



Our speaker was the renowned historian and author, Dr Elizabeth van Heyningen (*photo left*). She taught in the Department of Historical Studies at the University of Cape Town for many years. Her main research interests are the history of Cape Town, the social history of medicine and the history of colonial women. Previous publications include a two-volume social history of Cape Town (with N. Worden and V. Bickford-Smith) and a history of the Cape medical profession in the nineteenth century (with H. Deacon and H. Phillips). She was awarded the University of Cape Town's Meritorious Prize for her two volumes on the social history of Cape Town.

The subject of her talk was the new book which she co-authored with Con de Wet and Chris van der Merwe, entitled "Selections from the Letters of President M.T. Steyn, 1904-1910".

The Powerpoint presentation was subtitled "A tale of courage and obstinacy". Dr van Heyningen covered Marthinus Steyn's early career where he qualified overseas as an advocate and later met and married Rachel Isabella Fraser a.k.a. Tibbie. They had five children and in 1897 bought the farm Onze Rust, south of Bloemfontein. He became President of the Orange Free State in 1895.

Although he was against war breaking out with Britain, when it was declared (by the ZAR) in October 1899 he gave himself over to the war effort body and soul. After Paul Kruger left the Transvaal for refuge in Europe, Steyn became the most significant political leader among the people in both Boer republics.

On various occasions he "stiffened the sinews" of those Transvaalers who wished to surrender and end the war. Even at Vereniging he was opposed to any peace talks, even though he nightly prayed for peace! Unfortunately his ill health prevented him from taking part in the discussions. It is speculated that had he been present at the discussions, the course of history might have been very different.

He left for Europe in 1902 in order to recover from his serious illness. He was so ill that he needed both hands to write his signature. However, by 1904 he was writing letters to Merriman, Smuts, Fischer, Hertzog and Malan, dispensing a great deal of sagacity and good sense to his correspondents.

He took part in the National Convention in 1907. His plea for equal treatment of Dutch and English in schools and government was appreciated by other delegates, including his old "enemy" Leander Starr Jameson. His participation there was probably the main highlight of his career.

Owing to the deep respect in which he was held by most people, he would have been virtually certain of becoming the first Prime Minister of the Union in 1910, had his health been satisfactory. However, recurring poor health took him back to his farm. He was very involved with the building of the National Women's monument. This was completed by 1913.

He died at Onze Rust on the 28th November 1916 and is buried at the foot of the Women's monument. His widow Tibbie was buried with him after her death in 1955.



Saturday 10 March 2018 , 9:00 onwards

Quite a few members drove to Stellenbosch to attend a genealogical exhibition, at which a number of members displayed banners and archival material of their recent family history research, after which they took part in a tour of the Theological Seminary archives and museum (*photo right*). This seminary was opened in 1859 and is still training theological students.

Dr Andrew Kok, the manager of the NG Church archive services, presented certificates to a variety of persons, including our members such as Paul le Roux, David de Klerk, Mariana Olivier, Gerhard Geldenhuys and Isak Bosman.



At left is a photo of all the attendees being honoured for their work in the field of genealogy and family research.

The photos below show some of the exhibition tables situated on the ground floor of the seminary.



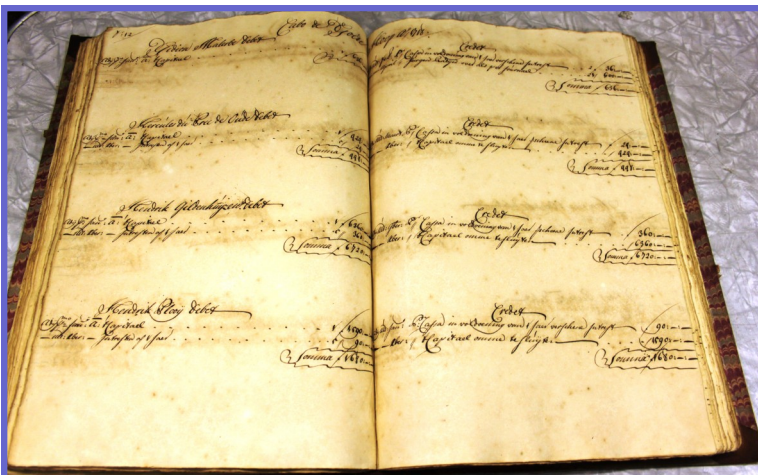
Saturday 10 March 2018, 9:00 onwards

On the tour of the archives and the museum, we were taken into two separate archive rooms, each one being temperature and humidity controlled. These archive strongrooms (pictured below) are performing a vital service by safeguarding extremely rare and valuable material.



A manuscript from mid-18th century (picture below)

A rare archive from 1665 (picture below)



Some pictures of the small museum (see below)



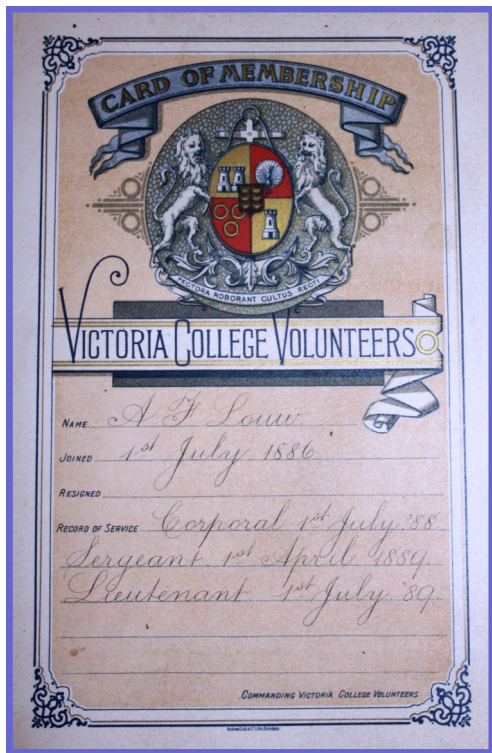
Sunday 11 March 2018, 11:00 onwards

We experienced a most interesting discussion at the Stellenbosch University Seminary chapel with its beautifully designed stained glass windows (*photos at right*). The theme of the discussion was “Van slagveld tot sendingveld”. The discussion leader was Eliza Neethling (nee Murray).

A significant time was spent discussing the problems which the inmates of the British concentration camps (during the Anglo Boer War) experienced and which resulted in the breakdown in relations between the two white groups. The unacceptable state of various concentration camps was highlighted as was the practice of the British soldiers in burning homesteads, destroying crops and farm animals, in order to force the women to stop providing food and shelter to the commandos.

Because a number of black persons were actively involved in the British war effort, it was recognised that for future good relations between the various ethnic groups to occur, it was vital that the “Word of God” be brought to these people. It was mainly due to the efforts of ministers such as the Reverends Murray, Albertyn and Abraham Louw that various mission stations were established. These developed and grew well over the subsequent years.

We then examined a small collection of artifacts and books relating to the ABW. Some of these were made by the inmates of the various POW camps in South Africa, St Helena, India, Ceylon, Bermuda etc.



Picture below: exterior of the Seminary chapel



## Saturday 14 April 2018, 14:00

Our speaker was the well-known sportsman and TV sports commentator, former Marketing Director of Adidas, and genealogist, Gavin Cowley (*pictured at right*)

He enthralled the audience with his family reminiscences and reminded us that genealogical research must be rigorous, correct and provable. Otherwise, incorrect and misleading conclusions can and will be drawn from the research.

Gavin has recently published a book entitled "The Cowleys – from Derbyshire to Plettenberg Bay". He discussed in detail the work entailed in getting the family history up to date and correct.

Given his considerable oratory skills and his self-deprecating wit, he wowed the audience. GSSA members who were absent will seriously regret having missed his talk.

Gavin previously published a book on sports entitled "Having a Ball".

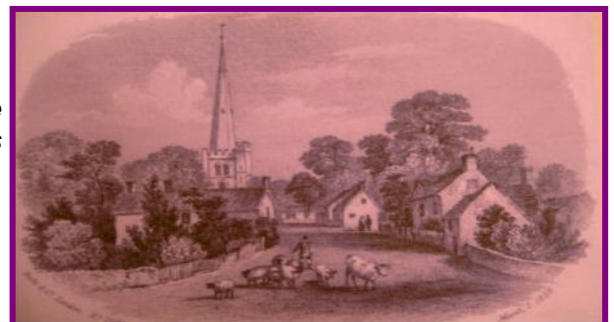


*Cowley Manor, home of Giles Cowley who died on March 7th, 1686*



*Marsh Green Hall, Ashover, Derbyshire  
Bought 1648*

*Breadsall, Derbyshire  
Ancestral home of the Cowleys*

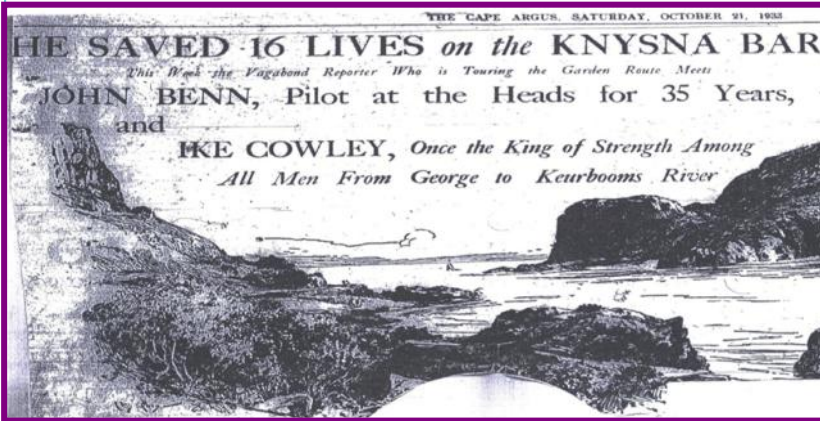


*The Old Hall in Breadsall opposite the All Saints Church. The floorboards in the building are dated to 1231. It is believed that the building was granted to William de Ferrars by his father William the Conqueror some time before 1086. The Old Hall is the oldest non-ecclesiastical building in the Borough. At a time, James Cowley and his mother stayed in the Old Hall and it was also used as a Post Office for a period.*



Ivy cottage, Breadsall 1906

Isaac Cowley (1847 – 1938) was the second born child to Robert and Elizabeth Cowley. He married Magdalena Rosa Harker in Plettenberg Bay in 1871 and had 8 children.



**Saturday 12 May 2018 , 14:00**

Our speaker, June McKinnon, (*pictured at right*) entertained us with a fascinating Powerpoint presentation entitled "From Russia with love - with a South African connection".

This story concerns the Radziwill and Pikel families in Eastern Europe and how Valery Pickel (changed from Pikel) arrived in South Africa and married Huibrecht Jacoba Engelbrecht in Cape Town in 1949.

Valery's grandfather was Oswald Kazimir Pikel, Prince Radziwill, born 1844 in St Petersburg. He was the state banker for Tsar Nicolas and his father.

Valery's father was Anatole Pikel, also a Prince Radziwill.

June shared some wonderful pictures of St Petersburg, including the Hermitage and the Summer Palace. There were also stunning pictures of Moscow, Shanghai and Vladivostok.

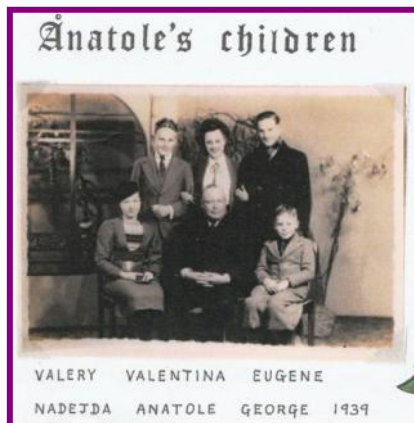
The Pickel family, being White Russians, had fled to Shanghai to escape the Bolsheviks in the early 1920's

In 1948, the Chinese communists under Mao Tse Tung, invaded Shanghai and Valery and his siblings were forced to flee. Apart from Valery who settled in Cape Town, the rest of the family settled in Australia and the United States



*Valery Pickel marries Huibrecht Jacoba Engelbrecht 1949 DRC Cape Town.*

*Map of Lithuania 1690 – Home of the Radziwill family*



*The family before they were forced by the Bolsheviks to leave Shanghai and resettle in different countries*

## Various awards presented to members for their contributions to the GSSA



Left: Prof Gerhard Geldenhuys received the Genealogist of the Year award



Right: David de Klerk vice-chairman for 10 years & member for 35 years



Left: Max White received the Extra Mile award



Right: Dr Andrew Kok Chairman for 5+ years



Left: Lorraine Fautley member for 5+ years



Right: Rini Scheffler branch librarian & member for 10 years



Left: Isak Bosman member for 5 years



Right: Dolf Cocqui member for 5 years



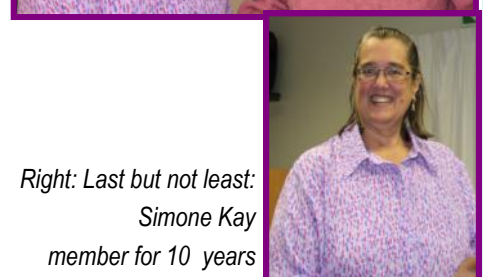
Left: Jaco vd Merwe member for 25 years



Right: Engela van Dyk member for 10 years



Left: Henk Rall member for 10 years



Right: Last but not least: Simone Kay member for 10 years



## **GSSA awards to members not present :**

Treasurer for 5+ years	<i>Paul le Roux</i>
Branch Photographer 5+ years	<i>Andre van Wyk</i>
30 years membership	<i>Cynthia Winstanly (See Obituaries)</i>
10 years membership	<i>Derek Yeoman</i> <i>Karin van der Merwe</i> <i>Paul le Roux</i> <i>Erik Eloff</i>
5 years membership	<i>Henri Wolfaardt</i> <i>Johan Tromp</i> <i>Pieter Opperman</i>

## Saturday 9 June 2018, 14:00

This meeting was a combination Bring and Brag exhibition, and a Q & A session designed to impart essential information needed by all genealogists, especially those fairly new to the fascinating field of family history

There were four speakers, discussing various aspects of genealogy:



Our first speaker, Jaco van der Merwe (*photo at left*) discussed the NAAIRS website in detail. Unfortunately for on-line researchers, he stated that less than 3% of all archived documents and reports have been scanned and are available on-line. As a senior person working with the archives in Roeland Street, he urged members to visit the archives, where they would likely achieve greater success in their researches than being on-line (and that includes search engines like Google)



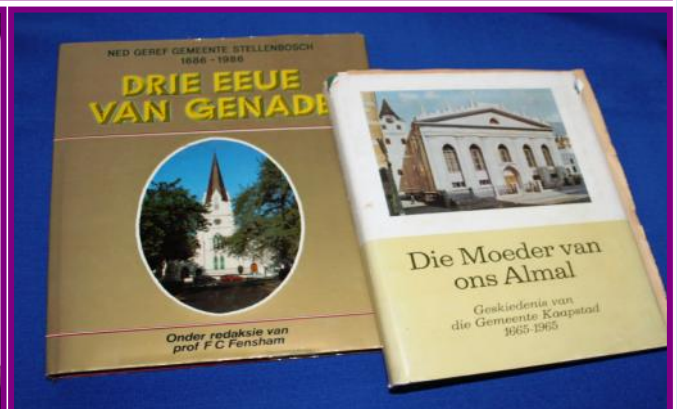
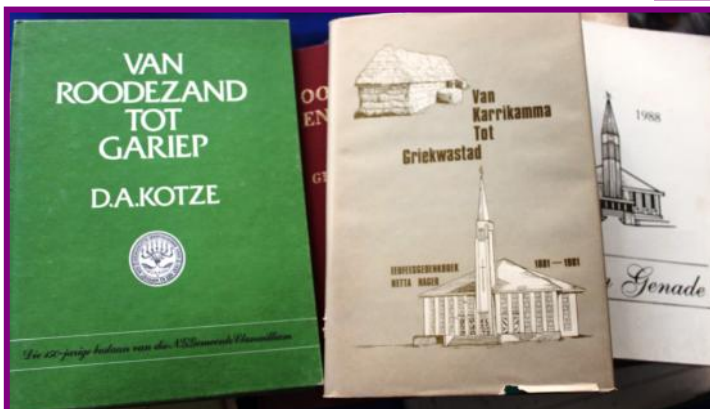
Thereafter, Douglas Reid (*photo at right*) discussed the new [www.gssawc.co.za](http://www.gssawc.co.za) website, which will become in due course a comprehensive on-line archive for the Western Cape branch. Members were encouraged to forward any and all interesting items to Douglas, Simone or Phil, who will arrange to publish them on the website. In future, GSSA Western Cape newsletters and other publications and notices will be posted to the website



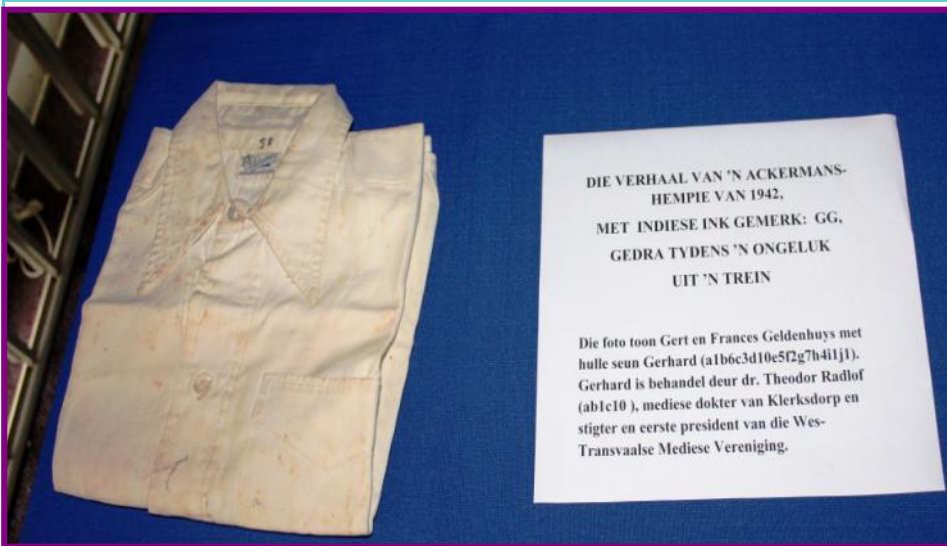
Margaret Gundry (*photo at left*) thereupon described how she was able to contact various overseas people while searching for ancestors. She was very pleasantly surprised at the quick responses and the high level of willing co-operation she received

Our Chairlady, Simone Kay, wrapped up the discussions and then invited us to view the Bring and Brag exhibits

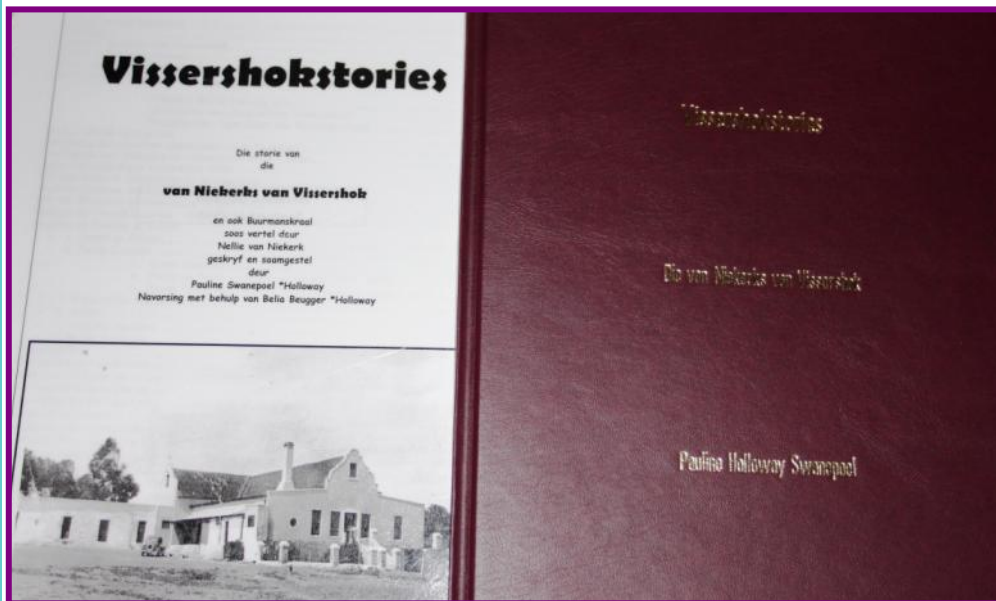
Ronel Lutjeharms displayed a variety of items from her family history collection



David de Klerk displayed these rare copies of church-related publications



Prof Gerhard Geldenhuys displayed most interesting relics from 1942, regarding his fall from a moving train at age four! Luckily for all concerned, he survived that ordeal satisfactorily



Pauline Swaneepoel showed the previous method of inexpensive ring-binding (left) and the more modern but fairly inexpensive binding



Regina Verwey displayed some napery with lace embroidery that originated with her great-grandmother

## Branch News/Vergaderingsnuus

*Saturday 14 July, 14:00*

Our speaker was Henk Rall, (*photo at right*), a branch member, who gave us a very interesting illustrated talk about the restoration process and of the genealogical research of the Doornboom Opstal (Fourie Huis) in Heidelberg, Cape.

Henk visited the deeds office and traced all the previous owners. He presented his findings as well as some of the genealogy associated with the building which also happens to be the oldest house in Heidelberg.

Previous owners included Fouries, Munniks, van Rensburgs, Esterhuizens and Steyns.



*Doornboom Opstal in the 1970's*



*2004: A seriously dilapidated Opstal in need of considerable renovations*

*2008: This is what money and care can do for a building, especially one with such a heritage value*



## **Branch News/Vergaderingsnuus - (Continued/Vervolg)**

*Saturday 14 July, 14:00 (Continued)*

The old farmhouse is the oldest building in town, as it was the original homestead of the farm Doornboom. According to research the clay building with thatched roof dates back to 1728. The grazing rights of the farm were first awarded in 1725 to a certain Andries Gous.

From 1733, the property was registered in the name of Louis Fourie II, son of the Huguenot immigrant Louis Fourie of Wellington. The Fourie family lived in the house for 151 years until 1876. The house was from the earliest times an informal inn for many travelers, including celebrities like Governor van Plettenberg, John Jacob Gordon, John Barrow, Thunberg, Sparrmann, Lady Anne Barnard and later still, General Janssens.

**See also: <http://www.gssawc.co.za/doornboom-opstal-restorasie-en-genealogie/>**



## Branch News/Vergaderingsnuus

Saturday 11 August 2018 , 14:00

We were once again privileged to be entertained and informed by a very interesting talk by Prof. Gerhard Geldenhuys and Prof. Pieter Maritz about the Liesching family and their diverse descendants which include amongst others Genealogists, Medical Doctors, Chemists, Mathematicians, Botanists, Paleontologists, Lawyers and Musicians.



### **Friedrich Ludwig Liesching** (*above left*):

Birthdate: August 12, 1757 Birthplace: Weinsberg, Stuttgart, Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany

Death: June 09, 1841 Cape Town, South Africa

Occupation: Doctor and Pharmacist

Father of: Dr Carl Ludwig Wilhelm Liesching, b1; Catharina Charlotta Louisa Liesching, b2; Maria Wilhelmina Francisca Carolina Liesching, b3; Frederick Arend Gysbert Liesching, b4; Charlotte Johanna Gottliebe Anthing, b7 and 2 others

### **Louise Friederike Wilhelmina Liesching (nee Seubert)** (*above right*):

Birthdate: January 01, 1762 Birthplace: Bad Urach, Tübingen, Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany

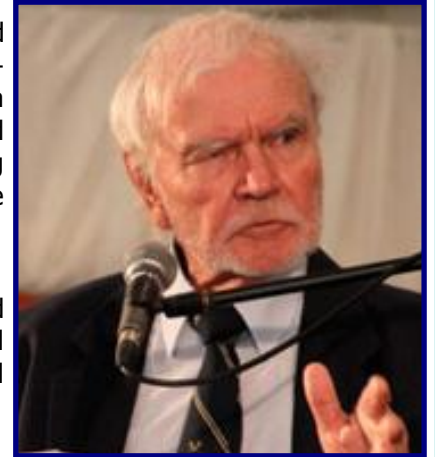
Death: circa 1846 Cape Town, South Africa

**See also:** <http://www.gssawc.co.za/liesching-family/>

## Branch News/Vergaderingsnuus -

Saturday 8 September 2018, 14:00

Our speaker, Dr Dan Sleigh, (*photo at right*), an eminent historian and recorder of the Dutch East India Company's (VOC) history and activities in the Cape during the period 1652 to 1795, entertained us with a superb overview of, specifically, the outposts created and maintained to ensure that provisions of meat, vegetables and fruit for the visiting ships at the settlement on Table Bay would continue unabated despite attacks and disruptions by the local Khoekoen and San tribes.



Dr Sleigh gave an overview of the VOC's trade with Batavia and showed the crucial role that the Cape played in replenishing food and water stocks to ships making their way either between Holland and Batavia or on the return trip.

Of the 44 outposts that were created over time by the VOC, Dr Sleigh mentioned the following: Leeuwenkop, Robben Eiland, Nieuwenland, Slagtersveld, Ganze Craal, De Schuer, Rustenburg, Groene Cloof, Saldanha Baay, St Helena Baay, Baas Harmans Craal, Vishoek, Simons Baay, Het Land van Waveren, Clapmuts, Hottentots Holland, Ziekenhuijs, Tijgerhoek, Warme Bad, Soetemelks Valleij, Rietvalleij aan de Buffelsjagtrivier, Plettenberg Baay, Fort Lydzaamhijd. The surnames Van der Merwe, Van Zyl and Visagie were among those who lived and farmed at the outposts

A capacity audience of over 120 people thoroughly enjoyed the presentation. Among the visitors were those from the Cape Town Family History Society, the Friends of Blaauwberg Conservation Area and the Durbanville Heritage Society.

**The entire pictorial and oral presentation of this talk may be accessed at the following link:**  
<http://www.gssawc.co.za/dr-dan-sleigh-voc-buiteposte/>

*Part of the capacity crowd listening intently to Dr Sleigh's address*



*Dr Sleigh being thanked by our Chair, Simone Kay*



## Vergaderingsnuus/Branch News

Saterdag 13 Oktober, 14:00



Ons gasspreker, Johan Krige (*foto links*), is 'n Genoot van GGSA en 'n baie bekwame historikus en genealoog.

Johan het 'n baie interessante oudiovisuele aanbieding oor die Rabies van Groenkloof gelewer.

Die verhaal van die Rabies wentel hoofsaaklik om die lewensloop van die gesinslede van Hans Rabie rondom 1900. Hulle het 'n tradisie gehad om alle gebeure neer te skryf en sulke dokumente te bewaar. Hierdie kulturele skat vorm die basis van hul verhaal.

Maar om dit alles 'n historiese perspektief te gee, is die geskiedenis van die voorafgaande geslagte ook nagevors en word dit in 'n verteltrant aangebied. Toepaslike beeldmateriaal gee verdere definisie aan hierdie kleurvolle geskiedenis.

Parallel aan die verskyning van die boek is daar ook onlangs die Groenkloof-Rabies se Museum voltooi. Dit word in die solder van Caledon Villa, die historiese woonhuis van die skrywer in Stellenbosch aangebied en kan per afspraak besoek word.

*Ons voorsitter, Simone Kay, dank die gasspreker hartelik*





## Vergaderingsnuus/Branch News

Saterdag 10 November, 14:00



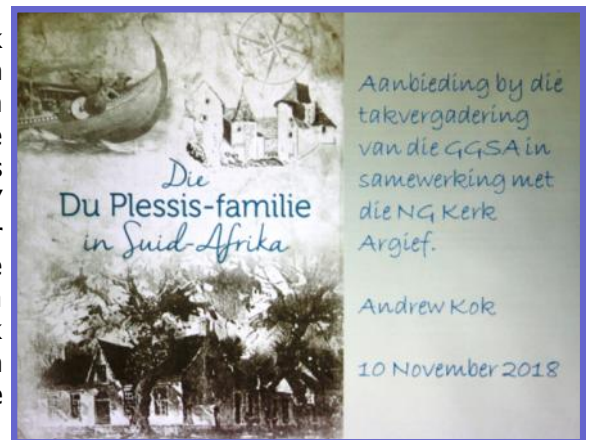
Ons gasspreker was ons voormalige tak voorsitter, Dr Andrew Kok (*foto links*). Hierdie baie insiggewende oudiovisuele aanbieding was by die Stellenbosch NGK argief gelewer.

Andrew het gepraat oor die Du Plessis familie se herkoms.

### Waar kom die naam vandaan?

Plessis beteken "die plek van die omheining." Dit dui op die vroeë gewoonte om 'n familie op 'n plek te vestig en dit dan te omhein vir beskerming teen rowers en ongediertes. Die Normandiërs het by hul Viking voorvaders die kuns aangeleer om die sogenaamde "motte-en-bailey" kastele te bou. Dit was 'n uiters effektiewe manier van verdediging, bestaande uit 'n heuwel (motte) waarop 'n hout palisade heining en 'n toring gebou is. Aanliggend was 'n tweede palisade heining (bailey) met die hele kompleks omsluit deur 'n diep sloot.

Die oorsprong van die du Plessis van is waarskynlik die versterkte vesting van Le Plessis-Grimoult geleë in die Calvados departement (provinsie), Normandië in noord-westelike Frankryk. Dit het in die vroeë elfde eeu behoort aan Grimoult die Verraaiër van Valognes en Val-ès-Dunes. Hy het die benaming "verraaiër" gekry nadat hy en 'n groep edelmannes in ongeveer 1047 in opstand gekom het teen Guillaume I, die Hertog van Normandië. Grimoult is gevange geneem en in 'n kerker by Rouen opgesluit waar hy dan ook gesterf het. Na die slag van die Val-sur-Dunes in 1047, is Grimoult se besitting gekonfiskeer en aan die Rooms Katolieke Kerk geskenk.



### Waar kom die du Plessis's vandaan?

Reeds voor 850 nC het Noorweë uit sowat dertig klein afsonderlike koninkryke bestaan. Toe een van hierdie konings, Harald Fairhair, die mag bekom het sommige van die ander Noormanne uitgewyk na Frankryk en ander gebiede. Dit sou bekend word as die verowerings deur Vikings.

Teen 800 nC het Hrolf, die seun van 'n Noorman-veroweraar, die Hertog van Rouen geword en die Frankiese konings het aan hierdie Noormanne in so 'n mate erkenning verleen dat die Hertogdom van Normandië ontstaan het. Omstreeks 1000 nC het daar 'n baron in Normandië gewoon met die naam van Thurstin, ook bekend onder die bynaam "Haldup." Hy is later as Christen gedoop as "Richard." Hy was die Baron van la Haye du Puis, of te wel Richard de la Haye. Hy het twee hertogdomme besit, nl. "la Haye du Puis" en "le Plessis," wat langs mekaar geleë was in die departement van Cotentin. Die Vervolière kasteel naby Coussay-les-Bois was reeds teen 1201 in die besit van Guillaume, die seigneur du Plessis, Vervolière en Breux.

Die "Histoire des Maisons de Dreux" deur André du Chesne Tournanguais vertel die genealogie van die du Plessis-familie. Dit begin by Tor de Belvoir in ongeveer 940 nC. Vir 21 opeenvolgende geslagte word die du Plessis-nasate dan gelys. Onder hulle tel interessante persoonlikhede soos Grimoult die Verraaiër, wie se lewensverhaal vertel word in die Tapeserie van Bayeux. 'n Aantal Guillaume's wat die titel Seigneur du Plessis, Breux en Vervolière gedra het, Jean, Écuyer en Seigneur van du Plessis, Breux, Roys, La Carrelilière, Faye en Thou Landgoedere en vele ander. Die storie van die veraf verwante Armand-Jean du Plessis, beter bekend as Kardinaal Richelieu word ook vertel.

## Vergaderingsnuus/Branch News - (Vervolg/Continued)

Saterdag 10 November, 14:00 vervolg/continued

### Jean Prieur du Plessis

Die Suid-Afrikaanse stamvader is in 1638 in Poitiers gebore waar hy ook as chirurgyn praktiseer. Na hy uit Frankryk vlug gaan werk hy op die St Christoffel Eilande. In Junie 1687 is hy op St Thomas in die Antilles getroud met Madeleine Menanteau. Hierna woon hulle 'n tyd in Amsterdam en Rotterdam en kom dan in 1688 met die Oosterland na die Kaap. In 1693 vertrek hy en sy gesin met die Sirjansland terug na Nederland. Hulle dogter Madeleine word egter in Ierland gebore en sy vrou sterf ook in hierdie tyd. Van 1697 tot 1698 het hy weer 'n kort besoek aan die Kaap gebring en woon toe in die Kolonieshuis in van Rhyneveldstraat in Stellenbosch. Hy keer terug na Nedrland en op 29 Augustus 1700 is hy in die Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam getroud met Marie Buiset. In 1702 keer hy terug na die Kaap waar hy as chirurgyn en landbouer 'n bestaan maak. Op 7 Desember 1708 sterf Jean Prieur du Plessis op Stellenbosch.



'n gedeelte van die gehoor



Ons voorsitter, Simone Kay, dank die spreker



## Branch News/Vergaderingsnuus

### Closure of GISA in Stellenbosch

Friday 23rd November 2018

By now, the genealogical community in South Africa must be aware of the serious loss of a highly regarded and valuable reference source, namely the Stellenbosch-based Genealogical Institute of South Africa.

With government funding a thing of the past, an ever-declining revenue stream and ever-increasing costs, closure was the only option open to the board of management.

Luckily, the full genealogical archive collection and all books related to genealogy have been removed to a special reference library at the Wellington campus of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. This library will be available to all researchers from early 2019 (dates to be advised).

The NG Church archives in Stellenbosch will inherit the microfilm equipment, film and related items. These will be available to researchers in due course.

Here is a picture of the volunteers who helped to pack the seemingly endless material.



*The GISA members are from left to right: Petro Coreejas-Brink, Pam Beck, Phil Beck, David de Klerk*

*Later, Simone Kay assisted with removing some GISA property*

*Also missing from the photo is Dr Andrew Kok, who left earlier*

