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In this Issue
Farmhouse at Klaasvoogds Rivier - Elize Joubert
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Cover design
Design symbolizes architecture in a modern African context
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I remember visiting the house about 30 years ago. My father took my sister and I to see the house that his grandfather, our Oupa-Grootjie, known as Uncle Johnny, built a long time ago. I remember the stoep, and the apricot orchard next to the house, but most of all I was fascinated by the signature made by my great grandfather on a glass window pane with his wife’s diamond ring. I did not know then that many moons later I would return to the house and measure it up and record it as part of a survey assignment towards the Master’s degree in Conservation of the Built Environment at the University of Cape Town. A second assignment required us to do historical research of a heritage resource, and this gave me the wonderful opportunity to look back into the past and discover the story of the little house and its occupants.

This article is therefore a combined and edited version of two assignments.

The story of the house and its people

Nearby stands a third house, small, single-storeyed and flat-roofed. It has a low-pitched triangular pediment over the middle third of the façade, and is dated 1881 (Fransen 1980: 329).

This is the way the small farm house was described in Hans Fransen and Mary Cook’s book, The Old Buildings of the Cape (1980). The purpose of their book was to have some documented inventory of all the old buildings because at that time there was “a remarkable upsurge of interest in the historical styles of architecture in South Africa” (Fransen & Cook 1980: ix). Unfortunately, the buildings that were described with great detail under ‘Klaasvoogds Rivier’, have since been destroyed and are no longer available as heritage resources for future generations.
Klaasvoogds Rivier East is a little hidden valley, similar to the Keisie and the Koo beyond Montagu (Fig. 1). I showed Fransen two aerial photographs of the Klaasvoogds Rivier East area. The earliest available aerial photograph was taken in the sixties, about the time when he and Mary Cook did their first historical survey. The houses that they described as being significant are still clearly visible. In the second aerial photograph, taken in 2010, those houses are gone, demolished at some point. The little cottage mentioned in the book is the only house still standing. Fransen expressed strong concern about the clear change in the landscape over the past 40 years. These seemingly unimportant environments are disappearing rapidly and, if not protected, will disappear completely.

The origin of the name Klaasvoogds Rivier

There are different versions of the origin of the name Klaasvoogds Rivier. The most popular version, and the one still told by the volksmond1 is the story of a Khoekhoe by the name of Claas, who was trampled to death by an elephant in the area of the two rivers. The Swedish naturalist Carl Thunberg attributed the name to a colonist called Claas Voogt, who was trampled by the elephant. In 1768 he and Anders Sparman asked the local people about the name and they told them that Voogt was a member of the “bushfighting gentry who was trampled to dead by an elephant and the soil was drained with blood” (Van Bon 2007).

A more believable version suggests that the rivers and the area were called after a German Dutch East India Company (VOC) soldier, Claus Voigts, who was sent to punish Khoekhoe cattle thieves in the Kogmanskloof in 1717 (Stemmet 1965:39). Claus Voigts was born around 1670 in Hensted between Hamburg and Neumunster in North Germany. In 1692 he arrived as a soldier of the VOC in Cape Town with the vessel Haemstede. Voigts attended an annual military call-up in Stellenbosch but in 1719 it was recorded that he passed away in the previous year, with no cause of death given (Van Bon 2007).

Another, more colourful, version is that the said Claus Voigts abandoned the garrison and became a rogue frontiersman, at the forefront of a small group of hunters, traders, scouts, trackers and cattle rustlers. He was one of the first Europeans to ‘go native’ and assume a nomadic-type lifestyle. It was known that he was able to communicate with the indigenous people in their own language. According to Van Bon: “He was also one of the clever ones”. The Opgaaf Rollen provide data about his taxable wealth; “nothing to declare and always on the move, amassing ‘wealth’ in other non-conventional ways” (Van Bon 2007).

The Klaasvoogds River starts in the Langeberg and has two tributaries, namely the Small Klaasvoogds River flowing through Klaasvoogds West and the Big Klaasvoogds River flowing through Klaasvoogds East. Lower down they run parallel until they join at Goedemoed to flow into the Bree River. The rivers are fed by south-east rains in summer and north-west rains in winter. The source of the Big Klaasvoogds River is a natural spring (Stemmet 2004: 38).

Travellers from Robertson to Ashton had to struggle through the river beds of the Klaasvoogds River and the Kogmans River. In his book, Sunrise on the Langeberge, William Nicol3 tells how his father, Matthew Nicol and a Dr Arthur Stevens, ended up with a broken wheel when they got stuck in the river bed on the way back from seeing a patient in Zandvliet (Nicol 1958).
The history of water mills in Klaasvoogds River is unknown, but it is believed that the first water mills were built in the 18th century when farmers started planting grain. The top water mill was located on the farm Fraai Uitzicht. Three sources indicated the position of a second mill about half kilometre lower down, on the farm De Molen. A third water mill was located on the farm De Heuwel and was still in use in 1933. This mill was broken down in 1953. There is a photograph amongst the family photographs showing my great grandfather and two of his sons standing at a water mill (Fig.2). It could have been the earliest mill, which was closest to their house (Stemmet 1965: 39).

History of ownership

The laws of Holland (Roman Dutch law) were applicable in the Cape, due to the power of the VOC and the de facto possession of the Cape by Jan van Riebeeck and those who followed him. At the outset settlement was not extensive and it had not been taken by force. Van Riebeeck was careful to preserve a quiet relationship between the settlers and the Khoekhoe, yet he made no attempt to purchase land and to compensate the Khoekhoe (Fisher 1984: 72). Land that belonged to so-called primitive people was considered as terrae nullius (land belonging to nobody), and as such the VOC assumed ownership by occupation (Thomas et al. 2000: 10).

According to Tromp (1953), Claes Jansz van Rensburg became ordonnansie-houer aan die Claas Voogt rivier on 5 July 1724. This meant that he could utilize the area for grazing and hunting purposes. It is later recorded that Hendrik van der Merwe was granted a grazing permit at Klaasvoogds Rivier in November 1729. Van der Merwe was the first cattle farmer in this area to change his farm into a leningseidendomplaas (loan-freehold) farm. He purchased the house and 60 morgen for 100 rixdollars and paid the annual fee of 24 rixdollars for the farm. The farm was then inherited by his son, Hendrik junior (Tromp 1953:7).
Land tenure

Freehold tenure was a form of land grant given to establish new farmers while binding them to the Company’s purpose by several obligations. However, they were considered ‘free’ to decide on how to use the land they were given and how to conduct their lives.

Loan tenure (between 1654 and 1714) was a form of gratuitous lease of land to the colonists. It originated in the first years of the Cape settlement when the VOC ‘allowed’ the inhabitants to use areas of land for the cultivation of domestic produce and for the grazing of animals. No rent was payable since it was offered rent free for 60 years. The main reason was that the immigrant colonists were extremely poor and it was difficult and expensive to start farming successfully, let alone to have to pay for the use of the land.

Another form of loan-tenure was introduced in 1714 when the administration thereof became more formalized. It was allocated by a renewal licence of 6 rixdollars every 6 months, and in 1732 this amount was increased to 24 rixdollars per year. As the agricultural economy of the Cape colony grew, so did its geographical extent and the need for land increased.

A hybrid form of tenure, loan-freehold, was created by the conversion to freehold of that part of a loan farm upon which the occupier had erected his main buildings and other improvements. In 1732 quitrent tenure was introduced. The quitrent grantee was obliged to pay an annual rent, which varied, for a 15 year tenure. The 15 year term was renewed in 1747 and 1762 after which the title became perpetual. Land rights were thus formally recorded and the records were maintained throughout the period (Fisher 1984: 72-73, 79).

It is further stated by Tromp that Johan Andries Kok became the next owner in 1790. However, other records show that Jacobus Conradie owned the farm from 1806 when he married Hendrik junior’s widow. He added another farm to the original farm. It is possible that Hendrik’s widow was first married to J.A. Kok with whom she had a few children. The farm would then have become the property of J.A. Kok, and after his death and upon the widow’s third marriage, would become the property of J. Conradie. Subsequently, after Conradie’s death, the farm was inherited by the Kok sons and heirs in 1822.

Widows and land inheritance

Ownership of farms is very difficult to follow, because every time a widow remarried the owner’s name changed to that of her new husband, because they were mostly married in community of property. At a later stage, due to laws that were brought in to protect children in obtaining their rightful inheritance, property was often transferred back to the name of the child or children with the original surname, when they came into their inheritance. In the case of Catharina M. Kriel, who was married to J.S.W. Kok and later to J.F. Möller, she had children by the name of Kok. When her last husband became insolvent, the property was transferred to Theodorius Louis Kriel senior, possibly her father or brother. In 1872 J acobus Eduard Kok obtained portion 4 (of 2) of the farm, being related to the late J.S.W. Kok. Another son, Theodorius Louis Kok, received portion 3 in 1873.

In the Title Deed Register of Farms, the first deed for Klaasvoogds Rivier Farm no. 36 was recorded in 1862 when the farm was transferred from the insolvent estate of Jacob Francois Möller and Catharina Margaretha Kriel, previously the widow of Jacobus Schalk Willem Kok. Möller’s sequestrated estate was subsequently transferred to Theodorius Louis Kriel senior, who transferred two portions of the farm in 1866 as follows: Portion 1 to Theodorius Louis Kriel, Portion 2 to Isaac Bernard Kok, and in 1871 Portion 3 was transferred to Johannes Wilhelm le Roux. In 1872 Jacobus Eduard Kok became the owner of Portion 4 (of portion 2) of the farm Klaasvoogds Rivier.
In 1881, Portion 2 of the farm Klaasvoogds Rivier was subdivided, and a piece of land approximately 1 hectare (portion 4 of portion 2) was bought by Johan Wilhelm Francois Fourie and his newly wed wife, Catharina Elizabeth Kok. Johan Wilhelm Francois Fourie was my great-grandfather.

A house is shown on the Surveyor’s Diagram of 1881. The house as it appears now was built just prior to the subdivision and the date was inscribed in the flat triangular pediment. Johan Wilhelm was very proud of his new house, and on a window pane in the double door on the left (facing the house), he signed his name with his wife’s diamond ring. This signature is still intact in the same original pane of glass in the same double door that opens onto the patio (Fig. 3).

The house was sold in 1920 by my great-grandfather after living there for nearly 40 years. It was purchased by Johan Frederick Stemmet and in 1950 he sold the house to Joshua Pieter Conradie, who sold it to Johannes Jacobus de Wit in 1975. My father revisited the house in 1959 and again in 1988, when he showed it to us. In 1990 it was sold to J. and I.S.M. Volschenk and two years later to P. and W.C. Marsland. In 1993 the small farm house was purchased by the current owners, Graham and Analie McMillan. They lived in the house for nine years and planned to do alterations to the existing house. They were dissuaded from adding to the old farm house and decided to rather build a new house on the property. Currently the old house is standing empty but is sometimes offered to overnight guests.
Figure 4:
Photograph of my grandfather and father visiting the house in 1959 with my one year old brother. All three generations in the photograph are named Jacobus Philippus Fourie. My grandfather is shown in one of the photos of the family as a baby on a swing, and later as a young man posing with a book.

History of the inhabitants

The first inhabitants of the farm house at Klaasvoogds Rivier were Johan Wilhelm Francois Fourie and his wife Catharina Elizabeth Kok. Their nine children were all born and raised in the small house: Stephanus Josephus (born 26/6/1880), Johan Andries (born 16/7/1882), Johan Wilhelm Francois (born 17/6/1884), Johanna Susanna (born 5/4/1887), Jacobus Philippus (born 26/7/1889), Maryna Gertruida (born 22/6/1891), Catharina Elizabeth (born 4/4/1894), Wessel Jurie (born 4/2/1897), and Martha Helena (born 31/1/1903). The children were all christened in the Dutch Reformed Church in Robertson, in the time of Reverend McGregor after whom the village of McGregor was later named (Fourie c.1980).

Figure 5:
Photograph of the first inhabitants of the house, presumably taken in 1890 (J.W.F. Fourie). Note the canvas backdrop and decorative props.
The Fourie family
Barend Jacobus De Klerk Fourie, descendant of the fourth son, Jacobus Philippus, has researched the family’s genealogical history. The progenitor of the Fourie lineage was a French Huguenot by the name of Louis Fourie, who came to the Cape of Good Hope in 1688 when he was only 18 years old. He married Suzanne Cordier, another French Huguenot, in 1693. They had 10 children. In 1699 he was allocated a farm called the De Slange Rivier in the Wagenmaker’s Valley. He later remarried and had another 11 children with Anne Jourdan. When all his children got married and had their own children, Louis Fourie managed to accumulate 250 grandchildren!

Jacques Fourie, the last son from the marriage of Louis and Suzanne, moved on to find work on other farms. He married Elizabeth Mesnard of Cralinge in the Caledon district. Sometime during their life, they start using the Dutch versions of their names; Jacobus Fourie and Elizabeth Minnaar.

They also had a son named Jacques (Jacques) who married Judith Wessels, also from Cralinge. Their second son, Jacobus Philippus Fourie, married Maria Elizabeth Havinga in a second marriage. Their son Stephanus Joseph Fourie, married Maryna Gertruida Magdalena Germishuizen, and they lived in the Villiersdorp area. Their son Johan Wilhelm Francois Fourie, married Catharina Elizabeth Kok and settled in Klaasvoogds Rivier.

It was Johan Wilhelm Francois Fourie who practiced photography and who designed and built the small farm house and completed it in 1881. This direct line only represents the direct lineage of the Fourie male descendants. Women who married into the lineage were born with their own interesting ancestors (Fourie c.1980).

The women of the Fourie family
The lineage of Catharina Elizabeth Kok was as follows. From her father's side, Johann Heinrich Christoph Koch was the progenitor of the Kok family in South Africa. He was a German soldier from Waldeck, who arrived in the Cape in 1745. In 1747 he settled as a freeburger in Swellendam. He later settled in the Kochmanskloof. He married Petronella van Eeden. They had several children including Johan Gottfried, who was the father of Johan Andries. Johan Andries and Elsie Sophia van Billion married and also had a son called Johan Andries who was ultimately the father of Catharina Elizabeth.

Elsie van Billion’s lineage in the Cape starts with Johannes Brand who married Christina de Vey, daughter of Abraham de Vey and Maria of Batavia. They were both from eastern descent. Their daughter, Cornelia, married Frederik De Wit; whose daughter Elsie married Bernardus van Billion. These were then the parents of Elsie Sophia, grandmother of Catharina Elizabeth Kok.

Another lineage with interest is that of Maryna Gertruida Germishuizen, who married Stephanus Joseph Fourie, and were the parents of Johan Wilhelm Francois. Her lineage starts with Andries Beyers who married Catharina Freeman, a freed slave. Their oldest daughter, Elizabeth, married Christoffel Esterhuyzen, whose daughter Johanah Catharina married Johan Christoffer Germishuizen, who were the parents of Maryna Gertruida who married Stephanus Joseph Fourie in the main lineage.

The direct descendant from the union of Johan Wilhelm Francois and Catharina Elizabeth Kok, Jacobus Philippus, married Jacoba Johanna de Klerk, who is a descendant of the notorious ‘Grootte Catrijn’ who was banished from Batavia and sent to the Cape because she killed her man in self-defense. ‘Grootte Catrijn’ was the mother of Christoffel Snyman, who married Marguerite-Therese de Savoye, and their daughter Susanna married Jacob Coetzer, whose granddaughter Maria Susanna married Andries Lategaan, whose granddaughter married Louis van Zyl, whose granddaughter Jeanette Johanna married Paulus Philippus de Klerk, whose granddaughter was the said Johan Jacoba.
It is fascinating that most families that are descendants from the early Cape families have freed slaves in their lineage, and similarly the Fourie and Kok family trees include people who came from the east, such as Catharina of Malabar, Maria of Batavia and Anthony of Bengal.

After the property was subdivided and the house was built in 1881, it was always used as a dwelling house only. By this time slavery was abolished so there are no records of slave ownership. By the time the insolvent estate of Jacob Francois Möller was auctioned in 1862, there was no inventory taken or record of slaves living on the farm.

During the specific period of time when the house was built and the children were born (1881-1891), technology was advancing with great strides and new inventions and patents were made almost daily. The Fourie family managed to keep up with the times. Johan and Catharina were living under British rule and adapted and assimilated British culture, their nearest village being Robertson. They became known in the English community as ‘Uncle Johnny’ and ‘Aunt Cate’. The house itself also represents the adaptation and assimilation capabilities of the inhabitants, who were well aware of the fashions and styles of the time. The design of the house is classical and proportioned, designed by someone with a keen sense of order and proportion.

**Major events during the Fourie period, 1881-1891**

- In 1881 Thomas Edison and Alexander Bell formed the Oriental Telephone company and on the 1st of July the first international telephone call was made.
- In 1882 the first electric tram began to run in London and false teeth were patented.
- The electric iron was patented by Henry Seely.
- Thomas Edison built the first electric lighting system employing overhead wires and in Germany, Utrecht began to install water pipe systems.
- During the following years, flaked cereal was patented, and the first mass production of shoes began.
- The first motorcycle was unveiled by Gottlieb Daimler and not long after that Karl Benz patented the first gasoline car.
- The first Coca-cola was sold, containing cocaine.
- Thomas Edison patented the Kinetoscope and Emile Berliner patented the gramophone. Soon the first recording of music was made on a wax cylinder.
- In 1888, George Eastman patented the first roll-film camera and registered Kodak.
- Both the elevator and escalator became patented, as well as the ballpoint pen and the adding machine.
- The London underground opened and the first portable typewriter was patented.
- In 1889, Bayer introduced aspirin powder in Germany.
- During this time of technological boom, the last Quagga died in an Amsterdam zoo, and Ghandi committed his first act of civil disobedience.
- Cecil John Rhodes became the governor of the Cape, and went on to conquer Rhodesia. Paul Kruger was re-elected as president of the Transvaal for the third time and gold was discovered in the Witwatersrand in 1886.
Johan Wilhelm (Johnny) was working as a photographer and practiced small scale farming to supply the family’s needs. All nine children finished school with a certificate in higher education. Photographs of the family taken by Johnny depict them as being educated and refined rather than being peasant farmers. The photos are always composed, with props such as hats and books used to “set the scene” of being scholarly and well read (Figs 5-7). According to family history, ‘Uncle Johnny’ also opened a studio in Robertson where he practised photography full time. Unfortunately, I was unable to determine the full extent of this. The information obtained however confirms that he was a well-read, well-educated man who kept up with the developments of the times. He was a good photographer and knew his subject well, as is evident in his photographs of the family.

**Photography at the Cape**

Antenie Carstens, working at the National Library of South Africa, has done research on the history and development of photography in Paarl, and has donated his unpublished research to the National Library of South Africa. According to him the apparatus and materials available for photography at the end of the 1800s and early 1900s were very limited and photographers had to know their techniques well in order to obtain satisfactory results. Slow lenses and film emulsions as well as slow shutter speeds, caused many difficulties. A tripod had to be employed because the cameras were large and heavy.
There was enough information available for professional and amateur photographers to stay updated with the development of technology, in publications such as The British Journal Photographic Almanac and even a local publication called Photographic Scraps issued in 1894.

Photographers did a wide variety of work, mostly portrait work in studios while also recording outside events and landscape photography. Photographers travelled widely. They contributed greatly to the documentation of historical events and documentation of early towns. They also captured fashions and styles of the times and many other interesting things. Unfortunately, most of the photographs taken were unreferenced; so many photographers cannot be credited for their work.

The first recorded photographic studio was opened in Calcutta in 1840. South Africa was not far behind and in 1843 the first studio opened in Port Elizabeth. In 1846 Carel Sparmann opened a studio in Cape Town.

Figure 6:
Photograph of Klaasvoogds house taken by the author’s father, J.P. Fourie, in 1959, with her sister Jeanne in the foreground and mother, Elsie Fourie, watching over her.

Figure 7:
Photograph of Klaasvoogds house taken by J. de Waal from the same corner in May 2012.
A heritage study

Heritage information is required to acquire knowledge, understand meaning and values, promote the interest and involvement of people, permit informed management, and ensure long-term maintenance and conservation of heritage places. It may also be considered as a kind of insurance policy against loss and damage and as a posterity record for future generations (Letellier 2007: xvii).

Location of the property

The turn-off to Klaasvoogds Rivier is located between Robertson (on the left) and Ashton (on the right) (33° 47’35’’S 20° 00’09’’E). The farm house is situated 5 km from the turn-off, in the foothills of the Langeberg Range, and is part of the unique cultural landscape of the original fruit farmers that moved to the interior and farmed on quitrent farms which were later granted to them.
Architectural character and history

One of the most interesting aspects of early nineteenth century architecture is the evolution of a uniquely South African character in the buildings, through the steady fusion of traditional Cape and British features (Lewcock 1963: 414).

A unique vernacular architecture with regional idiosyncrasies developed in the Cape Colony as a result of the availability of crude building materials, primitive building methods and appropriateness to the environmental conditions. Stylistic influences were guided by the occupants of the time. The first 150 years of colonization were characterised by Dutch influence while the VOC was controlling the Cape (Lewcock 1963: 415). The first British occupation began in September 1795. According to Lewcock, one cannot over-estimate the effect of the British occupation on the character of the architecture in South Africa.

It is obvious that the small farm house on Klaasvoogds Rivier was a result of all these British influences. The owner, a keen photographer who kept up with the times, studying the latest techniques in photography and other forms of stylistic expression, would have had access to and studied the British Pattern Books. It was perhaps here that he was inspired by the simplicity of the classical style, and most probably adapted it to suit the family’s needs. The house was built during the period when styles were changing from Georgian to Victorian.

British influences in South Africa

The British brought with them, at a time when some of the finest Cape homesteads were still in course of completion, not only English methods of construction, but also the strong architectural tastes of Georgian England which differed markedly from those favoured at the Cape under the Dutch. The English house of the eighteenth century was typically an unpretentious, neat building, well built and dignified, which depended for its main effect on its simple shape and careful proportioning. The windows were precisely spaced at regular intervals, and almost the only ornament was the pediment or the fanlight over the entrance (Lewcock 1963: 1).
The foundations of Georgian Architecture were laid by Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren. Jones introduced pure classicism, the basis of eighteenth century style to England. Pattern Books appeared in England that were all a matter of proportioning - of wall to window, and of breadth and height - and of correct classical detail. In the Age of Reason good taste was largely a matter of the intellect; to design well it was only necessary to know the rules and to follow them (Lewcock 1963: 1).

Robert Adam became popular in England, and by his death his particular style was followed in all the British colonies. It is interesting to note that a particular style of window that was used in Klapmuts clearly showed British influence even before the British occupation. This was an early attempt to adopt English fashions in a Cape Farmhouse (Lewcock 1963: 34).

After 1815 the influence of British taste on architectural design becomes clearly evident in the domestic architecture of Cape Town, specifically the use of the English window. English windows had two vertical sliding sashes which were recessed four-five inches from the wall face. English windows were also higher in relation to their width. Regency window proportions were min 1:2 and were frequently 1:2.25 or 4:9. The glass specified for windows was imported ‘Crown Glass’.

To the Georgian architect the proportioning of the windows, the number and size of the panes, and the relationship of the size of window to the wall space between them, was of the utmost importance. Eventually the numbers of glazing bars were also reduced to make the windows appear lighter. The new British immigrants also managed to solve the problem of climatic control in summer:

“It seems to be the best practice here with most of the inhabitants, to exclude the light during the day by shutting shutters, windows and letting down the blinds.” ... The new Cape houses were fitted with internal folding panelled shutters, which acted as linings to splayed reveals when not in use. External louvered shutters, called “Venetian Blinds” gradually replaced the use of solid shutters (Lewcock 1963: 85-87).

The Greek Revival period continued for a long time at the Cape. It first appeared in the design of the new Observatory and some early churches. Doric style was eventually transferred to the pilaster house of the old neo-classical Cape tradition. This was the creation of a new type of neo-Grecian house facade which did not appear anywhere else in the world. Greek pedimented houses also began to be fashionable in the outlying towns of the Karoo and the eastern Frontier (Lewcock 1963: 302).

Thick frames of smooth plaster were used around the windows during the same period, to create an impression of strength. Both town houses and farm houses were decorated with them (Lewcock 1963: 304). Flat-roofed architecture also spread to the interior. This was the result of the influence of the classicist revival, but also the basic shortage of reeds for thatching. In many parts of the Karoo this led to the appearance of houses with straight, stepped or pedimented parapets and brick plaster flat roofs. Cast iron was imported to South Africa in the 1860s-1870s (Lewcock 1963: 415).

British Pattern Books were increasingly devoted to the stylistic education of the craftsmen and the layman. In Britain, an early effect of industrial expansion was to produce a new middle-class patronage which was so unsure of itself as it emerged into the higher realms of aristocratic ‘good taste’ that whole volumes had to be written interpreting it for them, giving them models to copy and exact definitions to follow (Lewcock 1963: 352).

The revival of classicism brought a renewal of the influence of academic theories of architecture. Theorists were combining Palladian ideas from England with neo-classical Vitruvian concepts (Lewcock 1963: 360).

The house certainly has a curious classical presence with an unusual façade with a central window and two double doors arranged symmetrically (Fig. 12). There are three cast iron ventilation roses above each of the openings to ventilate the roof space. The exterior of the house is finished with stipple plaster and
has a distinct smooth plaster band of about 300mm around the bottom of the walls, the sides, surrounding doors and windows and also along the top of the façade. The plaster band continues around the corner of the house and creates the effect of applied pilasters. They further accentuate the formal appearance of the house and the continuation of the same surround around the window and two doors strengthens the symmetry. The remaining plaster work is stippled and continued over the rest of the house. The plaster bands continue along the sides of the house until the later additions. The kitchen area still has a section of the house, facing towards the front, with a surround around the window.

Figure 9:
Photograph showing the front of the small farm house, with its low triangular pediment, smooth plaster surrounds, and classical appearance (J. de Waal).

I asked the opinion of a colleague who is familiar with classical architecture as well as Cape vernacular architecture, and he made the following comments:

There are clear classical influences at play in this elevation: the formal symmetry of the facade, the choice of classical elements such as door surrounds, mouldings, as well as circular ventilators, the use of the pediment as a decorative device, as well as the possible presence of an underlying proportioning system (albeit not absolutely demonstrable). These elements are interesting re-workings of the local Cape Vernacular Tradition. The Cape style began, probably initially for climatic reason, as an architecture where the relationship between wall and openings is dominated by the former. This is still clearly visible in the remaining examples of the early vernacular buildings of the region. Later, this local vernacular became influenced by European fashions as well as what the locally available technology allowed. The windows, following the European trend, getting progressively larger and taller, the facades more formal, the appearance of classical decorative elements on the facades, and certainly in the case of the better known buildings by renowned architects, proportioning systems as a geometrical underlay to facades’ composition. This building seems to belong to this architectural trend towards more formality.  

A few similar-looking houses can be found in the book Brakdak by Gawie Fagan (2010). The use of stipple plaster and smooth plaster surrounds were common during the time (Fig. 13).
The significance of the house

This small farm house bears witness to the strong influence of British architecture on local vernacular Cape architecture. It is an unusual example due to its departure from the typical organization of a central front door, but it is well proportioned and very classical in style. Hans Fransen discussed the architectural merit of the building with me. It is his opinion that the small farm house is a typical Karoo-style house. He finds it strange that the fenestration is atypical, with a window in the centre and double doors on both sides. The date on the pediment and the date on the inscription of the glass window pane correspond with the title deed, and therefore confirm that the house in its current form was built in 1881.

The house has social significance to all the direct descendants of the original occupiers, albeit a small social group. It also has historical significance as a well preserved late 19\textsuperscript{th} century vernacular farmhouse. Further aesthetic significance of the house lies in its unique features. According to a heritage officer at Heritage Western Cape, it could possibly be graded as a category II\textsubscript{A} building (of highest significance in a local context), due to its architectural quality, being a rare example of its kind, and because the original fabric is mostly intact. It is also still located within its original historic context.
Recording the house

The selection of the appropriate scope, level and methods of recording requires that the methods of recording and type of documentation produced are appropriate to the nature and importance of the heritage place, the project’s needs, the purpose of the record, the cultural context, and the resources available (Letellier, 2007, p. xviii).

On 21 May 2012, Janine de Waal and I went out to site after obtaining permission from the owners, Graham and Analie McMillan. Fortunately the owners produced old drawings that were used for previous proposed alterations, and we traced one as base map for recording the measurements.

We employed the use of a 20m tape measure for overall perimeter readings, a shorter 8m tape for internal wall measuring and a 3m tape measure for detail measuring. A Bosch digital laser measuring device was used to double check some dimensions and to assist with height measurements, especially ceiling heights. According to John Rennie’s instructions, we proceeded with perimeter measurements around the outside of the building in an anti-clockwise direction and took running dimensions. The plaster band, openings and distances were recorded. Heights were taken from the floor to the undersides of window and door openings. The front doors and front window were sketched for more detail. When we completed the outside measurements, we proceeded with the internal measurements. This we did in a clockwise direction, in the same direction as the tape measure. In the large rooms, we double checked with diagonal dimensions. Sill heights and floor to ceiling heights were also recorded.

Since this was the first survey, and the reconnaissance and measuring was overwhelming, some discrepancies were noted and another measuring session was arranged on 25 June 2012. During the second visit, the frame details of the double doors and windows were taken to allow them to be drawn accurately and in the correct positions on the plans, and wall thicknesses were taken. Where splayed walls occurred, the hardboard clipboard was held against the wall and used to create a straight line against which to measure. A long ladder was also used during the second site visit to check certain height dimensions that were inconsistent.

The original house was built with thick walls constructed of low-fired clay bricks. A previous test showed that the walls are very strong and hard. Later additions were made at the back of the house. A new kitchen was built and later other rooms added to the back. It is not clear when all the additions were done and if they were done in stages. The only clues that we can use are that the windows in the kitchen are similar to those in the original house and that some of the windows may have been moved and re-used from the original house.

Unfortunately, since the owners moved to their new house, maintenance on the original house happens less frequently. A very prominent crack has appeared on the parapet wall on the front facade. According
to the owners the ground becomes saturated with water and is slowly sliding towards the river. Another possible cause for the crack is that new roofing material could be causing movement. It may be advisable to clear the area around the house of vegetation and to remove the soil against the house on the North West elevation. Further and more detailed measuring will have to be done if any conservation work is to be carried out, and a more thorough scrutiny of the condition of the house will have to take place. The services of an engineer would have to be employed to discover the reason for the crack in the pediment of the parapet wall.

Figure 12:
Photograph showing crack through pediment down to door opening.

The walls of the original house are 400mm thick and made of sundried clay bricks, while the walls at the back of the house are thinner and probably made from baked clay bricks. The walls of the kitchen are slightly thicker and were most likely built a bit earlier than the other additions.
Figure 13: Plan showing different wall thicknesses indicating different construction times.

The exterior of the house is finished with stipple plaster and has a distinct smooth plaster band of about 300mm around the bottom of the walls, the sides, surrounding doors and windows and also along the top of the façade. The plaster band continues around the corner of the house and creates the effect of applied pilasters.

Figure 14: Smooth plaster bands around doors and at bottom and top of wall. Corner moulding and plaster band detail.

The doors and windows are mostly in good condition considering that they are more than 130 years old. The glass pane in which my great-grandfather left his signature, is still intact. Since the house has been
lived in until approximately 10 years ago, it was regularly maintained. Currently the house is in need of maintenance and care. The wood work is very dry and needs to be sanded and re-finished.

Figure 15: Double door and inside of the front door.

Figure 16: Small internal door, and sash window.

The house was re-roofed about 10 years ago. It is not clear what material was removed, but it was most probably corrugated iron. The roof was replaced by sheet metal roof sheeting with concealed fixing, and
rainwater is collected in two tanks. Water stains along the walls inside the house indicate leakage, but this was reduced when the new roof was installed.

The deep ceiling void allowed for good ventilation, even though it was a flat roof. The ceilings are constructed of painted timber boards, and the original house and new additions have different sizes of boarding.

Figure 17: Internal photographs showing ceiling, floors and crack from the inside, and the ceiling in the kitchen area.

All the floors were covered with wall-to-wall coir carpets and the floor structure was not investigated. The floors are probably made of timber floorboards as they sounded hollow when stamped on. The back part of the house is concrete screed with either vinyl tiles, linoleum or carpet tiles (as indicated on the plan).

Figure 18:
The kitchen.
Figure 19:
Hallway, showing the threshold and opening where the old house connects to the addition.

Graphic records

The graphic or photographic capturing of information describing the physical configuration, evolution, and condition of a heritage at known points in time (Letellier 2007: xv).

The motivation for measuring this house was to record a piece of history, and to share it with all the family members. Although the actual house was very well built and fairly square, “nothing is always straight, square or horizontal, heritage places are affected by weathering and their design might not be regular” (Patias 2011: 11). It was therefore decided to print a set of drawings at the scale (1:50) required by the assignment brief on A1 sheets, and to reduce the size of the drawings to a smaller scale (1:100) on A3. The first set of drawings could be further developed into working drawings should any conservation and/or renovation project continue from this first survey. The second, smaller, set of drawings can be used to ‘celebrate’ the history and uniqueness of the house and to promote future maintenance and or investment in the house by the current owners and/or descendants of Johan Wilhelm Francois Fourie. The services of a professional calligrapher, Andrew van der Merwe, were commissioned to copy the handwriting of Johan Wilhelm Francois Fourie in the inscription on the glass pane, and to use the same style of handwriting on the drawings.

Figure 20:
Measuring and recording activities at Klaasvoogds house (J.M. Joubert, June 2012).
Photographs were taken externally and internally to record anything that may be necessary to assist our memories when back at the office. Interior photographs show the general layout and conditions of the inside of the house. They may be used for preliminary assessments into the condition of every room and what may need to be done to upgrade and/or repair certain items. Detailed photographs were taken to record special features and/or specific details, such as of windows and doors, the ventilation roses and the plaster mouldings. Detailed sketches were made to complement the photographs.

The photographs below run in sequence, moving around the house in an anti-clockwise direction, starting from the left corner of the façade.

Figure 21: Sequence of photographs of the house, moving anti-clockwise from the left corner of the front façade.
Figure 22:
Front façade of the house.
Figure 23:
Measured drawings of the house.
Interviews / opinions
Hans Fransen, consulted on 8 November 2012.
Bruno de Robillard, opinion obtained in writing on 5 December 2012.
Antenie Carstens, informal discussion on 9 November 2012.

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Endnotes

1. In the language of the people; colloquially speaking.
2. Herman van Bon employed Mansell Upham to do historical research concerning the origin of the name.
3. William Nicol grew up in the area at the same time the Fourie children lived in the farm house. He later became the Administrator of the Transvaal.
4. British architects of the modern period who employed Vitruvian rules of proportion and symmetry in their buildings.
5. Robert Adam was a Scottish neoclassical architect.
6. Klapmuts was a government corn farm, on which a house was designed by Thibault.
7. The Cape Town Royal Observatory was designed by John Rennie in the ‘Palladian’ style.
8. British Pattern Books were a principal means for the distribution of London designs throughout the English-speaking world.
9. Formulas based on the work of Italian Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio.
10. Marcus Vitruvius Pollio was a Roman writer, architect and engineer, known as the author of the multi-volume work De Architectura. He promoted principles of soundness, utility, and attractiveness.
11. Opinion given by Bruno de Robbillard, architect and colleague.