in continuation of the public one commonly known as 'Wilshire's Lane', commencing in the main street between the property of Mr Geo. Rayner and the English Church Parsonage and to extend to the properties of Messrs Inglis, de Stadler, Lankester, Storrier, Curgenoen and situated on the hill formerly called the 'Good Gift Estate'." Actually, the motion was not discussed until 20th March 1885, by which time the Lane had been inspected by the Committee of the whole Council. It was resolved to call for tenders for the construction of a flight of stairs

of blue rubble stone, set in cement. On 26th May the lowest of four tenders, that of £18 by Mr Gert Frieslaar, was accepted for "the construction of a flight of steps in Judge's lane hitherto called Wilshire's." Finally on 13th June, the steps having been built, the Finance Committee considered that "in order to give a proper finish thereto, there were certain extras in connection therewith which they recommended to be done, cost not to exceed £2.17.6." The handrail of pipes in the Lane is an appreciated amenity of later date. On ascending Rectory Lane steps we encounter immediately above Smith's Lane a compact set of steps bearing a self-explanatory Place Name probably not as well known as it used to be, the Twenty Steps.

RIVERSIDE ROAD : The road adjoining the river in the Brook "Riverside Road" is so named because it runs alongside the river, really a stream, known as "The Brook". This name may have been given to this stream and the area on the upper side of this part of St George's Street because of its somewhat resembling "The Brook" in another Naval town, Chatham, in Kent, Southern England.

RUNCIMAN'S DRIVE : The name High Level Road was changed to Runciman's Drive on 21st February 1938 "as a permanent tribute to the good work carried out by the late Mr W. Runciman during his long period of office as Mayor. "

ST GEORGE'S STREET : That portion of the Main Street from Toll Bar to the bottom of Cemetery Hill is named "St George's Street" after the first Anglican Church building in South Africa, a store in this Street converted into a Church, given the name St George by Governor Sir John Craddock and opened in 1814. It stood approximately where Cafe Pescado is now. The Rectory was at the south corner of this Street and Rectory Lane. The first Chaplain was Rev. George Hough.

At the time of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 the Flagship on the Station was the 1st Class Cruiser *H.M.S. St George*, launched at Hull in 1892. A 16 foot model of her and one of a predecessor in the days of sail were exhibited in a procession in Cape Town as part of the Navy's share in the Celebrations. These were built in the old Boathouse opposite the Sail Loft in the West Dockyard. In charge of the work was Mr Joseph Gay, Chief Carpenter's Mate, and the Rigger was a Mr Matthews. One of the young lads in Sailor Rig who manned the sailing model *St George* in Cape Town was Llewellyn C. Gay, who later served on several occasions as Mayor of Simon's Town. This model was afterwards sent to the Admiralty in England, while the other model was presented on 7th June 1898 to the Municipality by Vice-Admiral Harry H. Rawson, the Commander-in-Chief on the Station. It is now on display in Simon's Town Museum.

The Toll Bar marking one end of this Street was about opposite Jubilee Street. With the abolition of Tolls in the Cape Division on 15th August 1901 the Bar was removed and early in 1904 the Toll House itself was demolished.

In this Street, opposite the Admiral's Garden and close to the Admiral's Residence across the road is the bridge dating from early last Century under which the millions of gallons of water of the Brook run to waste each year. When in about 1912 or 1913 the bridge was widened under the supervision of the Town Engineer, Mr James M. Wilson, reinforced steel was used for probably the first time in Simon's Town otherwise than in the Dockyard. The great value of his design was proved when War came only a year or two later, for the bridge withstood the weight of massive guns and heavy traction engines without further strengthening, whereas for lesser gun weights previously temporary supports had to be placed under the bridge.

SAYERS LANE : Named apparently after Mrs Frances Eliza Sayers, widow, and owner of part of what were known as the Front and Back Buildings on the upper side of the Lane.

Her husband, William Harrison Sayers (1832-1871) had been Store Porter and afterwards Foreman of the Naval Yard, while his father, William Adam Sayers (1804-1870), from Falmouth, had been a Store Porter and also the Sexton and Bell Ringer of St Frances Church.

The two rows of the Sayers Lane Cottages, as the Front and Back Buildings more recently became known, were built in 1813 for housing the Artificers of the Dockyard Establishment as the following year Simon's Town was to become the year-round Naval Base. They were sold into private ownership in 1833 and 1834. In consequence of the application of the Group Areas Act to this Town the tenants of these cottages were moved out and the buildings were left vacant. Because of their resulting deterioration the historical Sayers Lane Cottages which were recommended to be marked with a Plaque were bulldozed in 1972 and the site was left vacant.

SEAFORTH ROAD : Named after the area Seaforth through which it passes. What is now known as Upper Seaforth was granted by Governor Lord Charles Somerset to Captain T.T. Harington in 1814 for his dwelling-house and a suitable estate round it, the land then being unappropriated.

The reason for Harington's choice of the name "Seaforth" for the estate he had been granted is revealed on a tombstone in Stoke Poges Churchyard, that which is believed to be referred to in Thomas Gray's celebrated meditative poem "Elegy in a Country Churchyard", Published in 1750. The tombstone is that of "Jemima K.M. Harington, wife of Capt. Thomas T, Harington of Seaforth Cape of Good Hope, daughter of the late Major Douglas of Windsor and niece of the late Earl of Seaforth," who died in London on 8th March 1820 at the age of 42.

When considering the unnamed roads at Seaforth and Bellevue on 12th June 1928 the Combined Council Committees recommended three names for acceptance by the Council. The second recommendation was that "the road leading from the main road down to the Seaforth Beach be named what it is now

known as, namely Seaforth Road." This and the other two recommendations were adopted by the Council at its regular fortnightly meeting on the 18th June. Clearly the Councillors and Town Engineer were unaware that "Seaforth Road" was not an informal name, but one of the thirty-six names given by the Council at the first naming of the Streets in 1899.

SMITH'S LANE : From the bottom of the steps to "Billy the Barber", Smith's Lane was named after a James Smith, who owned two cottages in the Lane but who appears to have died prior to the naming of the Streets. He seems to have left a minor daughter, Miss G.E. Smith, who went to live in or near George. The affairs of the Estate Late James Smith were handled by a Mr L. van der Poel, Attorney at Law, of George. The cottages continued to be registered as owned by the Estate of the Late J. Smith. By 1933 they had become so dilapidated that after the Agent at George failed to reply to a final registered letter regarding this, the Council ordered the demolition of the buildings.

As stated earlier the expression "Billy the Barber" was frequently used before the first naming of the Streets to indicate a locality. Just who Billy was and when he was a Barber in the Town are not known. A reference to Billy the Barber as a locality occurs in the Council Minutes within six months of the formation of the Municipality in 1883, and he might well by then have passed away or moved.

J. de Freitas in Main-street was the only Hairdresser listed in the earliest Directory to have a Simon's Town Trades Section, that for 1893, though there could have been one or more unlisted.

Going up the steps the bottom of which mark the other end of Smith's Lane one can take the road to the right in front of the "Three Bears" which appears really to be a narrow pathway until after a short distance and more steps and the prominent name plate "Quarry Road" it ends at Chapel Road. It would seem, however, that more use must have been made of the passage and steps on the left of the "Three Bears", the house which earlier had the names "Midway" and "Landmark," for these serve part of the Goede Gift area.

STATION ROAD : From the Toll Bar to the north end of boundary was named "Station Road" after the Railway Station past which it runs, The extension of the line from Kalk Bay to Simon's Town was opened on Friday, 1st December 1890.

The northern boundary of the Municipality to which this Road extended can be taken as that defined by a Proclamation of a few months after the Street naming, No. 260 of 7th October 1899. As we have seen earlier this cannot be understood without the plans mentioned in it and that even with them the Lands Department itself made an error about just where the boundary was.

THOMAS STREET : The cross street on top of Alfred, Wickboom and Hospital Lanes was named after one of the Thomas Family in the Town who was a

householder or property owner in the Street. He may have been Harvey Thomas, who lived close by though possibly later, or A.J. or R.C. Thomas or perhaps even another member of the Family.

On the upper side of the Street and facing down Alfred Lane is the Nooral Islam (Light of Peace) Mosque, the story of which is told on page 117 of the July 1967 "Bulletin" in the article "The Late Hadji Bakaar Manuel of Simon's Town", pages 116-120, prepared from notes he wrote for the Society five years earlier.

In this Lane was what was known as Drostdy House. As there was at no time a Landdrost of Simon's Town this was possibly so named because in it lived C. M. Lind, who was appointed Resident Magistrate on 5th December 1828. The house was pulled down in 1954. Its preservation for use as a Museum had been considered, but so much rebuilding would have been necessary that the house could not thereafter have been considered a Historical Monument. A relic of it is to be seen in the widely admired Warriors Room, the fanlight window with its prayer-wheel motif. *(The fanlight window is now housed in Simon's Town Museum)*

UNION STREET : Named after the building slightly to the right on the upper side of Smith's Lane erected in 1801 as a Tavern and Billiard Room, later used as a hotel and lodging house and becoming known as "The Union" Tavern. By the beginning of this century it had become a tenement.

Union Street comes to a dead end at the bottom of the steep bank below the outer side of Smith's Lane. In earlier days there was an upper Union Street, very much upper, for it started at the Lane, which is higher than a double storey building above Union Street, it is mentioned in the Town Engineer's report read to the Council on 23rd November 1911. In this he stated that "it is desirable that the roadway forming the continuation of Union Street, the centre portion of which is very badly washed away, be roughly formed and coated to enable the tenants to more comfortably reach their homes and that a fence be fixed extending along the edge of the bank above Union Street the full width to prevent accidents to persons using the road." This upper Union Street no longer exists as a recognisable road, though it is shown in the Department of Lands records. The Union Tavern building encroached on this Street, which was a continued source of trouble until a settlement was arrived at in recent years.

WATERFALL ROAD : This road is, of course, named after the Waterfall in the Kloof.

Here, there was at one time a Magazine, and the coach house, stables and house of Mr George Frieslaar, one of two brothers who largely provided for the transport needs of the Town. The top of the Waterfall, high up in the Kloof, is the picturesque haunt of picnickers and baboons.

In 1814 when Simon's Bay was made the base for the Royal Navy, George Dundas, the Naval Commissioner, wrote to the Governor, Sir John Craddock, that

he had been searching for a spot on which to establish a Rope Walk, a place for the manufacture of rope. Unfortunately, from the want of level ground he was unable to find a site of sufficient extent for the purpose. "The only place I look upon as most eligible and least likely to annoy or interfere with any one individual is the ravine which runs from the end of Mrs Hurter's garden (now the Admiral's garden, opposite Admiralty House) to the foot of the mountain, which by throwing two or three slight bridges across the gullies will allow of extending the ropewalk to one half of the usual length," This use of the land of 274m or more in length and 80m in breadth was approved. At a spring near the Barracks at the mountain end of the Road the Garrison and people of the Town washed their clothes. Most of the houses in the upper Waterfall Road area before they were cleared away to make room for the Sub-Economic Housing Scheme were built on what has locally been called Wesleyan Architectural lines - not that a Professor of Architecture would recognise the term. They were flat-roofed, the bricks laid flat in clay and covered with lime concrete, the windows poky, and inside the roof-beams were covered with planks.

WESLEY STREET : So named because of the old Wesleyan Parsonage in the Street and partly perhaps also because Mr Budge was a staunch member of the Wesleyan Congregation. As stated earlier he was the first Mayor of the Town, though at the first Council meeting on 28th February 1883 the title Chairman was chosen instead of Mayor, both being permissible in terms of the Municipalities Act.

The demolition of houses in the area seems to have resulted in this street being little distinguishable except as a series of steps between upper Waterfall Road and Wilfred Street. Mr Budge's residence was on the Arsenal Road corner. The house was "next to Admiralty House (but not as regards position) one of the oldest and most commodious houses in the town," said "The Simon's Town and District Chronicle" of 16th December 1899.

WHARF STREET : So named because it leads from St George's Street down to the Town Wharf and Jetty.

There were here at one time the Customs House, Port Office, the shed for the Port boat and the Lighthouse shed, the last of which still stands. The original Jetty was of wood, but the present is of concrete. Here ships other than Naval obtained their water, this coming formerly from the Harbour Board Tank at Goede Gift and afterwards from the Municipal water main.

On 9th September 1921 the Magistrate, Mr E. Graham Green, wrote to the Town Clerk that "as the new Jetty will be shortly completed and no doubt be resorted to by the local residents and visitors as a Promenade," he wished to suggest that early steps be taken to resite the nearby sewer and have it extended well beyond the shore so that the discharge would be carried away by the current. This is a matter that has long since been dealt with though possibly not with the

promptitude Mr Green desired.

WICKBOOM LANE : Named after the widow, or daughter Johanna Amarantia if unmarried, of Pieter Andreas Wikboom, a Swede who arrived at the Cape some time before 1817, becoming a Wardmaster here, and from 1826 a Heemraad in the Court of Resident and Heemraden until its abolition from the beginning of 1828. Pieter Wikboom died in 1840 at the age of 65 and his widow Anna Rosina Catharina in 1876 aged 86, both in Simon's Town, and leaving three daughters, the last of whom may not have married.

This Lane had previously been known informally as Glynwright's Lane. Thus in a Sanitary Report in 1889 the Town Clerk stated that "in Glynwright's Lane the houses owned by Mr R, Thomas are provided with Closets." The ground of Mr Thomas Brewitt extended back from Hablutzel's Lane, where he had his house, to Glynwright's Lane, where he had two cottages and three rooms forming a tenement.

The name Glynwright was also spelt in documents Glinwright, Glenright and Glin Wright with or without a hyphen. In the Old Cemetery is a gravestone "Sacred to the Memory of Daniel Glin Wright who departed this life 22 July 1831, aged 42 years and 4 months. Also, his son John Daniel Glin Wright who departed this life 11 February 1856 aged 30 years and 7 months."

WILFRED STREET : It is not known who the Wilfred was after whom this Street was named, but presumably a householder or owner of property in this street or a son or grandson of one or the other, or even father of husband or wife.

George Edward Dibben, the property owner at the Cornwall Street end of this Street, was a Works Contractor and Monumental Mason, had also property in Seaforth and was for some time a Town Councillor. William Napier at the other end of the Street was a Building Contractor and at one time an Undertaker as well.

The original (much longer) article by F. P. Chapman was published in Bulletin No 8 Part 3.

SIMON'S TOWN BEACHES : ROGER BAGSHAW

Simon's Town is a coastal town which has grown around the Harbour area and is blessed with many beaches amongst the rocky outcrops along the coastline on either side of the town.

It is noted that in this modern day these beaches are seen mainly as a place for recreation, not so much in the past where they were a source of accessing food, fish, shellfish as well as whales to manufacture whale oil for lamps. Beaches were for fishing from and for launching boats.

In the early days access to Simon's Town was fraught with difficulties, coming in from the North one had to pass through the quicksand of Fish Hoek around the mountain and again through drift sands and quicksand at Glencairn. The building of the railway and its embankments meant an end to the quicksand and eased transport to Simon's Town.

What is now Glencairn Heights was, as can be seen from the 1910 photograph a huge sand dune. Windblown sand remains a problem to this day. Glencairn beach area, substantial clearing and windbreaks being completed in mid-2023. It remains to be seen as to how long-lived this initiative will be.



The Simon's Town beaches from North to South are Glencairn Beach, (below) Shelley Beach, Makriel Beach, Long Beach, Seaforth Beach, Waters Edge, Foxy Beach, Boulders Beach, Windmill Beach, Franks Bay and Fisherman's Beach. Both Glencairn and Shelley beaches have tidal pools.



Many beaches were used, and continue to be used, for the launching of Trek fishing boats the main criteria being that there were no rocky outcrops to damage nets or boats. These beaches included Steenbras Bay (now lost to the dockyard) Fisherman's Beach and Franks Bay at Froggy farm, Boulders Beach, Jaffers

Beach, Long Beach and Makriel Beach at Klein Vishoek and then Glencairn. Trek fishing often runs in the same families for generations; our cover picture was painted in 1861 and the same family are still fishing the same waters. The shoals of fish are now a fraction of what they once were when fish were counted in their thousands. It is recorded that Tuna were once part of the catch. Trek fishing is now controlled by a permit system and, as a result, good catches of yellowtail and haarders are now being made.

The Jaffers beach was lost when the East Dockyard was extended and the Jaffers family moved to Glencairn and Makriel Bay. Klein Vishoek/Makriel Bay was manned by the Bruyns family prior to this move.



Trek fishing boat Makriel Beach

Long beach Simon's Town was fished by the Emery, Lawrence and Cotton Families, The Cotton tradition continues. Haarders and mackerel were salted and dried there for sale inland. Cotton's cottage is now a holiday let off Paradise Road.



Long Beach Simon's Town

Boulders beach was fished by a Mr Rietman who salted Snoek in his sheds; he also had a house on Bellevue Road. Steenbras Bay was also lost when the East Dockyard was built and the Muller family were granted the rights to fish Fisherman's Beach and Franks Bay.



Boulders Beach



Fisherman's Beach

Shellfish have been harvested for centuries and shell middens can be found in various spots along the coastline and in caves way up in the surrounding mountains. Researchers exploring the shell midden off Franks Bay at Froggy Pond have found basic tools as well as primitive jewellery and even human remains in this midden.

Many beaches were utilised for the landing of whale carcasses which had been harpooned in the bay. Much controversy was brought about by the rendering down of whale blubber in pots on the beaches and the resulting smell, which meant the blubber pots had to move continually. It seems however that the worst of the smell was from the whale carcasses and not the blubber.

It became necessary to formalise processing factories and Seaforth beach was set up as a whaling station with the permission of the authorities in Simon's Town. Whalers Way is named after the whaling activities in that area. Other whaling stations were set up in Kalk Bay, Gordons Bay, Fish Hoek Bay and at Millers Point. A floating factory was later set up in Simon's Bay. With the diminishing catches of Southern Right Whales whaling for them was outlawed in 1935.



Seaforth Beach



Whaling Gun and Blubber Pot

False Bay and in particular Simon's Bay has had its fair share of Shipwrecks over the years, most of which are now dive sites. Amongst the early wrecks are quite a number of more modern yachts. The wreck of the *Clan Stuart* to the north end of Makriel (or Mackerel) Beach is visible as one travels into Simon's Town. It is the engine block (seen below) that shows above the waves. The vessel dragged its anchor in a gale and went aground in 1914.



Other well-known wrecks in the area are the *Bato*, the *Brunswick* the *Drie Gebroeders* the *Katwyk aan Rhyn* and the *Phoenix*. The wrecks are popular local dive sites.

Windmill beach is a secluded beach lying below the Simon's Town Golf course.

This beautiful beach and the golf course above it have a history reaching back to the Boer war of 1899-1902. The golf course was a tented prisoner of war camp named Bellevue and Windmill beach a compulsory exercise area for the Boer prisoners. It is recorded that a certain John Henry Chandler aged 29 died as a result of a shark attack whilst swimming off this beach. Prisoners who died at Bellevue were buried at the nearby Old Burying Ground at Seaforth. The following photographs show the Bellevue tented camp, the Boer prisoners bathing on Windmill beach and a recent photograph of a school group on the same beach



portion of Windmill Beach was enclosed by barbed wire and bathing in the sea was part of the com



Windmill Beach

The media tells us that Boulders Beach is the home of the African Penguin colony. The Penguin Colony is actually based at Foxy Beach where they established themselves in 1982. It is rumoured that they appeared here after leaving Seal Island in False Bay, where the Cape Fur Seals were being persecuted

by fishermen who believed the seals were taking “their” fish. The name Jackass Penguin is the common name for the penguins, a name which understandably relates to the sounds of their call which is much like that of a donkey. Foxy beach administered by National parks, the beach and surrounding bush, is dedicated to the penguins. Only the boardwalks and viewing platform are accessible to the public. As can be seen from the accompanying photograph, penguin viewing is extremely popular and a great source of income. Prior to the parks Board taking over the beach the public and the penguins were separated by a heavy anchor rope which was policed by “Van the penguin man” who diligently prohibited members of the public from crossing into penguin territory.



More people than Penguins at Foxy Beach

Boulders Beach is a popular and picturesque bathing beach set amongst large smooth granite boulders and is complete with boat sheds. Bathers share the beach and waters with the penguins from adjacent Foxy Beach. Boulders is a pay beach administered by the Parks Board.

Shells were harvested from the beaches to be burnt in lime kilns in order to make lime for building purposes. A Lime Kiln can be seen today in the Cape point reserve. This kiln used the limestone and travertine rock found in the immediate area together with washed seashells. Washing of sea shells is necessary to remove the salts which are detrimental to buildings affecting the durability of mortars and concrete causing dampness and unsightly efflorescence.



Boulders Beach



Lime Kiln at Cape Point

Research, text and Colour Photography by Roger Bagshaw, Chairman,
Simon's Town Historical Society

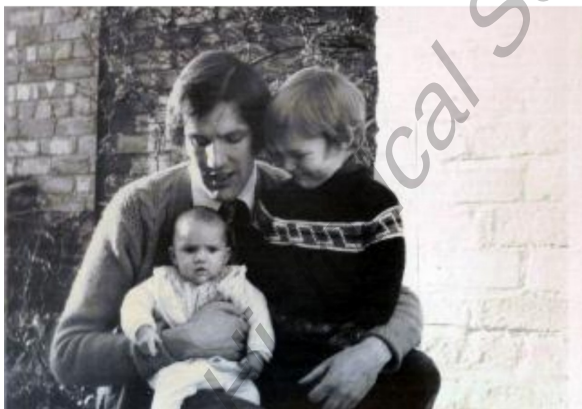
DAVID ERICKSON (1947 – 2023) – CHRISTINA ERICKSON

David, the loving father to Gavin and Christina and Grandfather to Maisie and Monty, was born in Huntingdon in 1947. He had a happy childhood; attended the local primary and grammar schools and would often be found playing with his friends or on a boat at The River Ouse.

The Erickson family moved to Harwich when David was a teenager. Being a major port, this began a lifelong interest in matters maritime and he took a job

working on the tenders that serviced the famous pirate offshore radio station Radio Caroline. He later joined the Trinity House organisation as a lighthouse keeper, being stationed at many famous lighthouses including Canvey Island in the Thames Estuary and others on the Isle of Wight.

With his first wife, he moved to the port of Barry, in Wales, with his Mum and Dad. They had their first child, a son Gavin, in 1969 whilst he was based at Flat Holm as the lighthouse keeper. They then had a second child, daughter Christina in 1973. Meanwhile David studied with the Open University.



Young David with Gavin and Christina.

He qualified as an engineer and began his career at Dow Corning Silicone in Wales but eventually got jobs in London, beginning as a draughtsman. As engineering declined in the U K he opted to work overseas in the booming middle east oil and gas sector and worked in Oman, Qatar, and Abu Dhabi for many years. He was a real pioneer. He started at the bottom and by the end of his career was one of only four people in the world to be able to sign off oil rigs fit for purpose and was sought by every major oil company.

In the 70s his main interests were cars. He owned eye catching Citroens and Cadillac motors for long periods, his favourite being the Citroen DS. He also had passions for photography and tracing his family heritage.

David's knowledge of engineering history was remarkable and he had lifelong associations with historical groups in London's Docklands and general maritime history societies.

Returning from Qatar and the UAE, he moved into the Barbican in London circa 1984. David became an early adopter of home computers, which he used to

become a home-based worker as a consultant to the Oil & Gas sector.

In the early 90s he spent some time living in a 14th century cottage in Stowmarket and was mainly based in the UK working in Suffolk and Aberdeen.

He worked hard and became the Chairman of the Institute of Quality Assurance. He worked all around the Globe, project managing offshore platforms. One of his tasks involved converting an old Russian Navy submarine base ship (of the type seen in James Bond movies) into a drilling platform that could be floated to anywhere in the world – in initial service off the Nigerian coast.

His work continued in Africa with a project in Angola at a time of political upheaval – basing himself in South Africa. After returning to London, he remembered enjoying the moderate climate in South Africa and opted to sell up and move to the Cape and settled happily for many years in Simon's Town.

His home overlooked the Bay and Naval Dockyard. During his early retirement, he continued to be involved in maritime history in the local Simon's Town preservation societies, museums and the Naval Dockyard. He climbed the clock tower in the West Dockyard to wind the clock for most of his years in Simon's Town; no mean feat for a man in his 70s. He was awarded Simon's Town "Resident of the Year." He initiated and documented international research up until his return to the UK for cancer treatment in 2022.



David with Grandchildren Maisie and Monty
aboard *HMS Dolphin* at Chatham Historic Dockyard.

The last year of his life was spent with his loving family in Kent, in Southern England. He enjoyed getting to know his only daughter Christina again and

meeting his doting Grandchildren, Maisie and Monty in Goudhurst.

He was loved and cherished and will be deeply missed.

While visiting HMS Dolphin David was able to point out to his grandchildren several errors made by the restorers!

NAVAL HERITAGE TRUST PUBLICATIONS :



Members of Simon's Town Historical Society are entitled to purchase Naval Heritage Trust publications at a discount. Please consult the Naval Heritage Trust website for the catalogue.

Simon's Town Historical Society

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