



**Newsletter of the Johannesburg
Branch of the
Genealogical Society of
South Africa**

July 2016

**Next Meeting
Saturday, 16th July**

Randjes Estate,
Randjeslaagte Road
(Opposite Balfour Park Shopping Centre)

2-30pm

**Neels Coertse
Legal Documentation
And how it should be read**

**Members FREE
Visitors R20**

Someday you'll be an Ancestor too!

SUGGESTED PROGRAM FOR 2016

August: Work shop – mind mapping with Robert Bush

September: Bob Saunders –“Brickwalls”.

October: Stan Close – visit to Jewish Roots in Belarus

November: Xmas party – Strange but True, Margaret Gundry

Our speaker this month is Neels Coertse, editor of the newsletter of West Gauteng Branch.

He last spoke to us on Copyright and its impact on publishing genealogical research.

Neels' CV makes very interesting reading, but as it is over 4 pages in length, I have a brief summary for you.

Cornelius J Coertse was admitted as an Attorney in April 1979 and as an Advocate in April 1990. Since then he has held some interesting posts such as State Prosecutor, Johannesburg dealing with Civil Trials, and appeals in both Johannesburg & Pretoria. Later he practiced as an attorney representing clients in both civil and criminal matters, and as a Notary for matrimonial and property matters. The list goes on to describe not only the articles he has had published and his vast legal library, but the fact that he is well travelled, is an experienced public speaker and takes more than just an interest in a variety of hobbies such as Cabinetry, photography, walking, sculpting , cooking and of course family & genealogical research.



But I would say this must be his proudest moment!!!

From Facebook -

Ek en Annemarie Coertse het die eerste keer oupa en ouma geword met die geboorte van Mispa en Rolf Roux se 2-ling: Charlotte & Nicholas Roux op Vrydag 24 Junie 2016.

Congratulations!!!

“History will tell of a British victory without glory and a Boer defeat without shame”

Join North West Branch on Saturday 6th August at 9.00am at what promises to be a very interesting meeting.



Genealogie Genootskap van SA ■ Noordwes ■

Posbus 1493, Potchefstroom, 2531

Telefoon: 083 644 6180 epos: bloemdirk67@gmail.com

CONCENTRATION CAMP SEMINAR

When: 06 August 2016

Where: Potchefstroom Museum, Sol Plaatjie Lane (Between Nelson Mandela and Wolmarans street).

Cost: R75-00 per person

RSVP: Dirk Bloem: bloemdirk67@gmail.com or

Elmarie Weyers: elmariew@potch.co.za on or before 22 July 2016

Program:

Arrival 08h30 to 09h00: Welcome: (Coffee/Tea)

Seminar:

09h00 - 09h45 (Me. Trudie Venter - Bethulie C/camp)

10h00 - 10h45 (Blackie Swart - Springfontein C/camp)

10h45 - 11h15 (Break)

11h15 - 12h00? (Johan van Zyl - ABO museum - Available Information)

12h00 - 12h30 - Question and answer session.

12h00 Lunch

Departure

BETHULIE CONCENTRATION CAMP

Presenter: Ms. Trudie Venter

My career spanned 40 years in librarianship in provincial, academic and specialist libraries. The great joy and challenge to me was assisting clients with information, and doing research. Creating systems and managing personnel also contributed to my ultimate goal.

After early retirement ten years ago, I found myself wondering how I might keep myself occupied. After numerous questions about "where on earth is Bethulie and does anything ever happen there" I found myself tapping into my desire to help by using my experience to set-up systems to help promote my hometown.

Tourist information, the town and surrounds history, as well as that of its people was collected and collated. Some visitors to the town look for information about their families and forebears, and this is how I was drawn into the fascinating world of genealogy.

My involvement in the attempt to save the town's museum contributed to the collection of information. As a result two books were published: *Bethulie and the Anglo Boer War*, and *Bethulie NG Church 1862-2012*; the third book about everything and more about Bethulie (essentially in encyclopaedic format) should be published towards the end of the year.

PRESENTATION:

BETHULIE: DIE NOODLOTS KAMP/BETHULIE: THE FATEFUL CAMP



In this discussion we will look at the reasons why Emily Hobhouse referred to it as "*that ill-fated camp*", and the researcher Elizabeth van Heyningen called it the "*archetypical 'bad' camp*". The locality, layout, facilities and figures will be discussed. Factors such as bad administration and management, unsympathetic officials and poor medical care contributed to a large extent to the misery that was evident. The battle for survival gained stature in events such as the celebration of Christmas, escapes, spiritual ministry, and participation in sport. Famous and interesting folk

who were involved will be constantly referred to. Attempts to maintain the site and cemetery will be briefly discussed. Six monuments, numerous artworks including a song and a coin have all been created as mementos of the camp.

SPRINGFONTEIN CONCENTRATION CAMP

"The Junction"

Presenter: Blackie De Swardt

Blackie de Swardt: Fulltime farmer and guesthouse owner on the farm *Prior Grange*, 6km outside of Springfontein. His career began as a teacher in 1975 and ten years later he began farming on the family farm that had been part of the *Prior* family and descendants since 1860. The farm has a very close history and connection to the Anglo-Boer war and also has a blockhouse which was restored by Blackie.

Because there was very little information about the involvement of Springfontein during the war, he became actively involved in the collecting of information pertaining to the war from the mid-nineties. This information was released in 2010 in a book entitled as "*963 Days at the Junction - Documented History of Springfontein during the Anglo Boer War.*"

PRESENTATION:

"963 Days at the junction"



A documented history of Springfontein during the Anglo-Boer war 1899-1902

My talk is intended to showcase the book.

[“History will tell of a British victory without glory and of a Boer defeat without shame”]

The presentation will be in English.

OORLOGMUSEUM VAN DIE BOEREREPLIEKE/WAR MUSEUM OF THE BOER REPUBLICS:

Presenter:

Johan van Zyl.

Johan attended school in the town of Bethulie in the southern Free State. He has a MA-History (busy with PhD about Bethulie during the Anglo-Boer war) and 22 years in the museum fraternity. He is Manager Professional Services, War Museum of the Boer Republics.



The Farewell.



Statue of "Agterryer and his horse"

PRESENTATION:

Projects of the War Museum over the past 5 years including the accessibility of information for genealogical research (databases, documents etc. of the War Museum)

How to find the father of an illegitimate child

26 September 2014 by Yvette Hoitink

(Thanks to Len Homber who sent me the article)



In most families, sooner or later you will encounter a child born to an unwed mother. Finding the fathers of these 'illegitimate' children can be difficult, but not necessarily impossible.

I've researched dozens of these cases, both in my own tree and for clients. In four cases, I have been able to prove who the father was. In two other cases, I have developed good theories which I hope to prove through DNA. In the majority of cases, I ended up with a list of possible fathers, but no clear candidates. With the growing popularity of DNA testing and advances in tools for exploring DNA matches, it may be possible to solve these cases in the future.

While working these cases, I developed some strategies that may help you with your own cases too. I will use anonymized examples from my own research to illustrate how you can find out who the father of the illegitimate child was.

Strategy 1: Examine records from around the birth

Many unmarried women tried to hide their pregnancies so a pregnancy may have gone unnoticed in the community until the child was born. At that point, there are several possible records that may have been created:

A birth record may reveal the father. Notes in the margin may show if a man later acknowledged the child as his (which does not mean he was the biological father but he may have been).

A baptismal record may name the father. In the Netherlands, we often don't look for baptismal records after the introduction of the civil registration in 1811, but they can reveal important information since churches often took a firmer stance against children born out of wedlock than the civil authorities.

Church council minutes may record how the mother was censored and perhaps contain interviews with the midwife to see if the mother uttered the name of the father during labour. The church council tried to make the mothers confess the name of the father so he could be admonished too, or censored for adultery if that was the case.

Even if one of these records states the name of the father, this does not prove his paternity as the mother could have been lying or may not have been certain about the identity of the biological father herself. Like all evidence, it must be analysed for reliability and compared to other records.

In one case, I researched a woman who had eight illegitimate children. The informant on all the birth records was the same man. One of the children was born in another town. In that birth record, the man was not only listed as the informant, but also as the father. According to official instructions, clerks were not supposed to record the names of fathers of illegitimate children, but the clerk in the second town ignored that instruction and wrote it down anyway. Further research showed that they were living together the whole time so it is very likely that he was the father of the other children too.

Strategy 2: Find out where the mother was around the time of conception

If the child lived, the pregnancy was probably full-term or close to full-term. This means conception probably took place around nine months before the birth, but to be on the safe side I recommend using a slightly wider range of seven to ten months. Try to find out where the mother was living and working around the time of conception. Possible records to consult:

Population registers (after 1850) and census records

Church membership records, which show when the mother came to live in the town
Newspapers

Strategy 3: Research the men in the mother's life

Try to find out who the men in the mother's life were, especially around the time of conception. Who was she living with? Who was she working for? Who were her neighbours? In one case, I discovered in the population register that the man who later married the mother was already living with her before the child was born.

As sad as it is to say, do not automatically exclude family members as potential fathers. I once found a court case where a stepfather was found guilty of sexual assault of a minor, his 16-year-old stepdaughter. A year after he got out of jail, she had an illegitimate child while still living at home. The stepfather was the informant on the child's birth certificate. This does not prove that he was the father but the circumstances make him a likely candidate. I recommend that any adult (or at least: teenage) man in the mother's life be treated as a candidate to be the father, regardless of whether he was related to the mother or not.

Records that can reveal which men were in the mother's life are:

Population registers (after 1850) and census records which show whole households and show the neighbours

Birth, marriage and death records of the civil registration

Baptismal, marriage and burial records of churches

Tax records which show the neighbours

For each of the men, try to find out where they were in the period seven to ten months before the birth of the baby to see if you can rule any of them out.

Strategy 4: Get to know the mother

To speculate about the situations in which the mother may have fallen pregnant, it is important to try and get to know her. What was she doing for a living? How rich were her parents? How old was she when she fell pregnant? What were her circumstances? A teenage servant girl who worked on a farm would find herself in different situations than a 40-year-old widow of an innkeeper.

For one of my ancestors who had two children out of wedlock, I investigated if she might have been a prostitute. To maximize your chances of finding the father, it is important not to make any assumptions or judgments and keep an open mind to all possibilities.

Strategy 5: Analyse the baby's name

An important clue that the mother may have left you could be the baby's name. Sometimes, unmarried women named the baby after the father, perhaps in kind remembrance or maybe in an attempt to persuade him to take responsibility. Dutch children were usually named after family members, so if the child has a name that does not occur in the mother's family, that can be a clue to the father's identity.

For this strategy, it is important that you know all the people in the mother's family: parents, siblings, aunts, uncles and any close step-relations. If the child is named after one of the maternal grandparents, that explains the name of the child and it does not help to find the father. But if the mother chose a different name, it may well point to the father's identity. This is particularly interesting if the name is unusual and there was a man in the mother's life with that name.

Strategy 6: Understand the community

To understand how your female relative might have found herself pregnant, it is important to understand the community she lived in. A few questions you could ask are:

Were there many women who had illegitimate children?

What ages were most women who got pregnant out of wedlock?

Were there many couples who had their first child within nine months of the marriage? If so, premarital sex may have been common. In some regions and social groups, couples waited until the bride was pregnant to get married, to ensure that she was fertile. It is easy to see how a girl could be abandoned before the marriage.

Were there many migrants in the community? The 'suspect pool' in a bustling merchant town would look very different from that in a sleeping village in the middle of nowhere.

Was prostitution legal and common? During large parts of the history of the Netherlands, prostitution was legal (it is today). Pregnancy was an occupational hazard for these women.

Answering these questions can be difficult. Perhaps someone is doing a one-place-study in the town where she was living in. Genealogists who do one-place-studies often have a good understanding of local traditions. If not, local genealogical societies might be able to help.

Strategy 7: Find out what was going on

Sometimes local events influenced how people behaved, which could result in pregnancy. A good example is the wave of 'liberation children' left behind by allied soldiers in World War II.

In order to understand if local events played a role in the conception, find out what was going on in the town about seven to ten months before the birth. Things to look out for are:

Presence of soldiers, for example an invading army, liberating army, soldiers quartered in houses.

Presence of a carnival or travelling show.

Was there an annual market or fair? This brought in people from several surrounding villages and also would have come with festivities and drinking that may have lowered inhibitions. The mother may have brought a local boy to the fair with her so just because there was an annual fair does not mean that the father had to come from somewhere else.

Was it harvest time? Often, when the harvest was over, the workers celebrated. The father may have been a fellow farm hand.

Criminal behaviour, like rapists, in the neighbourhood.

Local newspapers are a great source of information for these types of events. Many Dutch newspapers can be found at Delpher.nl. Alternatively, annual reports to the government by the municipality or police reports can shed light on what was going on. Magazines or books by local historical societies can also be a great source of information.

Strategy 8: Follow the money

In rare cases, mothers sued the father for child support, for loss of virginity or for breach of promise. These cases can be found in court records.

I once found a 17th century case file before the Court of Gelderland where an unmarried mother sued the father of her child. She details how he seduced her in the garden of the minister for whom she was working as a servant. He did not deny this but brought in a witness who testified that he had also had carnal knowledge of her, casting doubt on her moral character and the paternity of the child. She denied this and produced evidence that the second witness was a first cousin to the father and thus not unbiased. Unfortunately, the verdict has not been preserved but I would say the preponderance of evidence was in her favour. While not all court cases are this informative, they can be helpful to create a list of candidates. In another court case, a poor servant girl sued the rich farmer she was working for, but the rich farmer said she was involved with the hired hand instead. Without additional evidence it is hard to say who spoke the truth: it is understandable that the married farmer would like to shift blame if he was the father, but it is also possible that the mother chose a richer target to sue than a poor hand who could not provide for her or her child.

It is also worth investigating if the material wealth of the mother improved after the birth, indicating that perhaps she was paid off. I've heard several family stories where a poor servant girl is paid off by the rich farmer, who found her a husband to marry and gave them some land or a house. Circumstances that suddenly increase should set off alarm bells that perhaps the biological father may have been rich.

Strategy 9: Research from cradle to grave

If nothing else works, research the entire lives of the mother, child and any potential fathers that you have identified.

Did the potential father ever interact with the mother or the child at a later point? Sometimes fathers remained involved in the children's lives even if they would or could not legally recognize them. Perhaps the candidate father witnessed records involving the child, or acted as godfather to his (grand)children. I have never seen a case in Dutch records where a father mentions an illegitimate child in his will, but that is easy to check too. Don't dismiss their earlier lives either. The candidate father may have been named as the father of other illegitimate children, which gives you an idea about his character.

There could also have been an impediment that prevented the father from acknowledging the child at the time of the birth, for example if he was married and was unable to get a divorce. But if he later finds

himself a widower, it is possible that he would then marry the mother. He would not be able to legitimize the child, as it was born when he was married, so the fact that he does not acknowledge the child does not say anything about him being the biological father. For any man that the mother marries, it is worthwhile to find out if he was in the picture around the time of conception.

Strategy 10: DNA testing

Anybody who wanted to prove the paternity of a child today would turn to DNA. But DNA can even help solve older cases. There are several options.

A) If you have a candidate for the father, you can test specific people to see if they match. There are two options:

Y-DNA testing: Y-DNA inherits from father to son so you can use this kind of test if the illegitimate child is male and has a strict male-line living descendant. You should then find a strict male-line living descendant of the potential father (or his brother or paternal cousin, as long as they share an ancestor in the strict-male line). If both men agree to test, you can compare their results. If the results match, this is good evidence that your theory is correct. If the results do not match, your theory may be flawed, or there may have been a non-paternal event somewhere down the lines in either of the two men that tested. Y-DNA testing will not help you to determine which of two brothers or paternal cousins is the father but it can help narrow the suspect pool.

Autosomal testing: Autosomes are the non-sex chromosomes that get recombined each generation and half of them gets transmitted to a child. After about four generations, there are no guarantees that two descendants will share DNA so this type of test is especially useful if the illegitimate child was just a couple of generations ago. To use autosomal DNA testing to prove the identity of the father, you need one living descendant of the illegitimate child and one living relative of the potential father, who is not also related to the mother. If they share autosomal DNA this is evidence that it is the correct father.

In these cases, I always research the pedigrees of both test subjects and compare them carefully so I am sure that there aren't any other shared ancestors that could have contributed to any shared DNA. I want to make sure that any DNA that they share must have come from the alleged father.

With autosomal testing you want to test the oldest generations that you can, as 50% of the autosomal DNA is lost which each generation.

B) If you do not have a candidate for the father, you want to test descendants to see which people they match. All major DNA testing companies will give you a list of matches: other people who tested with that company and who share DNA with the descendant. If you do not have a candidate for the father, you cannot actively select the people you want to compare with, but you see which persons just happen to match and work from there.

Y-DNA testing: If the illegitimate child is male and you test a strict male descendant, his Y-DNA matches may show several people who share the same surname. This may be the surname of the father too, especially if this matches one of the known men in the mother's life.

Autosomal DNA testing: You want to test the oldest generation of descendants of the illegitimate child (or the illegitimate child him/herself if still alive and willing to test). To eliminate any matches from the mom's side, you also want to test the mother or relatives of the mother who are not also descendants of the father. Any people who match the mother's relatives can be eliminated from the list of matches. For the remaining matches, look for clusters of people that match each other on the same segments: those segments may have come from the unknown father. Then compare trees and see if these people share common ancestors. Since you are depending on the willingness of strangers to share information with you, this can be a long and sometimes frustrating process. But the numbers of people getting tested are growing quickly so there is a great potential for matches out there.

For more information about using DNA testing for genealogical purposes, I refer to Roberta Estes' [DNA Explained blog](#).

Conclusion

Finding the father of an illegitimate child is one of the hardest genealogical puzzles to solve. Often, the identity of the father will remain unknown but in some cases, enough evidence can be found to create a theory or even prove it.

Rarely are these cases solved by applying just one strategy. Developing good candidates for the father is often the result of extensive research into the records of the mother, child and potential father and acquiring detailed knowledge of the community that they lived in. Combining these traditional research methods with DNA testing can help to prove a theory.



About Yvette Hoitink

Yvette Hoitink is a professional genealogist in the Netherlands. She has been doing genealogy for almost 25 years. Her expertise is helping people from across the world find their ancestors in the Netherlands.

I've been back on Google Earth again!



Looking for cemeteries in China – last month was Clean your Ancestors Graves Day.



Interesting - found what looked like a cemetery.



But it wasn't!

Qinghai Golmud Solar Park is a photovoltaic power station located in Golmud, Qinghai Province, China. It is 20.16 MWp, and was completed in 2011 by Longyuan Power. It uses 18.63079 MW of polycrystalline silicon solar cell modules and 1.530144 MW of amorphous silicon thin film modules. The polysilicon modules are by Yingli, and the amorphous ones are from Golden Sun Solar (GS-Solar). The capacity factor is expected to be 0.189.

There are a total of 570 MW of solar parks in Golmud.

No Outspan by Denys Reitz

This is the third book by Denys Reitz.

I have always been fascinated by his story of how they flew over an active volcano in the Belgian Congo. I had never realised that there were active volcanoes so close to home. According to Wikipedia it was last active in 1977.

“The eruption of Mount Nyiragongo started on January 10, 1977 and ended completely in April 1977.”

Elevation less than 3,058 metres (10,033 feet)

Coordinates 1°24'30"S 29°12'0"E 1.40833°S 29.20000°E

Location Democratic Republic of the Congo, Virunga Mountains

Apparently General Smuts and Sir Ernest Oppenheimer were flying up north to view an eruption of Mount Nyiragongo and asked if Denys wanted to accompany them. General Smuts felt that as war between Germany and Britain was now a certainty (it was 1939) they might as well have a final holiday. So they set off on the 17th July 1939.

“..a fiery river of lava pouring down from a 10,00 foot volcano.. a blazing torrent.. destroying everything in its path..”



And here it is on Google earth with the lava flow still visible. In the bottom left corner – Lake Kivu.

So read the book and learn more about this fascinating man. I see there is a new Denys Reitz Trilogy now on sale at the bookshops.

For those of you who are not aware there is a new website just launched by the national archives with a new NAAIRS website at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.za> the same as before but no dot between the national and the archives. Not all the records have been loaded but we have been asked to test drive the site and send them (not here or me but on the web site only) feedback - they have a LONG way to go and personally at the first drive of the site I think the old one still works 1000 times better. Remember these people are web developers and not genealogists and had the same fight for 9 years until ancestry24 just got it right and then they closed the doors - it's up to us to make a change and get it right. Your options, ideas and feedback will be valued for future generations otherwise we are going to lose what works well and end up with years of lost ancestors which they may never get right but let's give them the chance to fix it first. The old site still works thank goodness.

Tour of the restored Johannesburg Art Gallery - 18 July 2016



You are invited to our next tour to the restored JOHANNESBURG ART GALLERY on Monday July 18. Unfortunately, it is on a Monday as on Saturdays there is no staff available and on Mondays museums are closed to the public. However, the curator Ms Antoinette Murdoch arranged a special tour for us and we have the whole building to ourselves from basement to roof top. This beautiful building designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens in 1915 has undergone tremendous restoration recently and the curator, restoration architect and a specialist will take us on this tour.

Your restoration guide, Roel Jansen, will explain what difficulties were encountered and how they were overcome. The restoration architect, Engela White, who was the captain throughout this sometimes stormy cruise will tell us more about the philosophy of restoration.

Book with Janine van der Merwe 082 458 2623 janine@shibbolet.co.za before July 14. R50.00pp. Own transport.

Tshwane Building Heritage

And if you are in Cape Town over the weekend.....

CAPE TOWN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

CAPE TOWN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Saturday 16 July 2016 at St John's Church, Wynberg. 14.15 for 14:30pm

Professor Bill Nasson of Stellenbosch University will give a talk entitled: 'A Greater South Africa and its Great War, 1914-1918' at the Cape Town Family History Society's next meeting. The talk will encompass the role played by South Africans in a global war – from the Western Front to the East Africa campaign – and the repercussions of the Great War on South Africa as a whole. Very pertinent subject matter for July as we remember the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme.

For further information contact David 021 715 5104 davidslingsby@telkomsa.net

or Ann on 021 782 7277 annsmythe@gmail.com

Visitors **R20.00** per person including tea & eats.

Map and website: www.family-history.co.za

L D S Family History Library

OPEN 9 AM- 4 PM TUESDAY THROUGH FRIDAY
SATURDAY 7 AM - 2:30 PM. **Note** – CLOSED ON MONDAYS

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Contributions to newsletter will be gratefully received!

Or – should you wish to be removed from the mailing list...

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