



Archaetnos Culture & Cultural  
Resource Consultants  
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**A REPORT ON THE PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION OF TWO  
HISTORICAL GRAVES ON PLOT 1242, ZEERUST,  
NORTHWEST PROVINCE**

For:

***BHYAT MOTORS  
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**REPORT: AE742**

by:

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## SUMMARY

Archaetnos cc was requested by Cornelius du Rand Attorneys of Zeerust, on behalf of Bhyat Motors cc, to conduct an investigation of two historical graves on Plot 1242, Zeerust. These graves are threatened by new building developments here, and will have to be exhumed and relocated to the Zeerust Municipal Cemetery.

As will be indicated by this report, the process of investigation and relocation had commenced nearly a year ago, and it is only at this late stage that the clients have contracted an archaeologist to be involved. Development has already started, and it is therefore imperative that these graves are relocated as soon as possible, before any further damage to them is caused.

Once the archaeological investigation of and exhumation and relocation of these two graves are successfully completed, the development can be allowed to continue.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Archaeos cc was requested by Cornelius du Rand Attorneys of Zeerust, on behalf of Bhyat Motors cc, to conduct an investigation of two historical graves on Plot 1242, Zeerust. These graves are threatened by new building developments here, and will have to be exhumed and relocated to the Zeerust Municipal Cemetery.

## **2. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Terms of Reference for the preliminary investigation of the two historical graves were the:

1. Detailed recording and documentation of the two historical graves
2. Assessment of their historical significance
3. Describing the possible impact of the development on these graves, according to a standard set of conventions.
4. Proposal of suitable mitigation measures to minimize possible negative impacts on them.
5. Reviewing of applicable legislative requirements.

## **3. CONDITIONS & ASSUMPTIONS**

The following conditions and assumptions have a direct bearing on the investigation and the resulting report:

1. Cultural Resources are all non-physical and physical man-made occurrences, as well as natural occurrences associated with human activity. These include all sites, structure and artifacts of importance, either individually or in groups, in the history, architecture and archaeology of human (cultural) development. Graves and cemeteries are included in this.
2. The significance of the sites, structures and artifacts is determined by means of their historical, social, aesthetic, technological and scientific value in relation to their uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential. The various aspects are not mutually exclusive, and the evaluation of any site is done with reference to any number of these aspects.
3. Cultural significance is site-specific and relates to the content and context of the site. Sites regarded as having low cultural significance have already been recorded in full and require no further mitigation. Sites with medium cultural significance may or may not require mitigation depending on other factors such as the significance of impact on the site. Sites with a high cultural significance require further mitigation (see appendix B).

4. The latitude and longitude of any archaeological or historical site or feature, is to be treated as sensitive information by the developer and should not be disclosed to members of the public.
5. All recommendations are made with full cognizance of the relevant legislation.
6. It has to be mentioned that it is almost impossible to locate all the cultural resources in a given area, as it will be very time consuming. Developers should however note that the report should make it clear how to handle any other finds that might occur.

#### **4. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

Aspects concerning the conservation of cultural resources are dealt with mainly in two acts. These are the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) and the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998).

##### **The National Heritage Resources Act**

According to the above-mentioned law the following is protected as cultural heritage resources:

- a. Archaeological artifacts, structures and sites older than 100 years
- b. Ethnographic art objects (e.g. prehistoric rock art) and ethnography
- c. Objects of decorative and visual arts
- d. Military objects, structures and sites older than 75 years
- e. Historical objects, structures and sites older than 60 years
- f. Proclaimed heritage sites
- g. Grave yards and graves older than 60 years
- h. Meteorites and fossils
- i. Objects, structures and sites of scientific or technological value.

##### **Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites**

Section 35(4) of this act states that no person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority:

- a. destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or any meteorite;
- b. destroy, damage, excavate, remove from its original position, collect or own any archaeological or palaeontological material or object or any meteorite;
- c. trade in, sell for private gain, export or attempt to export from the Republic any category of archaeological or palaeontological material or object, or any meteorite; or
- d. bring onto or use at an archaeological or palaeontological site any excavation equipment or any equipment that assists in the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological and palaeontological material or objects, or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.
- e. alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years as protected.

The above mentioned may only be disturbed or moved by an archaeologist, after receiving a permit from the South African Heritage Resources Agency.

### **Human remains**

In terms of Section 36(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act, no person may, without a permit issued by the relevant heritage resources authority:

- a. destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position of otherwise disturb the grave of a victim of conflict, or any burial ground or part thereof which contains such graves;
- b. destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority; or
- c. bring onto or use at a burial ground or grave referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) any excavation, or any equipment which assists in the detection or recovery of metals.

Human remains that are less than 60 years old are subject to provisions of the Human Tissue Act (Act 65 of 1983) and to local regulations. Exhumation of graves must conform to the standards set out in the **Ordinance on Excavations (Ordinance no. 12 of 1980)** (replacing the old Transvaal Ordinance no. 7 of 1925).

Permission must also be gained from the descendants (where known), the National Department of Health, Provincial Department of Health, Premier of the Province and local police. Furthermore, permission must also be gained from the various landowners (i.e. where the graves are located and where they are to be relocated) before exhumation can take place.

Human remains can only be handled by a registered undertaker or an institution declared under the **Human Tissues Act (Act 65 of 1983 as amended)**.

Unidentified/unknown graves are also handled as older than 60 until proven otherwise.

### **The National Environmental Management Act**

This act states that a survey and evaluation of cultural resources must be done in areas where development projects, that will change the face of the environment, will be undertaken. The impact of the development on these resources should be determined and proposals for the mitigation thereof are made.

## **5. METHODOLOGY**

### Survey of literature

A survey of literature was done in order to obtain background information regarding the area. Sources consulted in this regard are indicated in the bibliography. An archival search on the property, as well as on the two graves and the individuals buried here, were also conducted.

## Field survey

Although the survey (preliminary investigation) concentrated on the already known graves, all possible related features such as historic buildings, were also recorded.

The survey was undertaken on foot.

## Documentation

Both graves were recorded photographically, while all relevant information (inscriptions) visible on the tombstones of the two graves was also documented. All related features (a historic building and a third grave) were also documented. The location of the site was also recorded through a Global Positioning System (GPS).

## 6. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

The development area is located on Plot 1242, in the town of Zeerust and situated in Voortrekker Street. It is located in the Marico magisterial district of the Northwest Province.

Development of the property has already commenced, and the two graves that have to be exhumed and relocated are enclosed within a newly built shop (see **Fig. 1**). According to the client's attorney, Mr. Cornelius du Rand, the graves were originally located in the courtyard or garden of a Freemason's Lodge (see **Fig. 2 - 3**), the building of which is situated behind this newly built shop. Some renovations and changes to this historic building are clearly visible from fig. 2 & 3.

The GPS location of the grave site is between **25°32.668' S and 26°04.657' E**.

## 7. DISCUSSION

As mentioned earlier, the two graves that have to be relocated are located on Plot 1242 in Zeerust town, and are currently enclosed in a new building intended as a shop. This development was undertaken more than a year ago already, and the clients commenced with the opening-up of the graves before realizing that these graves need to be investigated by an archaeologist because they are older than 60 years of age. They were given permission by the MEC for Developmental Local Government and Housing, Northwest Province in July 2006 to undertake the exhumation and relocation. In December 2006 they applied for a permit from SAHRA Northwest, but were told that they had to get an archaeologist to do the physical investigation. This they proceeded to do.

The two graves were located in the courtyard or garden of a historical Freemason's Lodge. Unfortunately the tombstones (flat-lying slabs of slate) were already removed from the graves (see **Fig. 4**) when we carried out the preliminary investigations, and were in a bad state of repair. However, it was possible to record all the details needed for the archival and literary background research on the two tombstones (**Appendix D**).

Grave 1

This is the grave of a female named **Catherine Sarah Dickinson** (see **Fig. 5**). The tombstone, made out of slate, has the following inscription on it:

**SACRED**  
**TO THE MEMORY OF CATHERINE SARAH DICKINSON**  
**The Beloved Wife of George Dickinson**  
**Born 23 November 1837**  
**Died on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 1876**  
**Aged 38 Years 9 Months**

**UNVEIL THY BOSOM, FAUTHFUL TOMB**  
**TAKE THIS NEW TREASURE TO THY TRUST**  
**AND GIVE THESE SACRED RELICS ROOM**  
**AWHILE TO SLUMBER IN THE DUST**

**J.HARLEY**

**POTCHEFSTROOM**

Grave 2

This is the grave of a male individual named **Jacob Andrew Lewis Montgomery** (see **Fig. 6**), reportedly the first Landdrost of the Marico district, located in Zeerust and an individual who played a big role in the establishment of Zeerust. The style of inscription on his tombstone is very similar to that of Grave 1, and possibly done by the same **J.Harley of Potchefstroom** who made Catherine Dickinson's tombstone. The inscription reads as follows:

**SACRED**  
**TO THE MEMORY OF JACOB ANDREW LEWIS**  
**MONTGOMERY**  
**Died May<sup>th</sup> 2 1873 Aged 39 Years**  
**4 Months**

**Beloved Husband of ELSIE S**  
**MONTGOMERY born ROBBERTS**

**As for man, his days are as grass,**  
**as a flower of the fields, so he flourish (eth)**  
**For the wind passeth over it and it is**  
**gone, and the place thereof, shall... (missing) Psalm Verses**

A third grave is also located on the premises of Plot 1242, but separate from the first two graves. There are no plans at this stage for this grave to be relocated.



### Grave 3

This is the grave of **Casper H. Coetzee** (see **Fig. 7**), the brother of Diederik J. Coetzee, the man mainly credited for the establishment of Zeerust. The inscription on his headstone, clearly erected newly in 1948, is as follows:

**Ter  
Gedagtenis aan  
Casper H. Coetzee  
Medestigter van die  
Dorp Zeerust**

**Opperig deur die Sentrale  
Burgergraftekomitee  
1948**

During the preliminary investigation of the graves, it was also decided to visit the Zeerust Municipal Cemetery where the graves will be relocated to. During the visit to the old portion of the cemetery we located the grave (see **Fig.8 - 9**) of who we believe is the daughter of **Catherine Sarah Dickinson**. Although the headstone is badly damaged, it is in the same style as the one located at Plot 1242. We were able to make out some portions of the original inscription, which reads:

**SACRED  
TO THE  
MEMORY  
OF  
SARAH CATHERINE  
(BOR)N DICKINSON BELOVED WIFE  
OF...**

## **8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In conclusion it is clear that it would be necessary to exhume and relocate the graves from Plot 1242, Zeerust as a matter of urgency. Development around these graves has already commenced, and some damage to the tombstones has occurred. From the information gathered during historical background research it is clear that JAL Montgomery is an important historical figure in the history of the town of Zeerust as well as the Marico district. He definitely deserves the same respect as DJ Coetzee whose grave is indicated by information signs. Such an important historical figure does not deserve to be forgotten and it is a sad state of affairs that his grave was desecrated. This is especially true since permission was given by those who were placed in positions of power, and who were supposed to know the applicable legislation.

It is also clear that George Dickinson was an important figure in the early days of Zeerust. Therefore the grave and remains of his wife deserve similar respect.

It has become the norm nowadays to make a concerned effort in the reburial of the remains of the ancestors of different groups in this country. The remains of these two people should be treated with as much respect and in a similar fashion.

Unfortunately the damage has been done and it seems indeed as if the exhumation and reburial of these remains now is the only option. It would be just to minimize the desecration by reburying them near to DJ Coetzee where they would be treated with a similar respect.

If CH Coetzee were involved in the establishment of the town as indicated on the headstone of his grave, he should receive the same respect. It seems logical that his remains should also be moved to the same area as he would certainly not receive any respect if left in the back yard of a shopping complex.

If it is not possible to relocate the graves to the area where DJ Coetzee's grave is located, we would strongly recommend the following:

1. That the grave of Catherine Sarah Dickinson be relocated to the old section of the Zeerust Municipal Cemetery and that she be reburied near to or next the grave of Sarah Catherine Dickinson, possibly her daughter
2. That the grave of Jacob Andrew Lewis Montgomery also be relocated to the old section and that a plaque commemorating his life and death be erected at the grave. The same can be done for Catherine Sarah Dickinson
3. That the grave of Casper H. Coetzee be relocated to the site where his brother's grave is located. This is however a matter that can be resolved at a later stage. In the interim his grave needs to be protected against vandalism and damage (erecting a protective fence could be considered), while the area around his grave should be cleaned and kept clean

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## **Appendix A**

### **Definition of terms:**

Site: A large place with extensive structures and related cultural objects. It can also be a large assemblage of cultural artifacts, found on a single location.

Structure: A permanent building found in isolation or which forms a site in conjunction with other structures.

Feature: A coincidental find of movable cultural objects.

Object: Artifact (cultural object).

(Also see Knudson 1978: 20).

## **Appendix B**

### Cultural significance:

- Low            A cultural object being found out of context, not being part of a site or without any related feature/structure in its surroundings.
  
- Medium        Any site, structure or feature being regarded less important due to a number of factors, such as date and frequency. Also any important object found out of context.
  
- High            Any site, structure or feature regarded as important because of its age or uniqueness. Graves are always categorised as of a high importance. Also any important object found within a specific context.

## Appendix C

### List of Figures:

1. **Fig. 1: View of shop enclosing graves**
2. **Fig. 2: Historical Freemason's Lodge on the property**
3. **Fig. 3: Another view of the Freemason's building, showing renovations**
4. **Fig. 4: The two graves, showing the burial pits with cement covering. Note the fact that the headstones/inscribe slabs has already been removed**
5. **Fig. 5: The gravestone of Catherine Sarah Dickinson – Grave 1**
6. **Fig. 6: The gravestone of Jacob Andrew Lewis Montgomery – Grave 2**
7. **Fig. 7: The grave of Casper H. Coetzee**
8. **Fig. 8: The grave of Sarah Catherine Dickinson in Zeerust Cemetery**
9. **Fig. 9: Headstone of Sarah Catherine Dickinson's grave**

## **Appendix D – Historical Background**

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON TWO GRAVES FROM PLOT 1242, VOORTREKKER STREET, ZEERUST**

**Anton C van Vollenhoven**  
**Archaetnos**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This section deals with the historical information obtained regarding the two graves from plot 1242, Voortrekker Street, Zeerust in the Northwest Province. These graves, together with that of Casper H Coetzee, are situated in the garden of the former Free Masons lodge in the town of Zeerust. The headstone of Coetzee's grave indicates him as being a co-founder of the town of Zeerust.

#### **2. GRAVE OF JAL MONTGOMERY**

The first grave is that of Jacob Andrew Lewis Montgomery. These are the names indicated on his tombstone. However archival documents refer to him as Jacob Andries Louis Montgomery (NAD, TAB, MHG 0, 01, 0/4). One can safely assume that the spelling of the names on the grave is correct. It has to be remembered that during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century few people were able to write properly. Also, in the former Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) it was typical to translate English names into Dutch.

It was indicated that Montgomery was the first landdrost (landdros) of the town of Zeerust (personal comment: C du Rand). A vast amount of archival documents show that he was indeed the landdrost, but of the district of Marico and seated in this town. He does seem to have played an important role in the Marico area even before the establishment of the town of Zeerust.

At a time he was the Acting Field-cornet (Veldkornet). This probably was for the Field-cornet Ward of Marico, as it was not yet a district. In those days districts were divided into Field-cornet wards. During this time, on 2 September 1869, he requested that Zeerust gets its own Justice-of-Peace (Vrederegter) (NAD, TAB, SS 113, 01, R 1013/69). It is interesting that the name Zeerust is mentioned, as the town was only established in 1872 (Bergh 1999: 20). This is due to the fact that a settlement had already been established here.

On 26 September 1871, the Secretary of the Volksraad (House of Parliament) of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (old Transvaal Government) indicated that Montgomery and a Mr Jeppe wanted to present a memorandum to the House in which they asked for the establishment of a new town, called Zeerust (NAD, TAB, SS 139, 01, SUPL 70/71). This is also very interesting as it indicates that he played a major role in the establishment of the town, whereas it is commonly accepted that it was DJ Coetzee (see later).

CB Otto requested a day later, that Montgomery be proposed as landdrost for the Marico district (NAD, TAB, SS 136, 01, R 1057/71). This probably was in preparation for the establishment of this district as the district of Marico was only established in 1872 (Bergh 1999: 20).

He also seems to have been involved in state affairs. He was for instance a member of different commissions regarding various issues, such as land affairs. Proof that he had been an active and outstanding citizen can also be deduced from various other documents. One of these indicates that the landdrost (probably of Rustenburg) requested on 19 February 1872 that Montgomery be appointed as landdrost (probably for Marico) (NAD, TAB, SS 141, 01, R 300/72). It is indicated that the letter was written in the Marico, but one must realize that in those times people indicated where they were present when writing a letter (of course Marico was part of the district of Rustenburg). On 21 February of the same year it was also requested that he be appointed as the representative in Marico for the Weesheer (orphan-master) (NAD, TAB, SS 141, 01, R 253/72).

These requests were successful as he accepted the position as the first landdrost for Zeerust on 4 July 1872 (NAD, TAB, SS 145, 01, R 839/72). Although the document indicates that he was the landdrost for Zeerust, it actually only means that he was seated at Zeerust. On 6 July 1872 he requested the necessary support to furnish his office in the Marico (NAD, TAB, SS 145, 01, R 847/72).

Unfortunately JAL Montgomery was not in office for very long. The date on his tombstone indicates that he died in the age of 39 years, on 2 May 1873. The official notice of his death was given by JE Hutten on 6 May 1873 (NAD, TAB, SS 156, 01, R 685/73). The last document in the archives regarding him is one indicating that his surviving spouse was Elsje Susanna Montgomery, born Robberts (NAD, TAB, MHG 0,01, 0/4). Again this is evidence of names being translated into Dutch as her names on his grave is indicated as being Elsie S Montgomery.

### **3. GRAVE OF CS DICKINSON**

This is the grave of Catherine Sarah Dickinson, wife of George Dickinson. The tombstone indicates that she was born on 23 November 1837 and that she died on 1 August 1876. There is only one document in the National Archives regarding her.

In this document her names are also translated into Dutch. It is also interesting that the names are swapped and she is indicated as being Sarah Catharina, born Reid (NAD, TAB MHG 0, 01, 0/597). This document, dated 1876, also indicates her husband as being George Dickinson.

Two documents were found in the archives regarding her husband. The first indicates that he was also involved in state affairs. The document, dated 22 February 1872 states that DJ Cotze (Coetzee), J Beker (Bekker) and G Dickinson from Zeerust reported that it was in order for their commission to start operating from an office in Zeerust (NAD, TAB, SS 185, 01, R 515/75). The second document is a letter, dated 20 October 1876, from G Dickinson and others from Zeerust objecting to the introduction of a war tax (NAD, TAB, SS 218, 01, R 2871/76).



#### **4. THE TOWN OF ZEERUST AND THE DISTRICT OF MARICO**

The Marico area has been identified since 1851 when JA Enslin was appointed as Kommandant-Generaal (Commander General) for this area (Bergh & Ferreira 1999: 134). DJ Coetzee received approval from the Uitvoerende Raad (Executive Council) of the ZAR in 1858 to establish a town on his farm Nooitgedacht in the Klein Marico area. He was however unsuccessful in implementing it. Agitation for a town to be established here however continued.

From 1866 Diederick Coetzee succeeded in obtaining permission for his farm to become a town and he even started to sell plots in 1867. In 1870 TWD Morkel was appointed Justice-of-Peace for the ward of Marico. This led to requests that the ward be made a district with its own landdrost (Bergh 1999: 143). On 30 October 1871 the Volksraad decided that Marico should become a separate district. This was formalized by a proclamation on 24 February 1872 (Bergh 1999: 140). Zeerust was formally established as town and Montgomery became the first landdrost (Bergh 1999: 143).

From the above mentioned information there does not always seem to be a clear distinction between the town of Zeerust and the district of Marico. Since the establishment of the town and that of the district goes hand in hand, it however clarifies this matter. Strictly speaking it would be correct to say that Zeerust was the seat for the district of Marico, established in 1872.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

From the above mentioned information it is clear that JAL Montgomery is an important historical figure in the history of the town of Zeerust as well as the Marico district. He definitely deserves the same respect as DJ Coetzee whose grave is indicated by information signs. Such an important historical figure does not deserve to be forgotten and it is a sad state of affairs that his grave was desecrated. This is especially true since permission was given by those who were placed in positions of power, and who were supposed to know the applicable legislation.

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remains should also be moved to the same area as he would certainly not receive any respect if left in the back yard of a shopping complex.

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