

CTFHS NEWSLETTER

Cape Town Family History Society

MARCH 2010 Vol 5 No 1

EDITORIAL

1st March

Here I sit, hands poised above the keyboard ready to format, edit and spell-check all the articles that have flowed from you—the **members of the Cape Town Family History Society**. But... unfortunately my hands remain poised, the keyboard, for the moment, silent because so far not one article or comment has been received.

Later in March

Well, things have improved in the latter part of March. A wonderfully interesting article by our secretary Ann Smythe—**WHAT'S IN A NAME? A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME... A History of the KAL(L)IS Family** appeared in my email inbox. As did the **Anonymous Quotation** about why we do trace our family history—really worth thinking about.

With all this spare time because no news was coming for inclusion in the Newsletter, I've been reading and so I've written a **Book Review** for two books that I found at the Wynberg Library.

[Thinks!]

Maybe that is something that can occur in each of these newsletters—brief reviews of a new book or even a book in our own library. One doesn't have to be a skilled author or journalist to write that! Come on! Let's see some volunteers!

[More Thinks!]

Each month Lucille le Roux sends out an email telling us about the next meeting (Well done, Lucille and thank you). At the bottom of the email she says, "**Do send us your stories for the newsletter**" I love telling the story of my family but I know that as I start my wife's eyes get all glassy with boredom and perhaps you think that others will feel the same if you start on your family history. **DON'T!** You are amongst aficionados who love family histories—their own as well as others. So get writing. Sandra Cruywagen and I will edit it to ensure that it is interesting. But if I have nothing to edit then my hands will stay poised above the keyboard.

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PAGE ONE HUMOUR



You know you're too deep into genealogy when...

"As soon as I check out this census record, I'll fix dinner" means "call the local pizza parlor."

You have to watch the credits of a movie to see if any of the surnames are ones you are researching.

You ask all the people you meet, what their grandparents surnames are.

Old friends who knew you before you were into genealogy begin sending clippings about dead or live people with your surnames (and you know you have been talking about genealogy too much!)

from <http://www.carrollscorner.net/stuff.htm>

WHAT'S IN A NAME? A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME...

by
Ann Smythe (nee Kalis)

Josiph Kalis was born about 1753 and died 17 April 1859 aged 106 according to his death notice, signed with an X by his (illiterate) wife **Wilhelmina**, daughter of **Israel Botha of Baas Harmans kraal** (does anyone know where this is? Possibly in the present day Tokai or Steenberg area). They had 11 children, 2 of whom died as infants. From GISA I gleaned the information that Joseph arrived by ship in 1782 (age 29) – but so far I haven't found any proof.

His marriage to **Wilhelmina Botha** (b 1776, died 17 August 1863) was registered at **Swellendam** on 15 July 1805 when he would already have been 52 years old. One wonders whether there was another wife or liaison previous to this one given the gap.

According to very strong oral tradition in all branches of the family, the surname was originally **Berrangè**. He was a French officer who fought a duel with a superior officer (over a woman, naturally!), killed him and had to flee the country. He travelled through Europe to Poland where he changed his name, taking the name of a town there, **Kalisz** (pronounced **Kalisch** in Poland – I have various documents where the name is spelt **Kalisch** by the magistrate). I would dearly love to go to Poland (or Hungary, as stated on Josiph's death notice) and see if I can find any record of him or any family there as I have come to a definite block.

He somehow found his way to South Africa, where he was first registered in the Swellendam district, then Caledon, then Somerset West, before settling at **Wildschutsbrand** at the back of **Red Hill**. He bought land in George's Valley near **Smitswinkelbaai, Simonstown** which is where he died. The family later moved across to the other side of Cape Point, at **Olifantsbosch**, where the family were simple farmers and limeburners. (They crushed shells and burnt them to make lime for cement in building – hard manual work). In the winter, they would trek across to the West Coast and fish for a living. The remains of their homestead and some graves are still there, as well as the graves of a couple of fishermen who drowned nearby.

On 1 Oct 1850 Josiph and Mina drew up a Joint Will, survivor to have possession. However when Josiph died, it appears that there was no money to wind up the estate or else they just overlooked it, so when Hermine/Mina died later, the farm had to be sold to be divided up between the remaining children. It was auctioned on 27 Nov 1897 and sold to Thomas Johnson Anderson for 300 pounds. Presumably this is when they moved to **Olifantsbosch**.

While they were living there, their one son Frans happily had two concurrent families, the "other woman" being his wife's niece! The rest appear to



My Kalis great grandparents: Peter George Kalis and Helena Catharina Kirsten (of Pollsmoor)

be very respectable, if poor.

There were some disputes over land and land traversing rights at **Olifantsbosch** – laborious court cases documented these. Then the government wanted to buy the land for defence purposes – there was much negotiation and probably coercion till the 7 descendants eventually sold in about 1956 and the land was incorporated into the Cape Point Nature Reserve. At that stage only 2 of the 7 actually lived there. Some of the land had also previously been given to a Mr Hall in payment for a loan. This is where the family built a holiday bungalow for Christmas and holiday gatherings. There was the homestead where the grandparents and two of their married children lived, another house over the road, and another house near the beach.

The **Kalis vs Kallis** spelling probably came about through the magistrates and dominees who spelt the name as they thought right, bearing in mind that many of the people had little education, and also there wasn't the precision of spelling that we expect these days. Once people were being registered, the spelling got more fixed. Spelling is taken according to documents I have seen. I have a copy of a wedding register signed by the bride



My Lourens great grandparents: Jan Lourens and Maria Lourens both of Bredasdorp

ORIGINAL REGISTER.

1875 Marriage solemnized at *Elsjes River*, in the Parish of *Elsjes River*, District of *Simonstown*

No.	When Married.	Names and Surnames.	Ages.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	After Banns or Licence.	Consent by w given, or Jud Order.
77	16 th Feb	Thomas Brewitt Elizabeth Maria Magdalena Kalis	35 23	Bachelor Spinster	None None	<i>Elsjes River</i> <i>Guy's Valley</i>	Banns	<i>Peru</i>

Married in the Wesleyan Chapel at *Elsjes River* aforesaid, after Banns by me, *John Walter*

This Marriage was solemnized between us, *Thomas Brewitt* } *Elizabeth M. K. Kalis* } In the presence of *John Kales*
Rebecca Phillips
Peter Brewitt
Joseph Kales

above of his sister Elizabeth, he wrote his name as Kales. Which just shows that you have to keep an open mind in genealogy! As a matter of interest (as yet unproved), their mother, Elizabeth Rodgers, was said to come from the Sheffield family who made the well known Joseph Rodgers knives.

Wedding register of Elizabeth Maria Magdalena Kalis and Thomas Brewitt, in the Wesleyan Chapel, Elsjes River, Simonstown.

Elizabeth, her father John, sister Rebecca and brother Joseph – spelling their names as **Kalis**, **Kallis** and **Kales**.

However, that doesn't stop the various members of the family that I have approached, asking if I spell



My grandparents, Peter George Walter Kalis, and Catharina Elizabeth Lourens (of Bredasdorp)

my name with one "l" or two. It seems to be quite an issue and everyone has a story why it came about. Of course every since **Jacques Kallis** became so famous, the **Kalis** side is very happy to be associated with him and I gladly claim him as my third cousin! His father was **Henry Walter Stephen Kallis**, his grandfather Kerneels (Cornelius Jacobus Johannes Kallis) and great grandfather Joseph Gabriel Kallis – who was incidentally the earliest record I have of the Kallis spelling, as his sisters and brothers spelt their name Kalis. However, in the marriage register

[Is this Part One with more to follow? - Editor]



TIRELESS CONTRIBUTION: Deputy mayor Ian Nielson congratulates Merry Dewar.

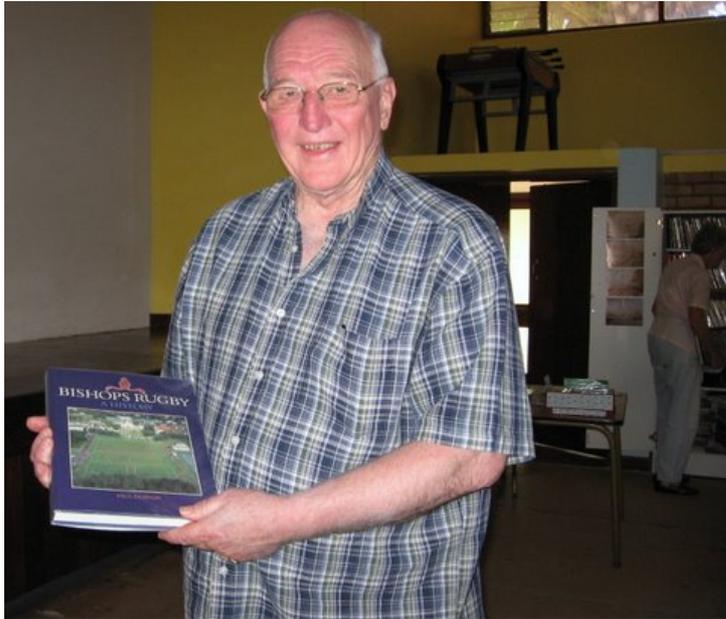
CAPE TOWN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETIES MEMBERS IN THE SPOT LIGHT

Merry Dewar was honoured for her 'tireless' contribution to conservation, historic signage and the Wynberg Walks brochures, as well as her service to the Old Wynberg Village Society. She was also involved in the formation of the Wynberg Improvement District and is the chairperson of the Maynardville Park Action Committee. She is a long standing member of the Black Sash.

People's Post 1 December 2009

SOCIETY MEETINGS THIS QUARTER

JANUARY 2010



Paul Dobson is probably the most knowledgeable person we could have had to talk to us about rugby. Not only has he written a number of comprehensive books on rugby in South Africa, and coached at many levels, he still continues to write articles on rugby for his son's website.

Paul started with an entertaining description of the origins of rugby football and exploded a few myths while he was about it. While it started as a form of soccer, there was actually no game of soccer in England in 1823. Various forms of a game were played as early as the 1st century between China and Japan, and by the 19th Century a number of British schools played their own versions of soccer, using variously "balls" of rags tied together with string, or later at Rugby School, pigs' bladders covered with cowhide for strength.

In 1863 the Football Association was formed in the UK. The Rugby Football Union broke away from this. The story that George Ogilvie, who taught at Bishops (Diocesan College), started rugby in South Africa, is apparently also a myth. The boys played a form of the Winchester game (where Ogilvie had come from), and called it GOG ball – his initials. The first official game of rugby was played at Sea Point in 1862. Rugby was played in the Western Cape, and then at Kimberley. SARFU was established, with laws, in 1889.

Paul Dobson went on to name and give background information on a number of the early top rugby players, such as Benjamin Osler and Alfred Richards.

In 1891 an Anglo/Scot team played against South

Africa and won every game, with Versfeld scoring the only points for SA. An Anglo/Irish team came out in 1896. Selection of the team was very simple – a man was approached to form a team, and he selected his friends! This was the case with a man called Castens, who had a brother who owned a trading store in Pearston who also chose some men, and the team therefore consisted of both Eastern and Western Cape players. The legendary Barry Heatlie who started the OD Union at Bishops and whose wife designed the tie, was chosen as captain, and he chose his club's green jersey for the team to wear – which became the Springbok jersey. And this time South Africa won.

After the Anglo-Boer war, a touring team was selected – for purposes of reconciliation. Hero of this 1903 team was Japie Krige, who was the father of Uys Krige and whose sister Issy married Jan Smuts. Pieter-Dirk Uys is also of this same family. Other anecdotes were of Paul Roos who wouldn't travel on a Sunday because of his religion, Gerald Orpen who proposed the name "Springboks" for the team, Oubaas Markotter, Danie Craven, Oupa Martinus Versfeld, brother of Loftus Versfeld. Paul showed us a precious find he had, which was the 1906 team manager's log book.

He ended with a request for any information people could come up with on the following men: Let's see if any of us can help him.

? Merry, of the Cape Mounted Rifles

Paul Scott, who started the Cape Mounted Rifles

Frank Douglass

? Hamilton

Furley Aston

H C Gordon

Philip Meyer

Many thanks to Paul Dobson for a fascinating talk on the people and stories around rugby.

FEBRUARY 2010



WO Andre Wessels

As a former SA Navy Able Seaman and having had a father who served in the RN for 10 years and SAN for 27 years. I was really looking forward to WO Andre Wessels input on the SAN Museum in Simon's Town. Once the technical gremlin in the laptop/projector connection was overcome, I was not disappointed with the fine and humorous presentation given by Andre.

The SAN Museum has been in a few venues before it's current home in St George's Road, Simon's

Town. This is the old Sail Loft that I remember as the movie venue when I did Basic Training at SAS Simonsberg in 1969. It incorporates the Chapel, which can still be hired for weddings etc. It is open daily from 9.30 till 15.30 except Easter, Christmas Day and the Day of Goodwill. Entrance is by donation and will certainly be on my visiting list next time I'm down in the far south.

Andre told us of the numerous displays (both inside and out) which include displays on a variety of subjects such as the sinking of SAS President Kruger in 1982, mine counter measures, the Marine branch, communication branch, hydrographer's branch and the role of the SANF during WW2. Some hands-on displays include a gunnery display, survival displays and even a display of an Ops Room in a submarine. The transformation that the Navy has undergone since 1994 is also presented.

Andre told us of some of the future projects, which have a total budget of R12mil. They sound very exciting and we hope that the Museum can get financial support for these. Amongst them is the idea of beaching an old Daphne Class Submarine on the beach near the Museum and converting this into a living museum, which would involve cutting a hole in the hull to allow wheelchair access as well as a safe access for numerous little schoolboys who would just love an exhibition such as this.

Our thanks to Andre for giving up his Saturday afternoon to share his enthusiasm for the Museum with us and also his son for dashing through with a laptop that could talk to the projector.

MARCH 2010



A SUCCESS STORY **The C T Family History** **Society Workshops** **By Lois Harley**

Why they were initiated

At our last committee meeting in 2008, we discussed the need for providing some form of training for people who were still at the beginning of their family history research to help them really get going on the right path. As I was giving up the chairmanship of the Society at the next AGM, I tentatively suggested that I was prepared to organize a class at the beginning of the year, before my term ended and possibly this could become an annual event. I thought that I may be able to approach some of our more experienced members to participate as instructors. Derek Pratt, Rector at St. Paul's Church in Rondebosch, offered the use of the hall there and as they had just installed WiFi, we would be able to access the Internet, which would be a big help.

The committee agreed and cheerfully left the mat-

ter in my hands.

The Choice of Curriculum

I started my family history career when I retired in 2003 so I still had quite fresh memories of my initial struggles and false steps. As director of St. John Ambulance in Cape Town I had many years of experience of working with people engaged in developing training material for people at all levels on topics ranging from First Aid through Basic Ambulance skills to community nursing and child care. This is of course quite different from family history but the principles of designing a course remain the same no matter what the subject matter. Although I was initially quite intimidated by beginning to work out what should be in the course I found this background in training invaluable.

Also, Colin Edwards and I had put together several workshops a few years previously on topics that we thought may be of interest to our members. I still had the notes we had used and as I worked I could hear Colin saying "you don't have to put everything in. It's better to have a few good points than hundreds of facts that will all get lost in the fray!" Thank you Colin!

By the time I finished mulling over all this in my mind I had four basic themes:

- Getting Started
- Important sources
- Using the Internet
- Putting it all together

Format and course materials

I decided to run the course for four mornings a week apart from 9.30 to 11.30 with a break for tea half way through the morning. At each session, enough material would be provided for the participants to do some work during the course of the week to ensure that they understood and practiced what was learnt.

Jean Blanckenberg and Lorna White were willing to tackle the "Sources" section, Heather MacAlister had her arm twisted to do the "Internet" session and a fortuitous phone call from Heather Lewis led to her agreeing to undertake the "Putting it all together" session. I put together a package of helpful material and felt confident I could manage the "getting started" bit so we were ready to go.

With the resources of the Society being rather slender, I knew that we could not afford to subsidize the course so I had to price it to ensure we covered the cost of the hire of the hall, the printing of course material and reimbursement to the instructors of their petrol and other expenses as well as being able to provide some refreshments. Having decided on a price and getting consent from the committee, I was ready to roll.

Who would attend

There were some members who expressed and interest in the course so that was an obvious market. I was fairly sure that most of the people who would want to come would be older people who had retired and had time to pursue a hobby that had captured their interest. There would possibly be a few younger people who had already become

hooked into this interest. We were in the Southern Suburbs of Cape Town so in all likelihood they would be largely English-speaking or extremely bilingual. However, they could come from very diverse backgrounds so we would need a bit of knowledge about research in Europe and possibly the east. While this would make more demands on the instructors, it would also make it very interesting and challenging.

My son-in-law offered to lend me his projector for the computer session and Heather Mac agreed to bring a laptop.

We decided to advertise the course on our website and in the press. Lucille also sent notices out to all our members and supporters. I worked out that I would need 15 people to make the class viable at the cost we had decided on. From my St. John days I had learnt that 15 people was the optimum number for one instructor so didn't want to go over that number. I worried that we wouldn't get that number.

The Outcome so far

The course was advertised and within a couple of days all 15 places were booked. The calls kept coming and the waiting list grew longer and longer and I soon realised that several further classes would have to be organized. The administration of booking, receiving funds and answering emails and phone calls became a daily routine.

In the end, we ran 5 full courses attended by 69 people during 2009. In addition I organized a shortened course, taking one morning, for people in Hermanus and 8 attended so the total for the year was 77.

There were a handful of people who booked for each course and in the end neither paid nor pitched. About a 125 people in total made enquiries and expressed interest in attending such a course but often the timing was wrong for them. I found it a bit stressful to keep having to book new classes and keep everyone informed so decided that this year I would make a time table for the full year and slot people in when they made inquiries. This has been published on the website and it has made life much easier for me.

In response to requests for a Saturday class, I have scheduled 2 during the course of the year and designed a computer presentation to facilitate getting through all the material. This seemed to work well at the first course. So far this year 17 people attended the Saturday course, 7 the regular course and 8 came to the Hermanus course – a total of 32 so far. And this means that 109 people altogether have been present at Cape Town Family History courses!

Lorna White and Heather MacAlister weren't always able to present their sections but I learnt so much from them that I have been able to fill in when they can't be there. I'd welcome new faces so please don't stand back if you would be interested in becoming an instructor. We still have nine months left in this year to continue training.

One of the ways of assessing the success of a

course is to look at the assessment forms which each participant is asked to complete anonymously. These have been conscientiously completed by most people. About 90% were completely satisfied with the course they attended, about 5% were satisfied and about 5% found the course did not really meet their needs or were otherwise not happy with the venue or other physical aspects of the course.

Some extremely good suggestions for improvements were made and I'm trying to incorporate these by tweaking the curriculum or changing aspects of the presentation.

Another way of assessment is being able to talk to people who attended and find out what they have done since they did the course. Some people have made phenomenal progress and have done some most interesting research, uncovering new sources of information and more efficient ways of doing things. Some have made contact with family members they haven't spoken to for years and have enjoyed renewing relationships. Others have uncovered relatives they never suspected existed, much to their joy. A few haven't really done very much but are thinking about it. If you haven't let me know how you are getting on, I'd appreciate hearing from you.

The Future

There are still several classes ahead of us this year so check the timetable on the website www.family-history.co.za or on the following pages.

There are some single-interest one day courses scheduled for the last part of the year. Next year we may increase the number of Saturday courses and reduce the four morning courses if the latter do not attract enough attendance.

I also need to work on the packages of course materials to make them look more professional.

I don't think that there will be a lessening of interest in family history but since we started other courses have come into being which is great so we possibly may not have the same demand. The GSSA have now done several courses but these are in Afrikaans and in northern Cape Town and Jako has had some extremely popular courses about the Archives at the Archives which sound well worth while attending. There are still many gaps that need to be closed in transferring knowledge about research and research techniques so I think we all have a lot of work ahead of us. I would like the various interest groups to get together and perhaps set standards for training in the future.

All kinds of interesting possibilities for extending training lie in the future. One of these is the cyber-classroom. As more and more people use skype, it becomes possible to run courses where participants can sit in front of their computers and participate together in a learning experience. But that's for someone more technologically minded than me to develop!

CAPE TOWN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Workshop Timetable 2010

Beginning Your Family History - An Introduction

CodeDate	Time	Venue	Cost
BS2 Sat 31 Jul 2010	9.30 to 17.00	Fish Hoek Library Hall	R110

Workshops on Family History for Beginners

CodeDates	Time	Venue	Cost
BW2Thurs 6, 13, 20, 27 May 2010	9.30 to 11.30	St. Paul's Church Hall, Rondebosch	R150
BW3Thurs 5, 12, 19, 26 Aug 2010	9.30 to 11.30	St. Paul's Church Hall, Rondebosch	R150

Intermediate Workshops on Selected Topics

CodeDate	Time	Venue	Topic	Cost
IW1 Thurs 9 Sep 2010	9.30 to 12.00	St. Paul's Church Hall	Archive Sources for Family History	R50
IW2 Thurs 23 Sep 2010	9.30 to 12.00	St. Paul's Church Hall	It's All on the Internet Now	R50
IW3 Thurs 14 Oct 2010	9.30 to 12.00	St Paul's Church Hall	Building Your Family Tree	R50
IW4 Thurs 28 Oct 2010	9.30 to 12.00	St. Paul's Church Hall	Using Your Digital Camera	R50
IW5 Thurs 11 Nov 2010	9.30 to 12.00	St. Paul's Church Hall	Writing Your Story	R50

Hermanus Workshops

CodeDate	Time	Venue	Topic	Cost
HW2 Wed 21 Apr 2010	9 to 12.30	Hermanus Library	It's All on the Internet	R75
HW3 Wed 15 Sep 2010	9 to 12.30	Hermanus Library	Building Your Family Tree	R75
HW4 Wed 20 Oct 2010	9 to 12.30	Hermanus Library	Writing Your Story	R75

Terms and Conditions

Programme and registration forms are available on request from Lois Harley tel 021 797 6537 or email lharley@bicknet.co.za

No more than 15 people will be booked on each course. Registration form and course fee must be received before the class commences.

The Society reserves the right to cancel a class if insufficient bookings are received or a venue should become unavailable for any reason.

SOMETHING FOR GENEALOGIST TO THINK ABOUT...

We are the chosen. My feeling is that in each family there is one who seems called to find the ancestors. To put flesh on their bones and make them live again. To tell the family story and to feel that somehow those who went before know and approve. To me, doing genealogy is not a cold gathering of facts but, instead, breathing life into all who have gone before. We are the storytellers of the tribe. All tribes have one. We have been called as if it were in our genes. Those who have gone before cry out to us; "Tell our story!" So, we do.

In finding them, we somehow find ourselves. How many graves have I stood before now and cried? I have lost count. How many times have I told my ancestors, "You have a wonderful family; you would be proud of us." How many times have I walked up to a grave and felt somehow there was love there for me? I cannot say.

It goes beyond just documenting the facts. It

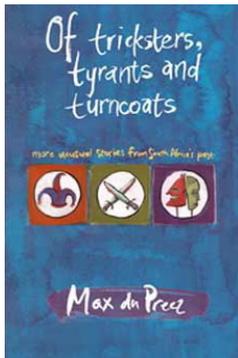
goes to who I am, and why I do the things I do. It goes to seeing a cemetery about to be lost forever to weeds and indifference, and saying - "I can't let this happen". The bones, here are bones of my bone and flesh of my flesh. It goes to doing something about it. It goes to pride in what our ancestors were able to accomplish. How they contributed to what we are today. It goes to respecting their hardships and losses, their never giving up, their resoluteness to go on and build a life to their family. It goes to a deep and immense understanding that they were doing it for us, that we might be born who we are, that we might remember. So we do.

With love and caring and scribing each fact of their existence, because we are them and they are us. I tell the story of my family. It is up to that one called in the next generation, to answer the call and take their place in the long line of family storytellers. That is why I do my family genealogy, and that is what calls those, young and old to step up and put flesh on the bones.

Author unknown.

BOOK REVIEW

Recently I took out of the Wynberg Library two newish books dealing with history in South Africa.

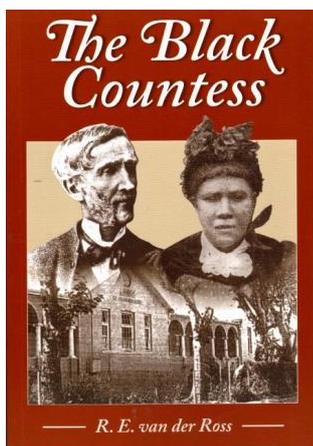


The first was ***Of Tricksters, Tyrants and Turncoats: more unusual stories from South Africa's past*** by Max du Preez (Zebra Press: Cape Town) 2008. Max du Preez is an investigative journalist and he writes this collection of sixteen essays in a journalistic style which

makes it easily readable. However, he also demonstrates his investigative style by the length and thoroughness of his bibliography. But do not for a moment think that this is an academic history book. There is no clutter of footnotes or endnotes but all the way through one feels that every detail is accurate and has been well researched.

This book is a sequel to *Of Warriors, Lovers and Prophets* but here we find stories about our Khoi and San ancestors which didn't appear in our school history books and moving on to delightfully tempting chapter titles such as "Eurotrash Gone Native" (about Herr Jan Bloem, Chief of the Springboks), "Black Samson" (about the Xhosa leader Makhana), "The Darkie Boer" (about William Worthington Jordan), "Cutting of the Head of the Tortoise" (dealing with the Jamieson Raid). It covers early historical episodes as well as more modern ones such as the stealing of Mrs Harry Oppenheimer's diamond jewellery in 1956.

I have not heard many of these stories before and those that I have heard about are so well presented here that they have a freshness which makes them seem new. I am certainly going to try to find *Of Warriors, Lovers and Prophets* to read.



The second book I read was ***The Black Countess: A biography*** by R. E. van der Ross (Ampersand Press: Newlands) 2008. While rector of St Andrew's Steenberg, one of my parishioners was the grand daughter of the coachman of

the Earl of Stamford. Not knowing this story I researched this in *Familia* and Helen Robinson's books on Wynberg. Those who do not know about it, Sir Harry Grey was sent out to the Cape by his family because of his proclivity for relationships with "inappropriate women" and his excessive consumption of alcohol. Of all the places to send him perhaps the "Tavern of the Seas" was the most inappropriate. Not wishing to reveal all the details of story, let me just say that Sir Harry Grey ended up in a relationship with Martha Solomons, a descendent from a slave here in the Cape. After the birth of a son, the local dominee insisted they marry. Soon afterwards, Sir Harry's distant relative, the Earl of Stamford died without children thus leaving the title to Sir Harry and making Martha Solomon, the Countess of Stamford.

I was excited to find complete book on this Martha Solomon/Earl of Stamford event. Unfortunately I was disappointed. Although well-researched where data was available, needless to say there were great swaths of times in Martha's life where there are no records. Prof van der Ross decided to describe possible scenarios in these spots and although he does clearly state that these scenarios are speculative one starts to doubt other parts of the story because of this.

Prof. Van der Ross's style is so very different from Max du Preez's. It seems as if he is chatting to you and so is quite "oral" in its format. It reminded me of the time he was the speaker at our monthly meeting talking off the cuff about the residents of Strawberry Lane, Constantia. He is frequently distracted to go down by-ways and explain things. For many readers this might be useful and delightful but for me it was an irritation.

In the end I got the impression that he was trying to make a short manuscript into book length. What I did find useful and fascinating were the appendices, which are well researched including family trees of both Martha Solomon and the Earl of Stamford family.

This is an interesting book for all Capetonian, who are proud of their heritage, to have on their bookshelves.

Derek Pratt