

Kovacs Investments 554 (Pty) Ltd – Berg River Lands

The property in question is situated on the outskirts of Franschoek and Paarl, in an area which up until the early 19th century, was used as grazing ground. Berg River Lands consists of portions of the farms Weltevreden (comprising a portion of Lubeck) (Farm # 1007), the remainder of Jericho (Farm # 1014) and portions C and D of Bellegam (Farm #1012). The historical background of the farms has been restricted to the specific portions indicated on the aerial photograph Figure 5 in the Background information document for the proposed Berg River Lands & Country Estate Ref 2125 04/03 (Figure 1&2)¹.

Brief history: Groot Drakenstein

Pre-colonial:

The presence of hand axes, commonly found in and along old river beds and in ploughed agricultural fields, gives evidence to the human occupation of the Groot Drakenstein area since the Early and Middle Stone Age (possibly as early as 700 000 years ago and 150 000 to 30 000 years ago). Rock shelters with paintings discovered near the Wemmershoek dam attests to the presence of Later Stone Age hunter-gatherers from about 30 000 years ago, possibly overlapping with Khoekhoen herders and the early colonial period (Manhire & Yates 1994). Archaeological evidence from elsewhere in the Cape suggests that Khoekhoen herders may have moved into the Western Cape as early as 2 000 years ago, displacing the resident hunter-gatherer groups. Historical documents confirm that the Khoekhoe were the predominant inhabitants in the Cape by the time that the first Europeans started frequenting the Cape. The Drakenstein region, including Paarl and Franschoek, was in fact 'discovered' by Europeans while on expeditions to barter for cattle with the Khoekhoe (Clift 1995, Winter 2000).

Areas around or new sources of fresh water and river plains could potentially contain pre-colonial archaeological material.

Colonial:

The Drakenstein region consists of Klein Drakenstein and Groot Drakenstein. Klein Drakenstein is situated on the eastern bank of the Berg River between Daljosafat towards the north and the Wemmershoek River towards the south. Groot Drakenstein is situated between Simonsberg and the Berg River with Simondium to the north (Le Roux n.d. a&b).

In 1687, 14 farms were granted in Groot Drakenstein of which about six were abandoned within the first three years². In 1694 an additional four farms were granted in freehold; **Lubeck**, Normandïe, Lormarins and **Bellegam** (Figure 3). In the mid 19th

¹ Area indicated is redrawn on the compilation of the farms. Perhaps SW or NB could also include a copy of the aerial photograph in the report.

² Conventionally, land was granted free of charge (in freehold) with the condition that the owner had to comply to certain conditions (eg land clearing, cultivation, building a dwelling) within a three year period. Non-compliance with these conditions meant that the land was repossessed and no deed of transfer was issued

century, the land now part of Berg River Lands, was granted in perpetual quitrents associated with Lubeck (now known as Weltevreden) and Bellegam.

Farms were originally granted along the Berg River in Drakenstein as a measure to solve the grain and food shortages at the Cape. The Cape of Good Hope under the control of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) was never intended to become a colony. Its prime function was to supply the VOC trade ships passing the Cape of Good Hope on route to the East and as such economic efficiency was a prime consideration. The first farms to be granted in an area were usually situated on land which appeared to be fertile and that was situated close to permanent and/or fresh water sources (van Zyl 1987).

During the 18th and 19th century, Drakenstein was well known for its grain fields and vineyards, with a large emphasis on wine production. Up until the 1850s wine was one of the most important source of income for the Cape Colony. The 18th and 19th centuries saw a marked increase in the number of vines that were planted in the Drakenstein valley. During this period, Drakenstein was producing more wine than the Stellenbosch or the Constantia-Wynberg region. The *Phylloxera* virus which destroyed huge tracts of vineyards in Europe during the mid 19th century spread to the Cape and was discovered in Mowbray in 1886. By the 1890s, 80% of the vineyards of Drakenstein had been destroyed (van Zyl 1987).

In order to alleviate the agricultural depression that followed the *Phylloxera* epidemic, Cecil John Rhodes, then Prime Minister of the Colony, agreed to establish a scheme to develop a deciduous fruit export industry. The Drakenstein valley was selected as a viable area to start the scheme. Its climate and soil conditions were deemed suitable for deciduous fruit farming. (The availability of farms for sale after the *Phylloxera* disaster no doubt also contributed to its suitability!) (van Zyl 1987).

In 1897 Lewis Lloyd Mitchell³ started buying up large tracts of farm land in the Drakenstein valley. At the end of the same year, these farms were transferred to Cecil John Rhodes (TD11413, 31/12/1897). Amongst the first farms to be bought up were Lekkerwijn, Eenzaamheid, Nieuwedorp, Boschendal, Champagne, Rhone, Lanquedoc, Papiermolen etc as well as Weltevreden. Anecdotal evidence has Rhodes giving orders to HEV (Harry) Pickstone⁴ to buy up the whole Drakenstein valley (Baker 1977). In total 29 farms were bought in the Drakenstein valley. In 1902, these were consolidated into Rhodes Fruit Farms Ltd, and were until recently owned by Anglo-American Farms Ltd (TD2582, 21/3/1902).

Farm history: Weltevreden, Jericho and Bellegam

It is important to stress that historically these portions of lands are not only agriculturally marginal, but they are also geographically marginal; being situated on the boundaries or outskirts of Franschhoek and Simondium (en route to Paarl). This land would have been used mainly as grazing and was granted in quitrent relatively late in the history of the Drakenstein Valley (Figure 4 & 5).

³ Later Director of the Rhodes Fruit Farms

⁴ HEV Pickstone is credited with being the 'father of the Cape deciduous fruit industry'. He met CJ Rhodes in 1892 (van Zyl 1987).

Weltevreden:

In 1692 61 morgen 15 square roods were granted in freehold to Ernst Frederick Walter as the freehold place Lubeck. Lubeck was the first farm to be granted in Groot Drakenstein that was not rectangular in shape (possibly accounting for the fact that this farm was slightly larger than the conventional 60 morgen). In 1771, Lubeck was owned by Eduard Christian Haumann (who also owned Simonsvlei, Simondium). At this time the farm is subdivided. The remainder of the farm (Lubeck B), is sold after Haumann's death to Pieter Marais (TD 168 1/11/1782), this is the portion which later became part of Weltevreden.

In 1813 a portion of land 3 morgen 421 square roods was granted in perpetual quitrent to Hendrick Jacobus Louw. The presence of two springs on this relatively small portion of land was presumably the reason for it being petitioned. The transfer deed describes the land stretching towards the dwelling house on the remaining portion of Lubeck. It is unfortunate that the survey diagrams for these farms do not indicate the position of structures or dwellings.

In 1818 Lubeck B is sold by the estate of the late Daniel David Marais (Pieter's son) to Hugo Hendrick van Niekerk. By 1822, HH van Niekerk has ownership of Lubeck B as well as the piece of Old Quitrent granted in 1813 to Hendrick Louw. He consolidates these pieces of land through an additional quitrent grant of 355 morgen 488 square roods (StelQ6.17). The whole, now known as Weltevreden, is subdivided in 1860, when a portion (portion 3), 40 morgen 79 square roods is sold to Daniel Brink (TD492, 23/3/1860) it is described as 'a certain piece of quitrent with buildings thereon ... bounded by the remainder of Rhone, Lanquedoc, Lormarin and Lubeck' (SG1860.15.492) (Figure 6).

The remainder of the farm seems to have remained relatively stable. In 1897 Barend Johannes du Plessis sold Weltevreden to Lewis Lloyd Mitchell, who was in the process of buying up land for the establishment of Rhodes Fruit Farms.

Anecdotal evidence tells that the brother of Herbert Baker (the favourite architect of CJ Rhodes) lived at Weltevreden. While historical sources confirm that Lionel Baker did come to the Cape in 1892, to join with Harry Pickstone and Sebastiaan van Reenen in their deciduous fruit growing enterprise (Baker 1977), these sources do not confirm Lionel Baker's connection with Weltevreden. It is possible that further archival research may confirm the connection. CJ Rhodes did however have Weltevreden rebuilt in the Cape Dutch style⁵ after it was destroyed by fire (de Bosdari 1953).

Bellegam C & D:

Bellegam C & D (being the portions of Berg River Lands) originated as a quitrent grant issued in 1822 (Figure 7).

⁵ Herbert Baker was involved with the rebuilding.

While the freehold place Bellegam⁶ was granted in 1695, the relevant portions Bellegam C and D do not form part of the original freehold grant. In 1822, 451 morgen 554 square roods were granted in quitrent to Johannes van Niekerk⁷ (Albert's son) (StelQ6.11 15/12/1822).

Some time after the farm Bellingham/Bellegam was transferred to Abraham Coenraad de Villiers (Abraham Barendzoon) in 1834, there seems to be a break in the transfer history. TD 4370, 10/05/1927 contains notes to this effect. It was assumed in these notes that at some point prior to 1898 the perpetual quitrent had been redeemed. Between 1898 and 1927 (perhaps as a result of the *Phylloxera* epidemic) Bellegam quitrent was alienated from Bellingham freehold and abandoned.

In 1927 these portions (ABC& D) are still registered in the name of Abraham Coenraad de Villiers. At this point a notice was placed in the local papers 'calling upon all persons having or claiming right, title, interest' to come forward. Three people laid claim to Bellegam, Henry/Harry Oaks Arton, Jacoba J Gray and Hester E de Villiers (on behalf of her underage children). HO Arton was granted Bellegam A & C, while JJ Gray was granted BD.

Bellegam C and D do not seem to have been incorporated into the Rhodes Fruit Farms Ltd.

Jericho:

Jericho also originated as a quitrent grant issued in 1822 (Figure 8).

In 1818, Johannes van Niekerk (owner of Bellegam Freehold since 1810) transferred a portion of the freehold to Albertus Petrus Bernardus van Niekerk (Johannes's son). This piece of land was referred to as Klein Bellegam (Figure 9). In 1822, another parcel of quitrent land is granted to Albertus PB van Niekerk (StelQ6.8 15/12/1822). The farm is now referred to as Jericho. For the next thirty odd years the farm boundaries remain relatively constant. From 1854 to 1863 it is subdivided.

In 1954 Jericho, Portions 1, 2 and 3 were incorporated into Rhodes Fruit Farms Ltd.

Rivers, springs, watercourses and boundaries (Figure 11)

The courses of the Berg and Wemmershoek rivers have changed over time. The eastern most boundary of Bellegam (Quitrent) was originally formed by the Wemmershoek river. This river now runs through the centre of what now forms Bellegam C and D.

The island formed by the Berg River at the southern boundary of the old freehold Lubeck has disappeared.

⁶ This is also referred to as Bellingham. JG Le Roux suggests that the seeming confusion regarding the name can be explained by the fact that the original survey and deed was lost and the property was resurveyed in 1822. In 1850 SGeneral Charles Bell documents the farm's name as Bellingham instead of Bellegam.

⁷ At this time he also owned Bellingham/Bellegam freehold.

Three springs are indicated on the survey diagrams; two springs on the Old Quitrent (StelQ1.23 of 1813) on Weltevreden and another spring near the north eastern boundary of Jericho.

A watercourse is indicated on the survey diagram for Weltevreden, flowing from the Old Quitrent and Lubeck towards Lormarins. A watercourse, in part, also formed the southern boundary between Jericho and Bellegam

References:

Archival:

M3/405 1808 Map of Drakenstein

Baker, H & Stead, WT. 1977. Cecil Rhodes. The man and his dream. Bulawayo: Books of Rhodesia.

Clift, H 1995. The assimilation of the Khoikhoi into the rural labour force of Paarl, Drakenstein District. Unpublished Dissertation. BA Hons (Archaeology) UCT.

Le Roux, JG & Le Roux, WG n.da. Ons Drakensteinse Erfgrond: Groot Drakenstein. Unpublished pamphlet: Drakenstein Heemkring.

Le Roux, JG & Le Roux, WG n.db. Ons Drakensteinse Erfgrond: Klein Drakenstein. Unpublished pamphlet: Drakenstein Heemkring.

Manhire, T & Yates R. 1994. Rock paintings at Wemmershoek Dam. The Digging Stick Vol 11 No 1. SA Archaeological Society.

Van Zyl, DJ. 1987. Chp5 Economics. IN Oberholster, AG & van Breda, P 1987. Paarl Valley 1687-1987. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council

Winter, S 2000 Heritage Conservation Study: Groot Drakenstein-Simondium Spatial Development Framework. Unpublished Report for Taylor van Rensburg & van der Spuy Planners and Architects

Deed Summary: Weltevreden, Farm 1007

Described as 'certain farm called Weltevreden' together with two pieces of perpetual quitrent land adjoining; 31M 15 SqR Freehold and 359M 309 SqR Perpetual Quitrent

Farm name	Diagram	Deed	Date	Extent	From	To	Price
Lubeck		OSF1.407	1692		Grant	Ernst Frederick Walters	
Lubeck		168	1/11/1782		Helena Catharina Kruger	Pieter Marias Pieterzoon ⁸	
Old Quitrent		StelQ1.23	1813	3M 421SqR	Grant	Hendrick Jacobus Louw	
Lubeck (Ptn) – now known as Weltevreden		172	3/3/1818	31M 15SqR	Estate of Daniel David Marais Pieterzoon	Hugo Hendrick van Niekerk	
At some point Hugo Hendrick an Niekerk obtains Lubeck ptn 'Weltevreden' as well as 'Old Quitrent'							
	335/1818	StelQ6.17	15/12/1822	355M 488SqR	Grant	Hugo Hendrick van Niekerk	28 Rixdallers
Weltevreden		256	2/3/1838	390M 324 SqR	Hugo Hendrick van Niekerk	Roelof Petrus vd Merwe	£675
Weltevreden		257	2/3/1838	31M 15 SqR + 359M 309 SqR	RP vd Merwe	Johannes Mattheus Brink	£550
Weltevreden		1126	5/7/1849	31M 15 SqR + 359M 309 SqR	Insolvent Estate of Johannes Mattheus Brink	Cornelius Petrus Brink	£550
Weltevreden		1349	13/9/1850	31M 15 SqR + 359M 309 SqR	Cornelius Petrus Brink	Wouter Cornelius Justinus Brink Janzoon	£875
TD 492 a potion (3) of the Quitrent is sold to Daniel Brink on 23/3/1860 measuring 40M 79 SqR for the price of £9. This portion is described as 'a certain piece of quitrent with buildings thereon.... Bounded by the remainder of Rhone, Lanquedoc, Lormarin and Lubeck. SG 1860.15.492							
Remainder Weltevreden		4 ¹ 94	23/3/1860	31M 15 SqR + 319 M 230 SqR	Wouter Cornelius Justinus Brink	Johannes Jurgen Abraham Marais	£125

⁸ Pieter Marais was married to Johanna S Krynauw. After his death she was married Hendrick J Louw, c1798.

Farm name	Diagram	Deed	Date	Extent	From	To	Price
		280	26/1/1864	31M 15 SqR + 319 M 230 SqR	Insolvent estate of Johannes Jurgen Abraham Marais	Johannes Jacobus Joubert Gideonzoon	£1170
There seems to be a discrepancy between the actual Title Deed books and the Deed Summary books at this point. The parcels of land are reunited in 1897 when Lewis Lloyd Mitchell (later Director of Rhodes Fruit Farms) starts buying up land in the area							
		2723	5/4/1897		Barend Johannes du Plessis	Lewis Lloyd Mitchell	
Several farms* incl. Weltevreden		11413	31/12/1897	**	Lewis Lloyd Mitchell	Cecil John Rhodes	£30 975
		2582	21/3/1902		Cecil John Rhodes	Rhodes Fruit Farms Ltd ⁹	£192510 "4" 0

* Lekkerwijn, Eensaamheid, Nieuwedorp, Boschendal, Champagne, Rhone, Lanquedoc, Papier Molen, de Bordje Outspan, Goede Hoop, La Motte, Zondernaam, Watergat etc

** Including (b) certain piece of quitrent land with buildings thereon described as Lot M ... part of quitrent land contiguous to the Freehold place Weltevreden transferred to WCJ Brink 30/09/1850 ... 40 M 79 SqR

VI a) Certain piece of Freehold land – Weltevreden – 31 M 15SqR, exted. Pieter Marais 1/11/1782
b & c) Perpetual quitrent land – Weltevreden – 3 M 421 SqR + 315 M 409 SqR, extend. van Niekerk 1822

⁹ This later became AngloAmerican Farms Ltd

Deed Summary: Bellegam, Farm 1012

Farm name	Diagram	Deed	Date	Extent	From	To	Price
Bellegam	211/1822	StelQ6.11	15/12/1822	451M 554 SqR	Grant	Johannes van Niekerk Albertzoon	73 Rixdallers
1823, Bellegam is part of farm Bellingham which contained portions not only of the quitrent grant of Bellegam, but also of Watervall (StelQ6.16)							
Bellingham		336	5/12/1823		Johannes van Niekerk Albertzoon	Isaak Cornelius de Villiers Davidzoon	
		451	19/9/1834		Insolvent Estate of IC de Villiers	Abraham Coenraad de Villiers ABzoon	70 000 Cape Guilders or £1750
In terms of the Titles Registration & Derelict Lands Act of 1881, Portions ABC&D as well as the remainder of Bellegam are 'regranted' as follows:							
Bellegam A & C		4371	10/05/1927	54M + 78 M	Derelict Lands Act	Harry Oaks Arton	
Bellegam B & D	(attached to deed, no number)	4370	10/05/1927	53M +23 M	Derelict Lands Act	Jacoba Johanna Gray (nee de Villiers)	
Remaining extent				71M 500 SqR		Hester Elizabeth de Villiers (nee vd Merwe)	
Bellegam C		4934	1/08/1948			Peters & Morrison	
Bellegam D		12509	20/07/1951			N Berhold	

Deed Summary: Jericho, Farm 1010

The parcel of land described as Jericho, contains a small portion (11 M 400 SqR) of Freehold land. The remainder was granted in perpetual quitrent. It was also known as 'Klein Bellegam'.

Farm name	Diagram	Deed	Date	Extent	From	To	Price
Jerico		StelQ6.8	15/12/1822	283 M 89 SqR	Grant	Albertus Petrus Bernardus van Niekerk Johzoon	24 Rixdallers
		318	21/11/1823		Albertus Petrus Bernardus	Jacob Joshua van Niekerk	47 647 Cape Guilders

					van Niekerk Johzoon		
		274	16/5/1834		Insolvent estate of Jacob Joshua van Niekerk	Abraham Johannes Marais	£630 or 25 200 Cape Guilders
		470	6/11/1835	283M 9SqR	AJ Marais	David Stephanus vd Merwe Roelofzoon	£696 12 schillings or 27 864 Cape Guilders
		1343	26/10/1838	283M 9SqR	DS vd Merwe	Lourens Arie Toerien	£797 13 schillings
		1360	21/11/1843	11M 400 SqR + 271M 209 SqR	Insolvent estate of LA Toerien	Johannes Tromp	£750 12 schillings 6 pence
		595	29/4/1847	11M 400 SqR + 271M 209 SqR	Johannes Tromp	Nicholas Johannes Tromp	£700
		101	27/1/1852	11M 400 SqR + 271M 9 SqR	Nicholas Tromp	Johannes Jurgens Abraham Marais Williamzoon	£900
	74/1854	235	26/1/1854		JJA Marais	Pieter Gabriel Marais	
1854-1863 subdivided							
1954 remaining portions 1, 2 and 3 became part of Rhodes Fruit Farms							