

9/2/018/231

**REPORT ON A SECOND PHASE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION
OF THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS
THE WOODS, ST CYPRIANS SCHOOL**

**PREPARED FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ST CYPRIANS**

MAY 2000

**Mary Patrick
Cape Archaeological Survey cc
19 Dawlish Road
Plumstead
7800
Telephone: (021) 7614744**

THE WOODS, ST CYPRIANS

1. Introduction

This report was commissioned by the Board of Trustees St Cyprian's School to investigate the cultural history of a burial vault located in 'The Woods' and is an adjunct to a deeds search and subdivision history of the property ¹. Figure 1 shows the location of the site in the city, Figure 2 shows the location of the burial vault in relation to the proposed development.

Historical Background

A brief review of the known history of the site provides the basis for the interpretation of the material culture revealed in the archaeological investigation. The site is comprised of two erven; Erf 331, Erf332.

Erf 331 has no transfer record and is described simply as open land (T121168/1998). Erf 332 is described as Town Council property and open land respectively (Transfer Deed 677795/1930 and Cape Freehold Grant 1901). Patrick ¹ and Malan's ² research indicate that various maps show that 'The Woods' was part of the Nooitgedacht Estate from 1708 until 1889. Snow's survey 1862 (Vide Fig 3) depicts a rectangular building on the site lying to the South East with a path leading in a loop between the Nooitgedacht homestead and the building. Thom's Index 1898 and a series of maps dated c1910 and c1930 from the Cape Archives however shows the site to be completely underdeveloped, but within the estate boundaries.

In 1998 the Trustees of St Cyprian's School acquired a portion of land (Erf 331, Erf332) known as 'The Woods' through prescriptive acquisition and submitted a planning proposal to develop the site (Vide Figure 1).

Biographical sources³ describe a family vault located in 'The Woods' "where those who loved Nooitgedacht long ago had been laid to rest", and an oral history of the tomb is recorded in the school's archives. The apparent last sighting of the tomb was in 1986 when a member of staff at St Cyprian's visited the tomb. She described the tomb as being knee high, without roof and lying to the South East behind the Kramat on the Gorge Road side of the school (Broekmann pers comm).

In a letter dated 18 May 1998 from Peggy Heap, a pupil at the school in the 1920's, to the school's archivist, the writer recalls the "van Breda family vault from which the coffins had long been remove behind the kitchen quarters". Nooitgedacht was owned by the Versfeld-Smuts-van Breda family from 1762 until 1808 ².

In light of the evidence suggesting the physical presence of a tomb, the Trustees of St Cyprian's commissioned a Phase One Archaeological Investigation which was undertaken in February 1999.

ST CYPRIANS

GORGE ROAD

THE WOODS

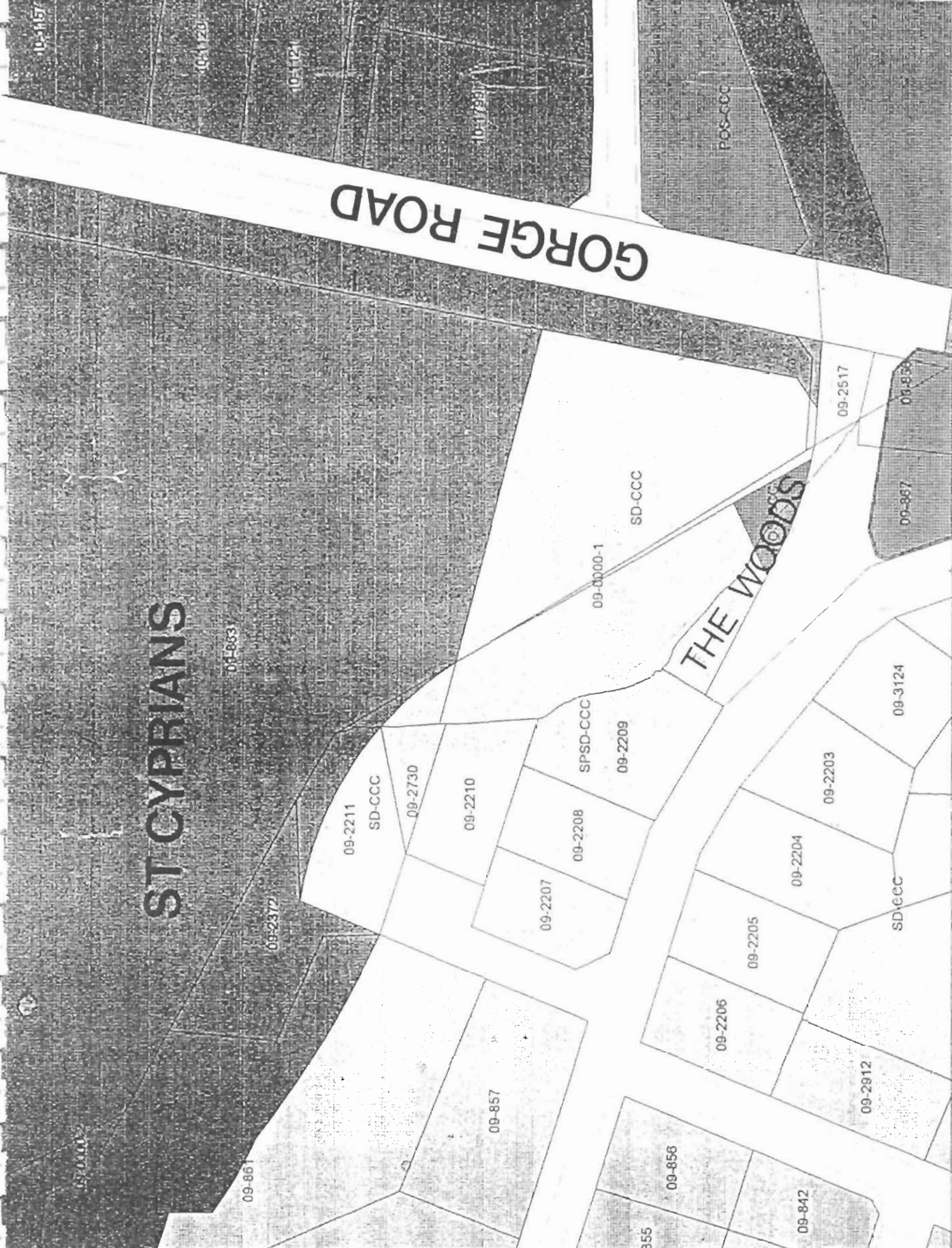


FIG.1

NOTE: LAND SURVEYOR'S LEVEL 120.000 = 0

1 tomb
2 kramat

FIG. 2

JANE VISSER • MARK THOMAS
A R C H I T E C T S

NEW PRE-SCHOOL & SPORTS FACILITY
FOR ST. CYPRIAN'S SCHOOL,
BRANEBURGH

SETTING OUT PLAN

SC01

102



STREET
AVENUE

6.710
20.840
77.580

42.420
16.420
34.750
20.310

00.96

TRUCK PARK

VEGETATION

100.000

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The findings of this investigation were to conclude that :

1. The site had been disturbed by dumping activities. Builders rubble and an assortment of contemporary rubbish had been indiscriminately strewn over the site.
2. Historic artefacts from the site were low density finds.
3. Physical evidence of the tomb, such as standing walls, were thought to have been raised to the ground and associated skeletal material destroyed.

2. Archaeological Problem

While land clearing operations were underway in April 2000 the gable end of structure was exposed in the South East section of 'The Woods'. The client requested additional archaeological investigation to determine the nature of this find. This survey was undertaken following the new guidelines set out by the South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA) when dealing with Graves and Burial Grounds. Appendices 1-5 refers to the notifications made to inform the general public about the pending archaeological investigation.

In the implementation phase of the archaeological investigation a delegation from the Islamic community expressed concern about the impending excavation, indicating that Islamic graves would be desecrated if land clearing and trenching operations were allowed on this site. The following account is a summary of the early history as narrated to me by a member of the Islamic Community.

Oral History

An Oral Historian and Islamic archivist, Mr Dawood Zwavel visited the site and gave the following account concerning the early land use of 'The Woods'. The land lies directly behind the shrine of Sayed Abdul Malik who was born in Batavia in 1585. He arrived in the Cape with Prince Yusuf on the Voetboog. It is reputed that Abdul Malik secured his freedom from the Dutch Administration and became the community leader of the 17th century Islamic community living at the Cape. Mr Zwavel claims that Abdul Malik married a Khoi woman who bore him seven children. He claims that Malik's family, along with other Islamic persons whom Malik freed from slavery under the Dutch Administration are buried in 'The Woods'. This account is in part collaborated by Jaffer's (1996:46) research into the Kramats of the western Cape. Jaffer however disputes the date of arrival of Abdul Malik in the Cape inferring that the inscription on the tomb is incorrect. He suggests that Abdul Malik was brought to the Cape as a slave from Batavia at the end of the eighteenth century. At the Cape he married a free born woman, Ruska of the Cape, whom he claimed in his will to be the mother of his children. Abdul Malik was known as a 'Malay Doctor and Priest'.

The inscription inside the Kramat at Gorge Road reads, "In memory of Sayed Abdol Malik, Born in Batavia 3 May 1583, died in Cape Town 21 September 1669. Arrived at the Cape in the Voetboog with Prince Yusuf".

Regardless of the confusion concerning Abdul Maliks arrival in the Cape he holds a revered position in Islamic society. The prefix Sayed refers to his relationship

with the Prophet Mohammed: that he was a direct descendent of the Prophet (Abdul Tayob pers comm).

Cultural Practices

In Islamic cultural traditions outstanding religious figures are often referred to as Sheikh (elder) especially if famous as teachers. They may also be revered as Saints before or after death. The religious rituals of veneration are most typically directed towards the sacred dead. The tomb of a saint may be any simple grave, although it may develop into an elaborate tomb complex, around which a religious cult develops. The saint is believed to be present in the shrine and so pilgrims come to visit and adore or even pray to the saint. Offering prayers on behalf of the saint sets up the possibility of a patronage relationship between the pilgrim and the saint. Graves were situated on a Northeast - Southwest axis as religiously prescribed, near but never in a residential area (Smith 1993).⁵

In contemporary society the Kramat which is located on the George Road is visited on a regular basis for the purpose of ritual veneration, and is one of the best known, and the most regularly visited Kramat in Cape Town⁶

3. The Excavations

The standing wall (West Section) of a built structure was partially exposed from under four meters of earth and rubble when land clearing operations were undertaken on the proposed development site (Vide Fig 4).

The objective of formal archaeological excavation was:

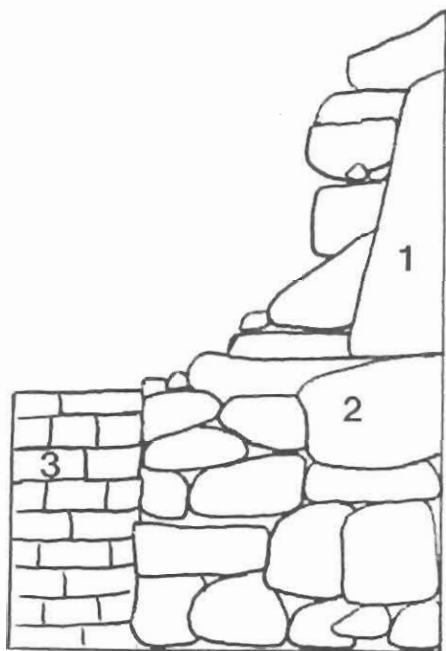
1. Expose the extent of the standing wall so that its physical characteristics may be understood.
2. Identify the architectural history of the structure
3. Map an additional burial sites in the area.
4. Ensure the human skeletal material be left in-situ until community decisions were made concerning reburial if required.

The rubble which had obscured the tomb was removed, bricks and mortar were placed into piles according to architectural design. This was done that in the event that the tomb would be reconstructed the original fabric could be remodelled. Miscellaneous contemporary builders rubble was discarded to one side.

Standing Walls:

A vaulted tomb measuring three meters in width and four meters in length was excavated. The in-fill of the tomb comprised of bricks, both modern and historic, and an assortment of modern artifacts, an alarm clock, plastic combs, glass bottles and a selection of biro pens. The vaulted roof had collapsed into the inner camber of the tomb and remained in-situ and undisturbed (Vide Fig 5).

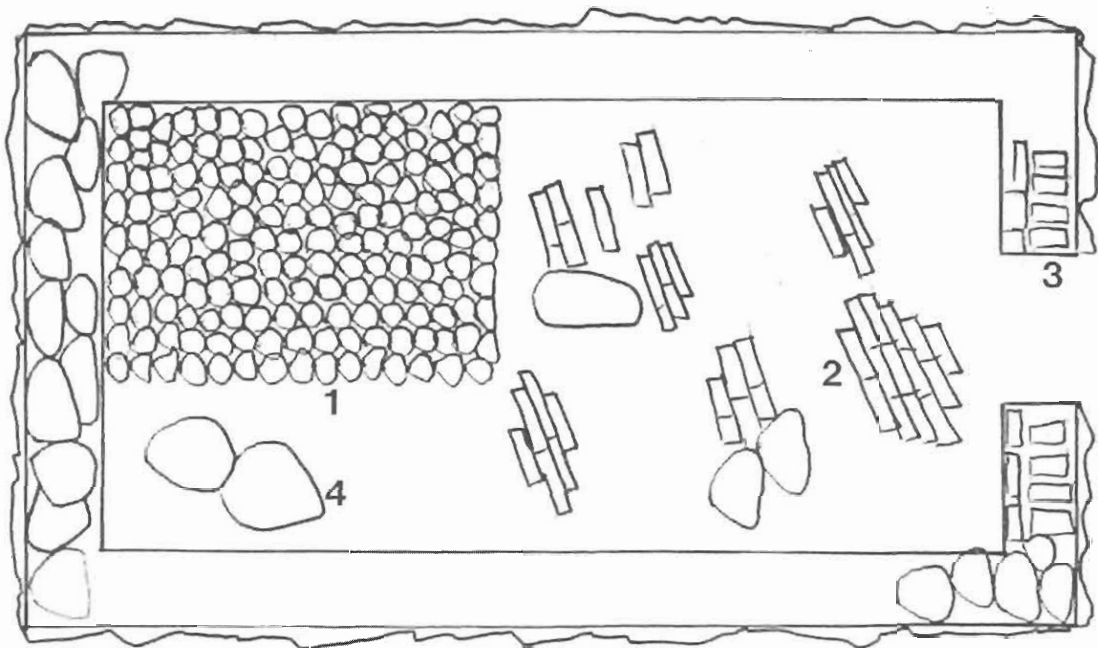
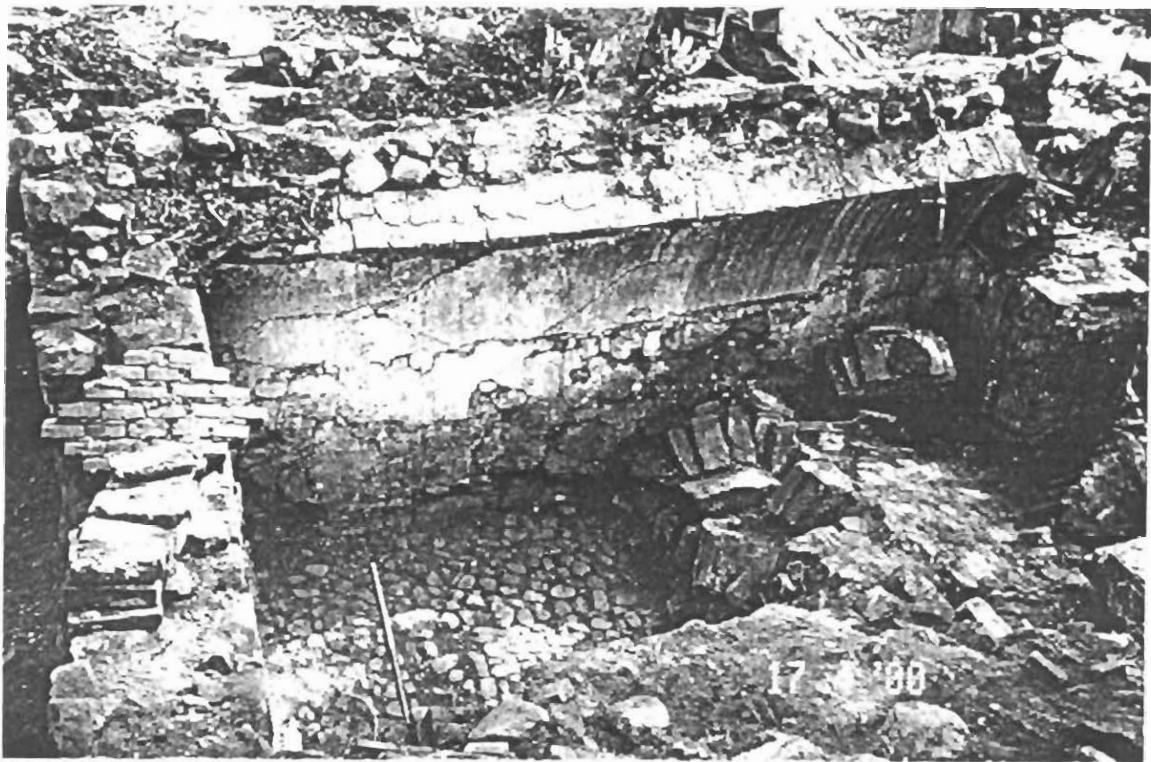
The entrance to the tomb measures 70cm in width and the supporting frame is made from yellow kiln fired bricks. The tomb is approximately 1 meter 800cm at its highest point.



- 1 calcrete plaster
- 2 undressed tms sandstone
- 3 yellow brick

FIG.4.

0 1m



1 cobbled floor
2 red brick

3 yellow brick
4 tms boulders

FIG. 5

0 1m

Materials:

From ground level the tomb is constructed of undressed Table Mountain Sandstone to a height of 800cm. The walls of the tomb are composed of hard red bricks measuring 140X110 and 220x110cm respectively. Two types of mortar are present. A coarse lime-shell mortar which is found throughout the structure and the presence of a finer, calcrete mortar on the upper walls of the West side of the tomb. The internal walls of the tomb were painted with lime-wash. Fragments of wood were recovered from an area immediately outside the tomb entrance. The floor of the tomb, exposed in the South West section is made from river pebbles.

Site Survey:

An oblong structure measuring approximately three by one meter square similar to a grave site was noted lying behind, and to the East, of the tomb (Vide Fig.6). The mound of earth was exposed as part of a general survey to locate the presence of unmarked graves in the area. The structure was photographed and left undisturbed.

4. Conclusions

The excavation and fabric analysis of the standing walls of the tomb in 'The Woods' has led to the following conclusions:

1. The standing wall exposed in land clearing operations in April 2000 is the remains of a tomb. The structure is depicted in Snow's survey map 1862. The tomb is situated in the boundary off the Nooitgedacht estate.
2. The tomb is built in the late 18th early 19th century Dutch tradition with a vaulted ceiling and undressed stone foundation. The entrance to the tomb faces north. This type of construction is most frequently seen in the burial practices of those following the Christian tradition in the eighteenth century.* It is unlikely to be the tomb of an Islamic person. Burial practices in the Islamic tradition require that a Muslim bury their dead five to six feet below the ground.†
3. The tomb has been repaired, possibly more than once. This is indicated by the presence of a finer calcrete mortar on the west wall of the tomb, as well as, the presence of red bricks more characteristic of the British tradition than Dutch. The yellow kiln fired bricks, which make up the entrance to the tomb are of a modern construction.
4. The tomb has been desecrated. There is no evidence of a coffin(s) or the skeletal material, which was interred in the tomb in the historic past.
5. The oblong structure lying to the South East of the tomb is characteristic of a gravesite found in rural areas. This structure lies on top of several levels of infill which suggests that it is unlikely to be a grave, and more likely to be builders waste. If indeed it is a gravesite then it is a recent event. Partial excavation of this structure would resolve and help clarify the nature of this feature.



FIG. 6

5. Recommendations

1. Submit a copy of this report to the South African Heritage Resource Agency and await their recommendations
2. Evaluate any written submissions that may be submitted concerning the ownership of the tomb and formulate a joint management plan concerning its proposed destruction, or conservation.
3. Evaluate the written submissions from the Islamic community and formulate a joint plan of action concerning the removal of skeletal remains from gravesites, and reburial should the need arise.
4. Consider appointing an Archaeologist to be on site when trenching and construction work commences in the event that unmarked graves are uncovered.

6. References

1. **Patrick, M.K.** 1999 Report on a Phase One Archaeological Investigation of the Property known as The Woods, St Cyprians School. Unpublished Report prepared for the Board of Trustees St Cyprians.
2. **Malan, A.** 2000 St Cyprians Development Project, Preliminary Report. Historical Archaeological Research Group, University Of Cape Town.
3. **Fitzroy, V. M.** 1952 Down to Earth. Standard Press, Cape Town.
4. **Jaffer, M.** 1996 Guide to the Kramats of the Western Cape. Cape Mazaar Society, Cape Town.
5. **Smith, G.** 1993 Manifestations of Sainthood in Islam, Isis Press, Istanbul.
6. **Hart, T. G.** 1996 Phase Two Archaeological Investigation of Colonial Burial Patterns, Groote Constantia Estate. Prepared for the Groote Constantia Trust.
7. **Davids, A.** 1985 The History of Tan Baru. Intergrafis, Cape Town.

7. Investigation Team

Consultant	<i>Ms Mary Patrick</i>
Archaeology	<i>Ms Mary Patrick Mr Mzwandile Sasa Mr Mzunzima Mjikeelizo</i>
Report Preparation	<i>Ms Mary Patrick</i>

8. Acknowledgements

The Board of Trustees St Cyprian's School who commissioned this project. Ms Liz Brokemann for her assistance and access to archival material. Mr Ross James for his assistance in administrative matters.

Site Plans:	<i>Jane Visser & Mark Thomas Architects Inc</i>
Oral History	<i>Mr Dawood Zwavel, Bo-Kaap Community. Dr Abdul Kader Tayob, Dept. of Religious Studies, UCT Imam Bassere, Bo-Kaap Community</i>

APPENDICES

PUBLIC NOTICE

In terms of the South African Heritage Resource Act (Section 36) please be advised that Archaeological Investigations will be conducted at a tomb located in The Woods at St Cyprian's School for a 60-day period from 21 April to 20 June 2000.

Any persons who consider themselves interested and affected parties and who have documentary submissions, please contact:

Mr Ross James
Administration Manager
St Cyprian's School
(021) 461 1090

OPENBARE KENNISGEWING

Volgens die Suid-Afrikaanse Erfenis Bronne Wet (Afdeling 36) stel ons u hiermee in kennis dat argeologiese opgrawings vir 'n 60-dae periode vanaf 21 April tot 20 Junie 2000 by die Woods te St Cyprian Skool sal plaasvind.

Enige persone wat geïnteresseerd is, sowel as groepe wat geraak word en wat dokumente tot dien effek wil inlewer, kontak asseblief:

Mnr Ross James
Administratiewe Bestuurder
St Cyprian's Skool
(021) 461 1090

ISAZISO SIKAWONKE WONKE

Ngokomthetho woMzantsi Afrika wobutyebi bendalo (Icandelo 36) Uyaziswa ukuba uphando lwearkiyoloji luzakuqhutyelwa emadlakeni ase Woods e St Cyprian's iintsuku ezintandathu ukususela ngomhla we 21 April ukuya kowe-20 kuJuni kulo nyaka ka2000.

Nabani na onomdla okanye ochaphazelekayo nonamaxwebhu okumngqinela anokuwangenisa makancede aqhakamshelane:

NoMnu Ross James
Administration Manager
St Cyprian's School
(021) 461 1090

MINUTES OF MEETING

ST. CYPRIAN'S SCHOOL

PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE: THE WOODS PROJECT

This meeting: Monday 10 April 2000, 15:30

Next Meeting: Monday 16 May 2000, 16:00

Future Meeting: Monday 19 June 2000, 16:00

Present:

Name	Organisation
M.Patrick	Cape Archaeological Survey
T.Fairbairn	School Head
P.Syndercombe	Pre-School Head
N.Baumann	School Council
M.Thomas	Jane Vissser Mark Thomas Architects
D.Wares	Project Committee
R.James	St.Cyprians School
R.Espin	St.Cyprians School
E.Broekman	St.Cyprians School (ARC)
I.van Huyssteen	StCyprians PTA
S.Nicks	Parent
J.Knox	School Council (Parent)

Apologies received:

J Weight

Distribution:

Those present, apologies & members of the School Council plus D.Stewart

Meeting chaired by James Knox; minutes prepared by James Knox

1. Approval of Previous Minutes

1.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record of the proceedings.

2. Archaeological items

2.1 After a visit to the site, the meeting was advised by Ms. Patrick of the following:

2.1.1. A permit is required to carry out exploration of the site; however it is permissible to "clean and expose" without a new permit i.e. on the previous permit. This work will assist in confirming what the ruins are/were.

2.1.2 Ms. Patrick will proceed with two her assistants but may call on Mr.Espin for additional help if required.

2.1.3 There are new draft procedures for dealing with grave sites. These will be followed where possible, failing which the old procedures/guidelines will be followed.

There will be a newspaper article soon, partly to offset any mis-information that the Stoltzmans may try to disseminate. Liz Broekman and Inga Huyssteen may prepare an article on the earlier inhabitants.

2.2 A legal notice is to be placed in the local & national press, advising of our intention to explore the ruin. James Knox to follow up with Dick Cheeseman. This notice would be required in terms of the old regulations but it was felt that it signify openness in our dealings to the public.

2.3 Mary & Tess will initiate contact with the Van Breda & Verseveld (sp?) families, as they are the probable descendants of any deceased that might be found

2.4 Should there be positive links with a family established, the removal costs of remains will be to the account of the party wishing to move them.

2.5 Liz Broekman will involve the pupils wherever possible, so as to maximise the educational aspects of this process.

2.6 Agreed that we would advise our insurers of the excavation, in case of injury to anyone. We will demarcate the area with hazard tape (or similar)

MINUTES OF MEETING

ST. CYPRIAN'S SCHOOL

PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE: THE WOODS PROJECT

This meeting: Monday 08 May 2000, 15:30

Next Meeting: Monday 19 June 2000, 16:00

Future Meeting: (to be advised)

Present:

Name	Organisation
T.Fairbairn	School Head
P.Syndercombe	Pre-School Head
N.Baumann	School Council
J.Visser	Jane Visser Mark Thomas Architects
M.Thomas	Jane Visser Mark Thomas Architects
D.Stewart	Bernard James & Partners
D.Wares	Project Committee
R.James	St.Cyprians School
R.Espin	St.Cyprians School
E.Broekman	St.Cyprians School (ARC)
I.van Huyssteen	StCyprians PTA
A.Haggie	School Council
J.Weight	School Council
J.Knox	Project Committee

Apologies received:

M.Patrick

Distribution:

Those present, apologies & members of the School Council

Meeting chaired by James Knox; minutes prepared by James Knox

1. Approval of Previous Minutes

1.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record of the proceedings. The Chairman apologised for the incorrect date of the next meeting & thanked the attendees for getting it right.

2. Archaeological items

2.1 The adverts were placed in the local & national press (Mail & Guardian and Burger) in 3 languages on the 26 April. Our 60 day waiting period began then. There has been no response or reaction to the advert.

2.2 The question was raised: does the advert only refer to the tomb & mound already located? Does it mean that if another mound is found, the entire 60 day process must be restarted? We understand from Mary Patrick that the advert is sufficient for the whole site.

2.3 Mary Patrick has advised that she has visited the site with a Muslim representative who claims to have visited graves on the site as a child. She also advises that she has learned that the MJC intends to lay claim to the site.(Information forwarded by N.Baumann)

2.4 Contact has been made with the Verseveld families of the Darling & Kobokkeveld areas and they advise that they have no interest in the matter.

2.5 A letter was hand delivered to Mrs.Stoltzman on the 18 April, warning her not to enter the School grounds without prior arrangement with the School.

2.6 It is the intention to not open up the floor of the tomb, after verifying that there are no bones present. Excavation will be limited to the floor level.

Nasnuus

Kaapstad Cape Town

Aan Belanghebbendes

To Whom it may concern

Ons verklaar hiermee dat die aangehegte advertensie **AMPTELIKE KENNISGEWING**
We hereby certify that the attached advertisement **OFFICIAL NOTICE**

verskyn het in **DIE BURGER** van
duly appeared in **DIE BURGER** of

..... 26 April 2000
NASNUUS

.....
Bestuurder Advertensie-afdeling
Manager, Advertisement Department

Erfenis Bronne
OPENBARE
KENNISGEWING

Volgens die Suid-Afrikaanse Erfenis Bronne Wet (Afdeling 36) stel ons u hiermee in kennis dat argeologiese opgrawings vir 'n 60-dag tydperk van 21 April tot 20 Junie 2000 by die Woods by St Cyprian's Skool sal plaasvind.

Enige persone wat geïnteresseerd is, sowel as groepe wat geraak word en wat dokumente te dien effekte wil inlewer, skakel asseblief: Mnr. Ross James, Administratiewe Bestuurder, St Cyprian's Skool, (021) 461-1090.

PUBLIC NOTICE

In terms of the South African Heritage Resource Act (Section 36) please be advised that Archaeological Investigations will be conducted at a tomb located in The Woods at St Cyprian's School for a 60-day period from 21 April to 20 June 2000.

Any persons who consider themselves interested and affected parties and who have documentary submissions, please contact: Mr Ross James, Administration Manager, St Cyprian's School, (021) 461-1090.

ISAZISO SIKAWONKE
WONKE

Ngokomthetho woMzantsi Afrika wobutyebi bendaio (icandelo 36) Uyaziswa ukuba uphando lwe-archeology, luzakuqhutyelwa emadlakeni ase woods e St Cyprian's lintsuku ezintandathu ukusela ngomhla we 21 April ukuya kowe-20 kuJuni kulo nyaka ka2000.

Nabani na onomdla okanye ochaphazelekayo nonamaxwebhu okumngqinela anokuwangentsa makancede aqhakamshelane: NoMnu Ross James, Administration Manager, St Cyprian's School, (021) 461-1090.
3498704 Apr.26-(232)
R

Appendix 4 Copy of Official Notice displayed in Die Burger asking for written submissions from concerned and affected parties.



LEON LESTRADE

Unearthed: St Cyprian's teacher Liz Broekmann indicates the wall that is believed to be part of an old burial vault

School find hints at burial vault

CAROL CAMPBELL
STAFF REPORTER

A wall believed to be part of a burial vault that could date back to the late 1700s has been uncovered at St Cyprian's School in Oranjezicht.

Teacher Liz Broekmann, head of the school's archaeological resource centre, said a dig would be conducted on the overgrown site to try to establish exactly what the building was.

"At this point all we can see is a wall. But there are people who remember seeing a vault in the area."

The archaeological dig will be the second commissioned by the school for the site. The first was done several months ago to clear the way for a controversial building project which the school still hopes to carry out.

The project was postponed when it was thought there might be Muslim graves in the area. It is now in the final

stages of assessment by the National Monuments Council.

"The first dig missed the vault by only 3m," Mrs Broekmann said. "We knew something was there but we just couldn't find it."

Archaeologists advising the school on the historical value of the site believe the vault could have been built by businessman Willem Versveld, who owned the land from 1777 for about 10 years.

"One of our problems is that this particular piece of land has changed hands dozens of times so it's difficult to pinpoint exactly who built what."

The land where St Cyprian's is built was first purchased in 1708 by a Dutchman called Johannes Ossenbuil, who probably used it for grazing livestock.

The land changed hands over the years, and several dwellings and out-buildings were built on it.

Earlier archaeological digs have been conducted at the school. The first,

in 1993, was in front of the old slave quarters and uncovered broken porcelain and bits of bone – the sort of things that would have been tossed out as kitchen waste.

The second dig, later the same year, was under the "voorkamer" floor in the oldest part of the school. It was done to uncover the sequence of building work. The site is still used by the school for educational purposes.

The latest find, said Mrs Broekmann, was "exciting" especially since there were many school legends about the vault.

In one instance, the story goes, four of the younger St Cyprian's pupils who were bunking cricket practice by hiding in the woods in about 1910, came across the vault, broke in and found the body of a young girl in a glass coffin.

"The school has an archaeological resource centre which makes this type of find all the more meaningful for the pupils," Mrs Broekmann said.