

1. OVERVIEW

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The 56th Volume of The Coelacanth journal has been compiled to commemorate the bicentenary of the 1820 Settlers in South Africa. The range and variety of topics will ensure that our members will find something of interest in this volume.

The annual Chairman's Report: 2020-2021 of the Border Historical Society is included in the overview.

The first article - authored by Martin Goldswain - is titled *The East London connection to The Chronicle of Jeremiah Goldswain*. The article captures interesting information relating to Jeremiah Goldswain's descendants and their influence and involvement in East London and elsewhere.

Dr Patrick Hutchison contributed the second article titled *The Tragic Life and Times of John Bailie 1820 Settler*. Bailie's extraordinary and interesting life history includes a direct link to the formative years of East London and this is recorded here in detail.

The third article - by William Martinson - records the history of *The Stone of Memory* in East London. The article details its inception in 1953, through three different sites in the town of East London with the associated changes to the design of the memorial, until it 'settled' at its current site.

The fourth article is titled *William Cock: hero or villain?* authored by a direct descendant Jacklyn Cock, Professor Emeritus at the

University of the Witwatersrand. She is the author of *Writing The Ancestral River - A biography of the Kowie*, recently published by the Witwatersrand University Press.

Jacklyn's article reflects some diverse opinions regarding the 1820 Settlers. However, the present state of our political economy and the near total collapse of our civil services is a cold hard reality that cannot be placed at the feet of the 1820 Settlers. Perhaps after another two hundred years academic historians will be more appreciative of the contribution the 1820 Settlers have made to this country and how quickly it has all fallen apart.

If you wish to contemplate your existence, past and future with brutal honesty you are required to negotiate a tightrope over what is being said out there and that which you hold dear as your own. Jacklyn Cock achieves this daunting feat with far more integrity than most. We encourage our readers to do the same.

The journal is available at no cost to paid-up members of the Society. Copies can be purchased by non members for R75.

1.2. BORDER HISTORICAL SOCIETY COMMITTEE: 20/21

Chairperson: William Martinson

Vice Chairperson: Lorraine Cockcroft

Secretary: Gordon Campbell

Treasurer: Thelma Shepherd

Committee Members: Gaby Heuer, Dr Patrick Hutchison, Sharon Frauenstein, Donald Davies and Diane van Tonder.

1.3. EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Dr. Patrick Hutchison, Thelma Shepherd, William Martinson, and Gordon Campbell. Layout: Grace Martinson.

1.4. MONTHLY MEETINGS

The Society and the Friends of the East London Museum usually meet on the third Tuesday of the month in the Marjorie Courtenay Latimer Hall, East London Museum. However due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these meetings remain on hold.

1.5. CONTACT DETAILS

All communications to be addressed to The Secretary,
border.historical.society@gmail.com

1.6. SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single	R 50	Single lifetime	R 500
Dual	R 70	Dual lifetime	R 700
Couple	R 70	Couple lifetime	R 700

1.7. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2020 - 2021

Introduction

The Border Historical Society fosters an interest in the history of East London and its immediate surrounds. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has however fundamentally impacted on the Society. The monthly meetings from March 2020 were cancelled and our Committee meetings are being held online in a 'virtual' meeting space and occasionally in person with the required social distancing. We trust that things will in due course return to normality.

Committee

The Committee comprised William Martinson as Chairperson, Lorraine Cockcroft as Vice-Chair, Gordon Campbell as Secretary, Viv Mostert - and more recently Thelma Shepherd - as Treasurer and the following ordinary members: Dr. Patrick Hutchison, Sharon Frauenstein, Diane van Tonder, Donald Davies and Gaby Heuer. The Committee meets on the 1st Tuesday of every month.

Membership

The BHS currently has a total of 40 paid-up individual members, four honorary life members, and continues to encourage new members to join. The Society hosts an historical interest group on Facebook called 'Border History - in the Eastern Cape.' The Facebook group has in excess of 1 900 members and continues to grow and attract interest from the local and international Facebook Community.

Monthly Talks

The monthly speaker's evening (shared with the Friends of the East London Museum) would under normal circumstances be held at the East London Museum on the third Tuesday of every month. The COVID-19 lockdown requirements have made such meetings a thing of the past. The annual Mark Taylor Memorial Lecture was also not convened in 2020. We have however commenced with some virtual talks. These talks included the following:

- The BHS virtual AGM on Tuesday 15 September 2020 was followed by an illustrated talk by William Martinson titled "An exceptional heritage - the Ceramic Studio tiled art panels in 1930's Post Offices in the Eastern Cape." The talk highlighted a selection of Post Offices built by the Public Works Department, decorated with fine painted ceramic tiled panels, illustrating aspects of life or history in the vicinity of the particular Post Office.
- The BHS's usual end-of-year dinner and associated talk for 2020 was not held due to the Covid 19 situation.
- Donald Davies presented a virtual illustrated talk on 16 February 2021 titled 'War Memorials in the Transkei and the Ciskei'. The talk recorded the War Memorials erected in some of the remote EC towns to commemorate locals who had enlisted and had died in the First and Second World Wars.

- The Friends of the East London Museum presented the following two virtual talks. On 16 March 2021, Kevin Cole of the East London Museum presented a talk titled “Shipwrecks - expanding our Knowledge and Collections”. On 20 April 2021, Amanda Bothma presented a talk titled “Opening night at the Guild Theatre.”

Tours

At the invitation of the Stutterheim Historical Society, the BHS visited the Keilands Catholic Mission Station, on the Kei River, near Cathcart on Saturday 13 March 2021. A number of members and friends gathered for an early start from East London and a great day was had by all participants, wandering around the abandoned mission station with its fine stone buildings and ample evidence of enormous effort and thought expended by the nuns and fathers involved. We also visited the hamlets of Bolo and Mgwali on our return and made a brief stop at the Ganger’s Cottage near Dohne.

The Committee continues to consider options for other interesting tours in the East London and Border region.

Plaques

The BHS Committee decided to erect a new plaque to replace the original NMC bronze plaque commemorating Kimmerling’s historic flight in East London in December 1909. The bronze plaque has been removed to the East London Museum for safe keeping. A new plaque was designed incorporating the original text but including a photograph of a Voisin biplane in flight. John Small of Plastic Art + Sign kindly manufactured the plaque as a donation to the Society and this was finally installed in August 2020, on the original concrete base opposite Stirling High School. A formal function to commemorate the new plaque remains to be held.

The Coelacanth Journal

The Society continues the publication of The Coelacanth, primarily to publish articles on the history of East London and surrounding districts. The Editorial Committee comprised Patrick Hutchison, William Martinson, Thelma Shepherd and Gordon Campbell. Grace Martinson again assisted with the layout and typography.

The Editorial Committee achieved their goal of publishing Volume 55 of The Coelacanth - a special edition relating to the Transkei, which was circulated in December 2020. Volume 56 of The Coelacanth is focused on the bicentenary of the 1820 Settlers.

It has been decided to circulate The Coelacanth volumes electronically due to COVID-19, with the important proviso that any member can request a paper copy. Paper copies are available free to paid-up members and at a nominal cost to non-members.

The Society has a large holding of more than 1 400 back copies of The Coelacanth, in varying quantities by Volume. The back copies are available for purchase and have been stored by William Martinson in a secure facility for which we are grateful.

Finances

Our thanks are due to Viv Mostert, and more recently to Thelma Shepherd, for their careful management of the Society's finances. The Financial Statements for 2020-21 have been submitted to our Honorary Auditor Shawn Whitfield and he has signed and accepted them.

YouTube Channel

The Border Historical Society's YouTube Channel continues to maintain a presence and has attracted a total of 50 subscribers. Some archived audio recordings of talks from the 1960's

Title

The Literary Historical Landmarks of Alice & District: Part 1

The Literary Historical Landmarks of Alice & District: Part 2

The Journals of the Rev. Cyrill and Mary Wyche: Part 1

The Journals of the Rev. Cyrill and Mary Wyche: Part 2

The Life and Times of a Transkeian Magistrate

East London Floods of 1970

Repairs by the Royal Engineers of Railway Destruction During the Anglo-Boer War: 1899 - 1902

The tragic life and times of John Bailie 1820 Settler

A sketch on the public career of Col. Charles Duncan Griffith, CMG, 1881

Temporary timber bridge, Great Kei River, 1877: Video 1 showing the complexities of a reconstructed CAD 3-D model

Temporary timber bridge, Great Kei River, 1877: Video 2 showing the complexities of a reconstructed CAD 3-D model

Temporary timber bridge, Great Kei River, 1877: Video 3 showing the complexities of a reconstructed CAD 3-D model

Fort Murray - British Kaffraria - South Africa: 1847 - 1856

The Washie 100-mile road running race - an introduction and brief historical review

1820 and the start of the "Great South African Historical Debate"

(digitized by Paul Wiggins) and some more recent talks and videos, have been added onto the Society's YouTube Channel since the last Report. The details of all recordings and their current number of views is noted below:

Speaker	Date	No. of views 6 May 2021
Dr R. H. W. Shepherd	1960's	434
Dr R. H. W. Shepherd	1960's	97
Mark Taylor	1960's	73
Mark Taylor	1960's	25
Des Hooper	18 July 2017	69
Organiser: G Campbell	17 July 2018	379
Dennis Walters	21 January 2020	168
Dr Patrick Hutchison	18 February 2020	440
Brian Watson	1960's	46
CAD Model by Philip May	2020	73
CAD Model by Philip May	2020	31
CAD Model by Philip May	2020	22
Dr Patrick Hutchison	2020	312
Tracy Mackay	2020	307
Mike Kenyon	2020	301

Fundraising

Membership fees continue to be our main source of income. The re-issued "Guten Appetit" Cookbook has only generated very limited sales - the minor profits being split 50/50 with the East London Museum. Other fund-raising options are also being considered.

Eastern Cape Historical Organisations (ECHO)

The activities of ECHO have been suspended due to the COVID-19 lockdown and it is unlikely that the organisation will be rejuvenated.

Conclusion

Grateful thanks are again due to the Committee members for their support, participation, diligence and generosity in giving of their time. Our particular thanks are due to Gordon Campbell for his minute taking.

Thank you
William Martinson
Chairperson: Border Historical Society
May 2021