

**SURVEY OF CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES
ON THE FARM RIETFontein 375 JR
PRETORIA DISTRICT**



AFRICAN HERITAGE CONSULTANTS CC

2001/077745/23

DR. UDO S KÜSEL

Tel/fax: (012) 567 6046

Cell: 082 498 0673

E-mail: udo.heritage@absamail.co.za

P.O. Box 652
Magalieskruin
0150

OCTOBER 2003

SURVEY OF CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES ON THE FARM RIETFontein 375 JR PRETORIA DISTRICT

1. DEFINITION

The broad generic term *Cultural Heritage Resources* refers to any physical and spiritual property associated with past and present human use or occupation of the environment, cultural activities and history. The term includes sites, structures, places, natural features and material of palaeontological, archaeological, historical, aesthetic, scientific, architectural, religious, symbolic or traditional importance to specific individuals or groups, traditional systems of cultural practice, belief or social interaction.

2. METHODOLOGY

A search was done on all archaeological records for data on the farm. The aerial photographs of the area were studied for possible sites. The site was visited on two occasions and thoroughly inspected on foot.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Original farm house and yard

According to the present owner, Mr Gerhard Bredenkamp the original house and outbuildings had been built in 1899. As the Anglo-Boer War broke out the buildings were only completed after the war. The main house was extended several times and today mainly represents the 1930/40 building style. The *waenhuis* is largely in its original state and an excellent example of a Boer farm outbuilding. It has a loft (solder) for storing food for animals during the winter (see photograph 1 & 2).

The original farmhouse and outbuildings are older than sixty years and fall under the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999. According to Mr Gerhard Bredenkamp these buildings and an area of forty hectares are not part of the new development and not in danger of destruction.

3.2 Graves

There are three graves in a small graveyard located at S25°50'59.5" and E28°20'37.5". Two of the graves are those of the original owners of the farm. The details are as follows:

Jacobus Gerhardus Opperman
18/4/1877 – 25/5/1945

and

Sibella Margaretha Geb Erasmus
7/5/1877 – 7/5/1958

(see photograph 3)

3.3 Cattle kraal

A square cattle kraal located at S25°50'56.6" and E28°20'50.8", is built with local stone without mortar. It is typical of early kraals on Boer farms (see photograph 4).

3.4 Stone structure

Three square structures were found at S25°50'51.7" and E28°20'51.7". These enclosures were probably used for small animals like goat or sheep.

3.5 Stone ruins

At S25°50'53.5" and E28°20'55.2" several stone ruins occur. Most of them are square walls built with stone and clay.

According to Mr Gerhard Bredenkamp this site and the cattle kraal were part of a *bywoner* settlement. After the Anglo-Boer War poor whites were allowed to settle on the farms of rich land owners (see photograph 5).

3.6 Large cattle kraal

A very large cattle kraal approximately 25 X 45 metres found at S25°50'47.2" and E28°20'46.2". This kraal is approximately 25 X 45 metres. It is constructed of dry stonewalling. It is part of the original farm settlement and lies just east of the farmhouse (see photograph 6).

3.7 Archaeological site

Only one archaeological site could be found on the farm. The site is located at S25°51'13.4" and E28°21'16.0". The site consists of a large stone circle of 25 metres in diameter and two smaller circles. This is a typical Late Iron Age settlement. From archaeological and historical sources we know that it most probably formed part of the Manala Ndebele settlements with the main concentration along the Bromberg. The Manala Ndebele were concord by Mzilekazi in the 1820's (see photograph 7).

4. CONCLUSION

The original farmhouse and outbuildings, the graveyard and the large cattle kraal are truly worth preserving. If this area falls outside the new proposed development the structures will at least in the short and medium term be save.

The archaeological site and at least 50 metres around it should be save guarded from development. The stonewalls formed the central part of the settlement. The houses were outside the walled area. For this reason a area of at least 50 metres around the stonewalls should be kept as a save area with no development.

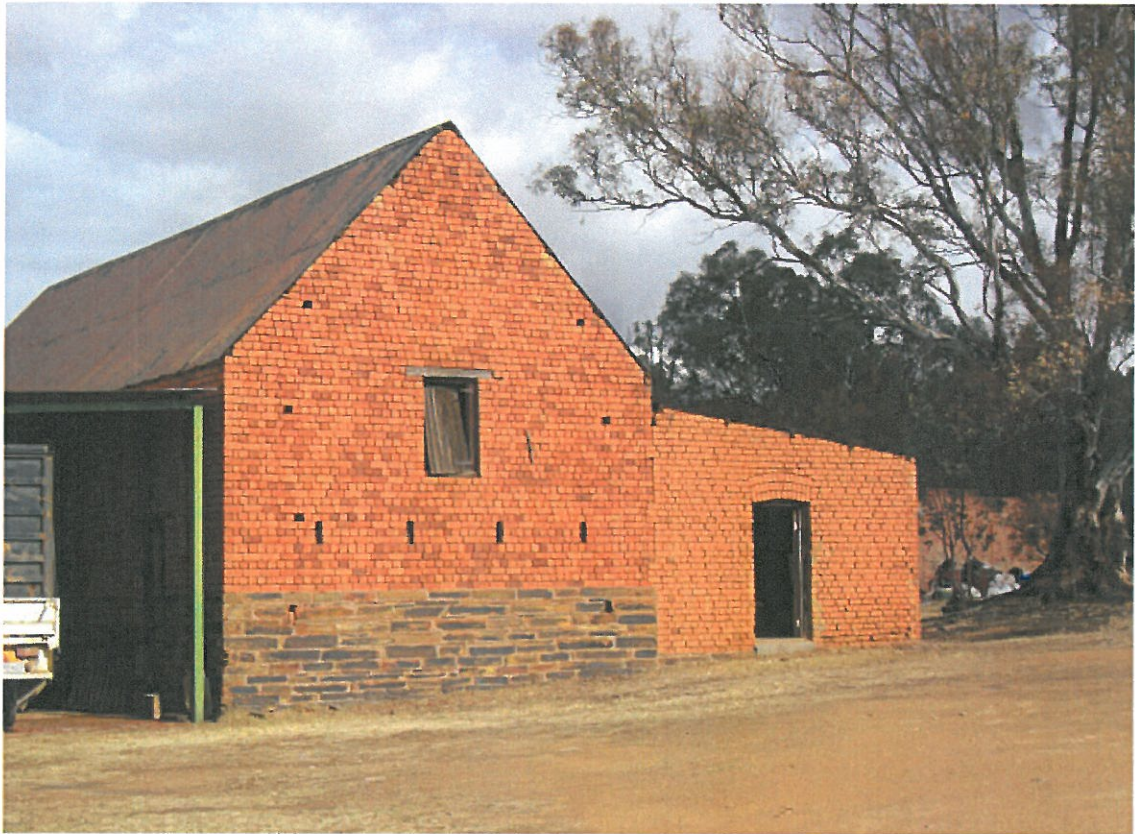
5. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the original farm settlement as well as the archaeological site be preserved and excluded from development.

PHOTOGRAPHS



No. 1 The old farmhouse on Rietfontein



No. 2 The old *waenhuis* on Rietfontein



No. 3 The Opperman graveyard



No. 4 Remnants of a Cattle kraal



No. 5 The large Cattle kraal east of the farmhouse



No. 6 Ruins of the *bywoners* settlement. The walls of the house can be seen in the background. The wall in front most probably was the garden wall.



No. 7 The circular wall of the Manala Ndebele settlement