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# Liewe Vriende

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My eerste dag op skool, eintlik maar net speelskool, het my gemoed versteur en aan die einde van daardie dag het ek tot die gevolgtrekking gekom dat ek glad nie tuis voel in *Annette se Speelkring* nie.

Net 'n paar dae tevore het ek my *dummy* in die ruigtes van die leë erf langs my oupa se huis gegooi wat die einde van die taai, onhigiëniese wollerigheid beteken het. Ek was net drie jaar en 'n halfjaar oud en te jonk om so stukkend te wees. Daar is baie goed wat my onthou ontgaan, maar daardie dag in my driejarige lewensbestaan lê kooltjie-rooi in my geheue. Natuurlik stoor ek ander goed ook daar, belangrike goed; soos die keer toe my ouma 'n kalkoen kopafgesny het op 'n houtblok en my neef sy kat se oor afgebyt het, van liefde.

Maar om terug te keer na my eerste dag by Annette en haar speelkring...

Huppelend, stoeiend en giggelend; 'n see van seuntjies in wit kortbroeke en geel hempies en

dogtertjies in geel rokkies, almal baksteenhoogte! Blykbaar het Annette en haar assistent Aunty Mary, 'n ding vir geel en wit gehad. Net jammer my ouma het dit verkeerd verstaan en toe daag ek op: uitgevat in 'n spierwit kortbroek, geel hempie en vlegsels met bypassende geel strikke. Hemele behoed my! My verleentheid was ongekend.

Nog was dit geen einde van my verdriet by die spelerige kring van Annette nie. In daardie selfde jaar, 1977 om presies te wees, sien ek vir King Kong in lewende lywe, in my perifere visie. Dié brul verwoed voor die skooldeur, slaan op sy bors en grom later verder af in Voorstraat, seker op pad na die saaltjie waar die flik *King Kong (1976)* later in die kerksaal vertoon sou word. Min wetend van advertensietegnieke, gryp ek die paar-maande-jonger-as-ek Violetta in my arms na skool om die ongeveer halwe kilometer na my ouma se huis in rekordtyd af te lê. Ek kon King Kong se asem in my nek voel, of dalk was dit Violetta wat

haarself later op my rug bevind en gejaagd asem in en uitgeblaas het.

In die tyd het Danny-boy my hart gesteel, tot groot vermaak van my niggie, 'n volle agt jaar ouer as ek. Ek sal maar sy van verswyg want hierdie outjie het blykbaar noue bande met die beret-draende sanger van die Graaff-Reinet lied gehad. Helaas....*it was not meant to be!* My ouma se blaps met die seuntjie-klere, sou my vir die res van my kleuterskoolloopbaan jaag en so ook vir Daniël, want dié het later liewer sy karretjie en klei met Anthea Naidoo gedeel. Geen wonder ek wou my naam toe na Anthea verander nie!

Aan die einde van daardie jaar het ek die hoofrol in die Kersspel losgeslaan met niemand anders as Daniël in die rol van Josef nie! My niggie wou haar 'n papie lag en *Oh Danny-boy* het vir weke in die huis weerklink. Dié niggie van my is op 34-jarige ouderdom na 'n nieroorplanting oorlede. Na twintig jaar, voel ek hierdie verlies soos gister.

Die sertifikaat, toga en foto's wat nou nog diep in 'n kas gebêre is, is stille getuie dat my speelyd by Annette ook uitgeloop het. 'n Paar jaar gelede het my jongste ewe kordaat die meer as veertigjaar-oue toga aangetrek en homself as regsgeleerde by die kleuterskool voorgedoen. Hy het eerste prys gewen en hy was in sy skik!



Herinneringe is kosbaar en verdien om af en toe van die rakkies van vergetelheid afgehaal en bepeins te word. Selde is daar iemand om te luister. Kinders en kleinkinders lei holderstebolder lewens en vergeet

dat dae weke, maande en later jare word. Tyd knaag aan herinneringe. Dit is die hartseer wat ons telkens met die Mondelinge-oorleweringeprojek beleef. Ek het 'n onbeskryflike waardering vir almal wat hul eerste skooldag met ons gedeel het tydens die vele onderhoude wat ons die afgelope jaar gedoen het. Natuurlik het dit my aan my eerste skooldag herinner en ek moes dit net deel.

Kort na *Annette se Speelkring* moes ek 'n nuwe adres aanleer. Om *Wolseley* te skryf was nie speletjies nie maar gou het ek geleer dat die dorpie in 1803 gestig is en dat dit 'n volle uur geduur het om oor Bainskloof te ry voordat ek my Oupsie sou sien.

Dit was die begin van 'n nuwe avontuur en die inleiding tot 'n nuwe fase in my lewe.....

# Municipal Engineers in Graaff-Reinet During the 19th Century

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**Johannes Haarhoff**

The concept of strong local government first developed in England during the mid-1800s as large urban concentrations suddenly mushroomed around new manufacturing centres during the Industrial Revolution. Untreated water, lack of stormwater drainage, sewerage systems and the accumulation of solid waste in streets and basements gave rise to periodic epidemics that claimed large numbers of the population. Soon the "Great Sanitary Awakening" followed which not only brought better scientific understanding of bacteriology and disease transmission, but also deep organisational reforms that gave the

cities a larger say in Parliament and more powers to collect taxes, draw up legislation, and to enforce new and frequently unpopular sanitary and building regulations.

The profession which became known as the “town engineer” was an inevitable product of the Great Sanitary Awakening. Suddenly the municipalities needed people with the skills to survey, plan, design and build the many municipal projects which we lump today under “service delivery”. The city and town engineers in England, from the 1880s, worked hard to professionalise their occupation by forming a strong institution, holding conferences to share their experiences and learn from one another, setting examinations to register persons with the required skills, etc. By about 1900, the status of the municipal engineer as a specialised profession was firmly established.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The high point of municipal engineering in the UK came in 1948 when the Institution of Municipal Engineers obtained a Royal Charter, allowing registered members to have the designation of a “chartered municipal engineer”.

Similar to the sudden urbanisation of England that followed the Industrial Revolution, South Africa was also rudely awakened from a long agrarian sleep by the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley in 1867 and gold on the Witwatersrand in 1885. Although this happened long after the start of the Industrial Revolution, the consequences were equally disastrous. Large communities sprang up overnight and the unsanitary and often chaotic conditions in these crowded mining towns is well documented. The Graaff-Reinet photographer William Roe reached international fame with the first photographs of the Kimberley diamond fields – photographs that are on display in Graaff-Reinet Museum today – which showed just how frantic and disorderly the conditions were at the time. Although the understanding, and practice, of municipal engineering was more advanced by the time South Africa had its first mining towns, it was a long and arduous process to place South African municipalities on an effective

and sustainable footing. The first conference of municipal engineers in South Africa only took place in Johannesburg in June 1921. It was attended by 16 town engineers while seven apologies were received – one was from the town engineer of Graaff-Reinet. This modest start laid the foundation of a proud record of South Africa having a municipal engineering conference every year since 1921 to this day – with only one cancellation in 1942 due to World War Two.<sup>2</sup>

This paper, given the background as sketched above, presents an overview of municipal engineering in the Cape Colony during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and then addresses Graaff-Reinet's uneasy relationship with its own town engineers.

## **Municipalities AND TOWN ENGINEERS in the Cape Colony**

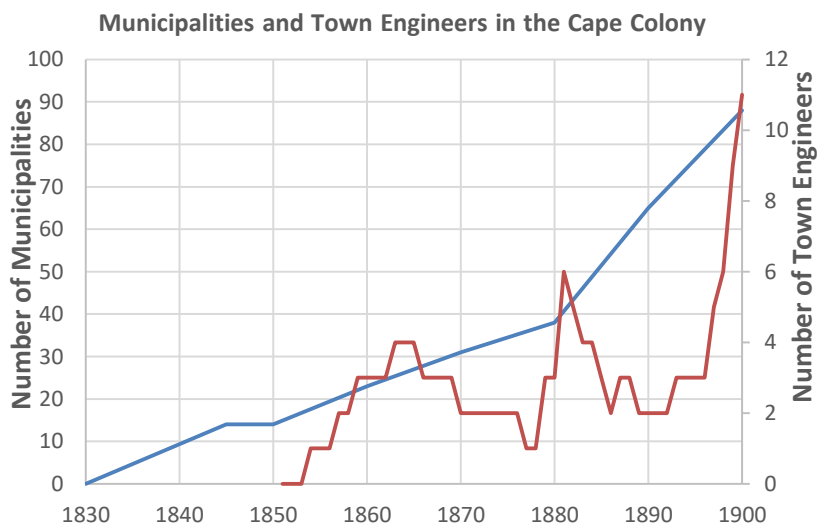
Although Graaff-Reinet is the fourth oldest town in the Cape Colony, it

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<sup>2</sup> Up to 1961, South African municipal engineers were organized as the “South African District” of the mother institution in the UK. From 1961, its place was taken by a newly formed, independent IMESA which continues to be the collective voice of municipal engineering in South Africa to this day.

was only the 14<sup>th</sup> town in the Cape Colony to receive municipal status. Graaff-Reinnetters, known for their streak of fierce independence, saw little need for municipal status – why have another body that could raise taxes and interfere with their everyday lives when the colonial government already paid the salaries of the officials necessary to maintain the town? The colonial government, anxious to see the towns take financial responsibility for their own affairs, turned the screws somewhat in 1839 by no longer paying the salary of the marketmaster. The majority of the local citizens, however, voted with a large majority to rather see the demise of their market than accept municipal status. The colonial screws soon turned even further by withdrawing the convicts from town duties and not paying the water overseer and the superintendent of the town clock, resulting in “*local affairs in utmost confusion and the village in a sadly neglected state*”. By 1845, the Graaff-Reinnetters buckled and had

no choice but to vote in favour of municipal status.



The Cape Colony was fairly quick to adopt the principle of local government, evidenced by the accompanying graph. But these institutions were rendered ineffective by resistance from town dwellers who did not recognise the need and value of municipal improvements, as well as a general lack of finances. The many towns that sprang up during the period could not really afford to employ the required municipal officials. The scant sprinkling of town engineers employed during the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Cape Colony is a good example of this.

Cape Town appointed the first town engineer in 1854 – a very young Woodford Pilkington at the age of 23! After 18 months he left for a better salary in the office of the Colonial Engineer in the Eastern Cape. Pilkington was replaced and Cape Town continued to have a town engineer during the rest of the century. Port Elizabeth was the second town to employ a Mr Grey as town engineer around 1856, who left in 1857 due to lack of support from the Board of Commissioners. Grahamstown was the third in 1859, but the appointed Robert Hoggar left in 1861 as he was not paid enough to support his family. King William’s Town was technically the fourth, when it appointed RS Webb as town clerk in 1861. Webb was assigned the additional duties of town treasurer and town engineer in 1862. He stayed on until 1869, when his salary was reduced and he had to leave. Graaff-Reinet was the fifth when it appointed WL Mackie with the same triple role of town clerk, town treasurer and town engineer in

1863. He left in similar fashion in 1865 after a pay dispute.

The first five appointments as town engineers in the Cape Colony (four from the Eastern Cape) display a clear pattern, reinforced by the rest of the appointments in the years that followed. First, they were not fully supported by the municipal commissioners and reviled by a large part of the public. Second, they were not properly paid and even had their salaries reduced. Third, with the exception of Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, they were employed for specific projects such as building a dam, a city hall, etc., and were dismissed afterwards. As we turn to the specific case of Graaff-Reinet and its three town engineers during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the same pattern played out.

### **The First Engineer - WL Mackie (1863-1865)**

WL Mackie was appointed as the town engineer of Graaff-Reinet in 1863, at the same time also assuming the duties of town clerk and treasurer. Graaff-Reinet was a

deeply divided town at the time, with a mostly English-speaking commercial sector keen for municipal development, contradicted by a mostly Dutch-speaking group of “erfholders” who was strongly opposed to interference by government and therefore not supportive of municipal progress. Unsurprisingly, Mackie’s two years in Graaff-Reinet were quite controversial. Besides being unable to speak Dutch, he was a bachelor in a very conservative town, drawing a comment that “*the presence of a gay bachelor about town, who spent his money freely on liquor, playing cricket and paying attention to the eligible ladies, was viewed unsympathetically by the more conservative, impoverished backstreeters*”. Mackie was barely in town when the municipal board (the erfholders then in the majority) considered dismissing Mackie because of his ignorance of Dutch. They eventually settled on a less drastic move to reduce the salaries of all the municipal officials. Mackie’s salary was reduced from



£200 to £180. Then, in 1864, the same board had to resign before its term ran out due to financial problems. A caretaker board was elected, this time controlled by the commercial sector. Mackie asked the new, more sympathetic, board to raise his salary to what it was before, which was approved. But a few months later, in the next regular election, the erfholders regained control and reduced the salaries of the officials once more. This time, Mackie's salary was cut deeper from £200 to £130 which he would not accept. Mackie *"refused to go and the board proceeded to eject him from office under protest"* in June 1865 – so ending the unpleasant tenure of Graaff-Reinet's first town engineer. It is not known where Mackie came from before his sojourn in Graaff-Reinet, nor where he went thereafter.

In an ironic twist, Mackie is the only person from that turbulent era whose name survived into the 21<sup>st</sup> century through his association with "Mackie's Pit", a name still recognised by most Graaff-

Reineters. To appreciate his contribution to the town, one has to be aware of the poor state of water supply to the town during his tenure as town engineer. At that time the town was served by two poorly built earthen dams just upstream of the town, with two furrows leading the water into town where the public had to collect water by hand from the closest furrow. Even if the system was working at its best, the water was turbid after flowing through the earthen furrows. Moreover, the water was polluted as some also washed their dirty linen in the furrows. In addition to the furrows, a few "branddamme" were built for fire-fighting emergencies. The branddamme were a continuous bone of contention, accumulating filth and silt, polluted by unscrupulous individuals, drunk from by animals, and a public nuisance when they had to be cleaned out every year or two. Matters, however, became even worse when floods came down the Broederstroom and the Sundays River. The earthen dams collapsed

and the water furrows were washed away or damaged. This left the town without a fresh water supply for days or even weeks on end until the flood subsided and the necessary repairs were frantically made. The public now had to turn to the “branddamme” for their water supply – a considerable distance away for most, but of repulsive quality. Rainwater tanks, private wells and a public well on Church Square offered limited relief during water supply interruptions.

Mackie realised that the answer was to rather get the water from a well or fountain which would stay clear during floods, and to construct a proper culvert or lined furrow which would not be washed away easily. He proceeded to dig a pit in a shingle bed near the point where the Pienaars River joined the Sundays River, where he found that clear water percolated into the well. Again, Mackie ran foul of the erfholders, who feared that abstraction of water from the pit would diminish the natural flow in the Sundays River, thereby putting

their existing supply from the downstream earthen dams at risk. Furthermore, the dire financial position of the municipality also put a lid on building the protected furrow to bring the water to town, and Mackie left the town soon afterwards. Although Mackie never saw his plan come to fruition, he planted a seed of hope for an improved water system and so rightly earned the honour of having the eventual water source, built 16 years later, named after him.

For the next few years, the water system remained as it was. But during November and December 1874 the system was almost totally destroyed by heavy floods. Agitation for improvements flared up again and in 1875 the town obtained parliamentary permission to borrow the necessary funds and detailed proposals were formulated for developing Mackie’s Pit. The final step in the process was to get public approval at a meeting of ratepayers, but here the project stumbled as it was voted down. The town council kept the idea alive by calling on the

esteemed Government Hydraulic Engineer John Gamble for advice. After considering all the alternatives, Gamble strongly recommended Mackie's Pit as the best option. On the strength of Gamble's reputation, and the fact that the commercial sector (by now known as the "water party") had gained control of the town council, the council approved his proposal early in 1881. It was time for Graaff-Reinet to employ its second town engineer.

### **The Second Engineer - Humphrey Henschman (1881-1884)**

In March 1881, Humphrey Henschman was appointed for the primary purpose of putting Mackie's earlier proposals into practice. Henschman trained as engineer in England during the mid-1860s. After completing his pupilage, he worked on railway projects in Germany, Hungary and the United States in the years 1869 to 1872. In the four years before he was appointed in Graaff-Reinet, Henschman was employed by the Cape Government Railways. Henschman's salary was £450 a year

plus £50 for a horse. This was the highest town engineer's salary in the Cape Colony - £50 more than that earned by the municipal engineer in Cape Town.

Municipal engineers continued to be a rarity in South Africa. After the appointment of Henschman, there were still only four engineers employed by municipalities in the Cape Colony, despite the number of municipalities growing to almost 40. The low number of engineers was not due to a scarcity of candidates. Henschman's job application for Graaff-Reinet was one of six. For the other calls for town engineer in the Cape Colony during the same year, Cape Town received 116 applications, Port Elizabeth 94 and King William's Town nine.

Running into the same animosity between erfholders and the commercial sector as his predecessor Mackie, Henschman was not popular with a large part of the town population. The first proposal for his dismissal was made only seven months after appointment,

which was narrowly defeated by eight votes to six. Henschman became the target of abuse, insults and humiliation as the opponents of the water supply scheme did all they could to stop the scheme. Henschman, however, doggedly stuck to his task and systematically completed the different parts of the water supply scheme; a structure to protect Mackie's Pit, a culvert and a permanent furrow to lead the water to town, and a pump house and reservoir at the northern end of Cradock Street where some water could be elevated to serve the higher parts around the current business centre of town. When the planned commissioning date was announced, Henschman was threatened by some members of the public not to proceed, but he had no choice, of course. On Monday 31 March 1884, during the commissioning of the scheme, one of the spectators, an erfholder, grabbed Henschman and dunked him in the water tank before the pump house. This barbaric act was widely condemned and after Henschman laid

a charge, the accused was found guilty in court and fined £400. After the conclusion of the court case, Henschman resigned and left in October 1884 to manage a railway in Thailand for a while, before returning to South Africa to take charge of the drawing office at the Port Elizabeth harbour.

Although Henschman is probably mostly considered as a somewhat tragic victim of circumstance, he should also be remembered as an able, efficient engineering professional. A contemporary observer noted in January 1883, after Henschman had been busy in Graaff-Reinet for a year, that he was *"... happy to say that the present holder of this highly important office possesses both ability and energy, as well as courtesy, in the discharge of his very onerous duties; and the council cannot but appreciate this gentleman's efficient services."* On 18 April 1883 the water project was inspected by the Colonial Irrigation Committee and the Government Hydraulic Engineer and they *"...highly complimented [Henschman]*

for his success in a difficult undertaking...” and for “...his skill in getting so far through a very heavy piece of work...”. By June 1883 Henschman was busy building the aquaduct into town and, according to the *Graaff-Reinet Herald*, the work progressed with “...vigour and rapidity...” and “...the progress made with the work has caused general astonishment and reflects great credit on Mr Henschman...”. The newspaper foresaw that other important projects would be tackled by Henschman after completion of the water scheme, such as the long-awaited repair and improvement of the streets in town – a wish that was not to be fulfilled.



Dignitaries at the partially completed water system of Graaff-Reinet, probably taken during

the visit of the Irrigation Committee on 18 April 1883. Front row sitting: 1. De Smit 2. Bisset 3. Henwood 4. Alston 5. Humphrey Henschman (Town Engineer) 6. De Graaf (Town Clerk). Single man standing alone in front right: Tom Auret (councillor east). First row standing: 1. CE Geard (councillor east) 2. Carel P Liebenberg (councillor west, later Mayor 1907) 3. John G Gamble (Government Hydraulic Engineer) 4. Anthony Berrangé (Magistrate) 5. FS Tilbrook 6. Alfred Essex 7. W Gregorowski (councillor east) 8. Street keeper “Trippens”. Second row standing: 1. Frans Weitsz (councillor west) 2. JCS Haarhoff 3. DJ van Ryneveld (Mayor, councillor east) 4. Unknown 5. William H Rabone 6. (partly obscured) Unknown. Far back: 1. Unknown 2. Unknown 3. Unknown 4. Henry Sandford (GR Advertiser editor). [The councillors representing the area east of Bourke Street were supportive of the water system; those west of Bourke Street against.]

### The Third Engineer - James Peter McMillan (1901-1903)

In 1900 (shortly after the start of the South African War) the need to further improve Graaff-Reinet’s water supply prompted a decision to appoint a third town engineer. By now, there were 88 municipalities in the Cape Colony, of which 11 had town or city engineers. James Peter McMillan was appointed to the position at the beginning of 1901. McMillan, born in 1867, trained as engineer in Scotland from 1863 to

1867. After some initial work on structures and railways, he worked on a new water treatment plant for Glasgow until 1896. He then moved to South Africa to erect the pumping plant at Van Stadens River Gorge near Port Elizabeth. In 1899 he returned to Scotland for two years before being appointed at Graaff-Reinet in 1901.

By the end of 1900, the city fathers of Graaff-Reinet probably shared the common expectation that the South African War would soon be over, and that they could embark on further infrastructural improvements to the town thereafter. The unforeseen continuation of the War to middle 1902, however, prevented the town from obtaining final approval and securing the finances for the planned improvements. Although McMillan could not work on what he was originally employed for, he certainly had enough to do. The total population of Graaff-Reinet before the war is estimated to have been 8000 people at most. But when martial law was imposed, many farmers and their workers moved

from the farms to town, as they were not allowed to have weapons, ammunition or more than a week's supply of food. Their animals could be commandeered by either the British or Boer forces, while the movement of people and products in and out of town was closely monitored and restricted. As a result, an estimated 2000 farm workers flocked to town, while the Coldstream Guards posted another 2000 soldiers to Graaff-Reinet, along with their horses and draught animals. For a town that was severely tested by a poor water supply before the war, the extra water demand pushed the water system to the limit. By the middle of 1901, six months after McMillan and the Coldstream Guards arrived in town, McMillan had plans ready to increase the water supply by digging two more wells near Mackie's Pit, by installing a steam pump to improve the yield of the town well and to provide pipes to lead water directly to residential homes to overcome the large water losses from the earthen furrows and leaking sluice

gates.<sup>3</sup> These plans went as far as asking for tenders in the local newspaper, but, at the final step of approval, was once more voted down by the residents.

During September 1901, a “*record flood*” came down the river to inflict serious damage to the earthen dams, furrows and canals. The resulting water crisis was so bad that the Coldstream Guards made 10 military men, commanded by a Captain Perreira, available to assist the municipality with the repairs. This was not the only water-related incident – it was noted that water problems were raised at almost every meeting of the town council at the time. The many military animals added to the already significant dust problem and the municipality had to run a water cart to suppress the dust. In order to curtail the dust problem and to save some of the water from Mackie’s Pit, the municipality requested the military to water their animals directly from the river south of town, without

bringing them into town – a request that the military refused to meet. Another example of the somewhat strained relationship between the military and the civilian population, was the military prohibition of washing clothes in the Sundays River south of town, on the flimsy grounds that it would allow citizens to “escape” and that it would pollute the water.<sup>4</sup>

These conditions continued until the end of the war on 31 May 1902, when the Coldstream Guards left town. The economic downturn after the war, coupled with the resistance from the residents to spend public money, did not allow McMillan to start with the improvements anticipated at the time of his appointment 18 months earlier. The town council was forced to terminate his employment in 1903. Further information of McMillan is scanty – we only know that he worked in the Public Works Department in Sydney, Australia from 1908 to 1915 and that he

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<sup>3</sup> It was suspected that many erfholders deliberately allowed the sluice gates to leak to get more water than they should.

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<sup>4</sup> The two main military camps were on Magazine Hill and opposite the old hospital in Stockenström Street, where the pollution would not have affected the encamped soldiers.

continued to live in New South Wales at least up to 1923.

## The Situation Since

Graaff-Reinet continued for another 17 years without a town engineer. In 1920, it appointed Albert Herbert Waller, previously town engineer of Bulawayo, to become its first permanent town engineer, a position he held until 1925.<sup>5</sup> At this time, the rapid industrial development of South Africa and the explosive growth of its towns and cities made the appointment of qualified engineering staff a norm at all municipalities.

Which fruits are left of the labours of Mackie and Henschman? When the Nqweba Dam was built in the 1920's, the water from Mackie's pit was led by a pipe to the dam wall, where special provision was made to accommodate the pipe through the dam wall – in other words, the old system was considered worthy of preservation. Today, this pipe continues to bring clear water to the

upper end of Cradock Street, then by pipe across the property of Huis van der Graaff to surface in a furrow in Stockenström Street, from where, the water crosses the road to discharge into the small lined pond just inside the perimeter of the Botanical Sports Grounds. The pond feeds the furrow running down the western side of Stockenström Street which turns west into Park Street to eventually serve the Sports Grounds, the schools and a few private owners.

The typical lifetime of water engineering infrastructure is roughly 50 years. The water system, conceived by Mackie in 1864 and constructed by Henschman in 1884, is still running uninterrupted after 134 years. Moreover, the section upstream of the present Nqweba dam wall was covered by water and silt when the dam started to fill up in the late 1920's – those elements were therefore not subject to any maintenance or repairs whatsoever for about 90 years! The first Graaff-Reinet water system is indeed a remarkable part of Graaff-Reinet's,

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<sup>5</sup> It was Waller who tendered an apology for not attending the 1921 conference of municipal engineers in Johannesburg mentioned earlier.



and indeed South Africa's, engineering heritage.

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# Op die Spoor van die Springbok – Springbokjag in Graaff-Reinet

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Toe die eerste ontdekkingreisigers voet aan die suidpunt van Afrika gesit het, het die jag van wild 'n nuwe karakter gekry wat dramaties verander het met die

daaropvolgende koms van die Nederlanders in die 16de eeu.

Vuurwapens het die tradisionele metodes van jag soos die gebruik van die pyl en boog en spoorsny, vervang om plek te maak vir vuurwapens wat aanvanklik aangewend is om mense en gewasse teen wilde dier te beskerm. Namate die *Vryburgers* die binneland bevolk het, het die jag van wild 'n winsgewende bedryf geword en is daar veral gefokus op die jag van grootwild soos olifante vir ivoor.

Reise na die binneland het toegeneem en verskeie beskrywings van die landskap is aangeteken. Waar die Karoovlaktes in die omgewing van die Sondagsrivier



C. 1870: Ivoorverkope in Caledonstraat, Graaff-Reinet.

'n Platform-skaal is in die sygaardjie gebou waar die voormalige Midland Apteek voorheen geleë was. Die skaal was oorspronklik olyfgroen, donkerrooi en goud. Die skaal wat aanvanklik gebruik is om ivoor en wol te weeg, is tans by Urquharhuis te sien.

begin het, is die grond met harde gras en onkruid bedek met hier en daar klein groen graspolletjies (Le Valliant, 1790). In hierdie omgewing het Le Valliant 'n reuse trop springbokke wat maklik uit tot 50 000 bestaan het, waargeneem. Die voorkoms van wild het egter uitgedun namate hy die westelike deel van die Camdeboo verlaat het en slegs 'n paar gemsbokke het sporadies voorgekom.

Barrow (1801) beskryf die grondoppervlak van die Camdeboo as 'kaal', maar noem dat wild oorvloedig was en dat dit klein viervoetige diere soos meerkatte, ratels asook tarentale ingesluit het. Plaashuise en mense het verspreid voorgekom, wat oorbeweiding deur skape en ander vee beperk het. Twee jaar later bevind hy dat wildebees en die rooi hartebees asook springbok oorvloedig was vanaf Pearston in die ooste tot by Aberdeen in die weste. Springbokke het in groot getalle van tot 15 000 voorgekom in streke soos die Sneeu-berg-area veral tydens migrasie. Andries Stockenström het in 1808 opgemerk dat "*immediately*

*upon leaving the village (Graaff-Reinet), we entered into flocks of countless springbucks."*

In April 1812 het Burchell ook talle springboktroppe teëgekom alhoewel hy 'n maand vantevore geen springbokke waargeneem het nie. Hy skryf dit toe aan die manier waarop springboktroppe deur die landskap migreer volgens die seisoen van die jaar en hul soeke na weiding. Daar is dus na hulle as *trekbokke* verwys in vergelyking met die *houbokke* wat nie migreer het nie.

Reeds jare lank vertrou met die jag wat sy ontstaan in die Britse jagkultuur van Indië in die 1700's gehad het, het baie Britte hierdie kultuurtradisie voorgesit met hul aankoms in Suid-Afrika tydens die Tweede Britse Besetting van die kolonie in 1806. Waar die jag aanvanklik slegs op roofdiere gekonsentreer het en veel later, as 'n manier om 'n inkomste te genereer, het die koms van die 1820 Britse Setlaars nuwe betekenis aan die term grootwildjag gegee aangesien hulle 'n bestaan maak

het deur te jag en handel te dryf. Baie Setlaars moes noodgedwonge 'n beroep as jagter aanvaar, aangesien sommige van hulle se vooruitsigte om 'n goeie lewensbestaan te maak, maar beroerd daar uitgesien het.

Geleidelik egter, het die fokus van grootwildjag verskuif omdat hierdie diere soos die olifant en wildebees, as gevaarlik beskou is en boonop tot sekere ontoeganklike geografiese areas beperk was. Dit is dus voor die handliggend dat 'n oorvloed springbokke in die Graaff-Reinetse omgewing, die fokus en belangstelling van die minder-toegewyde jagter sou word.

Vir die grootste gedeelte van die 1850's is springbokke egter gejag omdat dit as 'n bron van voedsel beskou is. Die karkasse was van goeie gehalte en alhoewel dit onder moeilike omstandighede vervoer is, is niks agtergelaat nie.

Die Graaff-Reinet Buck-Hounds Club is in 1860 gestig en die jag het in 'n gewilde sosiale byeenkoms ontaard



*"Off On a Little Shoot" –  
William Roe Versameling, Graaff-Reinet Museum*

waar mans hulself in kommando's georganiseer het om springbokke te jag en om daarna, oordadige maaltye en die geselskap van die dames te geniet. Die stigting van die klub is luidkeels in die Graaff-Reinet Herald aangekondig. Tydens die klub se eerste byeenkoms, was al die lede in fluweeljasse, jokiepette, koordfluweelbroeke en kapstewels geklee. Ten spyte van hierdie gepaste drag, het die springbok hulle egter ontwyk en moes hulle maar noodgewonge met 'n steenbokkie tevrede wees. Steenbok het egter die jagters, hul perde en honde opdraande gegee, soos daar in die Graaff-Reinet Herald berig is (April 1860).

Die daaropvolgende veranderinge in ekonomiese omstandighede in Graaff-Reinet kondig ook veranderinge in die manier waarop springbok beskou is, aan. Springbokvleis het deel van die stapelvoedsel van inwoner en plaasboer geword en in plaas van vermaak, het wildsvleis 'n belangrike bron van proteïene geword. In Aberdeen byvoorbeeld, is die springbok beskou as 'n laaste uitweg wanneer geen ander vleis beskikbaar is nie. Tog het die Graaff-Reinettters voortgegaan om "good old Queen Victoria's birthday" met 'n jaarlikse springbokjag op die plaas Wellwood te vier. Die voorreg om 'n uitnodiging na hierdie jag te ontvang, was hoog op die prioriteitslys van elke inwoner aangesien dit 'n baie belangrike gebeurtenis op die jaarlikse kalender was. Tydens een van hierdie geleenthede is tot sewe en veertig springbokke geskiet en die ongelukkiges wat ooie geskiet het, is beboet.

### *THE HEART OF THE HUNTER*

A strange drumming noise was approaching from behind the ridge as if a great army were beating a retreat there. While we watched and listened, the fine dust rose up swiftly to flicker like a sheet of flame over the ridge. Then a buck appeared, magnified on the skyline, the evening light in its hair. Others appeared to the left and the right of it until a quarter mile of ridge was covered with graceful shapes and, as quickly, was uncovered again, for they paused only long enough to make sure the pan was empty before plunging down its sides. The moment their nimble feet found the flourished floor, they danced with joy.

Behind them came vast cohorts of glittering Springbok. They poured over the ridge like a summer flood over a cliff, until the floor of the pan was covered with them, their delicate horned heads packed tight. When the last buck was safely done from the ridge, the mysterious urge which had set them running left them. Suddenly the whole of the great assembly halted and stood to attention as if drilled for it. There were now, I guessed, perhaps forty thousand buck below us. Dabé and I could not suppress a grin at the experienced old ostrich, who looked in idiotic amazement at such excess of unexpected company. They stood there for perhaps fifteen minutes, moving very little, their fine heads held and noses continually sniffing the air. Yet still as they were, the electricity of excitement in them crackled in the air over the pan. The old ostrich was so affected by it that he became restless on his bare feet, like a little boy who cannot keep still in church, and even Dabé fell under the spell of the charged singleness of mind given off by that immense assembly. He began by lifting his own grey head and sniffing repeatedly at the air.

The last beam of sun came through the clouds, holding the buck like actors in the limelight of a great theatre.

- Laurens van der Post, 1961



C. 1800s: Na die Springbokjag  
William Roe Versameling, Graaff-Reinet Museum

Tydens 'n tipiese springbokjag word springbokke deur agterryers in die rigting van die jagters aangejaag. In sommige gevalle lê hulle versteek in vlak slote met slegs hul koppe en geweerlope sigbaar. Ongelukkig word die dier eers van die jagter se teenwoordigheid bewus wanneer dit heeltemal te laat is! 'n Tipiese jag het gewoonlik in die wintermaande plaasgevind nog voor sonsopkoms. Die jagters soos in meegaande foto, is warm geklee om hulle teen die ysige koue van 'n wintersoggend in die Karoo te beskerm. Vergete is die dae van koordfluweelbroeke en kapstewels.

Teen die middel van die 1880's is baie van die grondgebied rondom

Graaff-Reinet begrens. Die jag van springbokke is dus hoofsaaklik beoefen deur die eienaars op wie se grond springbokke voorgekom het, wat op hulle beurt graag familie en vriende uitgenooi het om aan die jag deel te neem. Afkamping en die daaropvolgende voorkoms van krale van veral volstruise, het die voorkoms van springbokgetalle drasties beïnvloed en het dit mettertyd afgeneem. Dit het ook die einde van die professionele jagter beteken.

John Priest, plaaseienaar verklaar:

*Little did I think that they were going to rake up the whole of the country to bring them into my ground and destroy the game that I have been for some years preserving at great trouble and expense. I say destroy, for it was nothing but wanton destruction. I believe that there were more bucks rode to death than were shot; it was simple butchery not sport.... Since leaving home I have heard that the above grand hunting party slaughtered about 150 springboks. Taking each buck at 45lbs, that represents a weight of of 2,600lbs, which is my loss. If*

*things are to go on in that way,  
how long shall we be able to have  
any games left in our country.*

- *Graaff-Reinet Herald, 09 June 1883*

Jag sou later deel van die kultuurtradisie van Graaff-Reinet word. Teen 1890 het Springbokjag deelnemers van sover as Port Elizabeth getrek. Baie ander boere het die ambisie gekoester om in die jagsukses van plase soos Wellwood, Shirlands en Klipfontein te deel en gevolglik het 'n nuwe generasie ontstaan wat in hulle voetspore sou volg soos Wallacedale, Roodeberg, Schietfontein en Putfontein.

Wildskaarste sou later aanleiding gee tot 'n beter filosofie, dié van wildbewaring, 'n taak wat alreeds in die 1890s met die ontstaan van wildreservate 'n aanvang sou neem.

Vandag word die wild, die jag en jagter baie beter gereguleer na aanleiding van lesse geleer uit die verlede.

Geneem uit:

Graaff-Reinet Herald. Graaff-Reinet Museum Archival Repository

Roche, C. (2002). *'Fighting their battles o'er again': the springbok Hunt in Graaff-Reinet, 1860 – 1908.* ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY (NOVEMBER 2003), pp. 86-108

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## DID YOU KNOW...

- \* The carpet currently on display in the big dining hall of Reinet House was made in Templeton Scotland and weighs an incredible 900 lbs. (408kg). This carpet covered the floor of the large reception hall of the governor of the Reserve Bank's residence in Pretoria until 1966, when all the curtains and carpets were replaced. It was then transported by train to Graaff-Reinet and became the property of the Biggs Family who farmed on Vrede. It was donated to the museum in 1979.

- \* An Instrument recently donated to the museum by Mr Brian Bunt as a rifle inspection tool, turned out to be a **boroscope**.

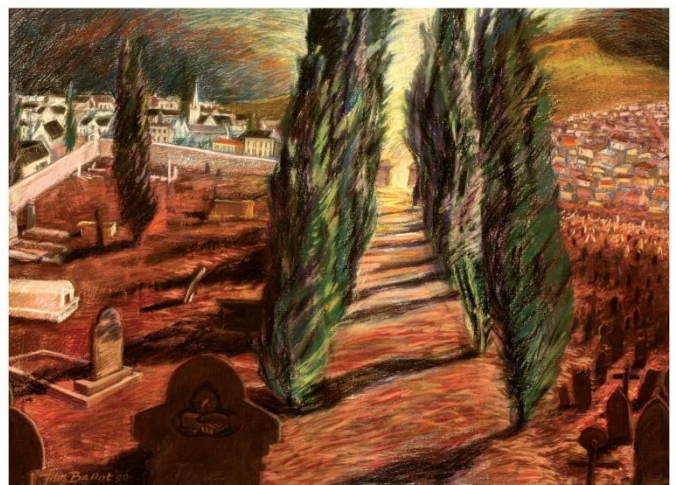


Made by the Royal Small Arms Factory Enfield and stamped with the code "EFD", the tool was designed to examine the barrel of a rifle to ensure that it was clean. This little instrument dates back to World War 1.

- \* A Kroonvale Rate Payers Association was established on 23 February 1961, consisting of 22 members. At their first meeting, P Hector was elected as secretary and W Smith as chairperson. They also decided that a meeting of the association would take place on the last Monday of every month at the home of Mr Isaacs who had to ensure the availability of adequate

lighting. The first item of discussion on the agenda was the keeping of livestock. They resolved that a letter be written to the town council to request permission for the residents to keep two to ten sheep or goats and a maximum of two cows. Unfortunately the council decided not to allow "Coloureds" to have their own kraal and that a kraal, and keeping of livestock, could only be considered after their homes were properly assessed. The Rate Payers decided to abide with the decision of council.

- \* The South African Artist Titia Ballot painted a scene from the Cradock Street cemetery titled *Good Friday in Graaff-Reinet* (1990).



It forms part of a set of artworks known as *Time for Anger*. It depicts the divide between the horseshoe community and Umasizakhe during the Apartheid period. It is currently in the art collection of The Rupert Foundation.

## News & Announcements

On 01 April 2018, the Graaff-Reinet Museum welcomed four new departmental appointments: Ms Denise van Wyk as Chief Auxiliary Service Officer / Deputy Head of the Museum, Ms Sinethemba Citwa as Auxiliary Service Officer, Mr Baphiwe Ngandi as Administrative Assistant, Mr Zennevin Isaaks as General Assistant and as Board of Trustee appointment, Mr Curtis Mitchell as intern of The Digital Archive Project. Congratulations on your appointment colleagues, we look forward to a long and fruitful working relationship.

The Annual General Meeting of The Graaff-Reinet Museum will take

place on Friday, 08 June at 12h00 at The Old Library. Miss Sarah Cromhout of the Herding Academy will be our guest speaker.

## Mediation, Contemplation and Speculation

"If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance."

—George Bernard Shaw