

THE ABSENCE OF THE WELLINGTON DUTCH REFORMED
MISSION CHURCH ON ERF 794: A SYMBOL OF TANGIBLE AND
INTANGIBLE HERITAGE, DESTROYED AND FOUND



Painting by German artist Josef Hawle, undated.

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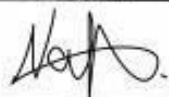
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May this thesis assist the Wellington Dutch Reformed Mission Church congregation by finally having its lost heritage recognised on paper; making the true, objective events which led to this traumatic destruction, known. May the truth assist the greater community to guide us so that we never again, as a nation, contemplate the need to go back to such a dark period in this beautiful town and country, in which we all belong, equally.

Abstract

This dissertation investigates whether the absence of the Wellington Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC) on Erf 794 in Wellington is a heritage-lacuna. It answers the question by setting out, firstly, how the tangible heritage of the DRMC was embodied in the physical church-building (the process of building and the resulting structure); and secondly, how the DRMC church-building was lost by demolition, including the events that led to the demolition and, specifically, the role that racial discrimination played in this process. Finally, the dissertation sets out how these aspects created intangible heritage and confirms how the intangible heritage is held and preserved in the community today.

The dissertation examines the history and context of the DRMC, and why it was formed separately from the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), which plays a significant role in the tangible and intangible heritage of Wellington DRMC. This is explored to contextualise why the tangible heritage of the demolished DRMC building is so significant compared to the objectively more impressive DRC building which still stands.

The study confirms that the DRMC of South Africa, as a racially segregated church denomination, was officially founded on 5 October 1881 by the DRC of South Africa. This historic event happened in a church which had been built in 1845 on the corner of Church and Main Street in the well-preserved 19th-century town of Wellington in the Boland region of the Western Cape province. This church with its Coloured congregation became the first DRMC in South Africa. The impressive DRC building (built by its white congregation in 1840) is located directly opposite the site in question.

In 1941 the church building of the DRMC was purchased by the DRC. A condition of the sale was that the DRMC had to demolish the church and clean the plot. As stipulated, the DRMC congregation demolished its church after building a new church building, also as stipulated, at least 500 yards away from the white DRC *and* not on Church Street.

What made this event especially significant was that it occurred nine years before the enactment of the Group Areas Act of 1950 (although there were many removals and attempted urban segregation before the act was implemented). Uniquely, in this case, it was the DRC which stipulated and enforced the physical segregation and demolition and not, as in most other cases, the state. This event had been preceded by 13 years of negotiations between these two churches, which further polarised the community.

The study shows that most remember this event as a tragedy and that it caused a lot of pain and division. As this event happened more than 80 years ago, there are very few survivors left and most of the memory of this event is embedded in the post-memory of the children and family of the congregants.

All the available local, national, and international literature on this event was reviewed; but literature covering research into the tangible and intangible heritages of the Wellington DRMC revealed that sources is scarce. And, so, in order to establish the tangible heritage of the DRMC and to reconstruct the structure and its history, various sources were used, including old DRC church books, advertisements in newspapers and periodicals of the time, and photographs of the building. To investigate the demolition process and why it is argued that the demolition process is the most significant heritage of the DRMC in Wellington, the minutes of the meetings of the two church councils (DRC and DRMC) were thoroughly studied and analysed; and to confirm that the intangible heritage of this traumatic event still exists today, individuals who still hold that intangible heritage were interviewed. These interviews were undertaken to unpack the memories of this intangible heritage to determine how this tragic event is remembered.

From the research, it is concluded that the demolition was primarily an act of racial discrimination and that this event paved the way for more forced removals, especially churches, based on race. This church created a theatre of memory, and its demolition remains in the collective psyche of many of the descendants of the people involved in this traumatic event.

“Reality becomes history and history becomes legend, and legend becomes mystery – until
one day...”

J.R. Tolkien

Lord of the Rings

The Dutch Reform Mission Church building before the demolition (in 1941), and Erf 794 as it stands today.

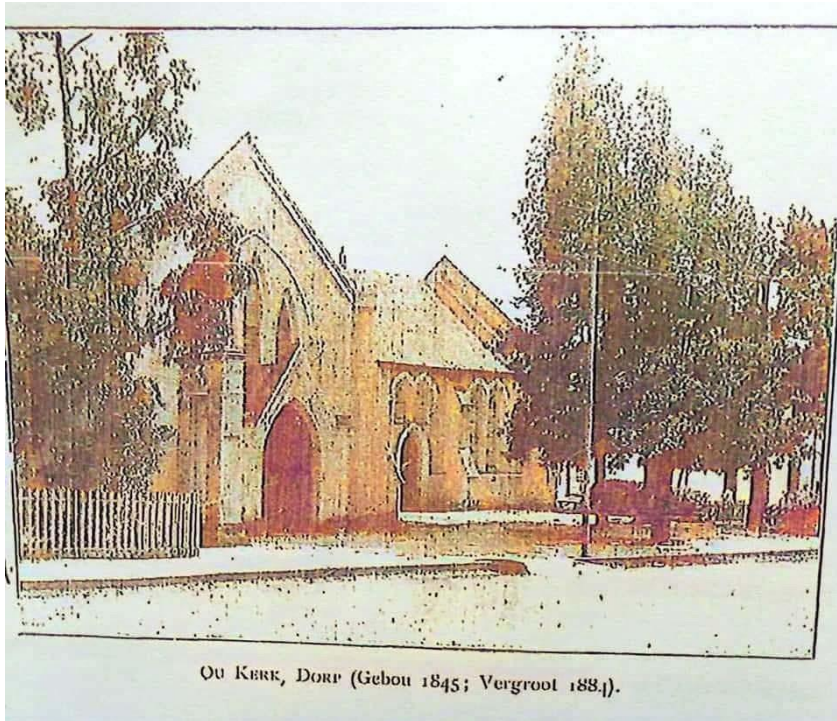


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Figure 2: The parking lot today. (Photo: Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, 2023)

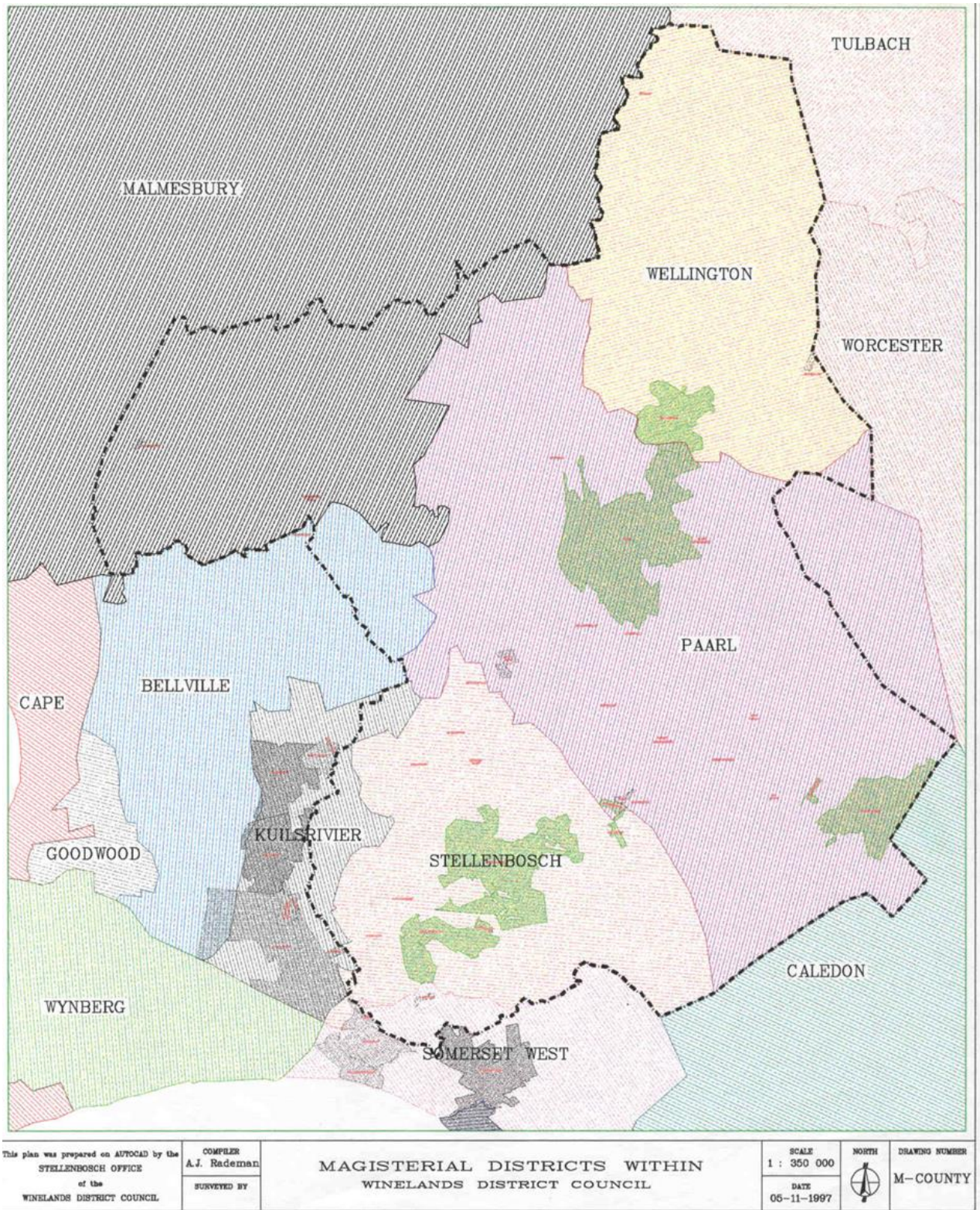


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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CC	Church Council
DM	Drakenstein Municipality
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
DRMC	Dutch Reformed Mission Church
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SG	Surveyor-General
TBVC	Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, Ciskei
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
URC	Uniting Reformed Church
VOC	Dutch East India Company
WM	Wellington Municipality

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Aim of research

This research project provides an in-depth study of the first DRMC building in South Africa. It was built in Wellington in 1845, enlarged in 1884, and demolished in 1941 when its Coloured congregation was forced to move to an area that would soon be classified a “Coloured” area under the Group Areas Act.¹ It is crucial that the significance of this “forced removal” be unpacked, as it occurred historically before the implementation of segregation legislation by the former National Party minority government, which ringfenced South Africa in a colour-coded landscape. De la Torre and Mason state that “it is self-evident that no society makes an effort to conserve what it does not value”,² and in researching the process of why this DRMC building was demolished, it is evident that the congregation itself was not valued – thus not conserved.

This is also evident in what the land is today – a private, access-controlled parking lot which bears almost no memory of the church building that once stood there other than a plaque and a few hidden remnants, insignificant to the unenlightened. In this thesis, I investigate how an emptied, de-churched place of erasure can be used to understand how the intangible heritage of erased places may live on, and the extent to which the land on which these erasures took place, might be said to retain heritage significance or not. The heritage significance of the de-churched land will be researched and unpacked to establish how this heritage is understood, experienced and articulated in memory and postmemory by the current generation of the descendants of the congregation and the broader community.

The purpose of this study is to establish and document the tangible and intangible heritage of the Wellington community that was occluded and erased through the forced removal and demolition of this historical church. The DRMC in Wellington is just one of countless sites across South Africa where tangible markers of memory, community and identity were erased, both before and during apartheid. However, as shown in this dissertation, the memory and symbolism of the building have been maintained by the descendants of its congregation, many of whom still live in the area to which their parents and grandparents were removed in the 1940s. By documenting the history of the building, as well as the memories and experiences of those connected to the site, I hope to provide an argument for the recognition of heritage significance in sites like these

¹ Group Areas Act 41 of 1950.

² De La Torre, Marta & Randall Mason, “Assessing the values of cultural heritage,” *Getty Conservation Institute*, last modified 2002, https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/pdf_assessing.pdf

which may not contain a built heritage resource any longer but retain the memory of what was once there.³

What distinguishes this church demolition from other demolitions⁴ of churches in forcibly removed neighbourhoods, is the fact that the Wellington DRMC was forced by the DRC to demolish its own church. The DRMC of South Africa, as an official racially segregated church denomination, was founded on 5 October 1881 by the DRC of South Africa in this very Wellington DRMC building. This church building consequently became the first DRMC in South Africa. The objectively architecturally impressive DRC building is located directly opposite this site.

This study exposes the destructive effects of the erstwhile practices, policies and incidences of segregation and forced removals based on race, specifically in the Wellington and Drakenstein area. No such local study has yet been undertaken, as far as is known, and with the witnesses of this tragedy dwindling every year, this documented study assists in the cohesion and galvanising of this memory, postmemory, tangible and intangible heritage of Wellington and the broader society. It also contributes by discovering and documenting tangible and intangible heritage and memory that was “temporarily” erased by these segregation practices (and the absence of documenting such practices), falling off the academic radar, now re-establishing it as part of the collaborative public history of South Africa.

1.2. Legislative context

It is important to note that demolitions of buildings and removals of communities based on race have been researched extensively. In South Africa, there is comprehensive legislative context which provides insight and structure to the racial segregation events. This context will be set out below, but it is emphasised that none of this was at play when the demolition of the DRMC occurred.

Historically, worldwide, various forms of forced removals have taken place and, in some areas, persist. However, what makes the history of forced removals in South Africa unique, but not

³ What makes this forced removal and demolition of the beautiful New Gothic style, century-old church for Coloureds, just across the road from the bigger DRC building for whites, so bizarre, is the fact that Wellington was, and in a way still is, the historical moral capital and innovative generating hub for religion, education and welfare in South Africa. “But how?” is the question that Wellington’s younger generation ask. Was discrimination and racism already so deeply entrenched or simply just taken for granted? How did this happen, ten years before the promulgation of the notorious Group Areas Act and more than 20 years before the bulldozers went in to flatten District Six? Ironically, many places of worship in District Six were spared from being demolished. “Doesn’t God dwell there anymore?”

⁴ For example, the Abraham Esau Church in Calvinia was expropriated by the Department of Community Services and subsequently demolished by an external contractor after the church stood empty for a while.

exclusive, is the fact that most forced removals were clinically and technically implemented purely based on racial grounds and discrimination through a barrage of legislation in the apartheid era. In 1973 the United Nations declared that apartheid was a crime against humanity, and it is concretised in the *UN Convention on Apartheid as a Crime Against Humanity*. This document refers to apartheid as “practices of racial segregation and discrimination”.

Racial segregation has been rife all over Africa for centuries and in South Africa in particular. The official apartheid policies implemented were not the beginning of racism, segregation or the destruction of heritage. In the case of the demolition of the DRMC in Wellington, no such legislation was necessary (nor called on) as it was simply enforced by a financially strong DRC onto a financially weaker DRMC, which becomes evident in the discussion of the minutes which enabled this process.

During the legislative entrenchment of segregationist policies of the pre-1994 political pigmentocracies, South African citizenry was separated by various (legal) instruments into different geographical pockets where they were allowed (or not) to reside and live according to the pigmentation of their skin. The main legislative tool which encapsulated the pinnacle of forced removals was the Group Areas Act,⁵ although it was complemented by other acts such as the 1923 Natives (Urban Areas) Act and the 1934 Slums Act, which also contributed to ensuring comprehensive racial segregation. Implementing these acts in a society which was relatively integrated in many aspects and geographical areas, especially in the Boland and Cape Peninsula, led to the forced removals of thousands of people of all races of which the majority were not Caucasian.

After apartheid was ended, legislation was implemented which strives to address the injustices of racial segregation of the past and attempts to ensure that it will not happen again. The first sentence in the preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, states that it strives to “... recognise the injustices of the past”. Without expanding on the Constitution, it is important to also acknowledge section 21(4), which states that, in the current South Africa, “every citizen has the right to enter, to remain in and to reside anywhere in the Republic”.⁶

The Constitution of the Western Cape (1998) goes further than the Constitution, by declaring its intent as “... recognising and striving to heal the injustices of the past”. In section 81(n), dealing with the “Directive Principles of Provincial Policy”, a further directive states that the Western

⁵ Group Areas Act 41 of 1950.

⁶ While also having due regard to the limitation-clause in section 36.

Cape government must adopt and implement policies to actively promote and maintain its heritage:

(n) the protection and conservation of the natural historical, cultural historical, archaeological and architectural heritage of the Western Cape for the benefit of the present and future generations.

It is, therefore, also important to acknowledge the emphasis placed by the National Heritage Resources Act of South Africa (NHRA)⁷ when referring to our unique, precious and diverse cultures that possess the power to build our nation. It states that:

Our heritage celebrates our achievements and contributes to redressing past inequities. It educates, it deepens our understanding of society and encourages us to empathise with the experience of others. It facilitates healing and material and symbolic restitution, and it promotes new and previously neglected research into our rich oral traditions and customs.⁸

The NHRA goes further in section 5, “General principles for heritage resources management”, stating that heritage resources can promote reconciliation, understanding and respect, and contribute to the development of a unifying South African identity.⁹ It also refers to the right of communities to be consulted,¹⁰ and an obligation is placed on local authorities for the identification and management of Grade III heritage resources and heritage resources which are deemed to fall within their competence in terms of the act.¹¹ The NHRA also gives local authorities the authority to designate any area or land as a heritage area on the grounds of its environmental or cultural interest or the presence of heritage resources.¹²

Although our heritage is theoretically protected by various legislative frameworks in South Africa, there is no guarantee that it is automatically identified, authenticated, understood, respected, conserved or maintained. Neither is human commitment regarding giving effect to this, assured.

The irony of the forced removal of the DRMC building was, firstly, that no legislative tool was necessary to clinically remove the DRMC congregation and “de-church” the land on which the DRMC once stood, and, secondly, that all such legislation was only promulgated after the

⁷ National Heritage Resources Act 5 of 1999.

⁸ Preamble.

⁹ Section 5(1)(c).

¹⁰ Section 5(4).

¹¹ Section 8(4).

¹² Section 31(5).

DRMC building was already demolished. This means that there cannot be (nor is there) any official or legitimate reason or moral justification for the removal of the church from the geographical location where it originally stood, making this lost heritage (and how it came to be erased) so much more poignant.

1.3. Significance of the research

Having lived in Wellington for nearly three decades, I have discovered various local buildings, institutions and vacant land over many years that all have a story to tell. I recently discovered that one of the beautiful municipal buildings, now the offices and premises of the building inspectors and traffic police, was once a school which had to close and move to the (at the time) newly demarcated Coloured area 300m further, on the opposite side of the main road, in the more racially integrated area.¹³ This is not publicly documented nor in the public domain. I believe there are many other such buildings just waiting to be documented. The details and information on the footprint of the built environment that was affected by forced removals are relatively very skimpy, sometimes non-existent, and seem to be slowly but surely disappearing as time moves on, which is a horrifying possibility. Many of the survivors of these ordeals are now in their twilight years, their memories gradually fading; the survival of this intangible heritage lives in the postmemory of their children.¹⁴

Besides the forced removal of the congregation, the crux of this event was the demolition of the historical church. The church had all the potential to be upscaled to a Synod Hall, as was requested by the DRMC Synod.

Charlotte Dodgeon states in relation to buildings in general:

Although the main priority is to understand the value of a building's fabric in architectural, artistic, or archaeological terms, a building's significance can also lie in its intangible heritage; the events that took place, the people with whom it is associated, and the story of its development. To fully understand a building's value to the community, all of these aspects need to be considered, particularly if it is a place of worship.¹⁵

This quote encapsulates the essence of the value of the building itself that needs to be established through memory and postmemory to truly grasp the gravity of the heritage lost. The significance of the heritage captured in the physical elements of the DRMC is only made

¹³ Pauw Gedenkskool: *Eeufesblad 1879-1979*. State archive: SGE 1/1615; SBWN 1/1/6, 1/1/7, 1/1/8.

¹⁴ Marianne Hirsch, "The generation of postmemory," *Poetics Today* 29, no. 1 (2008).

¹⁵ Charlotte Dodgeon, "Intangible Heritage," *Cathedral Communications Limited*.

<https://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/intangible/intangible.html>. Accessed 25 January 2021.

manifest when one undergoes the exercise of theoretically reconstructing the DRMC brick by brick, and in so doing acknowledging that the heritage of the DRMC is brought to life by those physical elements used in its construction, each carrying its own story to tell.

On a personal level, I grew up in the sixties in a racially mixed area in Cape Town's Northern Suburbs, Kraaifontein, and witnessed many of our Coloured neighbours disappearing overnight to newly demarcated Coloured areas. When we moved to the Transkei / Ciskei in 1974, I saw how farms were expropriated, and farmers and their staff, including the farm and staff of my white grade 7 teacher, removed from their homes to create the stillborn TBVC ethnic homelands. When we moved to the West Coast in 1976, I witnessed how big parastatal companies expropriated farms, displacing owners and families, destroying and disrupting communities and huge tracts of land to create the Saldanha-Sishen steel complex.

Having grown up in various parsonages belonging to the DRC (my late father was a DRC minister), I know first-hand what insecurity of tenure does to your humanity and self-esteem. This insecurity led me to start buying cheap properties in the deep rural areas, as the bigger towns were out of my financial league as a schoolboy teenage entrepreneur. Amongst these acquisitions were vacant Group Areas-expropriated properties in Calvinia (I did not realise this as a schoolboy). Only decades later I discovered that one plot once had a historical memorial chapel (the Abraham Esau Memorial Chapel) on it, which was subsequently demolished in terms of the Group Areas Act.

I handed this property, together with others, back to the community, but this demolition sensitised me to similar church demolitions, of which I became aware after my exposure to the Abraham Esau Memorial Chapel saga. One such church demolition occurred in my town of residence, Wellington. The discovery of the demolition of the DRMC building in this cradle of religious, tertiary and welfare training, was even more shocking to me than the Abraham Esau Memorial Chapel demolition in the distant Northern Cape village of Calvinia.¹⁶

After living for more than half a century, I fully grasp the importance and significance of the spaces where people come from, and how much of our humanity is attached to the spaces we grow up in and live in. The segregation legislation in South Africa robbed many people of everything they knew and were proud of; this is something that I learned through the places I grew up in as a child. We attach who we are as humans to the spaces that we live in, which inherently forms our heritage and ultimately our humanity. To have this forcefully removed, is

¹⁶ Bill Nasson, "The Priest, the chapel and the repentant landowner: Abraham Esau revisited," *African Affairs* 93 (1994): 3-19.

an injustice, and knowledge of the extent of such injustice sheds light on the extent of heritage lost in that era. Therefore, part of the motivation for this study is the possibility of documenting the scale of loss symbolised by the destruction of the first Dutch Reformed Mission Church, and the need to locate heritage significance in land where the physical traces of memory have been erased.

The tangible and intangible heritage, and the memory and postmemory of this forced removal and subsequent demolition in Wellington, must not disappear. Therefore, I felt I had no choice but to research, establish and document this chapter in Wellington's heritage in extensive detail. The living heritage of this historic landscape provides a sense of place, space, memories, and in a way a sense of permanence, belonging and identity.

In District Six, a well-known site of forced removal in South Africa, the land has remained vacant apart from the development of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology in the 1970s in the area. This significant space has sparked a great deal of contestation about how and whether to use the land. Currently, some parts are being developed for land restitution purposes, but the general feeling remains that it is "salted earth". As such, in the context of South Africa's interesting history with land, and in the spirit of healing and restitution, it is critical to reach a better understanding of how land becomes invested with significance, even if the heritage resource (the DRMC in this case) is no longer in place. This is critical in places of forced removals, and especially places where buildings were demolished, which affected demographical aspects of South Africa's population disproportionately. The Wellington DRMC offers an example of how we might understand this significance many years after the events that shaped the land.

1.4. Methodology

This is a single-case study, dealing with a unique and symbolic expropriation of the site and demolition of the historic first Coloured DRMC church building. The research process for this study was broken down into three distinct stages, each of which required a slightly differing set of methods. These were:

- i) researching the materiality, appearance and physical context of the building.
- ii) reconstructing the process by which the building was demolished (and the reasons for the demolition); and
- iii) lastly, understanding the effect of the demolition on the congregants, and what the empty space now signifies and symbolises for them.

My interest in this study extended to understanding the extent to which those who experienced the forced removal and demolition of the church, and their descendants, identify the de-churched land itself as a place of heritage significance. I was also interested in whether, and how, memories and stories of the demolished church have been kept alive or transmitted as a form of intangible living religious heritage.

In the first phase of the research, I attempted to reconstruct the materiality and aesthetic appearance of the church via archival, photographic and historical research. While the primary focus of the dissertation is on the meanings and heritage significance of the site, it was important to establish the recorded history of the church and to develop a visual record of what was lost. Mark Ferguson states “We study architectural history through drawings, photographs and on-site observations, and by reconstructing it dramatically expands one’s appreciation for the building and the people who created it.”¹⁷ As minimal written sources and other secondary data characterise the de-churched site, an in-depth built environment autopsy was required to first establish what was tangibly lost.

Information regarding the actual event of the removal and demolition is skeletal and poorly documented. All the readily available literature and secondary data were sourced, collected and studied. Many of these are not academic sources but the documentary analysis greatly assisted in providing important information, bridging and connecting the historical and chronological dots. Records held by the Wellington Museum also helped fill some of these gaps.

Unfortunately, despite exhaustive research, only two pictures were found of the outer appearance and style of the church building and three pictures of the interior planning and layout. As far as I could ascertain, these five pictures are the only remaining visual records of the church. The details of the building regarding its construction and furniture had to be pieced together literally from snippets and oral communication. However, minimal architectural fragments, physical items and objects from the rubble and debris were sourced, including two church pews and three foundation stones.

It was a challenge to try to complete the reconstruction with all the various pieces of information that came from many diverse sources. A noteworthy aspect is that significant information came from seemingly insignificant sources. For example, it was discovered that Carl Otto Hager

¹⁷ Mark Ferguson, Dean of Catholic University School of Architecture and Planning, quoted in *The Art Newspaper* 21/7/2021 by Martin Rosenberg.

designed the church.¹⁸ Hager was one of the leading church architects during this period.¹⁹ The demolished New Gothic-style church once had architectural and artistic significance, although modestly small and different in terms of typology compared to the bigger built heritage of the DRC across the street. What also emerged from this research and archives, was the direct role and physical contribution, during the construction and afterwards, of almost each member of the congregation, whether young or old, male or female. The church had a physical connection to the congregation with many symbolic components.²⁰ The silence regarding all this information goes against the grain of the norm of church history.²¹

Data was also collected via social media groups, from which interesting information emerged, although it had to be verified, unpacked and analysed. The WhatsApp group “WellingtonANC” was approached about the demolition and some of the older group members seem to recall the event through memory but with little detail except the tragedy of the event. A picture of the DRMC was placed on the Facebook site “Kerkgeboue van Suider-Afrika” with an enquiry if anyone had any information on the church, and someone posted the same picture, but in colour. The source of this colour photo is not known. Published sources of available data were also collected from various libraries, online databases, the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, the universities of Cape Town, Western Cape, and Stellenbosch, as well as other institutions. The Cape Town Archives were also accessed and utilised.

Technical data, such as title deeds, were examined to establish the ownership trail of the properties and surveyor diagrams were simultaneously correlated to establish the surveyor diagrammatical history of all the affected properties. Aerial photography was collected at the Cape Town Deeds Office, the Surveyor-General Cape Town, Farm Mapper and the Mowbray Trig Survey Office (part of the National Geo-Spatial Information Authority) to establish the periodic visual changes in the heritage footprints. All the data mentioned, from over a timespan of a century, was investigated and analysed.

The newspaper *Paarl Post* also made available archived hard copies of the newspapers dating back to the time of the whole demolition process. Information retrieved from these hard copies was crucial in the research, such as the adverts for demolition contractors.

¹⁸ It is strange that there was no documentation linking the well-known German-born architect to the church design except the words, “Architekt, den heer Hager van Stellenbosch = £10”, a receipt documented in Rev Pauw’s financial report to his Church Council in 1884.

¹⁹ AM Hugo & J van der Bijl, *Die Kerk van Stellenbosch* (Cape Town: Tafelberg Uitgewers, 1963), 254.

²⁰ For example, the bricks for the building were physically made by male congregants themselves.

²¹ A Stoler, “Colonial archives and the arts of governance,” *Archival Science* 2, no. 1-2 (2002): 87-109.

The next phase consisted of researching secondary data including finding and reading all available literature written about the church and related matters. This was followed by phases consisting of primary research, which included delving into the DRC Archives in Stellenbosch – a qualitative research phase, which produced a crucial volume of archival data. During this qualitative research phase, the focus was concentrated on the historical analysis of the demolished DRMC in Wellington, particularly the minutes which captured the whole process, which encapsulated the chronological events which led to the demolition. The minutes of the DRMC and the DRC hold the key to what and how this event unfolded, aiding in researching the intangible heritage held by the empty space.

The final stretch of research consisted of putting together the heritage held by the people – congregants, family members and affected individuals. Oral history interviews provided important insight into how they experienced this event and what they remembered of this time in history. As the aged survivors of this event are dwindling, use was also made of recollections of the memories shared by deceased congregants with their children and relatives. Interviews were completed telephonically, personally or via e-mail, depending on developing circumstances,²² as well as the practicality of specific situations. Fortunately, a few of these interviews are also captured on film. Some flexibility was required for this portion of the research under the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic at the time.

Some of these interviews were open-ended and some were semi-structured. Recorded oral interviews were conducted with pre-selected and willing role-players who are knowledgeable and with individuals with institutional memory of the specific era in Wellington's history. New insights were gained from these interactions, which I believe reveal new meaning and important values which were previously significantly less known. The primary data retrieved from these interviews was diverse in context and varied from memory and postmemory of a sacred and holy space to outright ignorance of the gravity of the hurt that was inflicted by this tragedy.

The following people were interviewed for the project:

- i) The late Mr Herman Bailey, retired mayor, congregant whose whole family was evicted and who was a convenor of a forced removal remembrance collective;
- ii) Mr Ampie de Vries, a congregant's son;
- iii) The late Mr Sam Abrahams, a congregant;
- iv) Mrs Susan Francke, daughter of the late Mr Abrahams and a community leader; and

²² This was subject to the phase that the pandemic was in at the time.

- v) Rev Bennie van Rensburg, current minister of the DRC in Wellington which bought the church land and ordered the demolition of the church.

The interview processes were conducted by me and a research assistant. Interviews were electronically recorded via voice and film recording, with permission from participants. Although the same questions were asked during all the formal interviews and each interviewee received the questionnaire a few days before the interview, there was ample room for deviation and follow-up questions. Fortunately, the interviews were filmed – to ensure these contributions are recorded for future use and reference. This was a constructive strategy as two of the key interviewees passed away due to Covid-19 a few weeks after these interviews were recorded. One of the interview sessions was conducted with three of the interviewees, which included a father and his daughter. This worked well as the daughter made her father feel at ease and the group dynamics unearthed more memories and added authenticity to many of the reflections, memories and postmemories. Matters arising from the interviews that needed clarification, were followed up telephonically.

The methodology also comprised of numerous informal interviews. Efforts were made to ask anyone who might have any memory of the original DRMC building and events surrounding it what they could remember, adding interesting insights to the research. Very few white people, even elderly white people, had any knowledge or memory of the events. As no member of the DRC could be found who was in the vicinity when the church was demolished, informal enquiries were made to elderly DRC congregants, and their memories were very vague. To establish the perspective from the Wellington DRC, the most senior cleric, Rev Bennie van Rensburg, was also interviewed. This is important as every piece of history, memory and heritage is open to various interpretations, and it speaks to those who know how to interpret it.

One of the interviewees, Mr Sam Abrahams, was a teenage congregant when the demolition took place, and he was interviewed thoroughly. The input of his daughter was very valuable as well. An unrelated congregant could offer much in terms of postmemory, as his late parents were also witnesses to the demolition. A key interviewee was Mr Bailey, who, although he was born a year or two after the demolition, had the most institutional memory of the event and played an enormous role in keeping this heritage of the demolished church alive in the whole community. The unarticulated connection to the de-churched site, which played a pivotal role in their family life, held an enormous body of memory and postmemory.

The interviews made it possible to establish their experiences and how they make meaning of the site. Comparing the historical experience, memory, postmemory and stories of those who

were there, who saw it, who heard it, with the printed material, such as minutes, letters, biographies and other sources, also aided in constructing the understanding of the heritage of this historical church building. The research from the archives and the literature were very important although very clinical, while the interviews with the congregants provided information on the memory and postmemory of the community, an aspect which was ignored in almost all literature and archival documentation.

Although the methodology detailed above comprised most of the approach, the research also included examining summaries, collations and syntheses of existing research. For this specific research question, it also involved archival documents, electronic media, minutes of meetings, library books and photos. Published sources provided insight into what has been recorded and provided answers to the question of why it was recorded – and why certain things were not. Technical data was used to combine the human and published sources to compare the academic sources with the practical, physical image of what happened, which is recorded in the primary source of the Church Council meetings. Most of the literature was printed in Afrikaans and the interviews were all done in Afrikaans as it is the *lingua franca* in the Wellington area.

The methodology adopted in this research strived to objectively obtain a collective of information which not only addresses the physical history of the building and what was already written, but also the tone of what Erf 794 still means to the affected community. This is in line with the belief of Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, that intangible heritage is not only the site of yesterday's memory, but also the laboratory where tomorrow is invented. This thesis hopes to add to the historiography and heritage of Wellington and its surrounds.

1.5. Summary of all the chapters

This first chapter sets out the research question and includes the aim, legislative context and significance of the research. It also unpacks the methodology used for the research question.

Chapter 2 describes what has been written on the research question and deals with the theoretical apparatuses used in the study.

Chapter 3 provides context to the research question as it relates to Erf 794 as an architectural / historical / heritage site. It deals with its morphology as a used space providing context to the long-term history of the erf on which the church was built.

Chapter 4 consists of the reconstruction of the church on paper, with details on its outer and inner appearance up to the physical end and demolition of the church. This chapter is used to illustrate the elements of the tangible heritage lost through the demolition of the church building.

Chapter 5 deals with a crucial element of the research question as it unpacks the demolition and the 13-year negotiation process between the two Church Councils, deceitful elements, and analyses of the effects and impact thereof.

Chapter 6 discusses the lived experiences, stories and memories of the congregants, and investigates how the building of the DRMC, the demolition of the DRMC, and the negotiations surrounding the demolition, impacted the memory, heritage and history of the church.

Chapter 7 concludes the research question and confirms that the empty Erf 794 does hold heritage, that the tangible heritage of the DRMC building is lost, but that the intangible heritage is still contained and kept alive among the descendants of the congregants affected.

Chapter 2: Contextualising trauma and memory in the study

This chapter will expound what has been written on the aspects surrounding the research question(s), including forced removals and memory, links between place and intangible heritage, existing socio-historical writing on Wellington, and the theoretical apparatuses used in this study to interpret the primary sources which were crucial in this study.

2.1. What has been written on the topic.

2.1.1. The Wellington DRMC

The municipal document titled *The Heritage Index of Wellington*²³ is presented as the collection of the built environment heritage offered to the tourist, visitor and residents of Wellington curious about the history of the built environment in Wellington. Nowhere is any mention made of the history of the DRMC, the demolition of this building, or of the de-churched site of the DRMC, which makes this municipal document an incomplete heritage list highlighting all the other ecclesiastical marvels. This begs the question, “Whose heritage does this document reflect?” It specifically emphasises the built environment still standing, and not the historical built environment, which, in South Africa, is very relevant to the history of the built environment of our towns. This is significant when assessing the state of completeness and inclusivity of heritage listed, identified, displayed, recognised and portrayed in Wellington; the paucity of this document exposes glaring shortcomings. The demolition of this building, and the absence of any mention of it in documents, reflects the attitude of those in the positions to recognise, protect and promote this heritage. The realignment and consolidation of various previously individual municipalities into one, the second largest in the Western Cape, also unintentionally caused a vacuum and loss in institutional municipal memory relating to the heritage of Wellington and the broader Drakenstein.

There is little historical work dealing specifically with the DRMC, its role in Wellington, and the demolished church itself. A notable exception is the work of Kriel,²⁴ who discusses the history of the church from its own perspective as minister of the DRMC from the inception of the DRMC to the late 1950s, although he notably writes little on the demolition and removal of the

²³ Drakenstein Municipality, *The Heritage Index of Wellington*. This document was prepared by the Drakenstein Municipality over the years and is presented as a generic document, and not an official published document.

²⁴ His work includes the following four publications which shed important light on this chapter in Wellington’s heritage, namely: *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946*; *Die geskiedenis van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika 1881 – 1956*. ‘n *Historiese studie van sendingwerk onder die Kleurlingbevolking van Kaapland*; *Seuns in sy wingerd, Goue Jubileum. Die Teologiese Skool vir die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk in Suid- Afrika*; and *Die eerste eeu. Geskiedenis van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika, 5 Oktober 1881 – 1981*. These publications mainly represent a historical overview of the DRMC.

building. Although to some extent a useful historical resource, his work is best read as a primary source rather than an analytical study, due to his position in the church. Exploratory research regarding the effect of the demolition of the church on the heritage of Wellington, specifically, is minimal. To my knowledge, no literature solely on the DRMC congregation in Wellington has ever been written, except for a master's thesis by Kriel, where, again, little mention is made of the demolition. In fact, he specifically states that he does not want to expand on it, which explains a lot.²⁵

He emphasises the technical perspective that the Wellington DRMC was in fact too small for the rapidly expanding congregation and that, because there was no adjacent land available to enlarge the church building, the congregation had no choice but to build a church on a bigger site elsewhere. This position is very much in keeping with the official position taken by the church at the time of the demolition and omits important events and records that paint a somewhat different picture of how these events unfolded.

Recent publications have also seen the light, such as *Ons kom van vêr af*,²⁶ which sheds more light on certain aspects of Wellington's heritage, memories and the segregational fate it suffered over decades. The Theron Report was also explored. The outcome of this commission into matters pertaining to the Coloured community, which was appointed by the State President in 1973, with Prof Erika Theron as Chairperson, confirmed the suffering of the Coloured community.²⁷ Exploratory research regarding the effect of the demolition of the church on the heritage of Wellington, specifically, is minimal.

2.1.2. Segregation and urban development in Wellington in the context of the DRMC

Histories of racial segregation and forced removals in Wellington must be read in the greater South African context. Alan Mabin unpacks a comprehensive chronological history of segregation legislation in South Africa, in which the Group Areas Act²⁸ was one of the most effective legal tools for implementing the technicalities of forced removals. This is used to help form the perception of what "community" looked like in South Africa, how it changed through the concept of incremental segregation, and how extremely effective it was in changing the composition of communities' heritage. This is why publications such as the Drakenstein Municipality's heritage index is incomplete, only indicating built heritage which still stands.

²⁵ CJ Kriel, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946" (Master's thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950), 285.

²⁶ WAM Carstens & Michael le Cordeur, *Ons kom van vêr af* (Gansbaai: Naledi Press, 2016).

²⁷ Erika Theron & JV du Toit, *Kortbegrip van die Theron-verslag* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1977), 1.

²⁸ Group Areas Act 41 of 1950.

It is significant that the date of the DRMC building's demolition was nine years before the (alpha) Group Areas Act and that this dehumanising demolition was inflicted upon the Coloured DRMC congregation by the neighbouring white DRC across the road. The effect of this on the heritage and memory of the town (to an extent the reputation of the town as well) was enlightening and ought to be acknowledged.

Although Laura Evans²⁹ deals with the effect of forced removals of a few million “non-white” people in South Africa, mostly with the now defunct old homelands (TVBC-states), she re-affirms the traumatic effect of any forced removal on the victims. Seventy years after the birth of the Group Areas Act of 1950, Caroline Newton and Nick Schuurman³⁰ argue it is still very relevant in dealing with the challenges facing housing and re-housing of South Africans, the spatial and urban planning and development. The challenge of trying to rectify and synchronise decades of racial spatial engineering in a humanely relatively short time is very complex.

In Wellington some streets have disappeared altogether from the planning grid layout due to apartheid forced removals, and it is significant that chronologically forced removals and demolitions occurred in Wellington prior to the main segregation legislation being promulgated and implemented. Although one tends to think of the traumatic effect of segregation based on race in South Africa in the context of the creation of the homelands, as encapsulated by Martin Abel,³¹ the trauma is accepted as very similar for segregation in an urban environment. Uprooting is always traumatic, especially when it is racially defined and forced.

Sources reveal that Wellington, over centuries, played a pivotal role in many facets of South Africa (such as logistics, markets, welfare, religion and education). It also complied with the rules and laws of the Cape Colony, the Union, and the Republic of South Africa. It is interesting that there was a petition signed by 67 people as far back as 1919 pleading to the municipality to remove Coloured people from living in the centre of town. In 1938 the Town Council adopted regulations that constrained and limited the influx of black people into the municipal area.³² These actions instilled a mindset of legitimacy to the approach and insistence of the DRC that the DRMC move and demolish their own church.

²⁹ Laura Evans, *Survival in the 'Dumping Grounds'* (Cape Town: UCT Press, 2019).

³⁰ Caroline Newton & Nick Schuurmans, “More than twenty years after the repeal of the Group Areas Act: housing, spatial planning and urban development in post-apartheid South Africa”, *J House and the Built Environment* 28 (2013): 579-587.

³¹ Martin Abel, “Long-run effects of forced resettlement: Evidence from Apartheid South Africa”, *Journal of Economic History* 79, no. 4: 915-953.

³² Research Committee on the History of Wellington, *Die Geskiedenis van Wellington en Distrik*. 2nd issue, September 2012.

Johan Zaaiman researched the role of the local Wellington branch of the Broederbond in the Wellington community from 1937 until 1994.³³ He notes that the Wellington Municipal Council applied to the Minister of Native Affairs for the promulgation of a regulation in terms of the Native Urban Areas Act³⁴ to limit the influx of black people moving into the town of Wellington. During 1939 various Afrikaner-organisations approached the Town Council and persuaded it to vote at the coming Municipal Congress in favour of separate townships for whites and Coloureds. The Town Council acceded to the request, but its representative voted against the resolution, indicating that white racism was not universal.³⁵ On 15 December 1942 the Town Council discussed a town plan that provided for separate housing for Coloureds and Blacks, and from 1944, housing schemes were developed according to this plan. Confirming this racial spatial segregation is the township, Newtown, for Coloured people, which the Town Council established in 1938, according to aerial photography.³⁶

In 1945 the Wellington Broederbond requested that segregation be implemented at the local post office. In 1946 they requested that segregation be implemented at the local library, and they worked for apartheid measures at the station and the municipal offices. During the same time more than 1 800 blacks were ethnically cleansed and moved to Paarl, which made Wellington one of the few Boland towns without a “Black” area.³⁷ This is significant because, already in 1941, the forced removal and demolition of the Coloured DRMC created the perception that these actions were acceptable.

Certain segments of Wellington’s history are documented in a three-volume publication entitled *Die geskiedenis van Wellington en distrik tot die jaar 2000*,³⁸ initiated by the Wellington Museum, which was compiled by a mostly Caucasian collective of about 20 elders of the town with substantial institutional knowledge and memory.³⁹ Winnie Rust, in her publication *Van dorp tot Drakenstein*⁴⁰ provides relevant information regarding the area and the socio-economic environment of the Coloured community, which also contains elements of overlapping with the previously mentioned publications. Charlotte Helen Cupido née Bushby, in her publication *Vra*

³³ Johan Zaaiman, “The local role of a Wellington Afrikaner Broederbond branch, 1937-1994”, *Historia* 55, no. 2 (2010).

³⁴ Urban Areas Act 21 of 1923.

³⁵ Zaaiman, “The local role of a Wellington Afrikaner Broederbond branch, 1937-1994”.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Research Committee, *Die geskiedenis van Wellington en distrik tot die jaar 2000*, (Wellington, Boland Drukkers, 2001).

³⁹ The incremental chronological segregation of the community is vaguely documented; however, it is a very helpful voluminous document which sheds important light on the history of Wellington which is very necessary for this study.

⁴⁰ Winnie Rust, *Van dorp tot Drakenstein* (Wellington: African Sun Media, 2008).

*na die ou paaie*⁴¹ also discusses Wellington's Coloured community and certain details assist in correlating crucial details regarding the DRMC, especially geographically, and the pivotal role it played in the community. Her description of the emotionally exhausting last church service held in the soon-to-be-demolished DRMC is significant and poetic.

HJ Smith in *Die liefde van jou bruidstyd*⁴² discusses the history of the DRC in Wellington, (which also sponsored the publication), and documents interesting alternative Afrikaner-centric elements of enmeshed information regarding the demolition of the DRMC. This assists in understanding how this event played out according to the DRC. The fact that the publication *NG Kerk 350 jaar* merely states that the church was demolished and the land recycled as a parking lot, subtly expresses an opinion on this event as well.⁴³ In '*n Lewe suid van Markstraat*',⁴⁴ co-authored by the late Herman Bailey and the late Winnie Rust, the authors provide more detailed information regarding the effect, trauma, memory, postmemory and footprint of forced removals, including the demolition of the DRMC in Wellington. The detail in this publication is helpful, especially linking certain families geographically with certain areas, streets and built environments.

This concludes the collection of *what* has been written on aspects of the topic. However, and fundamental to the question of what the empty de-churched land now represents, it is important to note *how* writers have written on the town and church. As noted sporadically above, the objective information available appears biased more often than not, and the true opinions of the authors come through in how they write about Wellington.

2.2. How have other writers written on Wellington.

The fact that Fransen states that "Wellington is not a beautiful town"⁴⁵ does not help to expose the complete tangible and intangible heritage and history of Wellington. This statement has been exhausted in justifying various heritage impact assessment conclusions, fundamentally affecting the heritage of the built environment of Wellington. The Drakenstein Heritage Survey⁴⁶ was studied and analysed in this regard to establish the inclusiveness and effective documentation of the history of forced removals and demolitions in Wellington to determine if anything is

⁴¹ Charlotte Cupido, *Vra na die ou paaie* (Wellington: FX DP, 2003).

⁴² HJ Smith, *Die liefde van jou bruidstyd!* (Paarl: Paarlse Drukkers, 1990).

⁴³ George Hofmeyr, *NG Kerk 350 jaar* (Cape Town: Lux Verbi, 2002), 145.

⁴⁴ Herman Bailey & Winnie Rust, *'n Lewe suid van Markstraat* (Wellington: Wellington Museum, 2013).

⁴⁵ Hans Fransen, *Old towns and villages of the Cape* (Cape Town: Jonathan Ball, 2006), 186-189.

⁴⁶ *Drakenstein Heritage Survey Report 2012*, Drakenstein Municipality.

http://www.drakenstein.gov.za/docs/Documents/Heritage_Drakenstein%20Heritage%20Survey%20Report_October%202012%20final.pdf. Accessed 15 September 2020.

mentioned about the demolition of the DRMC after the removal of the congregation, but it was omitted. This specific demolition became a metaphor for Wellington's overall forced removals and segregation policies and practices as this specific event flies in the face of all the innovative religious, tertiary and welfare developments of, around, and in Wellington.

Much of the other literature relies on the work of Kriel and projects the same vagueness. Smith presents the three staggered purchase price payments that the DRC made to the DRMC as a "financial donation" made towards the construction costs of the building of their new DRMC. It is concluded, however, that it was a one-sided, non-negotiable, willing-buyer-unwilling-seller offer to purchase with strict terms. Hofmeyr signals the first more sensitive criticism of the demolition and removal from within the DRC in his reference to the erstwhile church site as now being a parking lot. Loff, in the chapter named "Parking Lot", sketches a completely different critical and tragic scenario of events that led to the demolition of the DRMC.⁴⁷

Bailey also discusses the tragic demolition of the DRMC and emphasises (in effect critiquing) the fact that, although the church was too small and a bigger church was indeed needed, the decision to demolish the church was unnecessary. He states that the church building could have been repurposed to accommodate the DRMC Synod, which wanted to buy and use it as a Synod Hall.

The publication *Ground-Up News*⁴⁸ on 24 March 2016, also documents the removal of 200 Black households from the area called Sakkieskamp, whose successful land claim has still not been implemented by the Drakenstein Municipality. This sheds light on how the Wellington Town Council managed to steer Wellington away from having a Black area, one of a handful of towns in the pre-1994 South Africa of which this is true, and what the current mindset still is regarding acknowledging these injustices. This is interesting because the fact that Wellington already had no Black area, arguably concretises the motive behind removing the DRMC building before segregation legislation was even implemented.

Bailey states that the geographical division line between the Coloureds and whites was drawn in such a surgical manner that very few of the latter grouping were negatively affected.⁴⁹ The DRMC stood conveniently accessible to all its congregants in the centre of Wellington, as they were geographically spread out and integrated all over Wellington. After the apartheid

⁴⁷ C Loff, "De verplaatsing van de Zendingkerk Wellington, oftewel: Waarom die kerkperseel vandag 'n parkeerterrein is" in *Dogter of verstoteling?*, ed. C Loff (Cape Town: Broederkring. 1981), 43-50.

⁴⁸ "Wellington community evicted under apartheid still waiting for land", *Ground Up News*, March 24, 2016, <https://www.groundup.org.za/article/wellington-community-evicted-under-apartheid-still-waiting-land/> (accessed 17 September 2020).

⁴⁹ Herman Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020.

segregation lines were drawn, the vacant site of the demolished church was located in the white area.⁵⁰ Further periodic aerial photographs and ortho-photos, available at the Geo-Spatial Information section of the Department of Rural Development situated in Mowbray, were studied and extrapolated from in terms of the current situation on the ground to validate the statement of Bailey, which also provided insight into the situation.

This concludes what has been written and how it was written, which leaves me to investigate apparatuses to implement and to properly articulate and research what the open de-churched land now represents.

2.3. Theoretical apparatuses used in the study.

The theoretical apparatuses employed in this study include memory and postmemory, tangible and intangible heritage, in addition to a brief consideration of memory in relation to space.

2.3.1. Memory and postmemory

The undocumented and traumatic subdued memory and postmemory of the demolition and removal of the church needs to be unpacked for anticipated future generations to ensure that the emotional values such as admiration, identity, connection and spirituality stay intact. As Raphael Samuel notes:

Memory is historically conditioned, changing colour and shape according to the emergencies of the moment; that so far from being handed down in the timeless form of ‘tradition’ it is progressively altered from generation to generation. It bears the impress of experience, in however a mediated way. It is stamped with the ruling passions of its time. Like history, memory is inherently revisionist and never more chameleon than when it appears to stay the same.⁵¹

Postmemory, in contrast to memory, describes the relationship of the second-generation victims of powerful, traumatic experiences that preceded their births, but that nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own right.⁵² In this study, both memory and postmemory were significantly impacted by the events.

The town and district of Wellington are also interpreted as a source of memory and postmemory. The history, meaning and heritage of the demolished DRMC are mainly kept alive in the

⁵⁰ The possibility exists that certain DRC members were aware of the future racial segregation lines which further strengthened their hand.

⁵¹ Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of memory. Past and present in contemporary culture* (London: Verso, 1994), 10.

⁵² Hirsch, “The generation of postmemory,” 103.

postmemory of the children and second-generation relatives of the original congregants who were witnesses to this event, as most of the witnesses to this demolition have passed on. The primary witnesses are dwindling in numbers as the event happened more than 80 years ago. The critically important concept of postmemory is discussed as it contributes to the heritage of the demolished DRMC being kept alive as a place of remembrance.

This section relies on the literature of Marianne Hirsch and other sources such as Bryn Mawr, Piotr Sadkowski and Charlotte Dodgeon are discussed. All the above-mentioned literature assists in unearthing the memory and postmemory of the demolition and forced removal and where the meaning and effect of all this is held. As there is no longer an object on the vacant church site, from a built environment perspective, the questions are asked, What does the empty space mean at present? And, to whom does it mean anything?

The family of the well-known author Adam Small played an active leadership role in the Wellington DRMC, his grandfather being one of the few literate elders on the Church Council, whose signature appears regularly over many years under the surname Dampies in the approval of the minutes. The publication *Poetry International Archives*⁵³ honours the acclaimed poet, writer and academic, who also lived in Wellington and whose family was also evicted under the Group Areas Act.⁵⁴ Aspects of the memory and postmemory in relation to his experience in Wellington and the DRMC can be observed in his writings.

The document *The liberation struggle and liberation heritage sites in South Africa*,⁵⁵ prepared for the National Heritage Council, names the well-known Dr Abdullah Abdurrahman as well as Dorothy Adams, founder member of the Non-European Movement, who came from Wellington and were also subjected to forced removals and the demolition of their church, and there are many more.⁵⁶

Having successfully removed a pivotal community space such as the DRMC to the newly envisaged, still unofficial, Coloured area, made it so much easier to move the rest of the

⁵³ Adam Small, *Poetry International Archives* 15/10/2010. <https://www.poetryinternational.org/pi/poet/18033/Adam-Small/en/tile> (accessed 20 September 2020).

⁵⁴ The Adam Small legacy in Wellington is growing as students at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology are already propagating the renaming of the Wellington-campus as the Adam Small Campus.

⁵⁵ National Heritage Council Report, *The liberation struggle and liberation heritage sites in South Africa* (15 November 2013).

⁵⁶ These people and their achievements need to be placed in context to fully grasp the extent of the memory and postmemory of the lost heritage of the demolished church building. This context can also aid in explaining why Wellington has produced this calibre of historical figures, of whom many were subject to the same mentality that forcefully manipulated a community to remove and demolish their own church building simply because its congregants were Coloured and too close to a white DRMC.

Coloured community from the white area to this segregated area. It sent a message of brutal power to the Coloured community, one which was taken very seriously.

2.3.2. Tangible and intangible heritage

Heritage is transmitted from generation to generation; it provides communities with a sense of identity and continuity, and, as it lies essentially in the human spirit, it is also intangible.⁵⁷ It is important to distinguish between the different types of heritage encompassed by the DRMC building (the intricate tangible heritage of the building and the emotional intangible heritage encapsulated in the memory and postmemory of the families of the congregants). Likewise, it is important to take note of the effect of both types on different facets of communities and people, and the powers, functions and obligations imposed on certain bodies which were also influenced by the various eras in time.

Various definitions and descriptions of different types of heritage appear in numerous international and national sources. An important role in defining heritage is fulfilled by UNESCO.⁵⁸ In its Convention Concerning the Protection of The World Cultural and Natural Heritage,⁵⁹ it describes its role as “to adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programmes”.⁶⁰ The UNESCO definition of intangible cultural heritage refers to the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and know-how, transmitted from generation to generation within communities, created and transformed continuously by them, depending on the environment and their interaction with nature and history.

The Australian Burra Charter states that:

Conservation, interpretation and management of a place should provide for the participation of people for whom the place has special associations and meanings, or who have social, spiritual or other cultural responsibilities for the place.⁶¹

Reinventing and repurposing old churches has been done for centuries, which preserves the special associations and meanings for those for whom it is significant. Dodgeon in *Intangible heritage* discusses the repurposing of churches, adding a new layer of significance and heritage

⁵⁷ International Council on Monuments and Sites, *The Declaration of Amsterdam* (1975).

⁵⁸ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

⁵⁹ Adopted by the General Conference at its 17th session, in Paris, on 16 November 1972.

⁶⁰ Convention Concerning the Protection of The World Cultural and Natural Heritage, sec. II, art. 5(a).

⁶¹ Australia ICOMOS, 1999, art. 12.

and purpose.⁶² In the demolished DRMC's case, the repurposing of the land as a commercialised parking lot, exuding exclusivity, speaks volumes of the inaccessible tangible and intangible heritage of the de-churched land itself.

2.3.3. Memory and place / space

Coombes' publication *History after apartheid: Visual culture and public memory in a democratic South Africa*, is premised on the understanding that all memory is unavoidably both born out of individual subjective experience and shaped by collective consciousness and shared social processes, so that any understanding of the representation of remembrances and of the past more generally, must necessarily take into account both contexts.⁶³ In the DRMC's case, the de-churched land represents both subjective experience of those involved in the daily operations of the church back in the day, and a collective consciousness of those who are involved in the new DRMC building today. The memory of the place seems to have been remembered (and noted) only by those who actually engaged with the DRMC on the original land.

2.3.4. The value of the new research

The analysis above clearly shows the vast void of information on this building, its demolition, and the effects of the demolition on the congregants. Therefore, a lot of primary research had to be done from scratch. Once this research had been done and it was established what the building actually looked like and the tangible heritage it held, it was possible to implement and apply the apparatuses to interpret and analyse the intangible heritage subsequent to the negotiations and demolition.

The physical church building was never captured on paper. So, this was done by scrutinising all the information to be found, analysing the tangible and intangible heritage and memory and postmemory the church building itself held. There was a lot of significant memory and emotional capital in the components of the church building. For this purpose, I examined photographs, centenary documents of the Bovlei church, and stumbled across snippets of information in the old *Ligdraer* publications, amongst other sources.

What has not been clearly documented before, is the gravity of the forced removal and subsequent demolition of their DRMC, and the effect on the congregation as it pertains to the

⁶²Dodgeon, "Intangible Heritage," *Cathedral Communications Limited*.

<https://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/intangible/intangible.html>. Accessed 25 January 2021. (Accessed 25 January 2021).

⁶³ Annie E Coombes, *History after apartheid: Visual culture and public memory in a democratic South Africa* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2004), 8.

damage it has done in and to Wellington and its surrounds, and not only to specific ethnic racial groups. The *detail* of, and *various perspectives* on, the 1941 demolition of the Coloured DRMC, opposite the white DRC, on the corner of Church and Main Street, had to be unpacked.

This demolition was the catalyst for many more demolitions and forced removals to come and it created the psychosis that if a white congregation church can demolish, without lifting a finger, and move a Coloured congregation church elsewhere, any other forced removal and demolition wherever, will be morally acceptable and possible, seeing that it was the DRC that was orchestrating the forced removal and demolition of the DRMC and not an act of Government.

The question where the memory of this tragedy is held and what it means at present is important, as there is now no built environment on the old de-churched site, except a paved, enclosed parking lot. This required a dualistic approach to the overarching question: firstly, Does the *congregation* see the parking lot as a sacred place or is the memory held elsewhere? And secondly, Does the town view the parking lot (and what it represents) as part of its heritage?

From earlier documentation and literature of the DRC related to this tragic demolition 82 years ago, it appears that they present one specific sanitised consumer-friendly perspective of the forced removal and demolition, and it is packaged as a simple technical and practical issue. Further information on this was sourced at the DRC Archives in Stellenbosch and was instrumental in assessing the extent of the damage done by the lost heritage, in the first place, and the staggered process to acknowledge this lost heritage, in the second place.

From the literature of the DRMC, another perspective is sketched. It seems that there was a lot of external and internal division on both sides regarding the matter. The irony is that the DRC founded the DRMC in Wellington in 1881. Various pleas for unification of these two churches have been resisted since the first letter of Rev JC Pauw, dated 19 March 1880, until today.⁶⁴ In fact, the DRC continued to promote its segregationist theology as it also founded the Dutch Reformed Church of Africa for Black people in 1910 and the Reformed Church in Africa for Indians in 1968.⁶⁵

According to Ivor Wilkens and Hans Strydom in their publication *The Super-Afrikaners*⁶⁶, the Broederbond's vast majority of members were from the north of South Africa, but it also had a strong presence amongst Stellenbosch academics, where various policy documents were circulated for discussion and adoption regarding segregation. The fact that the Broederbond had

⁶⁴ Pauw Gedenkskool, *Eeufeesblad 1879-1979*. State archive: SGE 1/1615; SBWN 1/1/6, 1/1/7, 1/1/8; 350.

⁶⁵ Carstens & Le Cordeur, *Ons kom van vêr af*: 43.

⁶⁶ Ivor Wilkens & Hans Strydom, *Die Super-Afrikaners* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 1978).

a huge youth and conference centre on a farm on the outskirts of Wellington could also have had a trickle-down effect on the actions of the members of the Wellington Municipal Council and on the DRC Church Council, or just ordinary congregants. The damage that was done to relations between various demographics was and is devastating and continuous and had to be researched and obtained from new sources.

The major debates in the literature about segregation policies were about humanity and the destruction of that humanity. According to Olivier, the DRC compared to other South African churches has the worst record regarding human rights in South Africa.⁶⁷ The chronological history of segregationist legislation in Wellington has been researched; segments of the history of the role of the DRC in Wellington (and across South Africa) have been researched; but, what has not been thoroughly researched, is the effect of the one on the other, and the motive behind these policies, especially in relation to the DRMC and the effect of this on heritage in its totality. The surface has been scratched by certain literature, noting what was and what is now and how people feel about it, but it does not note the extent – nor the effect of the extent – of heritage lost through the question of what was and what is and what should be. This question will be answered through establishing the motive behind the DRC's insistence on demolishing a DRMC building before segregationist legislation was even officially enacted, which impacted the memory held by the open land.

To be able to understand what lies at the heart of the polarization of relationships in the town, I believe it is very important that this forced removal and demolition of the DRMC by the DRC in Wellington be academically researched and documented, as it is arguably one of the most important socially and morally legitimising examples from the era of institutionalised racial segregation in Wellington. It sent a message of what was allowed and why, and this paved the way for an easy acceptance of segregation legislation in the white community – in the process destroying a remarkable physical, tangible building.

The majority of the material used in this thesis is special in that it is mostly commercially unprinted material, which was not easy to access, much of which was stumbled upon, which necessitates inclusion. During the various visits to the DRC Archives in Stellenbosch, numerous opportunities also arose for important and enlightening discussions with members of the staff.

⁶⁷ OR Olivier, "Menseregte en die Suid-Afrikaanse kerke" (Licentiate Theology Thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1983), 53.

Using these sources in this thesis, I will attempt to extrapolate the history, heritage, memory and postmemory of this demolished DRMC.⁶⁸

Chapter 3: Erf 794 as an architectural / historical / heritage site

The thesis documents the history, lost heritage and memory of the demolished historical Wellington DRMC, once pivotally located in the centre of the religious precinct of the Boland town of Wellington, on the corner of Church and Main Street, across the street from the (impressive) building of the DRC. This vacant de-churched site is currently a private security-fenced parking lot, with wall-to-wall cement pavers covering the archaeological remains, the only tangible heritage evidence left of this once historical church.

3.1. The church site as architectural / historical / heritage site

The property Erf 794 has been graded IIIA heritage status by the Drakenstein Municipality, as the first DRMC in South Africa was built on it and the building was the site of various significant events described in this thesis. The main heritage resource on the property is the absence of the demolished DRMC with its concealed footprint intact, symbolising the extraordinary physical, tangible heritage that once stood there.

3.2. Locating place

The church was located on Erf 794, a square erf of approximately 589.0000m².⁶⁹ Together with the DRC across Main Street, adjacent to the main DRC parsonage two erven further down in Church Street, the Church Hall, the Martha Church Hall and another parsonage across Church Street, it collectively formed the religious precinct of Wellington, indicated on the figures below.

⁶⁸ Hopefully, this study will be the first chapter in a complete study of racial segregation in Wellington. The demolition of this church paved (and kickstarted) the way for further segregation in Wellington and for other churches of wrong-colour congregations throughout South Africa to be demolished.

⁶⁹ It has a fronting onto Church Street and is adjacent (on the southern side) to Erf 793, on the corner of Church and Main Street. Both Erven 793 and 794 are fenced in as the parking lot. On the northern side it is bordered by Erf 795, with a double-storey Georgian-style commercial building which once housed a funeral parlour, and on the western side by Erf 14077, which was once the house of the sextant of the DRC.



Figure 6: Erf 794 (the red square), opposite the DRC (blue square). (Source: Google Earth)

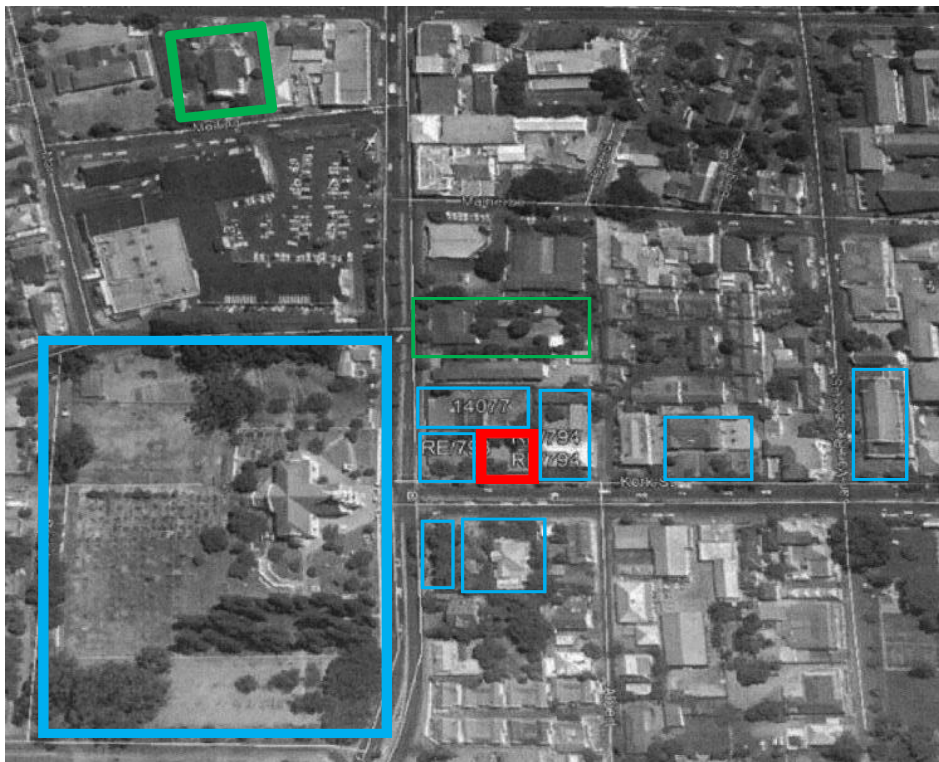


Figure 7: The blue indicates all the DRC's property. T, with the red square shows the original DRMC site. The green (at the top) indicates the new DRMC (at the top), and the DRMC parsonage that was expropriated under the Group Areas Act. (Source: Google Earth).



Figure 8: Aerial picture of the corner of Church and Main Street indicating Erf 794 today. The DRC can be seen in the left corner. (Source: Google Earth)

The erf still has some of the trees that were planted by the DRMC congregation as protection against the sweltering hot Wellington summers. The erf also features a Paarl granite monument erected in 1981 to commemorate the centenary of the founding of the DRMC in South Africa. A small length of the original clay and raw bricks ring wall at the back of the church is intact but in an unstable state, needing urgent structural support. A small section of the original steel fencing, with an original gatepost situated on Church Street, is still present but in a bad state (and exposed to potential scrap metal theft).



Figure 9: The granite monument erected in 1981 to commemorate the DRMC centenary in South Africa. (Photo: Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, 2020)



Figure 10: Raw brick and clay ring wall remnants of the church yard in poor condition. (Photo: Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, 2020)



Figure 11: Damaged raw brick and clay ring wall badly joined with cement and bricks. (Photo: Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, 2020)



Figure 12: Original fence wall with remnants of original metal spike fence. (Photo: Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, 2020)

3.3. Morphology of place

The morphology, as set out below, indicates the context in which the church property came to be church property; the history is important to establish the heritage the DRMC was supposed to encapsulate from the beginning.

Although a relatively small church erf compared to other such church erven in the Boland, Erf 794 shares various layers of heritage, history and memory with the rest of Wellington. Stone artefacts found in the agricultural fields, the mountain slopes and riverbanks, dating back to the Early Stone Age (700 000 years ago) and the Middle Stone Age (150 000 – 30 000 years ago) indicate a long history of human occupation.⁷⁰ Khoekoe herders moved into the area more than 2 000 years ago, occupying it seasonally until colonial settlers started to block their water sources and grazing land. Many historic place names in the area are evidence of this, such as the Hawequas and Obiqua Mountains.

On 25 October 1657 Abraham Gabemma, Secretary and *Fiskaal* (a Dutch position of juridical significance) of the Political Council, together with eight free *burghers*, seven officials and three trustworthy people indigenous⁷¹ to the area, “discovered” the Berg River Valley. In the Wellington area they found small groups of indigenous people everywhere.⁷²

Thirty years after this discovery, in 1687, Simon van der Stel founded a settlement here by awarding 23 farms of 60 morgen (50 hectares) each in size, to 50 Dutch settlers. These settlers named the valley Drakenstein, the name of an estate of Heer van Mijndrecht in the Netherlands. This privatisation and colonisation of land led to the first conflict between the new settlers and the indigenous nations, which included the Gorinchaqua.⁷³

In 1688 the first French Huguenots arrived at the Cape. The Dutch East India Company (VOC)⁷⁴ offered French refugees in the Netherlands a free passage to the Cape, plus land; if they did not like it here, they could return to the Netherlands after five years. The French insisted that they be allowed to bring their own minister, Rev Pierre Simond.⁷⁵ Between 13 April 1688 and 6 May 1689, some 180 French men and women of all ages arrived in the Boland.⁷⁶ They were poor and complained about the quality of the soil and asked, via their minister, to be awarded land on the

⁷⁰ Drakenstein Heritage Report, 18.

⁷¹ The indigenous people to the area were referred to as *Hottentotte*.

⁷² Kriel, “Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946” (Master’s thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950), 11.

⁷³ Drakenstein Heritage Survey, 19.

⁷⁴ This was due to a need for farmers to produce food as the Dutch were not very productive farmers.

⁷⁵ Where the name of the area of Simondium originates from.

⁷⁶ Kriel, “Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946” (Master’s thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950), 19.

other side of the Berg River. This was permitted and thus they moved across the Berg River, which is the Wellington area today, where they were awarded farms. Soon a few Dutch settlers followed them.⁷⁷

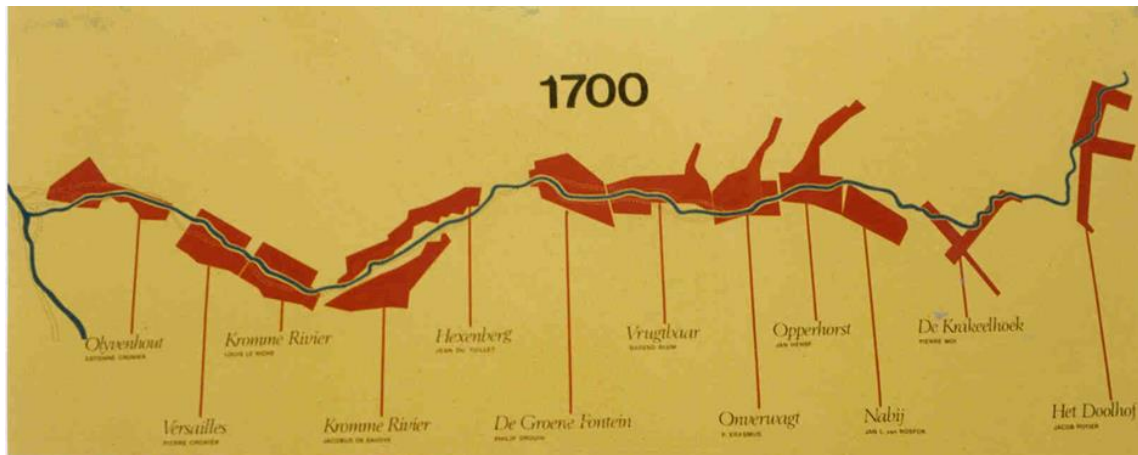


Figure 13: Farms in Wagenmakersvallei in 1700. (Source: Wellington History Museum Book)

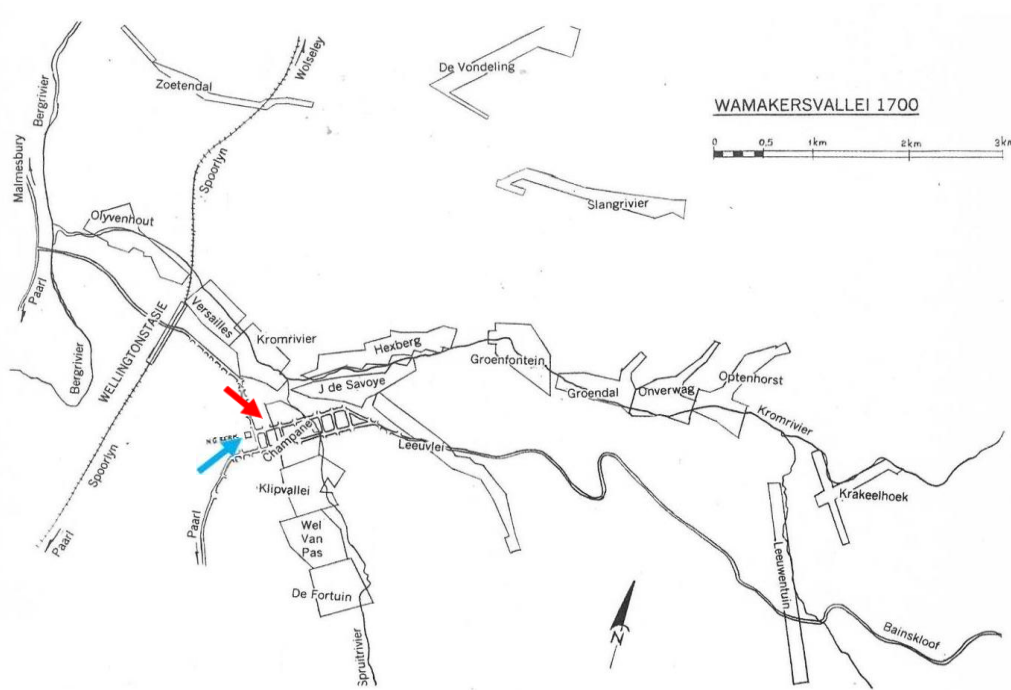


Figure 14: Diagrams indicating the corner of Church and Main Street in 1700. (Source: Wellington History Museum Book)

⁷⁷ Namely Klipvley; Leeuwenvallei; Krommerivier; Versailles; Hexenberg; De Groene Fontein; Olyvenhout; Champagne; and De Slangrivier. In 1712 five additional farms were granted, namely Nabygelegen; Krakeelhoek; Doolhof; Leeuwentuin; and Patatskloof. Surnames like Basson, Van der Merwe, Du Preez, Retief, Rousseau, Le Roux, Du Toit and De Villiers were common.

Volgens 'n brief van ds. Pierre Simond, die Hugenote se predikant, het die Hugenote baie gou na hulle aankoms van woonplek verwissel. Die grond wat aanvanklik aan hulle toegeken was, het nie in hulle smaak geval nie. Die kaart toon die plase in die Wellington-distrik wat hulle vir hulleself uitgesoek het. Die grysgebied is die huidige munisipale gebied van Wellington.

1. **Olijvenhout:**
Estienne Cronier (Cronjé)
2. **Versailles:**
Pierre Cronier (Cronjé)
3. **Krommerivier:**
Louis le Riche
4. **Hexenberg:**
Jean du Tuillet
5. **Leeuwenvallei:**
Jacques de Savoye
6. **De Groene Fonteijn:**
Philip Drouin
7. **Champagne:**
Hercules Wardaar
8. **Leeuwenvallei:**
Isaac Taillefert
9. **Klipvallei:**
Philip des Pres (Du Preez)
10. **Wel van Pas:**
Claude Marais
11. **De Fortuijn:**
Charles Marais
12. **De Slangrivier:**
Louis Fleury (Fourie)

Om u te help om die Hugenote-plase beter te plaas, is die volgende huidige landmerke en strate ook op die kaart aangebring:

- A. Lady Loch-brug
- B. Hoofstraat
- C. Ned. Geref. Moederkerk
- D. Champagnestraat
- E. Piet Retiefstraat
- F. Kerkstraat

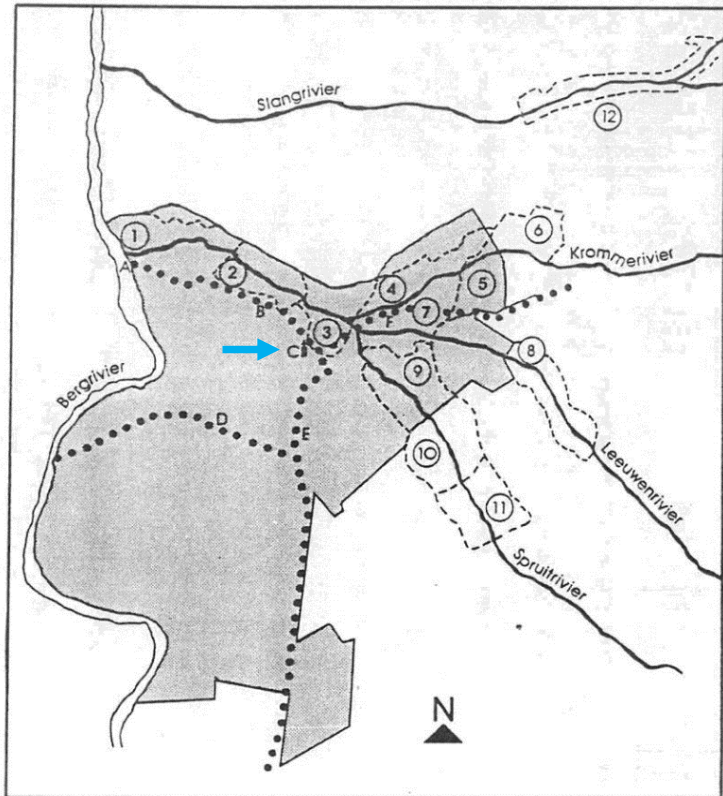


Figure 15: Diagram of farms with the DRC indicated at C. (Source: Wellington History Museum Book)

Indigenous tribes lived here⁷⁸ and because of creeping poverty, many started to work for the farmers. The VOC also started to grant small parcels of land to artisans to encourage them to settle in the area.⁷⁹

As the farming community grew, its need for its own church became greater as they usually attended church services across the Berg River in Paarl. There was no bridge across the river, and they made use of a ferry, which proved treacherous in winter. The farmers (settlers), after another severe winter, formed a commission from representatives of the three field cornetcies, namely Groenberg, Wagenmakers Valley and Dal Josaphat. One of the first tasks of the commission was to find a suitable space for the erection of a church and they decided to purchase the farm Champagne in 1838.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Such as the Chaynunquas, Goraghouqua, Kochoquas and Chariququas.

⁷⁹ Drakenstein Heritage Survey, 21.

⁸⁰ Smith, *Die liefde van jou bruidstyd!*, 6.

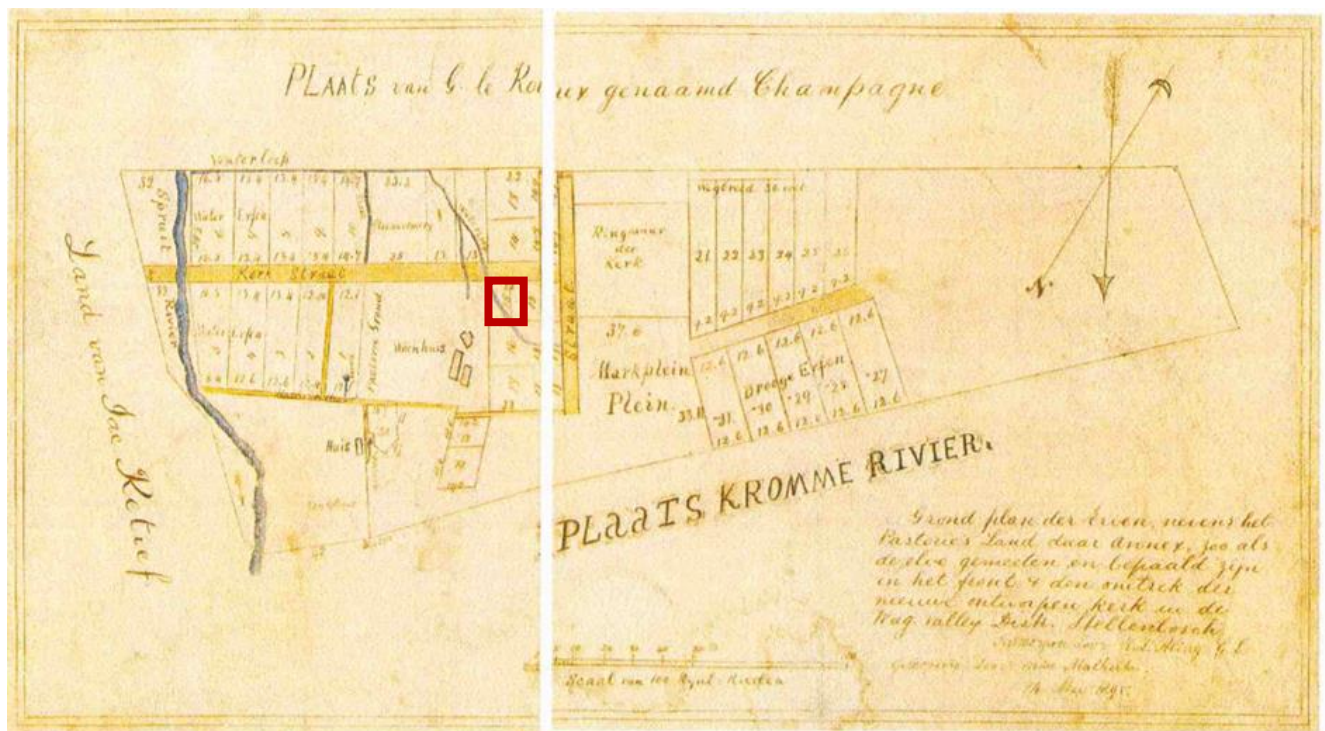


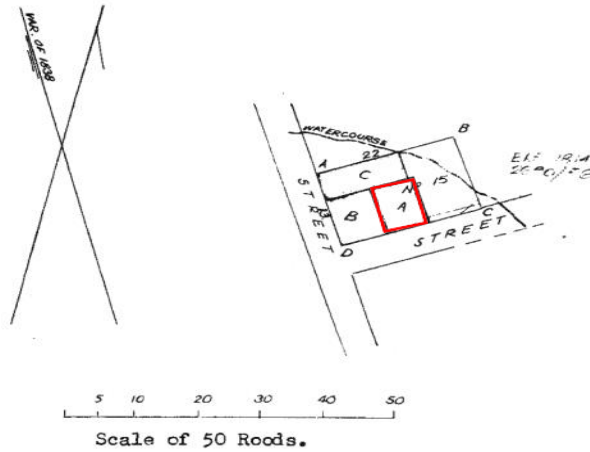
Figure 16: Diagram dated 14 May 1895 with original layout of plots on the farm Champagne surveyed by RL Aling. The red square indicates the DRMC property. (Source: Wellington History Museum Book)

The farm Champagne was chosen because all the wagon routes intersected there and there was enough clay for the manufacturing of bricks.⁸¹ The western section of the farm was to be kept for church purposes and the rest sold to pay for the purchase price.⁸² The town developed around a T-shaped road plan and the two most important streets created were named Church Street, which formed the leg of the T, and Main Street, which formed the crossbar of the T. Lot 15 was on the corner of Church and Main Street, making it strategically one of the most central and prominent properties in the newly laid-out village, at that stage known as *Wagenmakersvallei*,⁸³ with the DRC across the street.

⁸¹ The farm was purchased for 63000 gulden and the surveyor R.L. Aling was asked to subdivide the farm into erven.

⁸² The first subdivision of the farm into 47 separate lots, including a remainder and a few streets, was done by Aling.

⁸³ This translates to Valley of Wagonbuilders, as there was a vibrant wagon-building industry in the town.



This Diagram A B C D represents the * Lot No. 15, situated about the new projected Church in the Wagonmakers Valley, District of Stellenbosch, containing 286 Square Roods freehold.

Extending S.Et. and S.Wt. against the Street,
N.Et. on the land intended for the Parsonage, and
N.Wt. on the lot No. 16.

Measured by
(Sgd) R. F. Aling
L. Sr.

Copied from diagram relating
to Transfer Deed No. 157
dated 25.8.1840 (Vol. 15)
for Surveyor-General
28.2.1959

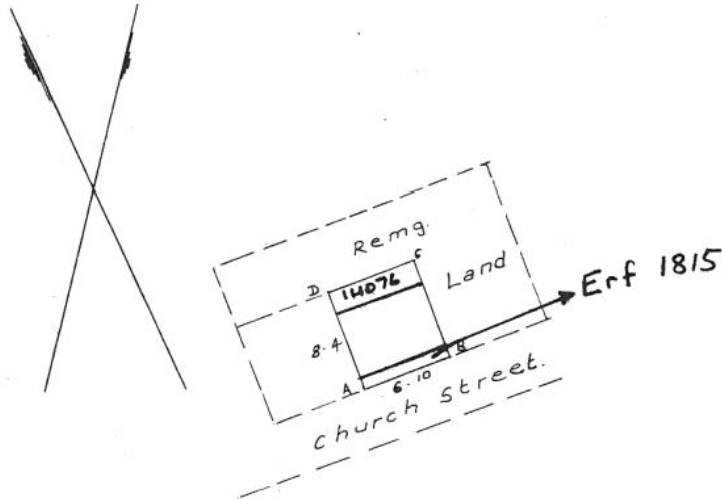
BI-5CA/W.11

C
795
ED

Figure 17: Lot 15 (DRMC Erf 794 indicated as A). (Source: Surveyor-General)

The commission offered some of the plots for sale to the community. Lot 15 was bought by the Du Toit-family and then further subdivided into Erven 792, 793 and 794 and the Remainder, which became Erf 795.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ The Surveyor-General diagram describes this Erf 15 as “situated about the new projected Church in the Wagonmakers Valley”.



Scale: 10 Rhynd. Roods - 1 Inch.

* NOW Erf NO. 794 WELLINGTON.

The above Diagram (A B C D) represents part of the Erf marked No.15, situated in the Village of Wellington, Division of Stellenbosch in ext. 56 Sq.Roods and 136 Sq.Feet presented by Miss. G.M. du Toit to the Missionary Society for the erection of a Telegious Meeting House.

Extending South East and South West against the Church Streets.

North East and North West on the Remaining Land.

Surveyed by,

(Sgd) R.N. Aling.

Land Surveyor.

March, 19th 1845.

Copied from the diagram relating to
 Transfer... File Deed No... 98...
 dated... 14th November, 1855... in favour of
 The Reverend Isaac Biasear...
 [Signature]
 for SURVEYOR-GENERAL,
 22 MAY 1956 CAPE TOWN.

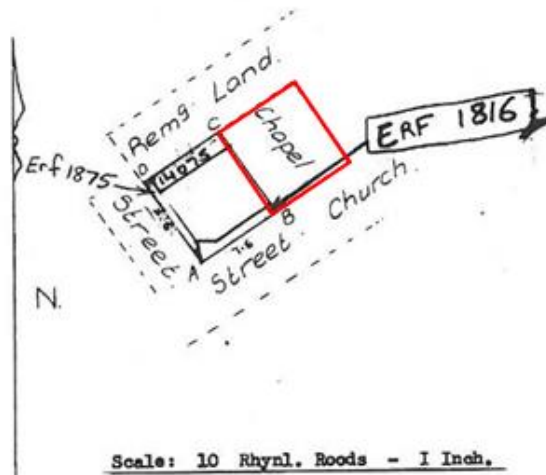
Vol. 24/1845
 [Signature]
 S
 B C
 For list of
 directions see
 back of diagram
 M.F.

Figure 18:1845 diagram of Erf 794 mentioning the donation to the Missions Society by Miss GM du Toit. (Source: Surveyor-General)

In 1845 Miss GM du Toit donated Erf 794 to the Missionary Society for the erection of a Telegious Meeting House, as stated on the erf diagram in figure 18. The erf was transferred into the name of the missionary, Rev Isaak Bisseux, as representative of the Paris Missionary Society, on 14 November 1845.⁸⁵ The adjacent Erf 793 was donated to the Reformed Church of Wellington (the village name of *Wagenmakersvallei* had changed to Wellington) by the same Miss du Toit.⁸⁶ This adjacent donation signifies the religious harmony which was prevalent at that stage. The fact that she donated two adjacent properties to separate racial group congregations, indicates that the relationship was amicable. It can be deduced that Miss du Toit intended these churches to be close in proximity, existing harmoniously next to each other. As the DRC had, and still has, a large tract of land across the road surrounding their church, Erf 793 has remained vacant for 176 years since it was donated to the DRC in 1845.

⁸⁵ See Figure 18.

⁸⁶ See Figure 19.



*NOW ERF NO. 793 WELLINGTON.

The Diagram (A B C D) represents part of the Erf marked No.15, situated in the Division of Stellenbosch, at the Village of Wellington, in extent 62½ Square Roods - being a Donation of Miss. G.M. du Toit to the Reformed Church of Wellington.

Surveyed by,

(Sgd) R.N. Aling.

Land Surveyor.

March, 19th 1845.

Copied from the diagram relating to
 Transfer... TWS Deed No. 236
 dated 22nd May, 1872... in favour of
 The Churchwardens of the D.S.C. of
 Wellington.
R.N. Aling
 for SURVEYOR-GENERAL
 CAPE TOWN.
 22 MAY 1956

BI - 5 CA
 W.11

For list of
 deductions
 back of map

Vol 16/1872

C
 B
 M.v.

Figure 19:1845 diagram of Erf 793 and adjacent Erf 794 (indicated as "chapel"), also mentioning the donation of the erf to the Reformed Church by Miss GM du Toit. (Source: Surveyor-General)

3.4. The plot as a used space

In 1845 a church was built on Erf 794 by the Paris Mission Society, under leadership of Rev Bisseux. The congregation already had a church in the Bovlei area, about 5km north of the village, which was built in 1820, and which served farmworkers and slaves, making it the first church in Wellington. White congregants attended the DRC in Paarl. When slavery was abolished in 1838, many freed slaves moved from the farms to the village of Wellington, and they requested to also have a church built for them as it was difficult to attend the Bovlei church. Very little is known about this first 1845 church in Wellington and there are no details regarding its architecture or appearance. The congregation grew rapidly and in 1884 the church had to be enlarged under the leadership of Rev Pauw. The details of this enlarged church are also minimal.

3.5. The footprint of slavery on the erf

There is a strong history of slavery in the area, and this affected the demographics of the people living in the valley. By the end of the 18th century there were approximately 300 enslaved people in the Wagenmakers Valley and by the middle of the 19th century there were about 700.⁸⁷ A system existed whereby slave-owners could buy their slaves' freedom. Many settlers did this and married the slaves. They and their children were then freed. The 1st of January 1834 was the announced date that enslaved people would be emancipated with the passing of the Slavery Abolition Bill, but there was a four-year period before enslaved people were actually freed on the 1st of December 1838. During this four-year period, enslaved people were referred to as apprentices. In Wagenmakers Valley there were several Free Blacks at the end of the 18th century, and they identified a need for a place of worship and Erf 794 came into play. On the 1st and 2nd of December 1934, the centenary of the abolishment of slavery were celebrated with thanksgiving services in the church. Developing into a fully-fledged church, it operated as such till its demolition in 1941. Ironically, Market Square, where slaves were regularly traded, was just across Main Street opposite the DRMC and the DRC and formed an associative landscape.

⁸⁷Kriel, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946" (Master's thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950). 27.



Figure 20: Painting by artist Otto Landsberg (1803-1905) indicating the gables of the DRMC on the left of the big DRC. The immediate front indicates the Market Square where enslaved people were traded. (Source: Wellington History Museum Book)



Figure 21: The DRMC on the left (red square) and Market Square with the slave bell (yellow square).

3.6. The centenary of the founding of the DRMC and the unveiling of the monument

In 1981 the empty plot received acknowledgement in terms of its meaning to the community and greater society when the DRMC Synod decided to erect a granite monument on the plot to commemorate the centenary of the founding of the DRMC in South Africa – after being granted permission by the DRC. According to Bailey, the whole congregation played host and claimed the centenary as their own as the whole congregation was involved and deployed in the festivities and celebrations. Prof Nico Koopman (currently Vice-Rector at Stellenbosch

University) held the church service, and the monument was inaugurated by elder Laban Van Rooyen.⁸⁸

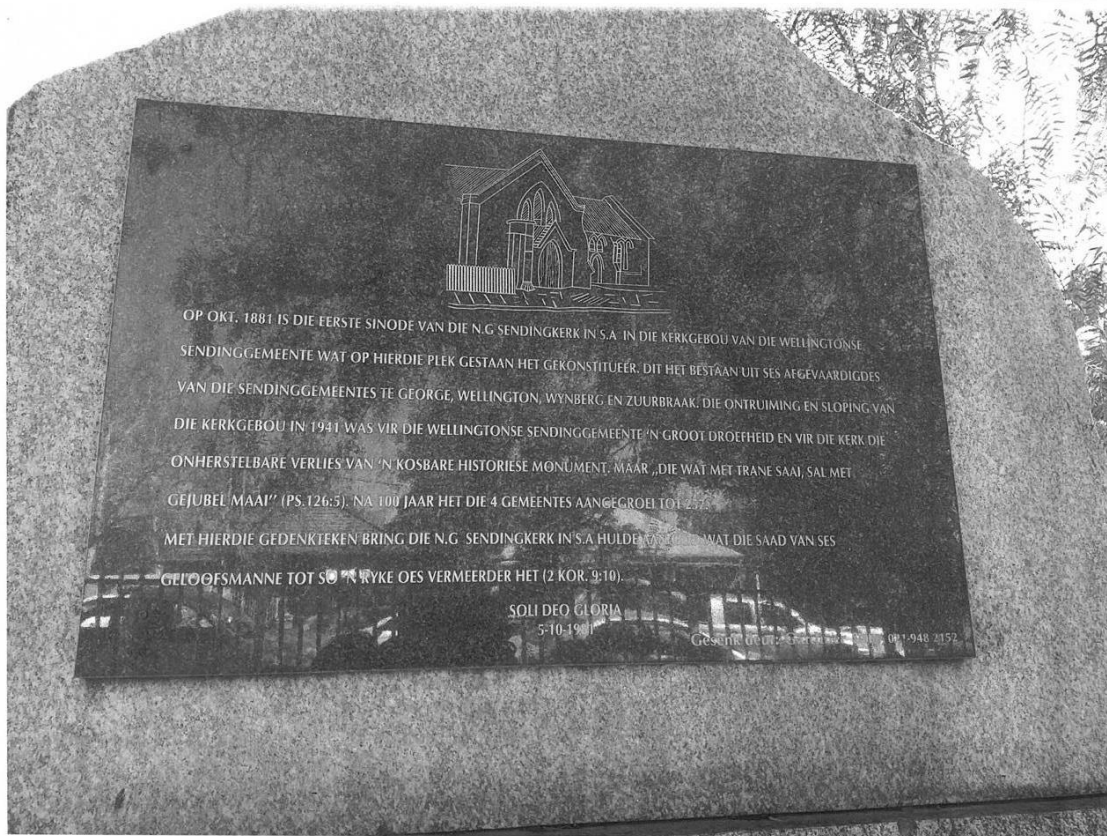


Figure 22: Plaque on the DRMC centenary monument, 1981. (Photo: Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, 2020)

3.7. Resurrection of the tragedy and “reconciliation”

After the demolition of the church in 1941, and the erection of the monument in 1981, the tragedy of the demolished church again slowly slipped into near oblivion, until 2010, when one of the sons of the DRMC congregation, the late Herman Bailey, by this time an elder, raised the possibility to approach the DRC to try to reconcile the two adjacent congregations. His Church Council was a bit pessimistic but nevertheless gave him a mandate to pursue the matter.⁸⁹

The DRMC Church Council took the brave decision to call a year of reconciliation in 2011, 70 years after their church was lost and demolished. Assisted by a small committee, Bailey approached the DRC Church Council about the possibility of reconciling. According to Bailey,

⁸⁸ Herman Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020.

⁸⁹ Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020.

the DRC Church Council, upon meeting them, claimed to know very little about the incident and he then prepared documentation to enlighten them.⁹⁰ The DRMC did not want to pursue a legal route to claim anything back, but rather provided them with a written offer of peace and reconciliation about what happened in 1941. With this action the DRMC placed a reconciliation offer at the theological centre of its critique and hurt against this schismatic period of ecumenical conflict.

In response, the DRC gave the DRMC a counter written letter of reconciliation. In the Address of Reconciliation, dated 22 September 2011, the DRC recognises and admits the hurt and trauma inflicted on the DRMC and offers condolences for the historical emotional loss.⁹¹ However, an acknowledgement of the racialised nature of the removals and demolition is glaringly absent.⁹²

Unfortunately, from the DRC side, only one of the two ministers and one of their congregants attended the reconciliation ceremony, which begs the question whether the congregation of the DRC was on the same page as the DRMC. Turnbridge notes that “one person’s landmark may be an object of indifference or hostility to another”.⁹³ Bailey mentioned that he asked the one congregant who attended, Ms Winnie Rust (also an important author in Wellington’s history), whether she represented the entire congregation.⁹⁴

The two adjacent erven, 793 and 794, have since the Address of Reconciliation in 2011 been fenced and paved as a parking lot rented to the neighbouring business, the income of which is shared by the DRC and the DRMC. In the middle of Erf 794 a metal crest with the insignia of the DRMC has been laid out. Ironically, the gravity of the historical events is captured in this symbol, a simple crest on the floor with cars driving over and parked on and over it daily.

⁹⁰ Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020.

⁹¹ Address of Reconciliation from Dutch Reformed Church to the United Reformed Church of Wellington, 22 September 2011.

⁹² Agreement was reached that: (1) Regarding Erf 794, the DRC offered to make the DRMC 50% co-owners of their erstwhile church erf and to make the DRMC a 50% co-owner of the adjacent Erf 793, which has belonged to the DRC since 1845. These two adjacent properties are now jointly owned by the DRMC and the DRC; (2) There would be joint church services where farmers and their workers would attend together; (3) The church will be rebuilt although the inside might be multi-purposed; (4) There would be a festival for the 70th celebration of the inauguration of the new DRMC on 28 September 2011 with a torch march from the old church site to the current church.

⁹³ JE Turnbridge, “Whose heritage to conserve? Cross-cultural reflections on political dominance and urban heritage conservation.”, *Canadian Geographer* 28, no. 2 (1984): 171.

⁹⁴ Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020



Figure 23: The DRMC metal mosaic paved crest in the paving of the parking lot. (Photo: Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, 2020)

Chapter 4: The tangible heritage of the church



Figure 24: Painting of DRMC done by German painter J Hawle. Undated. (Photo: Courtesy of Herman Bailey).



Figure 25: Picture of the DRMC as it stood. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

4.1. The physical building (and surroundings): Description of the church

“Memories, histories and relics suffuse human experience. While each particular trace of the past ultimately perishes, collectively, they are immortal.”⁹⁵

In the absence of a tangible church and only a vacant site at present, it is necessary to reconstruct the physical character, detail and components of a once pivotal axle of a congregation with the assistance of two photographs of the exterior, three of the interior, a 5m-long dilapidated wall remnant, three salvaged foundation stones, two church benches and a treasure of memory and postmemory. I will attempt to do so in this Chapter 4. Except for the thesis written by Kriel,⁹⁶ this chapter needed to rely on these limited sources and the colourful memories of the congregation members themselves, as captured in documents such as Centenary Festival pages, church booklets, and theological publications.



Figure 26: The interior of the Wellington DRMC showing pulpit, pews and organ. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

⁹⁵ David Lowenthal, “The past is a foreign country (1985)” in Baumann, Nicolas, *Townscape and urban conservation, The impact of the theory of townscape on conservation planning* (DPhil dissertation, University of York, 1997).

⁹⁶ Kriel, “Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946” (Master’s thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950).



Figure 27: 1885 picture of the DRMC before its demolition showing the inside (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington).



Figure 28: 1885 picture of the DRMC showing the gallery. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

The late Rev Dr Beyers Naudé was deployed from 1940 till 1942 as an assistant-minister by the Wellington DRC. He resided in his parsonage, Onze Rust in Church Street, across from the DRMC as well as the DRC.⁹⁷ In his book *My land van hoop* (My country of hope⁹⁸) he describes how “across the beautiful and impressive DRC with the marble statue of the late Dr Andrew Murray gazing down Church Street in Wellington, lies the humble small church of the DRMC where rev J.M.N. Breedt serves as the reverend”.⁹⁹ Bruggink and Droppers describe the feeling this imagery creates as follows: “Just as liturgy is theology in action, so architecture is theology in material structure”, and “Church architecture expresses theology”.¹⁰⁰ This represented the superior complex the DRC held and nurtured over the DRMC.

The DRMC on erf 794 was the third church building built in the Wagenmakers Valley (Wellington) by the congregation.

The location of the first church (*Oefenhuis*), built between 1796 and 1797, is still a mystery, and was apparently half an hour too far from the congregation, which was centred in the Bovlei area. The early churches were sometimes referred to as *Oefenhuisse* (exercise houses) which functioned as school and church, serving both religious and educational needs. There is a possibility that this first church might have been on one of the farms on which the village Wellington was later established and laid out.

The second church was built in the Bovlei area in 1820 on land that was donated by the Governor Lord Charles Somerset after a request from Mr Daniel le Roux to the Governor, and after inspection, approval and recommendation of the Magistrate van Rhyneveld.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Uniquely, the erf that houses this parsonage, which was occupied by Naudé, is unnumbered and indicated on the Surveyor General diagram No. 8031/49 as Lot Onzerust.

⁹⁸ Beyers Naudé, *My land van hoop* (Cape Town: Human & Rousseau, 1995).

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 32.

¹⁰⁰ Bruggink & Droppers, *Christ and architecture* (Michigan: William Eerdmans, 1965), 23-25.

¹⁰¹ Kriel, “Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946” (Master’s thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950). 67.



BO: Die oudste gemeente in Wellington en distrik is die Sendinggemeente wat in die Bovlei ontstaan het. 1820 word as die stigtingsjaar beskou, aangesien hul kerkgebou op 18 September 1820 ingewy is.

Figure 29: The Bovlei Missionary Church, built by the Paris Missionary Society, the second church built in the Drakenstein area. It is also the oldest in the Wellington area. (Source: Places and buildings of historical importance in Wellington)

After the abolition of slavery in 1838, the core of the congregation tended to migrate to the village of Wellington and after requests from this growing group to Rev Bisseux, he set out to construct a church in Wellington in 1845 on the corner of Church and Main Street.¹⁰² Rev Bisseux approached the Paris Mission Society and it donated £100 towards the construction of this church. He collected money from people as far as Cape Town and the local farmers also contributed to the building costs.¹⁰³

The DRC, built in 1840 across the street from Erf 794, was a racially integrated church at that stage with many Coloured congregants.¹⁰⁴ The Coloured women sat in a specific area and the Coloured men sat in the narthex; an apparently common practice in the DRC at the time.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² The erf was diagonally across the DRC, built in 1840, as well as the Market Square, where only a decade earlier enslaved people were still being sold.

¹⁰³ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente. *Program van verrichtingen op het Eeuwfeest der Ned. Gerf. Zending Gemeente, Wellington te Boven Vallei* (Wellington: 1920, October 23).

¹⁰⁴ These were fully fledged confirmed congregants. They even bought their own seats, as was the generally accepted DRC practice in many of their churches. Those who did not buy seats were allocated seats.

¹⁰⁵ This was apparently common practice, as Loff refers to the DRC congregation of Stellenbosch in *Bevryding tot eenwording*. This practice is also documented by WB van der Vyver in *Die geskiedenis van die Stellenbosche Gemeente 1800 – 1830, Argief Jaarboek*, 1958 part I, p 233. PB Borchers also refers to it in *An auto-biographical memoir*, a facsimile reprinted in Cape Town in 1963 from the original printed in 1861, p 182. Sources include: Kriel, CJ, *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington* (1952); and Loff, CJA, *Bevryding tot eenwording: Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika 1881 – 1994* (PhD dissertation, Theologische Universiteit van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland te Kampen, 1998).

After the new church was built by Rev Bisseux across the street from the DRC, many Coloured people continued to be members of the DRC for years.¹⁰⁶ The Bovlei Church and the Church on Erf 794 were the only churches built by the Paris Missionary Society, the *Société des missions évangéliques de Paris*, founded in 1822.

4.2. The history and context of Erf 794

It is necessary to trace how the demolished church ended up being built on Erf 794, right in the centre of Wellington, as it is incorrectly documented in Smith’s book, *The museum book*, and the DRC centenary book that the DRC donated the erf to the DRMC. The church was constructed on Erf 794, fronting on Church Street.¹⁰⁷ The streetscape in this area formed the religious precinct of Wellington.

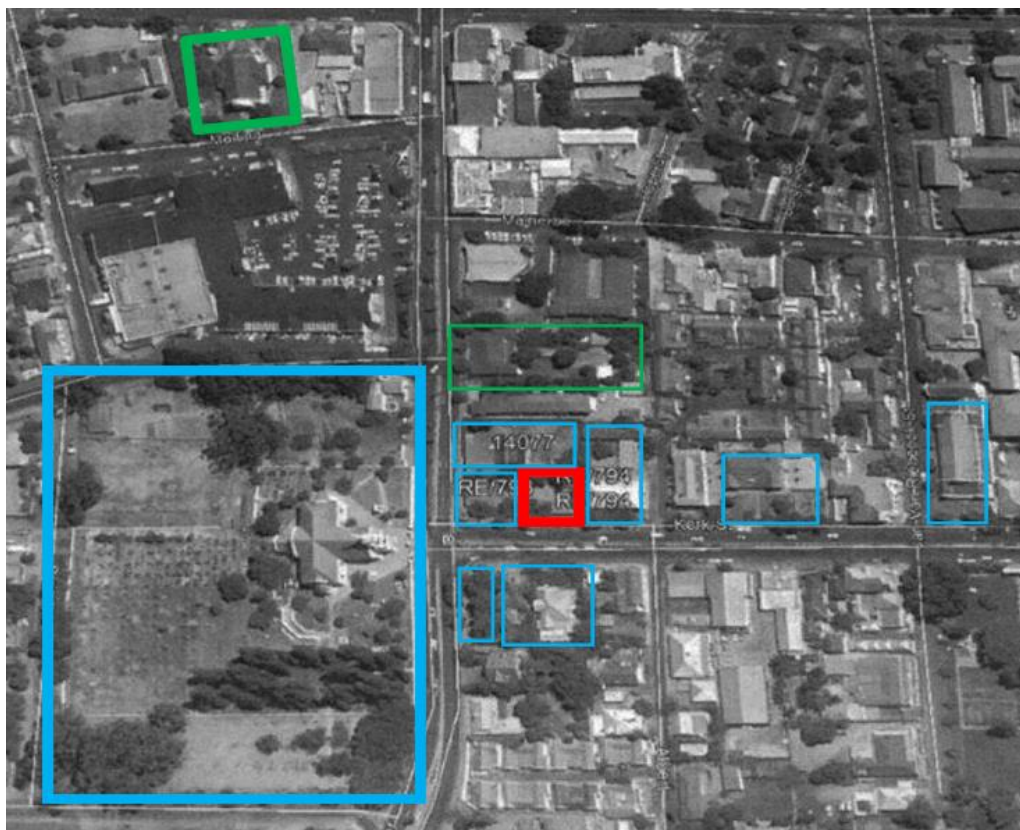


Figure 30: The blue indicates all the DRC property, with the red square the original DRMC. The green indicates the new DRMC (at the top), and the DRMC parsonage that was expropriated under the Group Areas Act. (Source: Google Earth)

¹⁰⁶ Kriel, “Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946” (Master’s thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950). 99.

¹⁰⁷ Contextually it was not standing in isolation, as it formed part of the historical nucleus of Wellington. The DRMC was situated in Main Street diagonally across the DRC, adjacent to the DRC’s sexton’s house on Main Street, which was opposite the DRC parsonage Onze Rust across Church Street. The DRMC was nearly adjacent to the main DRC parsonage also fronting Church Street with the Church Hall and the Martha Hall only two erven further down the road.

Erf 794 has a rich surveyor history¹⁰⁸ and was not donated by the DRC but donated to the Paris Mission Society by Miss GM du Toit in 1845, with the original Surveyor General Diagram indicating the condition of use.¹⁰⁹

Although the diagram refers to the condition of use as being for a “Telegious Meeting House”, this condition is not stipulated in the title deed. It also does not specify which missionary society; many different missionary societies were active in the Cape. However, at the bottom of the above-mentioned S.G. DGM. NO. 566/1845, it is stamped and signed by the then Surveyor-General on 22 May 1845, indicating that the diagram is related to Transfer Deed No. 98 dated 14 November 1845, in favour of the Rev Isaak Bisseux.

When the church was taken over from the Paris Mission Society in 1879 by the DRC, the church property, Erf 794, and all the other properties that were registered in the name of the Paris Mission Society, were transferred onto the name of the *Sending Kommissie* (Mission Committee) of the DRC. This was the *modus operandi* with all the mission stations that were taken over by the DRC.¹¹⁰ In terms of clause 304(d) of the DRC Internal Church Act, all property acquired by the *Algemene Sendingkommissie* (General Mission Committee) had to be registered in the name of the *Sending Kommissie*.¹¹¹ The diagram of the adjacent Erf 792, S.G. DGM. No. 407/1881, refers to Erf 794, the DRMC-erf, as “Portion of Erf 15 trfd to French Mis. Society”.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Erf 794 originates from the original Erf 15, described as “erf 15, situated in the Wagenmakers Valley, in the District of Stellenbosch”, as surveyed by Diagram No. 246/1833. Lot 15 was subsequently, in 1840, by virtue of Surveyor-General diagram No. 166/1840, further subdivided into four erven, namely Erven 792, 793 and 794 and the Remainder, which became Erf 795. The SG diagram describes this Erf 15 as “situated about the new projected Church in the Wagenmakers Valley”.

¹⁰⁹ This is indicated and described on the original Surveyor General Diagram No. 566/1845 as follows: “The above Diagram (A B C D) represents part of the Erf marked No. 15, situated in the Village of Wellington, Division of Stellenbosch in ext. 56 Sq. Roods and 136 Sq. Feet presented by Miss. G.M. du Toit to the Missionary, Society for the erection of a Telegious Meeting House. Extending Southeast and Southwest against the Church Streets. Northeast and Northwest on the Remaining land. Surveyed by, (Sgd) R.N. Aling Land Surveyor. March 19th, 1845.”

¹¹⁰ CJA Loff, *Bevryding tot eenwording. Die NG sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika 1881 – 1994*, Kampen: Theologische Universiteit, 1998.123.

¹¹¹ FE o’B Geldenhuys, *Die regsposisie van kerkraad, ring en sinode* (Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik, Bpk., 1951), 365.

¹¹² The donor of Erf 794, Miss GM du Toit, also donated the adjacent Erf 793, on the corner of Church and Main Street, to the “Reformed Church of Wellington” as indicated on S.G. DGM. NO. 567/1845. The fact that the two adjacent erven were donated to two different religious organisations, serving different religious communities, indicates the level of religious and racial tolerance and harmony that was a characteristic, at that specific period in the history, of the broader Wellington community. This makes the demolition of the DRMC building even more significant – the reasoning given for its demolition (and the absence thereof) speaks volumes as to the motive behind it. It is unclear why the Wellington History Museum book (*Die geskiedenis van Wellington en distrik tot die jaar 2000*), CJ Kriel’s masters’ thesis, as well as *Liefde van ons bruidstyd*¹¹² indicate that Erf 794 was donated to the Paris Mission Society by the DRC, when the property was donated by Miss du Toit, who also donated the adjacent erf to the DRC.

Erven 793 and 794 are located on the corner of Church and Main Street in Wellington with Erf 793 being the actual corner erf. Both these properties, situated on the important intersection, are currently vacant, although there is a monument on Erf 794 which celebrates the centenary of the founding of the DRMC on 5 October 1881. Both Erven 793 and 794 have been, in terms of the heritage legislation, graded as IIIA, as the first DRMC in South Africa was built on Erf 794.

4.3. The original 1845 church

There are no photographs, sketches or written descriptions available of the original 1845 church building, and it is possible that the design was also New Gothic, as the 1885 enlargement of the church was the addition of a new wing.¹¹³ The architect of the original church is also not known. Smit states that the church had to be nearly completely rebuilt during the enlargement.¹¹⁴ If this was the case, then it was probably the only church that was demolished twice in its lifetime.

4.4. The enlarged 1884 church

In 1884 the Church Council took the decision to enlarge the church. On 3 September 1884 at 15h00 the ceremonial laying of the cornerstone of the enlargement of the DRMC took place. This demographically integrated ceremony was attended by many whites and Coloureds.¹¹⁵

The young Rev J C Pauw, leading the ceremony, was born in Leiden, Netherlands, and was learning to become an architect, when he received the calling to become a missionary teacher at the *Christelike Normaalskool* (a teachers training college) at Klokkeberg, Nijmegen.¹¹⁶ At the laying of the cornerstone ceremony, Rev Pauw, the minister of the congregation, added context to the reasons for the enlargement and the accompanying challenges and contributions, physical and financial, and delivered the following report at the ceremony:

When I arrived here the reverend Murray, in referring to the church, told me the following, “*Broeder, dat is hier te klein, gij moet het groter maken.*” (Brother, it is too small here, you will have to enlarge it).

At that stage, the congregation was still supported financially by the Paris Missionary Society and the DRMC had already built a church, school and parsonage. The congregation had grown to the point that the church needed to be enlarged, and this required fundraising. These funds

¹¹³ With the fast-growing congregation the church became too small and had to be enlarged. As there are no photographs or images of the 1845 church available, it is impossible to determine what percentage of the original church was kept and what percentage was demolished to make way for the enlargement.

¹¹⁴ Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington) interview by author, 7 February 2020.

¹¹⁵ Kriel, “Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946” (Master’s thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950).101.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 67.

were raised from multiple sources,¹¹⁷ including from within the congregation itself, children's fundraising, fundraising parties, and donors from overseas.¹¹⁸ At Rev Pauw's suggestion, a group of men in the congregation took responsibility for manufacturing the bricks, while also working on the grape harvest – a huge undertaking of time and labour that signified the sense of ownership and commitment to the church.¹¹⁹

The opening ceremony was well-attended by the non-racial congregation members who had donated time, labour and money to the enlargement of the building. Beautiful aspects of the ceremony¹²⁰ paid homage to the emotional, physical and mental sacrifices made by each person who contributed to it.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente. *Program van verrichtingen op het Eeuwfeest der Ned. Gerf. Zending Gemeente, Wellington te Boven Vallei* (Wellington: October 23, 1920) states that the donations for the new extension were at that stage as follows:

£50 – From Holland from Mrs Ten Boekel
£25 – A donation from a brother in Wellington as a New Year's gift
£20 – The Hugenooten Dames, half of their *basaar* (fête) profit
£5 – From a widow
£5 – From an anonymous brother
£2 – From a youngster from his savings (*sparbus*)
£2 – From a young girl
£1 – From an old father and mother
£2 – From a stranger in Switzerland
£3 12s 10 (and a half) – From the Coloured day school children entertainment
£2 – From the Coloured Sunday school children
£14 – From a tea party held by the *Sang Koor* (Singing Choir)
£2 15s – From donations
TOTAL - £138 6s 10 (and a half) d

The monies used during the construction were as follows.

£10 – For the architect, Hager from Stellenbosch
£35 14s – For the soil and other costs
£50 – For the foundations
TOTAL - £95 14s

As a balance they had:

£42 12s 10 (and a half)
100 000 bricks
No debt
Skat (treasure) of prayers

¹¹⁸ In 1883 Mrs Pauw wrote a letter to a friend in the Netherlands about the work of the DRMC and informed her of the importance of having the church enlarged. On hearing the urgency of the matter, this friend informed Mrs Pauw that she would donate £25 if Rev Pauw confirmed the intention and courage to start the project. This was the catalyst. In the meantime, the Zending Kommissie of the DRC had also given its approval. Rev Pauw wrote to the donor in the Netherlands to thank her and mentions that the £25 would only be enough for half the foundations but that it is really appreciated. The Amsterdam donor then wrote back to say that they would donate another £25 to cover the whole foundation.

¹¹⁹ In February Rev Pauw proposed to the congregation that they manufacture 100 000 clay bricks; ten men from the congregation should take responsibility for producing 10 000 bricks each, after the grape harvest period. This added enormous emotional and embodied energy to the church and contextualised it as being a personal, built-with-their-own-hands church.

¹²⁰ After Rev Pauw delivered his report in the church, the congregation proceeded to gather outside at the cornerstone of the new extension to the church, where the Magistrate of Paarl, Magistrate Cloete, was to ceremoniously lay the cornerstone, while the rain was pouring down. After this formality, the congregation quickly returned back into the church where the Magistrate was to deliver his speech. This report is preserved inside the

Miss Anna Pauw, daughter of the late Rev Pauw, states in her contribution to the 1920 centenary celebration of the congregation, that the men worked to make the bricks and the women worked to supply the windows. The schoolchildren paid for the teak front door and even for a part of the communion service. One sister donated her whole monthly salary for one month.¹²² This was a collective community project, one which was personal, sacrificial and bears the heritage significance and memory of a congregation's unified perseverance.

While the enlargement construction of the church was taking place, the DRC made their smaller Church Hall, called the Martha Saal (named after the woman who donated the money for the construction of the hall) “*vroegere Martha's Gebouw*” (previously called Martha's Building), available to be used by the DRMC congregation for their Sunday and other church services.¹²³ Though the Martha Hall was too small to accommodate all the members of the DRMC, this indicated the harmonious relationship between the two churches.¹²⁴

glass container underneath the cornerstone. In the absence of the Rev Andrew Murray, Candidate Reverend Ahrbeck delivered a speech on behalf of the DRC. Rev Esselen was the master of ceremonies for this historical event. The amount collected during the sermon was £11 16s. The document containing all the information was also placed in the glass container underneath the cornerstone. Also in the container was another document from Rev Pauw describing the founding of the congregation as well as the current membership. The document emphasises that the Dutch Reformed Zending congregation was founded by the Soci  t   des Missions Evang  liques de Paris and is signed by “*Zending-Leeraar bij die Ned Ger Kerk van Zuid-Afrika*” (Mission minister at the DRC of SA). This is strange because the DRMC of SA, of which he was a founding member, was already established in 1881. One would have thought that he would refer to himself as a minister of the DRMC. The Philharmonic Ensemble (*Philharmonisch Gezelschap*) from Paarl, led by Prof JS de Villiers, entertained the congregation with beautiful choir singing. In 1885 the construction was completed with great interest from the congregation as well as from the white congregation.

¹²¹ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente. *Program van verrichtingen op het Eeuwfeest der Ned. Gerf. Zending Gemeente, Wellington te Boven Vallei* (Wellington, 23 October 1920); *Zending Gemeente, Wellington te Boven Vallei* (Wellington, 23 October 1920).

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente. *Program van verrichtingen op het Eeuwfeest der Ned. Gerf. Zending Gemeente, Wellington te Boven Vallei* (Wellington, 23 October 1920); *Zending Gemeente, Wellington te Boven Vallei* (Wellington, 23 October 1920). This was quite significant, indicating the spiritual harmony prevalent in the broader Wellington community in 1884, and in contrast to what happened 60 years later, with the purchase of the DRMC by the DRC. The point remains – if the DRC in 1940 had made available to the DRMC one of their two church halls to hold services while the DRMC was building its new church, the latter could have reduced costs substantially by repurposing the salvaged building material from their church they were contracted to demolish as a condition of sale to the DRC. This would also have saved, and preserved, much of the heritage contained and embedded in the building fibres of the old church building. This demolition of the DRMC, after the new DRMC was built, precluded any potential heritage and tangible memory transfer from the one building to the other. It could have softened the trauma of the demolition, keeping the dignity of the sacred material intact, instead of afterwards selling the bricks per lorryload, the wood by job lots, or the corrugated iron roof sheets piece by piece.

¹²⁴ During the construction, Rev Pauw became seriously ill but insisted that the construction continue. The deadline for the completion of the construction also had to be brought forward because the inauguration of the church and the annual confirmation had to be at the same church service and the Martha Hall was too small to accommodate all the anticipated congregants. At the inauguration occasion CP Hoogenhout also held a choir festival. At the inauguration, the new teak church front door was ceremoniously unlocked by the DRC Rev Neethling. As Rev Murray was on tour, Rev Marquard of the DRC across the road prayed for of the construction of the church faithfully every Sunday for the duration of the process. Together with the inauguration of the new church, 85 new congregants were confirmed of which most were baptised as well.

The enlarged new church was, according to Naudé a “*beskeie kerkgeboutjie*”¹²⁵ (humble small church building) architecturally built in the New Gothic style. In the report drafted by Rev JC Pauw, which was put in a glass jar and plastered in underneath the cornerstone of the new enlarged church, he mentions that an amount of £10 was paid to the architect Hager from Stellenbosch. It is presumed that he referred to the well-known architect Carl Otto Hager, who designed many churches all over South Africa of which many were in the New Gothic style.¹²⁶

Although Neo-Gothic, it is evident from the photographic record that the church had no excessive or inappropriate embellishments. The photographic evidence indicates that the walls, doors, pillars, windows, trusses, beams, ceiling and roof were all in harmony and complemented one another. This underlying harmony is significant as the church was enlarged after 40 years and some of the materials used were, again, primitive and humble. The photographic evidence further indicates that this enlargement was done on a perfect scale, maintaining all elements of proportions. The fusion of the elements of shape, colour, texture, pattern, size and position all added up to the harmonious relationship created by using elements like rhythm or contrast when this humble architectural composition was created.¹²⁷

4.4.1. Inside of church

From an analysis of the inside of the erstwhile church using the only three dated monochrome pictures, various characteristics can be observed and will be attempted to be reconstructed.

4.4.1.1. Walls

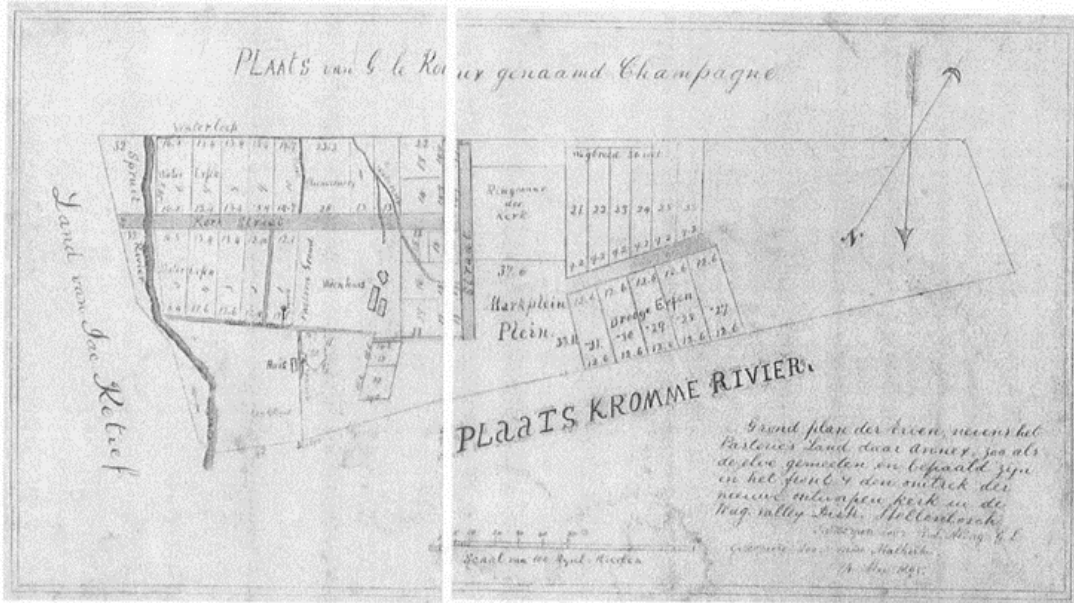
The walls were of handmade raw bricks and clay which were produced locally from Erf 973 further down Church Street, at least 100 000 of them, by the congregants themselves, with ten congregants each responsible to deliver 10 000.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Naudé, *My land van hoop*, 32.

¹²⁶ “Carl Otto Hager”, <https://artefacts.co.za/main/Buildings/archframes.php?archid=674>.

¹²⁷ Howard Robertson, *The principles of architectural composition* (London: The Architectural Press, 1950), 26.

¹²⁸ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente. *Program van verrichtingen op het Eeuwfeest der Ned. Gerf. Zending Gemeente, Wellington te Boven Vallei* (Wellington, 23 October 1920); Zending Gemeente, Wellington te Boven Vallei (Wellington, 23 October 1920). Further down Church Street, Erf 973 is still indicated on modern versions of figure 30, as “*steenvormery*” (brickyard). All the bricks of the demolished DRMC were made on this property as there was a suitable clay deposit.



Hierdie grondplan van die oorspronklike uitleg van die dorpsere op die plaas Champagne, ontwerp deur R.L. Aling, is deur "Miss Malherbe" op 14 Mei 1895 gekopieer. Die ringmuur van die kerkgebou en die Markplein kan duidelik gesien word. Die erf waar daar staan "Steenvormery" is die latere Victoriaplein. Links loop die Spruitrivier. Oorspronklike tekening in die Wellington Museum.

Figure 31: Map with layout of first Wellington town plots on the farm Champagne. (Source: Wellington History Museum Book)

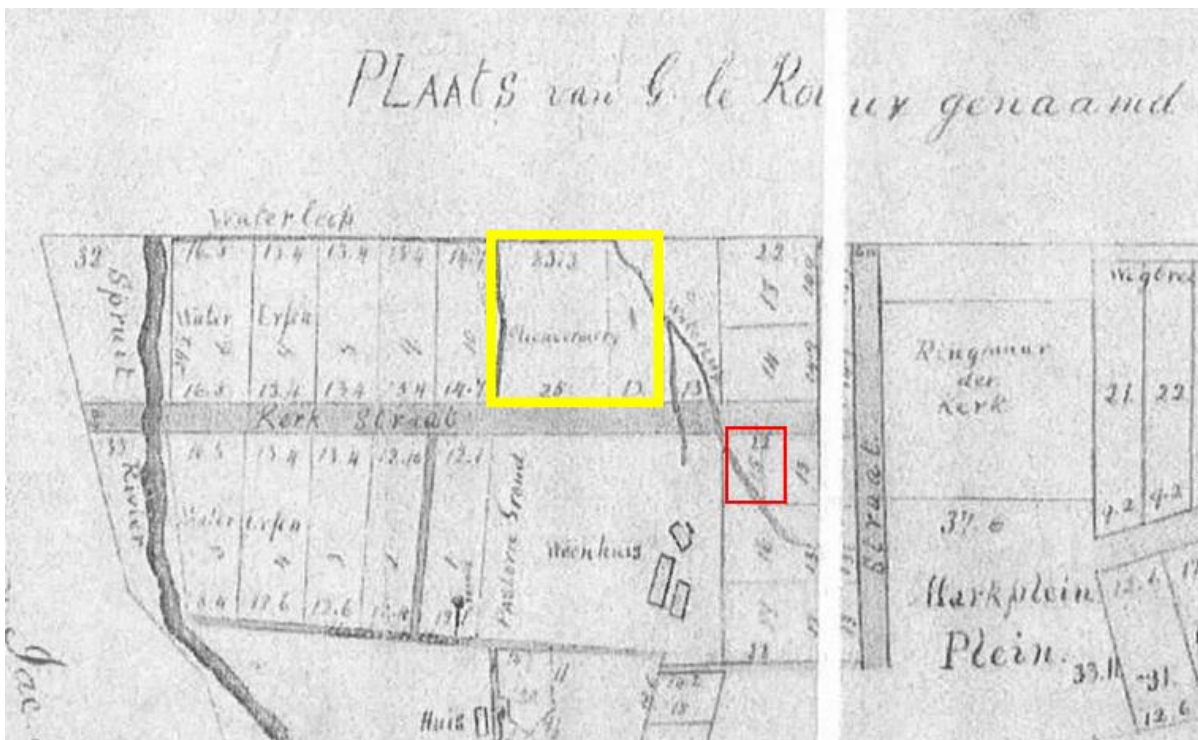


Figure 32: Enlarged from the figure above, indicating the "steenvormery" (brickyard site indicated in yellow) in proximity to the DRMC erf (red square) further down Church Street.

Mention was later made by Rev JMN Breedt that the walls of the church had begun to show cracks, however, it is not specified whether these cracks were structural.¹²⁹ The cracks could also have been from the years of continuous layers of lime being used to paint the church, both in- and outside. The walls were plastered and painted inside and outside. From the only colour photo available of the church, taken from the outside, it appears that the church had a yellowish ochre colour coat of paint at the time the photo was taken. From the photographic record of the inside of the church, it is evident that the church was painted white or cream. The photographs show that the church was surrounded by many trees which provided shade in the blistering hot summers of Wellington.¹³⁰ An informal tree survey of the premises for the purposes of this study on 25 September 2020 specifies the various trees that were present (it is attached to the thesis).

As there were no modern damp-proof courses available those years, use was often made of stone at the bottom of the wall, if available, which gave a fair bit of protection against any possibility of rising damp. It appears that use was made of stones to prevent this possible scenario, as Bailey states that after the demolition, the Prins family took three river stones to their house as a memory of the original church.¹³¹



Figure 33: Photograph of two of the three cornerstones at the Prins family's house in Pentz Street (Photo: Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, 25 April 2023)

The bottom 1.5 meters of the inside walls were all clad with wooden varnished dado panels with quarter-round skirting at the bottom and diamond-patterned black-and-white decorative stencilling, softening the line between the wall and the floor, as well as absorbing any moisture rising from the foundations. This cladding would probably also have been of Oregon pine

¹²⁹ JMN Breedt, *Gedenkboek by die inwyding van die Nuwe Ned. Geref. Sendingkerkgebou, Wellington op 27 en 28 September 1941* (Paarl: Paarlse Drukkers Maatskappy Beperk, 1941).

¹³⁰ Ben-Jon Dreyer, *Trees Survey, attached as Annexure .D.*

¹³¹ Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020

wooden planks or wooden board. It would have served to cover up any damp and to keep the walls of the busy church clean.



Figure 34: The green rectangular shape indicates the wooden varnished dado-panels which clad the inside walls. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

4.4.1.2. Roof structure

It is surmised that the roof of the original church, built in 1845, might have been thatched as corrugated iron only became available in the Cape Colony around the middle of the 19th century.¹³² However, there is also a possibility that it might have been constructed with corrugated iron cladding as corrugated iron was invented in Britain in 1829 and was exported in large quantities to the British colonies, especially for use in the South African mines, as well as to India and Australia.¹³³ Unfortunately, there is no documentation or photographic material in existence to determine this. From the few pictures available of the enlarged 1884 church, the roof can be identified as corrugated iron.

The roof had three identical classical gables at each of the three ends and also had a turret for ventilation, centred on the top of the wing parallel to Church Street. The church had no hierarchical tower, but the pitched roof and the turret did give a similar impression.

¹³² AD Herholdt et al, “Wellington Conservation Impact Survey” (University of Port Elizabeth, September 2002), 20.

¹³³ Peter Ball, “Corrugated Irony – A short history of the tin roof”, *The Heritage Portal* (October 25, 2015).



Figure 35: The corrugated roof structure with turret added, centred on top of the side wing. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

Inside the church the roof structure was exposed and consisted of hammerbeam wooden trusses with granite or stone corbels as resting supports beneath both feet of each roof truss. The configuration of these beams was based on triangulation and geometric principles (standards), with ample safety factors, which is generally indicated by generous timber sections.¹³⁴ Once again, nowhere is any mention made of what happened to these historical trusses after the demolition of the church.



Figure 36: This photograph shows the hammerbeam roof trusses resting on granite or stone corbels, and the Oregon pine tongue-and-groove ceiling. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

¹³⁴ Herholdt et al, "Wellington Conservation Impact Survey" (University of Port Elizabeth, September 2002) 9.

4.4.1.3. Gutters and down pipes

The roof structure of the new church was fitted on the outside with metal gutters and downpipes as an integral part of the building to lead rainwater away. It is impossible to establish whether the old church was fitted with gutters, but if it had a thatched roof, it would have been impossible.¹³⁵



Figure 37: Indicating the gutters and downpipes on the side of the building. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

4.4.1.4. Windows

The buildings' impressive tall vertical windows provided ample light and had the potential to create interesting contrasts between light and shade. These contrasts normally help to dampen the dullness of the inner walls and create the impression of borderless space, fostering a sense of

¹³⁵ From photographic material it can be safely established that the ceiling of the church was made from vertically fitted tongue-and-groove Oregon pine planks covering the whole church. The ceiling was fitted in such a fashion that the hammerbeams were all exposed. In those days, a fire-proof ceiling was standard practice, but no such details are available.

mystery in this religious space.¹³⁶ This complexity of rising lines and upward-pointing arches is an expression of humanity's yearning upwards and a heavenly view.¹³⁷ The numerous vertical lines and the accompanying amplification of light draws the attention and leads the thoughts towards heaven.



Figure 38: The impressive New Gothic windows. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

The New Gothic windows all had sloping plastered windowsills on the inside of the church. Although the windows would probably have been filled with rolled glass, as float sheet glass was only invented in 1959, there is no physical evidence of this, and it cannot be confirmed from the available photographic material.

The window frames would probably have been manufactured from Burmese teak (which the doors were made of), as that was the stronger and more readily available popular wood for window frames in that period in the Cape, although this is not confirmed.

¹³⁶ JMJ Koorts, *Beginsels van Gereformeerde Kerkbou* (Kaapstad: Nasionale Boekdrukkery Beperk, 1974), 88

¹³⁷ Sir Banister Fletcher, *A History of architecture on the Comparative Method* (London: Batsford Ltd., 1946), 326.

4.4.1.5. Doors

In all probability the existing doors of the 1845 church were upcycled and used in the new church, depending on their condition. For the new 1884 church, the boys from the congregation's Sunday School collected money to sponsor the New Gothic teak front door of the enlarged new church. The arched front door was constructed and positioned above the street level with a flight of steps and a landing. The other smaller side door facing Church Street also had a New Gothic arched shape with a similar landing.



Figure 39: The doors can be seen in the background. (Source: NG Kerk 350)



Figure 40: Two of the doors depicted above (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

4.4.1.6. Nave

The church had a nave and two semitranspts at the one end of the nave.¹³⁸ The nave area was the bulk of the inside and provided the congregation with a view of the liturgical centre with the vertical dimension pointing upwards, in a geometrical pattern, over the length of the nave. This element of mystery in the atmosphere adds to a worshipping atmosphere. It is where most of the church pews were positioned, where the congregation sat to receive the sermon and stood up to

¹³⁸ Cupido, *Vra na die ou paaië*, 27.

sing and pray. These white alder wood church pews clustered in various blocks with carpet runners in between on the wooden floors. The church building was T-shaped after the enlargement in 1884.



Figure 41: The nave with the two semitranspts also showing the lights and oil lamps. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

4.4.1.7. Lights and oil lamps

The New Gothic windows allowed ample daylight into the church. However, at night, use was originally made of oil lamps. This was also evident during the 1941 demolition process of the church when some of these oil lamps were discovered somewhere in the church. It is confirmed in church minutes noting that there was a request from the Newtown and Dal Josaphat church / school, also belonging to the DRMC, for the oil lamps. The oil lamps were replaced with electric lighting in later years when the church was connected to the municipal electricity grid in the early part of the 20th century.

4.4.1.8. Floors

It appears from the pictures that the church had a wooden floor. This would probably have been constructed from tongue-and-groove Oregon pine wooden planks cut into long lengths, assembled on top of a wooden frame construction, elevated above the soil level, thus avoiding possible damp and other water damage. From the photographic record it was in a good state and shining from being regularly polished. There were long loose-lying carpet runners laid along the various passages between the rows of pews and other furniture inside the church, to protect the wood and to reduce noise during services and other church activities. It is not known what happened to these carpets after the demolition of the church.



Figure 42: The wooden floors visible inside the church building. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

4.4.1.9. Ceilings

From photographic material it can be safely established that the ceiling of the church was made from vertically fitted tongue-and-groove Oregon pine planks covering the whole church. The ceiling was fitted in such a fashion that the hammerbeams were all exposed. In those days, a fire-proof ceiling was standard practice, but there is no such detail available.



Figure 43: The details of the ceiling. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

4.4.1.10. Narthex

Although the main entrances to most churches had a bigger narthex than the DRMC, its small narthex did serve its purpose as a foyer and protection from bad weather outside and formed an integral part of the social life and architectural makeup of the church. It also served as a port of entry for the congregants, closing off the outside world and softening the transition from the exterior to the interior, preparing them for entering an awaiting church realm of prayer and worship in the nave. If there is no narthex at a place of worship, the transition from the outside world to the inner is more drastic.



Figure 44: The narthex as seen from the outside of the church. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

4.4.1.11. Gallery

The church had a wooden gallery, supported by four steel pillars, which provided extra seating for more congregants. Each of the pillars had an electric lamp fitted onto it. The gallery was made of Oregon pine wood and had two steep staircases mounted against the back wall with wooden balustrades and hand railings. The size of the gallery was small enough not to create a distraction for the minister, keeping the nucleus of the congregation on ground level.



Figure 45: The gallery and the two flights of stairs as it would be viewed from the pulpit. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

4.4.1.12. Liturgical centre



Figure 46: The liturgical centre comprising of the pulpit, the church council pews, communal table and the baptismal font. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

The pulpit, baptismal font, communion table and the Church Council benches all made up the liturgical centre of the church. The pulpit was incorporated into a pointed arched recess, facing the gallery, in the centre of the long transept, which also contained the organ. There was also a lectern draped with an antependium, made of purple cloth, with the words, “*God is liefde*” (God is love) embroidered on it. In this space sermons were delivered, people were baptised, marriages concluded, funerals performed, communion held, and many other formalities took place. The horizontal lines of the liturgical centre stood in contrast to the vertical dimensions of the church, providing the tension which is typical of the New Gothic inner space.¹³⁹ This sanctified inner space was also the historical arena where the DRMC was officially founded on 5 October 1881 by congregational representatives from the George, Zuurbraak, Wynberg and Wellington congregations.

¹³⁹ Koorts, *Beginsels van Gereformeerde Kerkbou*, 39

4.4.1.13. Church pews

Most of the church pews of the later demolished building were made of South African white alder (*Platylophus trifoliatius*) wood and varied in length between 2.5m and 4.5m.¹⁴⁰ As the 1941 church was fitted with new pews made from teak (*tectona grandis*), some of the old pews from the demolished church were sent to the congregation's outpost churches and schools and the rest were sold off to other churches, organisations and people. The pews were advertised for sale for the first time in June 1941 at 5 shillings per 0.5m width, or nearest offer.



Figure 47: The pews discovered in the vestry of the Bovelei DRMC. (Photo: Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, 2020)

4.4.1.14. Pulpit

The tribune-shaped pulpit was the pivotal feature of the liturgical centre of the church. It was situated in the centre, against the wall of the one length of the church. The pulpit was a built-in feature made of teak and could seat four people on four free-standing wooden chairs behind the person addressing the audience.¹⁴¹ Interestingly, it had wooden balustrades so that the congregation had a full view of the preacher.¹⁴² This is not normally the case as most pulpits have a wooden wall which provides a bit of privacy for the minister if they sit down.

When the church was being demolished the pulpit was advertised extensively with very little interest.

¹⁴⁰ Breedt, *Die Ligdraer 4* (Wellington: 1941), 65.

¹⁴¹ Advertisement, *Die Ligdraer 4* (Wellington, 1941), 65.

¹⁴² Ibid.



Figure 48: The pulpit. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

**Kerkbanke en Preekstoele
te koop.**

Die Kerkraad van die N.G. Sendinggemeente,
Wellington, bied hiermee te koop aan:—

- (a) Sy ou Kerkbanke, merendeels van wit-els-hout
gemaak, en in lengtes van 8 tot 15 voet.
Prys 5/- per sitplek van 1½ vt. of die naaste
offer.
- (b) Sy ou preekstoel („tribune”-vorm, met mooi
paneel en balustrade). Die preekstoel bied
sitplek vir 4 leraars, en aan weerskante lei
trappies op na die preekstoel. Alles is van
Kijaathout gemaak, en is in eersteklas kon-
disie. Koper moet die preekstoel self afbreek.
Prys £25.
- (c) Sy ou kelkvormige preekstoel in grynhout,
prys £5.

In al drie gevalle kos die hout meer as waarvoor die klaar-
gemaakte artikels tans aangebied word.

Doen dadelik aansoek by ondergetekende.
J. M. N. BREEDT.

Figure 49: The advertisement of the pulpit and pews for sale after the demolition, specifying the type of wood and size. (Source: Die Ligdraer, June 1941 Volume 4, Year 2, p 65)

There was also a smaller mobile calyx-like lectern on the ground in front of the pulpit, made of Oregon pine. In June 1941 the pulpit was advertised for sale for £25, on condition that the purchaser had to disassemble and remove it themselves. There was little interest and after the demolition of the church the pulpit was sold to the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Wellington for £10.¹⁴³ The lectern was also advertised for £5 but was in a dilapidated state and could not be sold and the Building Commission (*Boukom*) of the Church Council was given carte blanche to dispense with it. I visited the AME Church as part of this research to establish whether the pulpit, or any section of it, was still intact or in existence, but unfortunately there was nothing to be found. Many hours were spent on this pulpit by many ministers and for many student-ministers from the Missionary Training Institute in Wellington, this pulpit was their debut stage from where they had to deliver their first trial sermon with a full congregation, their classmates, family and the examiners in full attendance.

4.4.1.15. Baptismal font

The church had a baptismal font, but when the new 1941 church was constructed, a new baptismal font was donated by the children of the late Rev Pauw. Nobody knows what happened to the original baptismal font that was used to baptise more than 8 790 babies and adults in the original church over a timespan of nearly a century.¹⁴⁴ Bailey confirmed that the whereabouts of the old baptismal font remains a mystery.¹⁴⁵

4.4.1.16. Vestry

The church had a vestry, and it was utilised for various diverse functions over decades by the church and other permitted role-players. Although it cannot be seen on photographs, mention is made of it in the minutes as the minister had a water tap installed in the vestry.¹⁴⁶

The vestry was also used as a temporary lecture room for the training of evangelists and missionary students. On 2 February 1929 the first classes for the training of Coloured ministers commenced in the same vestry. Revs Breedt and JS Louw from the DRMC and Revs Wilcocks

¹⁴³ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 7/9/1946.

¹⁴⁴ Breedt, *Gedenkboek by die inwyding van die Nuwe Ned. Geref. Sendingkerkgebou, Wellington op 27 en 28 September 1941*.

¹⁴⁵ Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020.

¹⁴⁶ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 25/2/1928.

and Gonin presented the lectures to the first two students, A Andries and P Solomon, who completed their studies in 1932.¹⁴⁷

Although it is preferred to have the vestry close to the liturgical centre of the church, such as behind the pulpit, baptismal font and communion table, it appears from inside photographs of the church that it was not the case here. The vestry was located behind the organ in the same transept.¹⁴⁸

4.4.1.17. Organ and choir space



Figure 50: The German-made pump organ with its 19 pipes. (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

¹⁴⁷ Kriel, *Die geskiedenis van die jaar Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika. 1881 – 1956*.202.

¹⁴⁸ Cupido, *Vra na die ou paaie*, 27.

The German-made organ with 19 pipes was situated at the back of the one transept, in front of the vestry.¹⁴⁹ The positional layout created a unitary feeling amongst the congregation and the preacher, and it provided a solemn, subdued space; the architecture created an atmosphere for worship.¹⁵⁰

From interior photographs (the three that exist), the 19-pipe organ can be seen located in the back of the one semi-transept of the church, in keeping with the DRC liturgical focus on the *sola scriptura*. It is on an elevated platform with the 19 organ pipes mounted to the back wall and the keyboard immediately in front of that and the organist sitting with their back to the congregation.

It is unclear when organ accompaniment was introduced in the church, but it was apparently after the arrival of Rev JP de Villiers in 1910. The first organ had bellows which were manually operated by a person other than the organist. This manual work was done by Koos Majave from 1913 and, according to the minutes of the DRMC, he was salaried at £1:10:0 per month.¹⁵¹

The first organist was the daughter of Rev de Villiers from 1913 till 1922. In 1922 the headmaster of the Pauw Gedenkskool, Mr Joh Abrahamse, was appointed as organist. He was paid very little – his salary was only increased to £25 per month in 1951.¹⁵²

The church had a very active choir programme with various choirs operating continuously over decades. A Choir Sunday was held annually when all the choirs sang together. There was also a regular choir competition where a shield trophy could be won. Perhaps a different angle of intangible heritage, the unity of the choirs also provides a specific type of lifestyle which adds to the heritage that was inherent to this building.¹⁵³

When the possible sale of the church to the DRC was still being discussed by the DRMC Church Council and prior to being demolished, surprisingly, one of the first things that the Church

¹⁴⁹ Cupido, *Vra na die ou paaie*, 27

¹⁵⁰ Koorts, *Beginsels van Gereformeerde Kerkbou*, 42

¹⁵¹ Kriel, “Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946” (Master’s thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950). 203.

¹⁵² Ibid. 203.

¹⁵³ These were the following:

- Senior Choir led by Br Moos April
- Junior Choir in Wellington led by Master Ruiters
- Parsonage Choir from Bovlei led by Mr Sylvie Samson
- Daljosaphat Choir
- Victory Choir from Newton (in later years led by Aunt Polla Brink)
- Hermon Choir led by Mr Sause
- Blouvlei Choir
- Junior Choir from Newton
- Various Childrens’ Choirs

Council unanimously decided on (in the event of a new church being built) was to buy a new organ. There was no opposition to this, which indicates that the organ might have been old and worn. The Church Council then discussed the possibility of donating the organ to the original Bovlei DRMC congregation, but this did not materialise, and the organ builder R Muller eventually paid the DRMC £50 as a trade-in on the organ that the DRMC bought for their newly constructed 1941 church. As the new organ cost £855, it is assumed that the £50 trade-in might have been an indication of the age and condition of the old German-manufactured bellows organ.¹⁵⁴

4.4.1.18. Parking area

It appears from the photographic record available that the outside area was barren and not covered with paving. A few trees provided shade with some scattered flora against the walls of the church. It also appears that the premises were only partially enclosed with some spiked metal fencing on the side. There is a short section of this historical original fencing still present.



Figure 51: The original fence wall with the remnants of the metal spike fence still visible. (Photo: Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, 2020)

However, the *Wellington History* refers to a flocking of people and vehicles to the two churches during church services. It also refers to the lack of space and parking for carts and vehicles of congregants as well as the lack of sanitation facilities and that the Church Council was often in trouble with the municipality, but luckily, they had a lenient health inspector.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 7/12/1940.

¹⁵⁵ Smith, *Die liefde van jou bruidstyd*, 62.

4.4.1.19. Church tower

The original church building did not have a hierarchical church tower in the classical sense but had a traditional detached two-pillar bell tower with a manually operated brass bell built into it. No tower was added with the 1885 enlargement of the church. Although it is not a prerequisite for a church, it is an integral architectural element / feature which can portray the Christian endeavour (towards the heavens). Since the Roman era church towers were built to alert congregations to duty. This DRMC building had a humble two-pillar bell tower a few yards away from the front door of the church, facing Church Street. Its brass bell was rung by the various consecutive sextons, and many other delegated congregants, regularly for nearly a century. Although the bell tower was very modest, the church would have been poorer without it, as in the architectural composition it created a vertical accent in a specific space, playing the role of a tall church tower.

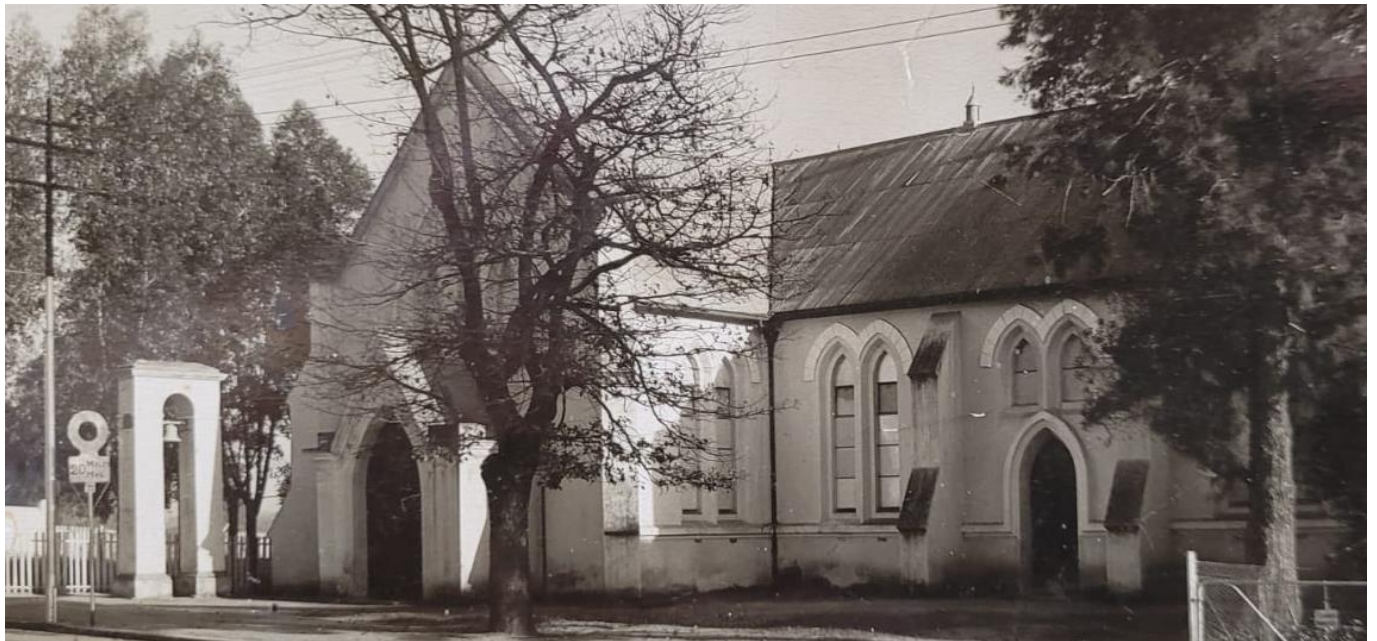


Figure 52: The bell tower (Source: Dutch Reformed Mission Church Wellington)

The widening of Church Street in 1955 makes it difficult to locate the footprint of the old bell tower, which may have been covered by the widened church street and accompanied sidewalk. There is no record of when it was demolished.



Figure 53: The bell tower visible on the left in Church Street. (Source: Wellington History Museum Book)

4.4.1.20. Ablution facilities

On the photographic evidence no ablution facilities could be identified although there would probably have been ablution facilities for both genders. It is mentioned in the DRMC minutes once or twice, as there was apparently a problem with it being insufficient. If so, it would provide insight into the desire to enlarge the church. It is also not clear if the facilities were inside or outside. One would imagine that there probably would have been at least one facility inside the vestry. In the minutes for the period from 1924 to 1941 both churches (DRC and DRMC) discussed or mentioned the installation of the new municipal sewage system.

4.4.1.21 Electrification

The later electrification of the church is visibly evident from the wall-mounted black metal electrical pipe housing protecting the electric wiring distribution. The church was fitted with a network of chain-suspended electric lamps which were hung from the high ceiling and roof trusses. Each of these lamps had three beautiful glass lampshades. Matching lamps were mounted on the wall on both sides of the pulpit to increase the light supply. Next to each of these two lamps were small (probably 50cm wide and 50cm long) wooden notice boards, with gabled tops, for listing the hymns to be sung and the Bible text for the service. These boards had narrow grooves into which thin wooden blocks, with lettering or numbers painted on, were slid,

indicating the details. Underneath the one wall-mounted light to the left of the pulpit, there was also a white marble template with black lettering. It is not possible to read the details from the photographic record. Two similar lights were mounted on both sides of the 19-pipe organ, to (also) supply extra light to the organist and the bellows operator, and lights were attached to each of the four steel pillars which supported the gallery.

4.4.1.22. Catechism and Sunday School classes

Catechism and Sunday School classes were only conducted inside the church building after it was enlarged, and the whole volume of the church was used for this purpose. Before the enlargement, these classes were held at Friedenheim where the children were taught by the students of the Huguenot Seminary.¹⁵⁶

4.4.1.23. The physical end of the road for the church building

After the church was sold to the DRC, the congregation set about building a new church on a site more than 500 yards away from the DRC. This erf was the site of the parsonage which had to be demolished to make space for the new church.¹⁵⁷ The payments for the sale were structured in such a way that the DRMC was paid a third on the date of purchase and signature of the deal, another third when they commenced with demolishing their church, and the final third when the site was clean, de-churched and barren.¹⁵⁸

The congregation still had the use of the old church while they were constructing their new church. Upon the completion they organised an inauguration week for the new church, commencing with a farewell service in the old church, soon to be demolished. The church's last day of use was on the evening of 21 September 1941, held by Rev Breedt. It was a big event with many choirs singing. For the 5 900 souls, 1 810 members, 8 790 babies baptised, 5 728 congregants adopted, and 2 822 couples married between 1845 and 1941, and their families,¹⁵⁹ it was the historic end of an era in this sacred place.

4.4.2 The demolition

After the inauguration of the new church, the demolition process had to commence as this was one of the conditions of sale and the DRC was withholding the final payment until the church site was cleared of all debris.¹⁶⁰ In the DRC Minutes¹⁶¹ they refer to the last £600 that was paid

¹⁵⁶ Kriel, *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, K.P.* 1820 – 1946. 251.

¹⁵⁷ Binnelandse Sendingkommissie. Minutes, 6/6/1940. 62.

¹⁵⁸ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes – 31/7/1940.

¹⁵⁹ Cupido, *Vra na die ou paaie*, 27.

¹⁶⁰ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 31/07/1940.

over to the DRMC and that the only outstanding amount still due to the DRMC was the £300 which became payable on the date of transfer of the property onto the name of the DRC.¹⁶² This was done in 1942 by transfer deed 6225/1942. The DRMC advertised in two local newspapers to find a contractor who would be interested in demolishing the church and to keep all the material as payment. The sale of the pews and the pulpit was advertised in the *Ligdraer*, the official monthly publication of the DRMC, of which Rev Breedt was the editor for many years.¹⁶³

According to Bailey, no local contractors were interested in the demolition tender as it was felt to be morally wrong. Eventually a contractor from Cape Town came forward to tender for the demolition. He also employed some local people from Wellington, some were even members of the congregation.¹⁶⁴

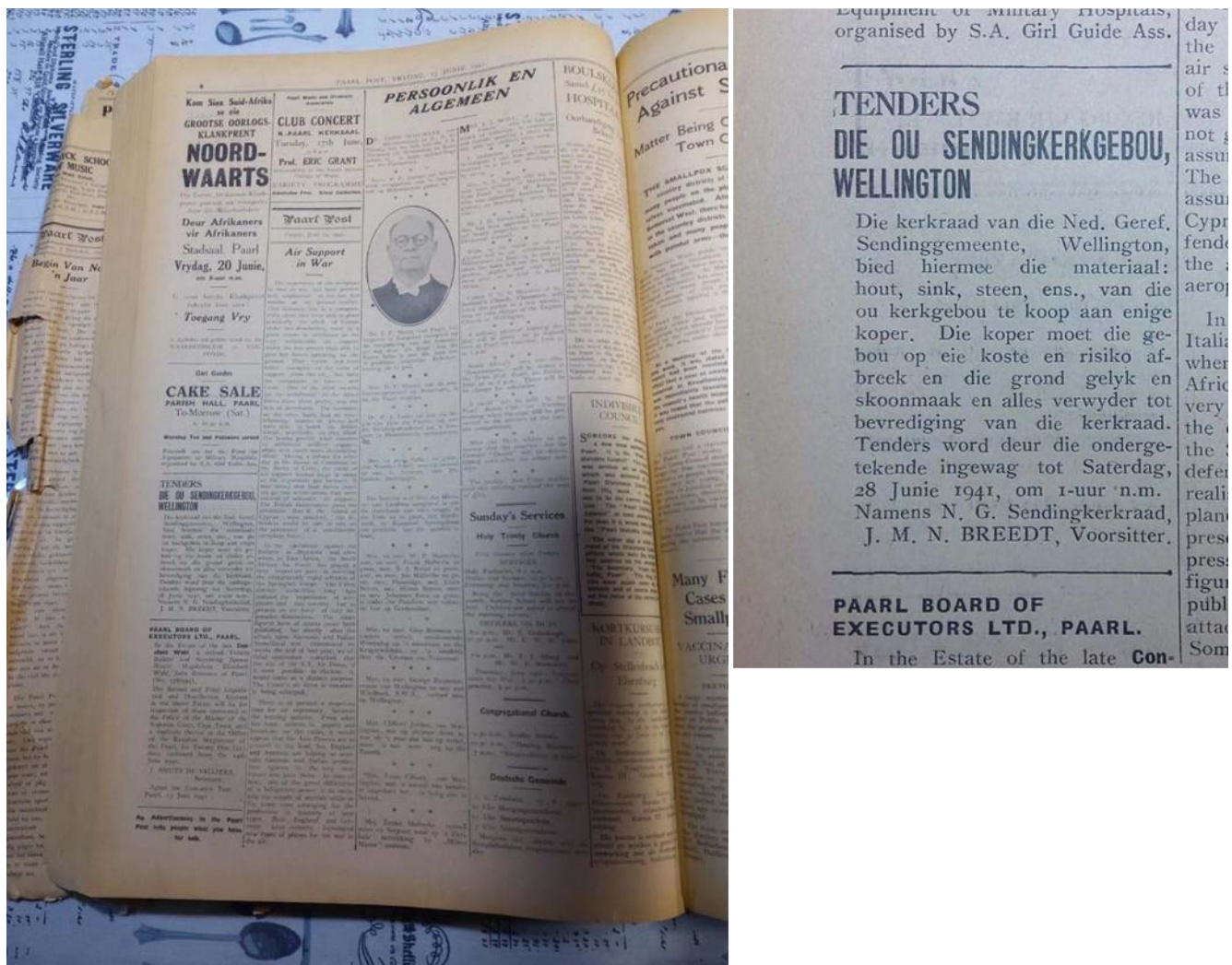


Figure 54: The first advertisement placed on 13 June 1941. (Source: Paarl Post, 6)

¹⁶¹ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 11/01/1941.

¹⁶² Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 11/01/1941.

¹⁶³ Advertisement, *Die Ligdraer*, 4 (Wellington, 1941), 65.

¹⁶⁴ Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author 7 February, 2020.

<p>r.m.:— esel, on-</p>	<p>A. N. DIFFORD, Waarn. Ere-Sekretaresse.</p>	
<p>DT, ster.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TENDERS DIE OU SENDINGKERKGEBOU, WELLINGTON</p> <p>Die kerkraad van die Ned. Geref. Sendinggemeente, Wellington, bied hiermee die materiaal: hout, sink, steen, ens., van die ou kerkgebou te koop aan enige koper. Die koper moet die gebou op eie koste en risiko afbreek en die grond gelyk en skoonmaak en alles verwyder tot bevrediging van die kerkraad. Tenders word deur die ondergetekende ingewag tot Saterdag, 28 Junie 1941, om 1-uur n.m. Namens N. G. Sendingkerkraad, J. M. N. BREEDT, Voorsitter.</p>	<p>Die B binnek pen to uitvind van Ca fisier i Hy is jaar g werkto gekome</p>
<p>d, Breda lay, 21st unless</p>		<p>'n Ske Laval- die m sake, 'n for hy ges gering stryd</p>
<p>(mare);</p>		<p>Kapt. land tenkbr tralies gedoo</p>
<p>DT, ster.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Waarom word ons Gebede nie verhoor</p>	
<p>BAAR</p>		
<p>e van</p>		
<p>t rs,</p>		

Figure 56: An enlargement of the second advertisement placed on 17 June 1941. (Source: Paarl Post, 3)

During the demolition, one of the elders of the congregation, Uncle Siempie Adams, was hired and worked for the Cape Town contractor. During the demolition, one of the walls collapsed and fell onto Uncle Siempie, killing him in the process. This event sent shock waves through the congregation, and many interpreted this event as being a curse on the demolition of the church.¹⁶⁵ This event was also commemorated during the inaugural service of the new building.

¹⁶⁵ Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020

Seeing that it was an elder of the church who was killed, it is strange that there is no mention in the minutes of the DRMC regarding this event. However, at the Church Council meeting dated 22 November 1941, under item 6, dealing with the demolition progress of the old church, an elder mentions that all the workers on the demolition site of the church are insured in terms of the law.¹⁶⁶ It is interesting that these meticulous minutes did not note this death; Bailey's view was that it was purposefully done to avoid a claim.¹⁶⁷ Such a claim would have been instituted against the DRMC.

From the various Church Council meetings, it appears there was a reluctance from other churches and role-players to purchase any of the salvaged church material. It is not clear what proportion of the material was salvaged. The minutes of the Church Council meeting on 20 September 1941 report that there was no reaction to the advert for the selling of the pews and the pulpit.¹⁶⁸ At the next meeting, dated 22 November, it was suggested that they should try to keep the pews and hire them out to be used in the church schools and their other outpost churches.¹⁶⁹ The old oil lamps would be sent to the Newtown and Dal Josaphat schools, or any of the other wards. Four months later the Building Committee (*Boukom*) of the Church Council reports at their meeting, dated 21 March 1942, that the demolition was completed and all the debris removed to the satisfaction of the DRC.¹⁷⁰ The handmade bricks and other building material was stored at the Pauw Gedenkskool grounds while the pews, pulpit and other fittings were placed – somewhat poignantly – in the storage that housed the hearse of the DRMC.

The same meeting documented what was found underneath the old cornerstone which had been laid on 3 September 1884 (it is not clear what happened to this cornerstone). The list is exactly as in the 1920 centenary programme, 21 years before the demolition of the DRMC.¹⁷¹ The Church Council decided to preserve this in a secure container.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁶ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 22/11/1941

¹⁶⁷ Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020.

¹⁶⁸ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 20/09/1941.

¹⁶⁹ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 22/11/1941.

¹⁷⁰ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 21/03/1942.

¹⁷¹ Underneath the cornerstone a glass jar was recovered containing the following items:

- 1) Three copies of the church magazine *Die Kerkbode* dated 23/5/1881, 8/4/1861 and 29/8/1884
- 2) The 20/4/1861 edition of *De Gereformeerde Kerkbode*
- 3) A Dutch Reformed Church calendar for 1884
- 4) A letter from CG ten Broekel from Amsterdam
- 5) Two letters from Rev JC Pauw, dated 2 & 3 September 1884
- 6) A copy of *Journal des Missions Evangeliques*
- 7) A two-schilling coin
- 8) A halfpenny and a few postage stamps.

¹⁷² Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020

The sadness of the sacred material of this once historic church is demonstrated in the minutes dated 23 February 1946, five years later, when a discussion was held about what to do with the old bricks of the old church which were still on the school grounds.¹⁷³ Many of the scholars in the school's grandfathers and great-grandfathers made these bricks themselves when the church was being constructed. The meeting decided to start selling these bricks at £2-10 per 1 000 and 15 schillings per truckload for the broken bricks. They also decided to keep the pews at this stage for their outpost churches and schools (the AME Church wanted to buy some).¹⁷⁴

At the very next Church Council meeting it is reported that a portion of the bricks were sold, and the rest would be kept for future building projects. Some of the pews were eventually sold to the AME Church at £31-10-0 and the rest were stored in the Pauw Gedenkskool attic. On inspection I could not find any remnants of this there. The little calyx-like lectern was apparently, by now, in such a dilapidated state that the Building Commission was given *carte blanche* to do with it what they wanted to. Some of the old, corrugated iron roof sheets were sold to Rev Breedt and the others were exchanged for various other materials with the approval of the Church Council.

The very last documented detail in the minutes dealing with the salvaged material of the demolished old church was made at the Church Council meeting dated 7 September 1946,¹⁷⁵ five years after the inauguration of the new church, reporting the selling of the pulpit to the AME Church for £10, and the Building Commission was given authority to dispose of the old bricks, timber, and corrugated sheets by auction. And so, the last memory fragments of the old, historical church were carried away, dumped and dispersed into oblivion.

This ends the final chapter in the physical life of a once historical church that was, for 96 years, the vibrant melting pot of an integrated community in harmony with itself, and the birth of a "salted earth" parking lot. The symbolism of this demolition and tragic event is so powerful that this barren piece of de-churched land, right in the centre of a big rural town, has become a moral symbol of injustice that not even the mighty DRC, at the height of its theocracy, dared to redevelop. The main remaining heritage resource on the property currently is the intangible memory of the demolished church with its concealed footprint, underneath the cement pavers, intact. In the middle of the paving a metal crest of the DRMC has been inlaid. There are some remnants of the old infrastructure still present on Erf 794 – a very small section of the original metal spike fencing with a single original gatepost situated on Church Street and a small section of approximately 30m of the original clay and raw brick ring wall at the back of Erf 794. This

¹⁷³ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 23/02/1946.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 07/09/1946.

ring wall must have been built in various time periods as the wall has two different canopies; attempts have been made to stabilise it by cosmetically fusing the wall with modern cement and bricks. It is, however, in a very unstable state.

Chapter 5: The demolition and the 13-year negotiation process

This chapter deals with a crucial element of the research question as it unpacks the demolition and the 13-year negotiation process between the two Church Councils, the deceitful elements thereof, and analyses the effect and impact of this. A dissection of the process of the decision-making in this instance is necessary for the recovery of memory and understanding, which elements were added to the memory and intangible heritage preserved by the demolition of this church building.

5.1. The minutes as artefacts

As meeting minutes in general provide a degree of stability over time, they inform future interpretations and serve as a point of reference to understand why something happened. Without studying, interpreting and integrating the negotiations which documented the forced removal and demolition of the DRMC Wellington, the mystery will prevail: How did this happen?

The starting point for answering this question would be the reading, dissecting and analysing of the minutes of both Church Councils. Abram offers a further explanation as to why minutes are important.

Methodologically, we offer the document as a distinctive ‘approach to practice’: to the extent that it serves as marker for social and political life, it serves also as a point of entry and orientation for investigation.¹⁷⁶

5.2. The deceitful negotiations

An integral part of the (in)tangible heritage and history of this demolished church is the whole negotiation process between these two neighbouring churches regarding the purchase of the DRMC by the DRC in 1940. These negotiations were drawn out over 13 years, from 1927 to 1940. A close reading of the minutes and archival evidence of these negotiations reveals why it is necessary to tell this part of the story in detail. To establish the chronological timeline of this whole negotiation process, all the minutes from 1920 to 1941 of the two Church Councils of the DRC and DRMC churches were studied.

On 18 August 1924¹⁷⁷ the DRMC, represented by Rev Breedt, approached the DRC meeting to purchase a narrow 15-20 feet wide strip of land adjacent to Erf 794 to enlarge their erf with its

¹⁷⁶ Freeman, & Maybin, “Documents, practices and policy”, *Evidence and Policy* 7, no. 2 (2011)165.

¹⁷⁷ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 18/08/1924.

growing congregation. At this meeting, one of the DRC elders, Mr F. P. Cilliers, said that they could have it for free. But another elder, Mr Maritz, proposed that the matter be postponed until the next meeting where Rev Breedt would not be present. At that later meeting, the DRC Church Council decided to neither give nor sell any land to the DRMC at all. This tactic of postponing potential decisions only to have them reversed at the next Church Council meeting, became the modus operandi of certain prominent members of the DRC Church Council. The decision to not allow the DRMC to expand their property aligned with the DRC initiating the process to buy the DRMC property outright a mere three years later. It is interesting that the DRC sent Rev Botha and two elders to explain the change of heart no-sale decision. Having realised how important this decision was, the DRC understood the gravity of not providing the land for the DRMC to expand and conveyed the decision in person.

In May 1927 the DRC¹⁷⁸ established a committee to start to prepare the way for negotiations with the DRMC to purchase the latter's church, across the street. The exact words documented in the DRC minutes are "*die verplaatzing van de Zendingkerk*" (the transference or moving of the Mission Church). The fate of the church was sealed with this Dutch phrasing. The core of the transaction was to remove the DRMC from the site. At that stage no mention was made of the state needing land for a post office or the DRC needing extra land for parking – the excuses offered a few years later. Six years later in 1933 the DRC established a commission to start negotiating with the DRMC to purchase and remove their church.¹⁷⁹

On 2 August 1933 this DRC commission, led by Rev DSB Joubert, went across Church Street to meet the DRMC Church Council.¹⁸⁰ Leading the discussion, he informed the meeting that the government wanted to buy their (DRC) Church Hall or its adjacent land to build a post office.

Rev Joubert proceeded to say that the DRC, on the other hand, wanted to buy the DRMC to use it as a church hall, creating the illusion that they wanted to save the church.¹⁸¹ He also informed them that he heard via the grapevine that the government wanted the DRC property for free and this complicated matters. But even if they did not come to an agreement with the government, the DRC still wanted to buy the DRMC because the property is very narrow, and the DRC owns most of the adjacent property. In the same breath the DRMC was also informed that the DRC did not intend selling any of its adjacent land. This left the DRMC in a difficult situation.

¹⁷⁸ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 27/05/1927.

¹⁷⁹ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 19/06/1933.

¹⁸⁰ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 02/08/1933.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

The reference to the DRC church hall, planned post office, and the DRMC conversion to a church hall for the DRMC is not mentioned again and the possibility cannot be excluded that this was a strong-arm tactic from the DRC. Bailey, in his oral interview, expressly stated his belief that this justification for the demolition was fabricated.¹⁸²

After the DRC deputation left, the DRMC discussed the matter and realised that –

- a) The DRMC is too small with no space to expand.
- b) With the growing congregation, there is no space to accommodate all.
- c) The sanitation facilities are already a challenge.
- d) Land is scarce to come by.
- e) There is currently a potential offer on the table, which might not be there forever.

After intense discussions, they then established a committee, led by their Rev Breedt, to investigate the merit of selling, the possibility of alternative land, and the potential construction cost of a new church. This investigation would determine the DRMC's next steps.

It is worth mentioning that many of the DRMC elders who were part of the Church Council were illiterate and signed the minutes with an X.¹⁸³ This could be significant; the question can be asked whether the minutes truly reflect everything that was put on the table by the DRMC. At a meeting in 1924, on Missionary Day, addressing the Centenary Synod, Rev Breedt, in his capacity as Moderator of the DRMC, informed his colleagues that in the previous year (1923) the DRMC in Wellington adopted 203 adults of which 57 could read, 46 did not know an “a” or a “b”, and 131 had to be baptised.¹⁸⁴

The deliberations of the DRMC Church Council, like most other Church Councils, are normally confidential but the DRMC Church Council meeting minutes of 16 September 1933 report that certain DRC congregants discussed the intended possible sale of the church with certain DRMC congregants.¹⁸⁵ This raised the ire of the DRMC congregation, and it was decided to stop any intended sale. Instead, proactively, the DRMC, on the suggestion of Rev Breedt, decided to negotiate an offer to purchase the only adjacent property not belonging to the DRC for £1500.¹⁸⁶

Almost a year later, in June 1934, the DRC Church Council decided to approach the DRMC with a concrete offer to purchase. The DRMC would be offered £2500 for the property on

¹⁸² Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020

¹⁸³ Francois Cleophas, “Adam Small: Familiageskiedenis, aanlope en vroëere invloed”, *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde*, 49, no. 1 (2012): 24.

¹⁸⁴ AC Murray & JWL Hofmeyr, *Dagbreek in Donker Afrika* (S.A. Bybelvereniging, 1927), 15.

¹⁸⁵ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 16/09/1933.

¹⁸⁶ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 02/12/1933.

condition that their church is demolished, the site cleared and that they not build a new church anywhere in Church Street. The DRMC could keep all the building material, but the land on which the DRMC church stood would become the property of the *blanke* (white) DRC congregation. This is the first mention of *race* being a decisive factor in the sale in the minutes of the DRC Church Council.

The stipulation of not building a church in Church Street is noteworthy as the DRC pronounces that with the adding of two wings in 1874, installing of two galleries in 1874, building of the tower in 1891, and the raising of the roof in 1928, the DRC was now a graceful (“*sierlike*”) house of God, dominating Church Street.¹⁸⁷ This indicates the superiority complex exuded by the DRC – they owned the only graceful big church on Church Street.



Figure 57: The DRC as it stands today, dominating Church Street. The parking lot can be seen on the right. (Photo: Pierre Jeanne Gerber, 14 April 2023)

The DRMC Church Council, at a special Church Council meeting held on 21 April 1934,¹⁸⁸ decided to receive a further DRC deputation and to meet them a few days later. The DRMC minister emphasised that they should all strive to maintain the good brotherly relationship between the two churches, indicating that there was already tension.

The leader of the five-man DRC delegation then explained to the DRMC Church Council that the DRMC needs to sell their church so that they can build a bigger church on a more

¹⁸⁷ PL Olivier, *Ons gemeentelike album* (Cape Town: NG Kerk Uitgewers. 1952), 54.

¹⁸⁸ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 21/04/1934.

appropriate site where there is more space. To assist the DRMC, the DRC offers them an amount of £2500, on condition that they demolish their own church, and have the site cleared and de-churched. They can, however, keep all the building material of the to-be-demolished DRMC. The DRC also stresses that they do not want to be seen as selling out the DRMC but rather to see the £2500 as a financial contribution to the cost of their new church construction. This wording is odd, as the clear intention of this transaction was to buy the DRMC out of the centre of town.

A second meeting between the two churches in late April 1934 was also attended by the DRMC *konsulent* (relief clergyman), Rev PP Joubert and the retired elders of the DRMC. Rev Breedt reports that an option to purchase the adjacent property of Miss du Toit (a descendant of the original donor of the land) at £1300 was negotiated. He, however, advises against the purchase of this property as the purchase price is too high, and the property is in a poor condition. This is very strange, as he was known as a very practical man and it was originally his proposal.¹⁸⁹ He further reports that, according to the architect, Wynand Louw, the church could be enlarged without that property.¹⁹⁰ Again this is strange, as he originally proposed the purchase of the adjacent property. Furthermore, the input from the architect regarding the possibility of enlargement is nowhere mentioned again.

The DRMC held a congregation meeting regarding the matter in July 1934.¹⁹¹ The church was in full attendance due to the huge interest in the matter in the congregation. Many saw the potential sale as a sell-out to the whites and *onderdrukking* (oppression) of the Coloureds. It is documented that the majority of members were against selling.

The DRC Church Council continued to address the issue at their various meetings in 1934. One of these meetings was addressed by DRMC Rev Breedt, where he explained the historical, sentimental and heritage value attached to the church building. At the same meeting he handed them a letter requesting that the purchase price be increased to £3000 and that the church not be demolished but sold to the Synod of the DRMC for use as a Synod Hall. The DRC, however, stuck to the offer of £2500.

After digesting the proposal of the DRMC, the DRC on 24 September 1934¹⁹² decided to offer the DRMC two options, namely:

¹⁸⁹ Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020

¹⁹⁰ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 30/04/1934.

¹⁹¹ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 15/09/1934.

¹⁹² Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 24/09/1934.

- 1) that the offer of £2500 remains or,
- 2) the alternate offer is £3000 on condition that the new, to be constructed DRMC will not be closer than 500 yards to the DRC, and that the DRMC Synod (as a separate entity) may purchase the church at £1000 from the DRC on condition that it may only be used for Synod purposes and that the DRC had the first option to repurchase the church if not needed by the Synod any more.

This offer was valid till 31 October 1934. This meant that the DRMC had about a month to decide on this far-reaching matter. This proposal was not acceptable to the DRMC and, as a way forward in finalising the matter, the Church Council decided to hold another special Church Council meeting to deal with the two letters from the DRC in September 1934. With a majority of 14 against six abstaining, the special Church Council decided not to sell the church.¹⁹³

After being informed by the DRMC that they are not willing to sell, the DRC at their 5 November meeting decided to purchase all the property surrounding the DRC to protect its parsonage and to limit the expansion of the DRMC on the current property.¹⁹⁴ The church negotiated with Miss du Toit to purchase her adjacent property, which they bought for £1500.¹⁹⁵ This is the same property that Rev Breedt and the architect advised the DRMC not to buy for £1300 six months earlier. The DRMC was now effectively landlocked, except for its access to Church Street.

At the DRC Church Council meeting of 19 August 1937, after an impasse of nearly three years, the matter was again raised by a DRC elder, JD le Roux, who emphasised the importance of the future of the DRMC.¹⁹⁶ He stated that it is important that they decide now, as the DRMC issue would only become a bigger issue. He apparently had an off-the-record discussion with Rev Breedt, who undertook to raise the matter with his Church Council as well.¹⁹⁷ It appears from the DRC minutes that this elder Le Roux played a very prominent role in the purchasing, demolishing and removal of the DRMC church to a new building site further away from the DRC church.

After a seven-month silence, the chairperson of the DRC informed the Church Council that he had an unofficial meeting with Rev Breedt, who would table the matter at the next DRMC

¹⁹³ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 22/10/1934.

¹⁹⁴ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 5/11/1934.

¹⁹⁵ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Wellington, Minutes: 19/11/1934.

¹⁹⁶ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Wellington, Minutes: 19/8/1937.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

Church Council meeting.¹⁹⁸ Up to this point only the DRC minutes mention these off-the-record meetings of Rev Breedt, while the DRMC council had no knowledge of these meetings. This can be ascribed to the fact that Rev Breedt kept the minutes of the DRMC Church Council meetings, and that he either had a good understanding of what off the record meant, or he did not want the DRMC Church Council to know about the meetings.

Rev Breedt kept his word and did table the matter at the next DRMC Church Council meeting, dated 28 August 1937.¹⁹⁹ At this meeting a decision was taken to send a delegation to the DRC to discuss the matter without the deputation being obliged or mandated to accept any offer. The DRMC Church Council furthermore established a committee to consult an architect Louw regarding the possibility of expanding the church, the costs thereof, and lastly, what a new church will cost to build with the same seating and increased capacity. There is no further information regarding the discussions with the architects.

The DRMC Church Council was informed, three months later, that the architect is not ready yet with his estimates.²⁰⁰ This is strange, as it was the same architect who advised against the purchasing of Miss du Toit's property, saying that it was possible to enlarge the building on the current property.²⁰¹ When the DRMC had to decide on architectural plans for the new church, the same architects already had drawings for a new building on a different piece of land.²⁰²

At the DRMC meeting of 21 May 1938, Rev Breedt focused on the fact that the church is too small and that the time has arrived to address this issue, whether it be to enlarge the church or to sell it and build a new one elsewhere.²⁰³ Interestingly, nothing is reported about the anticipated report of the consulted architect and there is no report of the building commission taking any steps regarding structural changes to the existing church.

For nearly two years nothing is mentioned in the DRMC minutes regarding the possible sale of their church until the Church Council meeting on 25 May 1940, when Elder Samson out of the blue raises the possible sale to the DRC and asks whether they should not approach the DRC to purchase the church.²⁰⁴ The meeting unanimously decide that the church is too small, there is no space for expansion, and that it will be better for the congregation to build a new church on the

¹⁹⁸ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Wellington, Minutes: 19/8/1937.

¹⁹⁹ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 28/8/1937.

²⁰⁰ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 20/11/1937.

²⁰¹ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 30/04/1934.

²⁰² Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Wellington, Minutes: 31/7/1937. The minutes state that Louw has three sets of plans ready, while Vlotman has one set of plans ready.

²⁰³ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 21/5/1938.

²⁰⁴ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 25/5/1940.

premises of the old parsonage, which still has to be demolished. There is no mention of the consulted architect and his report. There is also no mention or discussion regarding the possibility of repurposing the church as a Synod Hall for the DRMC. This is strange, as Rev Breedt was the moderator of the DRMC Synod. It is further worth noting that, again, capacity is played as the trump card.

Also strange, is that in the minutes of the *Binnelandse Sendingkommissie* (Internal Mission Committee) dated 6 June 1940, Rev Breedt asks permission to sell the DRMC to the DRC (the Internal Mission Committee was a working committee of the DRMC Synod, therefore, it resorted under Rev Breedt as Moderator, but it was still integral to the workings of the DRMC broadly as it was the custodian of all the DRMC properties). The possibility cannot be ruled out that they merely noted in the minutes that Rev Breedt wrote to inform them of the decision to sell the DRMC, and that they did not see it as necessary to also note the demolition. This was 11 days after Rev Breedt's Church Council had already taken the decision to sell and demolish their own church. The question is whether this process should not have happened the other way around. As he was at the time also the Moderator of the DRMC Synod, one would have expected him to mention in his letter that the church is due to be demolished and to inform his Church Council that they should first get the approval of the *Binnelandse Sendingkommissie* before deciding to sell and demolish their church.

The DRC Church Council at its meeting on 30 May 1940, gladly took note of the willingness of the DRMC Church Council to sell them their church for £3000.²⁰⁵ Some of the DRC elders proposed that they should try to reduce the price, but this idea was immediately stifled as it was mentioned by another elder that this strategy would be too dangerous as the DRMC might change its mind. This offer to purchase is then unanimously accepted by the DRC. The DRC could not afford to risk this orchestrated 13-year strategy since 27 May 1927 to purchase and remove the DRMC from across the road.

Less than two months after the conclusion of the sale, the DRMC Synod contacted the DRC Church Council on 15 July 1940 to arrange a meeting regarding the possible purchase of the church to be used as a DRMC Synod Hall, an idea which was kept alive during the whole process.²⁰⁶ Again, at the DRC meeting, some elders agreed to the arrangement of such a meeting, but before this decision was finalised, other elders proposed that the Church Council not meet with the DRMC Synod and rather inform them that they cannot sell the property for

²⁰⁵ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 30/5/1940.

²⁰⁶ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Wellington, Minutes: 15/7/1940.

this purpose. At the meeting on 13 August 1940 the Church Council finally decided that the property is not for sale.²⁰⁷ The animosity towards the DRMC is clearly embodied in the comment of Elder PD Smit when he informs the Church Council that the DRC Church Council will experience great opposition from its own congregation if the property is not kept and the church not removed.²⁰⁸ The fact that the DRC was not even willing to enter into discussions regarding a sale to the DRMC Synod, which was seemingly on the table since the inception of negotiations, indicates that the purpose of the sale was to remove the DRMC in its entirety from the site.

5.3. Impact of the negotiations

From the minutes it has been established that the Coloured DRMC building had become an ever-increasing irritation to the white DRC church and that it felt that all efforts should be made to have it removed. This was the reason for the stipulation that the new DRMC should be at least 500 yards away from the DRC.

The offer from the white municipality of a church erf at Langham Park for £1, even further away from the DRC, should also be seen in the same light.²⁰⁹ This was not an economic transaction from the municipality's side at all. The stipulation that they should not build a church anywhere in Church Street also indicates racism.²¹⁰

The crowding and mixing of the two congregations before and after church services was also an irritation as the two churches faced one another across the street.²¹¹ Evident from the interviews discussed in Chapter 6, there was limited parking for the DRMC, and it can be deduced that parking was not a problem for the DRC at all, as the DRC has about 2 hectares of open land surrounding the church.

²⁰⁷ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Wellington, Minutes: 13/8/1940.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 24/08/1940.

²¹⁰ Bailey (emeritus-Mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 17 June 2021.

²¹¹ This is indicated in the interviews discussed in Chapter 6.



Figure 58: Erf 794 (the red square), opposite the DRC (blue square), indicating the size of the DRC's property. (Source: Google Earth)

The planned and executed purchasing and capturing of all surrounding land around the DRMC, intentionally making its property landlocked (with no room to expand onto surrounding properties), was an orchestrated effort during the negotiation period to force the Coloured congregation away from the centre of town and to de-church the land. The decision by the DRC to donate the cornerstone and some church pews for the new church building was arguably nothing more than a public relations exercise.²¹²

The fact that Prof CJ Kies, a DRC elder, at the DRC Church Council meeting dated 13 August 1940,²¹³ asked certain pertinent critical questions regarding the intended demolition, including whether it is genuinely necessary to demolish the church, indicates that the DRC was not united regarding the matter and it is possible that the DRC Church Council was captured by certain cohorts (*"heethoofde"* – literally, hot heads),²¹⁴ as most congregants did not want to rock the boat. In many instances the DRC wanted to take positive decisions regarding the DRMC but

²¹² Smith, *Die liefde van jou bruidstyd!* 62.

²¹³ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 13/08/1940.

²¹⁴ Bailey (emeritus-Mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 17 June 2021.

every time it was tactically manipulated to the other extreme by these cohorts.²¹⁵ This was evident in the off-the-record meetings with Rev Breedt.

It appears there was also division in the DRMC Church Council, as it seems that a specific strategy was followed to take the decision away from the ordinary congregants. Some of the elders of the DRMC were also in the building trade and owners of substantial pieces of land. The theocracies of the two churches were not transparent in many respects, as communications between the church councils and the congregants were limited.

Various questions remain unanswered, such as, what happened to the architect's anticipated report? This architect had a well-sized practice with a national footprint and was well-known as a firm specialising in the design of churches. This emphasises the reach of the DRC in this instance. It is also strange that the report from the architect regarding the possibility of expanding the DRMC was not forthcoming over a period of seven years, yet, when the DRMC decided to sell its church in 1940, the same architect had the plans for the new church ready to be built so that the new church was inaugurated on 28 September 1941,²¹⁶ merely a year later. This emphasises the premeditated conclusion of these 13 years. It can be concluded that the original post office strategy used to initiate negotiations was nothing but a ploy, as nowhere else is this mentioned.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Wellington, Minutes: various.

²¹⁶ Inauguration programme, 27 and 28 September 1941.

²¹⁷ AI Sturgeon, "The truth shall set you free: A distinctively Christian approach to deception in the negotiation process", *Pepperdine Dispute Resolution Law Journal* 11, no. 3 (2011): 16.

Chapter 6: The intangible heritage and memory of the demolished DRMC

This chapter deals with the lived experiences, stories and memories of the congregants, and investigates how the building of the DRMC, the demolition of the DRMC, and the negotiations surrounding the demolition impacted the memory, heritage and history of the church.

6.1. The memory and postmemory of the demolished DRMC

The local house of worship in rural areas can be considered the prime container of communal memory transcending religious values, and therefore, the demolition of the DRMC was a traumatic event in not only the religious sphere, because this church was a truly pivotal, central and integral part of the community. Its influence and reach extended far beyond the religious practices of the congregants; it truly invested and worked tirelessly to have a valuable impact in all aspects of the community's lives, as confirmed in the interviews. This DRMC was a birthplace of many local, national and international initiatives and the destruction of the DRMC building had a crucial effect on the heritage of all these initiatives and projects as well. Its demolition did not unite nor tie the congregation together. The church was a container of historical, social and religious meanings which formed a physical reminder of our cultural inheritance. These associational values, such as links to historical events, happenings or personalities, can be instrumental parts of this accumulation of intangible heritage and memory.

In a post-conflict society, there is a desire to move on and forget – to return to some sense of normality. Part of that process can include the removal of the impositions from the conflict period as quickly as possible, leaving only the traces of a more pleasant and proud past. But to eradicate evidence of these structures would be to make an incomplete record of history, and without them the memory of events remains intangible and more open to different narratives.²¹⁸

This quote encapsulates why it is necessary to document the intangible heritage relating to the DRMC and the demolition of it, particularly in the memories of those who still have an association with it. It is further emphasised by Marianne Hirsch, who states that

The growth of the memory culture may be a symptom of a need for inclusion in a collective membrane forged by a shared inheritance of multiple traumatic histories and

²¹⁸ Anna Irwin, "Conflicting accounts." *Building Conservation Journal*, 2016/2017: 30-31.

the individual and social responsibility we feel toward a persistent and traumatic past – what the French have referred to as “le devoir de memoire”.²¹⁹

With the DRC church being built in 1840 in Wellington, seceding from Paarl, and the emancipation of the slaves in the same time frame, provision had to be made to accommodate the Coloured congregants in the DRC. This was common practice in many of the DRCs at that stage and some even enlarged their churches to accommodate the Coloured congregants, such as the Swellendam DRC in 1874.²²⁰ They were free to attend church services, and some received their confirmation classes there and were also baptised in the DRC. In Wellington, arrangements of chairs for the Coloured women were placed behind the white congregants while Coloured men were allocated pews in the narthex. In the *Strooidak* (thatched roof) DRC in Paarl Coloured congregants sat in the kitchen of the church.²²¹ Although the DRC seating arrangement for Coloured people was racially and gender discriminatory, the DRC justified these practices by making provision for all believers to practise their religion under one roof at the same time.

Farmers and enslaved people very often attended church services together at the original 1820 Bisseux Mission Church in the Bovlei, where the seating was never according to racial or gender lines. In the DRMC in Wellington, the seating was also integrated and mixed in terms of race and gender. Ironically, with the inauguration of the new DRMC in 1941, the white guests had to make use of the more accessible side door, so that they did not have to move through the Coloured congregants.²²² This indicates that, in contrast to other churches such as in Swellendam, race was always a factor in the geographical ecclesiastical milieu of Wellington (and Paarl).

After the DRMC (Bisseux Church) was built in 1845 on Erf 794, donated to Rev Bisseux, directly across the newly built DRC, many Coloured people remained members of the DRC. Seats were still rented to them, as was the practice for all DRC members and this is recorded in the 1883 minutes of the DRC.²²³

The position of a church building in the urban pattern has a spatial impact and supports the orientation of the town.²²⁴ Its location is usually central, and seldom outside the core of the

²¹⁹ Hirsch, “The generation of postmemory,” 111.

²²⁰ P Meiring, *Kronieke van 'n Kerk* (Pretoria: PMP, 1977), 36.

²²¹ Ibid, 148.

²²² Breedt, “Gedenkboek by die inwyding van die nuwe Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk Wellington op 27 en 28 September, 1941.” 35.

²²³ Ibid, 99.

²²⁴ Stefan Netsch & Katharina Gugerell, “Reuse of churches in urban and rural landscapes”, *Acta Horticulturae et Regioteecturae* 1 (2019): 49.

town. There was a very good relationship between the DRC and the DRMC during these years (which was at that stage still under control of Rev Bisseux, representing the Paris Mission Society) and this aided harmony of the town. The elderly Rev Bisseux's salary from France was cancelled and he wanted the Wellington DRC, under Rev Andrew Murray, to take over the DRMC (Paris Mission Church). Because the Coloured congregants were already accommodated in the DRC, Rev Bisseux held a meeting with the congregation to ask them if they want to become part of the DRC. They were all in favour of this.²²⁵ This was the level of harmony between these two adjacent churches at the time, and the willingness to be one central religious body and to orientate the town spatially, accordingly. Rev AF du Toit of the DRC even held the inaugural address at the jubilee of the new Paris Mission Church (soon to become the first DRMC) on 6 May 1880, while Rev Murray presented the keynote speech.²²⁶

There was an odd tension between races which seemed more evident in the Winelands compared to other parts of the country (such as Swellendam), which could be attributed to the history of settlers in the environment. The French Huguenots were generally poorer than the Dutch settlers and could not at first when they settled here afford slaves; thus, the indigenous people and the French Huguenots had a much closer relationship than the Dutch and the indigenous people.²²⁷

6.2. The 1881 founding of the DRMC and the detachment of the Coloured DRC members.

When the various missionary organisations started to withdraw from South Africa due to funding from Europe drying up, many of these mission churches naturally joined the nearest DRCs. This in general did not cause any problems. However, the DRC in Ceres complained in 1857 about sharing the church with the Coloured people and referred to problems relating to the practices surrounding the serving of the communion, amongst others where communion wine was shared. As alcoholism is still a real South African problem, especially originating on the farms, Ceres DRC asked to have a separate venue for the Coloureds. The concept of the “weaker brother” was created, referring to the problem surrounding alcohol abuse. To keep the peace (in a simplified version), Dr Andrew Murray, as Moderator of the DRC at the time, gave permission that in congregations, where it was practical, they could have separate venues if they so wished. Although this was portrayed as a practical ruling, it manifested as a *faute de majeure* which

²²⁵ Kriel, “Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946” (Master’s thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950): 85.

²²⁶ Ibid, 84.

²²⁷ Ibid, 38.

legitimised the theological detachment of the Coloured members of the DRC into separate churches, institutionalising theological racism and segregation in the DRC.

When the erstwhile four provincial Synods of the DRC discussed church unity in the beginning of the 20th century, the Cape Province still had many Coloured members and the issue was raised of what would happen to Coloured members of the DRC from the Cape Province if they moved to any of the other three provinces.²²⁸ The DRC was so strongly opposed against the possibility of a Coloured person remaining a member of the DRC should they move interprovincially, that it tasked a Member of Parliament to table a Private Member's Bill²²⁹ in Parliament, the Dutch Reformed Churches Union Act 23 of 1911, which included a clause that stipulated that a Coloured person could remain a member of the DRC only in the Cape Province and if they move to another province they will lose their DRC membership.²³⁰ This act was fortunately repealed, again by a Private Member's Bill,²³¹ called the Dutch Reformed Churches Union Act Repeal Act, 2008.

It is ironic that, according to Giliomee, the very first time the word "apartheid" was used in print, was in 1929 in the publication of Rev Jan Christoffel du Plessis from Bethlehem in the Orange Free State titled, *Die NG Kerk van die OVS en die Naturellevraagstuk* (The DRC of the OFS and the Native question).²³² Research shows that in the triangle of Cape Town, Paarl and Stellenbosch, a truly ethnic establishment of politicians, academics, journalists, clergy and business leaders developed which would become the biggest opposition to the United Party. The apartheid ideology would also stem from this power base.²³³

The DRC became very concerned about its poor white Afrikaners living in racially mixed areas and the possibility of interracial breeding, and a Stellenbosch University professor in Theology, Daniel Lategan, wrote that the DRC had a holy calling to save the poor whites and the only way was segregation into separate townships. A previous lecturer at the Wellington Missionary Institute and by then a professor in Missiology at Stellenbosch University, GBA Gerdener, as Chairperson of the Federal Missionary Council of the DRC, sent a petition to the government in

²²⁸ Dutch Reformed Churches Union Act 23 of 1911, sec. 9.

²²⁹ Although extensive research has been done, the name of this private member could not be traced.

²³⁰ Dutch Reformed Churches Union Act 23 of 1911, sec. 9.

²³¹ This was done by member of Parliament, Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, in 2009.

²³² Hermann Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners: 'n Biografie* (Cape Town: Tafelberg Uitgewers, 2004), 405. In addressing a conference of the Free State DRC on the "native question", held in the town of Kroonstad, the Rev Jan Christoffel du Plessis (no relation to the professor) said: "In the fundamental idea of our missionary work and not in racial prejudice one must seek an explanation for the spirit of apartheid that has always characterised our [the DRC's] conduct."

²³³ Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners: 'n Biografie* 372.

1942 to introduce township segregation, further entrenching apartheid as a secular ideology.²³⁴ It is noteworthy how frequently the decisions of the DRC between 1857 and 1935 were rooted in the desire of the whites to worship apart from their fellow South Africans.²³⁵ The relationship between the white and Coloured church was further negatively affected by the political policies and patterns which caused an ever-increasing polarisation between Coloured and white.²³⁶

6.3. Congregants' memories

This DRMC Church building in Wellington not only had a location and a visible form, but it also had a relationship with human beings and the human capacity to produce and absorb meaning. To many congregants it was a sacred space consisting of movable and immovable elements, but at the same time it had a function in worship that was related to sacraments, rites and festivals, including many elements of tangible and intangible heritage.²³⁷

Since its demolition, the memory of the DRMC in the minds of its congregants, descendants and other role players, has gradually shrunk. Very few survivors are still alive as the demolition took place in 1941, 82 years ago. Even those few survivors were at most in their early pre-teens when the demolition took place. To understand the social, emotional, spiritual and political meaning of the now parking lot, once a beautiful New Gothic church, I had to discuss and interview survivors as well as second-generation descendants and role players. The narratives underlying the embedded demolished church had to be unearthed and interpreted to understand the why.

Although the main priority is to understand the value of a building's fabric in architectural, artistic, or archaeological terms, a building's significance can also lie in its intangible heritage: the events that took place, the people with whom it is associated, and the story of its development. To fully understand a building's value to the community, all these aspects need to be considered, particularly if it is a place of worship.²³⁸

As the mainstream media, being Afrikaans (the *lingua franca*), was focused on the doings of the white minority and other issues in its interest, the demolition of this church was never reported in any media, except for the adverts surrounding the demolition. Thus, it became hazy and the memories started to disappear. The memory and postmemory are mostly held by the Coloured

²³⁴ Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners: 'n Biografie* 412.

²³⁵ Ibid, 428.

²³⁶ Theron & Du Toit, *Kortbegrip van die Theron-verslag*, 78.

²³⁷ Sylvia Aulet, & Dolores Vidal, "Tourism and religion: Sacred spaces as transmitters of heritage values", *Church, Communication and Culture* 3, no. 3 (2018): 2.

²³⁸ Dodgeon, "Intangible Heritage," *Cathedral Communications Limited*. <https://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/intangible/intangible.html>. Accessed 25 January 2021. (Accessed 25 January 2021).

community as very few whites are aware that there was once a church there, never mind its history. This was evident in the interview with the current DRC minister Rev Bennie van Rensburg, which is discussed below.

6.3.1. Herman Bailey

The most authoritative custodian and role player in the survival of the memory and heritage of the DRMC is emeritus-mayor Herman Bailey, born in Wellington, although after the DRMC was demolished. His grandparents, parents and family were senior role players in the DRMC, and he served on the Church Council since his early 20s. They all attended Sunday School catechism, baptisms, marriages and funerals in the DRMC, many in the since demolished church.

“I always saw this barren open piece of land in the middle of Wellington and had many questions around it. How and why do you demolish a church? For what possible reason? Never could anyone tell you the real reason, besides the emotional ones. It was such an eyesore for decades.”

His wife’s grandfather, Julie Julies, was the sexton of the original church. His grandparents always told him about this beautiful New Gothic church that stood out, like an icon, and they held it as a holy place. It was a *creatio ex nihilo*, where they worked for every brick, window, roof sheet, pew, door, everything. And it had a beautiful pulpit. They told him how the carts and wagons came in on Saturday afternoons to attend the communion the next day. Some slept on their wagons and the others at friends or relatives. This was also confirmed by Elder Sam Abrahams.

According to Bailey, the demolition of the church was one of the saddest events in the history of the community of Wellington. “The building was in a relatively good condition and was taken care of and maintained as it was used by believers practising their faith. It was getting too small as there was progressive migration to the village by the Coloured people from the farms, but it could have been enlarged, but then the DRC bought all the surrounding land so that we could not expand. It was the start of the de-browning [de-Coloured-ing] (*ontbruining*) of Wellington, where Coloured people were sent a clear message that they, the whites, do not want them here any longer. The orders were clear, never another church again in Church Street. Apparently, the mixing of the Coloureds and the whites when the two church services finished at the same time on Sunday mornings was an irritation as they were sharing the same sidewalk, yet it was quite okay for the Coloured people to walk all over the village to the all-white shops of the all-white

shop owners! Absolute pettiness. This drive from the DRC was led by Reverend Joubert and a few hotheads, as not all the DRC members were supporting this mission.”²³⁹

He goes on to say that “We were also told to not have a church tower higher than that of the DRC. Our church tower is thus much lower. There were complaints regarding the various church bells of the two churches ringing. How beautiful would it be in any case?”²⁴⁰

According to Bailey, the second- and third-generation memory of this dark chapter in the history of Wellington is skeletal. Although Bailey was born after the church was demolished, his postmemory of the event is deeply emotional and connected to the story as if he inherited the memory himself, which is in essence, the power of postmemory.

Efforts were made to interact with the DRC about this demolition, and in his own words, the position of the DRC was still quite evident: “I realised at the time that most of our congregation members are of the younger generation and that we have lost most of the older people who attended services in the old building. I then got permission from the Church Council to do a series of history talks during church services on Sunday mornings. This generated a lot of interest amongst the members and even the young people showed some interest. We also worked out a year plan which would include meetings with the current Church Council of the DRC. During our first meeting we discovered that they knew very little about that history or pretended not to know.”

Bailey also stresses that there must have been enormous pressure on Rev Breedt who, as a white person, was still a member of the DRC although he was also the Moderator of the DRMC at the same time. The fact that he made the proposal for the DRMC to buy the adjacent property to expand and at the very next Church Council meeting he had to convince his council that the building was too expensive and in a bad state indicates that he was put under pressure by the DRC not to purchase it as they purchased it a few months later for a bigger sum.²⁴¹ The fact that the DRC Church Council ignored and refused to meet and accommodate the uncomplicated request from the DRMC Synod that the DRMC be made available to the Synod as their Synod Hall, showed arrogance and insensitivity. Rev Breedt must have eventually caved in under pressure from the DRC.²⁴²

²³⁹ Bailey (emeritus-mayor, Wellington), interview by author, 7 February 2020.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Ibid.

Netsch argues that “The threat of a closing of a church might disrupt the established social and religious practices and consequently result in internal conflict.”²⁴³ It also caused a lot of division amongst the DRMC congregants, something which is still evident today, with congregants who left the church to join another. The demolition decision was taken by a divided Church Council.

This division of the congregation caused by the demolition is also confirmed by Charlotte Cupido in her book, *Vra na die ou Paaie*. She describes a female congregant, Tollie Jacobs, who always sat on the same church pew every Sunday, who swore to never put her foot in the new church. “And then came the split in the church. The church is demolished, a new church is being built. The congregation is split in two. Some accept it, some don’t.” A “sense of place” is accepted as the emotional and subjective link that people have with a place.²⁴⁴ Miss Jacobs reflects the emotional and subjective link congregants had with the demolished church building.

The late Christine Siebrits, a Wellington historian, recalls from her discussions with survivors of the demolition, that the event was the start of a period of tremendous sadness (*“geweldige hartseer tyd”*) and the final exit walk from the one church across the street to the new church was a very emotional long walk away from freedom into political darkness for the whole congregation and the start of a timeless sad memory.²⁴⁵

Bailey further notes that “The church was and will remain our heritage and it will never go away. A chapter of our church heritage and history was amputated as many important religious decisions were taken in this church dealing with reformed ecclesiology of the Coloured people in SA. At least eight synods were held inside it. It was in use for more than a century, this very church in which the DRMC of SA was launched. Our congregation regards it as sacred land and believe it should serve the church. It had this transcendental aesthetics. It was totally unnecessary to demolish this historical, century old, beautiful New Gothic style church.” This sacred space still today has a strong symbolism with a potent emotional and experiential component. Shackley uses the term “spirit of the place” to refer to the atmosphere that surrounds the sacred space.²⁴⁶ This land, where the demolished church stood, will forever hold a spirit which represents a dark period in the DRMC’s history.

The Erika Theron Report also found that in many cases the Group Areas Act affected sound, useful buildings, which first had to be sold before new buildings could be erected in the newly racially classified areas. The compensation was not always enough, but, what was even worse,

²⁴³ Netsch & Gugerell, “Reuse of churches in urban and rural landscapes”, 154.

²⁴⁴ Aulet & Vidal, “Tourism and religion: Sacred spaces as transmitters of heritage values”, 245.

²⁴⁵ Christine Siebrits, informal telephonic interview by author, 21 November 2020.

²⁴⁶ M Shackley, *Managing sacred sites* (London: Thomson Learning, 2001).

was the fact that many of these buildings had historical value and were of great sentiment.²⁴⁷ The reality is that the old churches and congregations were often the only or strongest anchor that the congregants had in a strange, confusing time in their new, disrupted community after the Group Areas Act's forced removals dumped them into their new demarcated pigmentocratic areas.²⁴⁸ This loyalty to their old churches could often also be seen as a sign of protest against the forced removal.

6.3.2. Sam Abrahams

The elderly Mr Sam Abrahams, born on 19 May 1933, was baptised in the DRMC by Rev Breedt and attended Sunday School there. All the Sunday School teachers were male, with a Sunday School Superintendent, mr Frikkie Louw being the first, and a Deputy-Superintendent. He remembers the donkey carts and horse carts that brought the congregation to church on Sundays. There was even a space for the horses and donkeys at the side of the church. He remembers the demolition and the construction of the new church very clearly.

“It breaks my heart to see the vacant piece of land that once was our church. I can still remember seeing Reverend Breedt standing on the beautiful pulpit. Was it really necessary to demolish the building?”

He views the site as part of his and the community's heritage but is concerned that this memory will eventually disappear. His grandchildren do not know anything, or very little, about this sad chapter in Wellington's history. His late wife, Abelia Schnell, was also a member of the DRMC and he was an elder for many years in the new church. Religious heritage can act as a transmitter of the age-old values linked to the identity of a territory, while reflecting on the relationship between the religious value and the monumental value of a place.²⁴⁹

“When I see the empty site, it takes my mind to far away times. Here I went in and out, all the time, for years, and look at what it looks like now. I grew up here. Now it is filled with cars, where a church should have been standing. All we can do is to accept it, but I would like to see a church here again. It will bring the people closer to the church as well. Seeing the 1981 centenary monument breaks my heart. The church could have stayed.

“I can still see the white ministry students there on the beautiful pulpit practising their sermons on Sundays to us. The last day of the old church was very sad as we all had to walk from the old

²⁴⁷ Theron & Du Toit, *Kortbegrip van die Theron-verslag*, 80.

²⁴⁸ Theron & Du Toit, *Kortbegrip van die Theron-verslag*, 81.

²⁴⁹ Aulet & Vidal, “Tourism and religion: Sacred spaces as transmitters of heritage values”, 245.

church to the new church, 500 yards further down the street, past the Market Square where the slaves were sold until 1834. The people were very emotional and sad.

“One day, while the contractors were busy demolishing our old church, we children walked past there, and someone told us that they are busy digging up a man on whom a wall has collapsed. Later, I was very sad when I heard that it was Oom Siempie who was lying dead under the church debris. It would not have happened if they kept the church.”

6.3.3. Susan Francke

Many descendants with memory and postmemory of the demolition and their relatives have moved away from Wellington, but community exists in the minds of its members, and should not be confused with geographic or sociographic assertions of fact. By extension, the distinctiveness of communities and, thus, the reality of their boundaries, similarly lies in the mind, in the meanings which people attach to them, not in the structural forms.²⁵⁰

Mr Abrahams' daughter, Susan Francke, was also a member of the church, but joined her husband's Anglican Church when she got married. She is very bitter about the demolition and sees it as a pure and clinically racist deed to remove the Coloured people from the centre of Wellington.

“I see this demolition as a symbol of apartheid, and it breaks my heart to see that this has been allowed to happen in our town. The church was part of my heritage. The congregation should never have moved, they should have amalgamated with the DRC as they belong to the same church. I am now a member of the Anglican Church because my husband is Anglican, but it is very difficult for me as I am used to the DRMC.”

6.3.4. Ampie de Vries

Mr Ampie de Vries is a member of the DRMC (now the Uniting Reformed Church), and his parents, grandparents and great-grandparents were all members of the demolished church. He was educated by his parents about the pivotal role that the DRMC played in their family's lives. He relates to the pulpit cloth of the new DRMC which quotes the Bible verse of Haggai 2:9, which reads: “*In hierdie plek sal daar vrede wees*” (In this place there will be peace.). This is intentional, indicating the dissatisfaction of the congregation regarding the sale and demolition of their church.

²⁵⁰ A Cohen, *The symbolic construction of community* (London: Routledge. 1985), 98.

He remembers: “The church was a holy place for them, and it still feels the same to me when I walk or drive past the vacant site. The church could have been enlarged and still standing today. Why were all the mosques of the Muslims kept and not destroyed, as in Paarl and District Six? The DRMC could have put up more of a fight. Now there is only a granite monument on a parking lot behind a security fence under lock and key. We must make an appointment with the tenant if we want to see our land that was given back to us.

“When it was communion, the congregants from the farms came in with their wagons on the Saturday already and parked their wagons next to the church to be ready for the Sunday communion service. After church, both churches came out at the same time and the people mixed unintentionally. The DRC was scared that there might be mixed marriages as “Sarah from the farm” looks very beautiful in her Sunday dress. The Market Square, between the DRC and the new DRMC, was developed as a bowling green and tennis courts to serve as buffer zone between the two churches.”



Figure 59: Notice of current access control to the DRMC site. The telephone number is that of the commercial business leasing the parking lot. (Photo: Pierre-Jeanne Gerber, 2020)

He still remembers the organ that was used as it was a German imported bellows organ and it had to be pumped by someone while the organist would be playing, who usually stood behind the organist. Abrahams’s memory about the organ is very vivid, as he remembers that a

dedicated member, Mr Koos Majave, was salaried at £1:10 monthly to pump the organ while the organist was playing. It is not clear when this organ was installed but the first organist, from 1913 till 1922, was Miss Truda de Villiers, the daughter of Rev de Villiers, who did this service for free. She was succeeded by the headmaster of the Pauw Gedenkskool, Mr Joh Abrahamse, who did this work at a fixed stipend for decades.²⁵¹

Bailey recalls how certain families became stalwarts in the church staff hierarchy. One such family was the Julies family. Although the sexton post was created before 1879, the Church Council meeting on 6 July 1879 appointed Jacob Pieterse as sexton. He was succeeded in 1881 by Adam Julie, then by Jan Julie and lastly by Julie Julie, who retired in 1940 after 37 years of service. These sextons played a very important role in the church, especially at funerals, where the minister would deliver the church service and the sexton would deliver the sermon at the burial, except when Church Council members were buried.²⁵²

Postmemory is not only limited to victims and their second-generation families, but it does include a broader spectrum of people from all walks of life for all the legitimate reasons in the world.²⁵³

Bailey, and his wife's family, who are descended from the Julies sexton's heritage, encompasses the postmemory which is encapsulated in a broader spectrum of people who absorbed this memory and postmemory through mere association with the post of sexton in the DRMC.

6.3.5. Rev BJ van Rensburg

To be inclusive and balanced regarding the demolition, the most senior minister of the DRC Wellington, Rev BJ van Rensburg, was interviewed to gain the perspective of the Wellington DRC. He also granted me, on behalf of his Church Council, permission to access the DRC Minutes for the period dealing with the negotiations in the Archives in Stellenbosch.

He says, "When I came here in 1997, I took notice of the issue about the demolition and on my own initiative, decided to make enquiries as to why this happened. Dr Basson from the local Huguenot College gave me quite a bit of information. There was, and still is, a sensitivity about

²⁵¹ Kriel, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946" (Master's thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950), 203.

²⁵² Kriel, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946" (Master's thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950), 204.

²⁵³ Hirsch, "The generation of postmemory" 107.

the matter. Apparently, the building was dilapidated and there was a problem with parking at the church. I also got the impression that the building was too small, and it was crowded there.”²⁵⁴

He feels that Wellington has a rich history, and everything should be seen in context and that everything was not always bad. It is tragic to him that the building was demolished, and he would like to see a replica of the church being built on the original property if the finances were available.

According to Bailey, the freak accident which caused the death of Oom Siempie during the demolition of the church when one of the walls collapsed, killing him instantly, was seen by the congregation as a curse, as they felt the demolition was wrong.²⁵⁵ To make sure no-one forgets this event, a picture to honour Oom Siempie is displayed in the narthex of the new church. Not a word of this incident is documented in the minutes of the DRMC during that period. Mention is only documented that all workers on the demolition site are insured.²⁵⁶

However, all of them [church buildings] are a repository, not just of building techniques, materials and crafts, but also of the stories of the people who designed them, built them, lived around them and worshipped in them. Understanding and appreciating the intangible heritage of these buildings helps us to develop a better understanding of their significance.²⁵⁷

The demolished DRMC building was a collective of everyone who participated in the creation, building, attendance and practices of the church. This intangible heritage is clear in the memory and postmemory that surfaces from the interviews of those with ties to the congregation.

6.4. Theological training facility

Religious communities have very different attitudes to the use of their churches and physical buildings. Some Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches regard their buildings and contents as sacred while others, such as the Protestants, are more open to the multifunctional use of their churches.²⁵⁸ Thus, the DRMC building in Wellington played an incubator role as it was also used for the practical training by the *Sending Instituut* (Missionary Institute), which trained white missionaries, and senior aspirant missionaries had to deliver sermons from the pulpit on

²⁵⁴ Reverend Bennie van Rensburg, interview by author, 10 June 2021.

²⁵⁵ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 21/5/1941; 20/9/1941; 22/11/1941.

²⁵⁶ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes: 20/09/1941.

²⁵⁷ Dodgeon, “Intangible Heritage,” *Cathedral Communications Limited*. <https://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/intangible/intangible.html>. Accessed 25 January 2021. (Accessed 25 January 2021).

²⁵⁸ Henrik Lindblad & Eva Löfgren, “Religious buildings in transition: an international comparison”, (Thesis, University of Gothenburg, 2016), 9.

certain allocated Sundays as part of their training. These sermons were part of their practical examinations and in many cases the services were also attended by their families, friends and colleagues, besides the regular congregation. These practical examinations created important memories for the students as well as their families and friends. As part of their training, they also had to hold services in the wards and teach at Sunday School.

Once qualified, these missionaries, were deployed all over the globe, and all of them held their first church sermon in this church.²⁵⁹ The role that the demolished building played in expanding the footprint of the DRMC missionaries into African countries such as Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Sudan, Swaziland, Zimbabwe as well as other global destinations was significant,²⁶⁰ meanwhile at home, in Wellington, their training church was fighting a battle against the DRC church across the street, which had the intention to wipe out and remove the footprint of the DRMC from the centre of Wellington.

Today, the descendants of these missionaries would be confronted by a vacant parking lot if they wanted to see the theological training theatre of their late fathers or late grandfathers. All they have is the memory of their fathers' or grandfathers' stories.

During the Anglo-Boer War, between 1899-1902, the DRC sent ministers to minister to the spiritual needs of the Boer prisoners of war on the island of St Helena, Ceylon, India and the Bermudas and there was a missionary revival with a specific recruitment drive to also train some of them as missionaries when peace eventually returned. It is said that a strong spiritual revival also took place amongst the Afrikaners in the concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer war, which continued afterwards and morphed into a new-born interest in mission outreach.

After the war, 191 ex-prisoners of the Anglo-Boer war enrolled for training as missionaries in Worcester at the *De Boeren Zending* School, later called the *Drosdij*, of which 48 were sent for training in Wellington and the rest followed a year later. Rev Breedt was one of the 48 and the historic memory of these ex-soldiers coming back from a bloody war to become missionaries and using this DRMC chapel as their practical training arena was quite unique.²⁶¹ Rev Breedt was wounded in the Anglo-Boer war, which left him with a limp, and Charlotte Cupido refers to

²⁵⁹ Kriel, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946" (Master's thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950), 204.

²⁶⁰ George Hofmeyer, *NG Kerk 350*. (Kaapstad: Lux Verbi.BM, 2002): 138

²⁶¹ Meiring, *Kronieke van 'n Kerk*, 171.

this limp as she describes how he led his congregation after the last service in the to-be-demolished church, limping across the street, to the newly built DRMC.²⁶²

Friedenheim was also a training facility in Wellington, which was started in the same period as the Missionary Institute for the purpose of training women to be employed in the missionary fields. These women also did all their practical training in this church.²⁶³ My late aunt, Miss Alta Fourie, was a missionary worker in Botswana, and she trained in this church. I cherish the memory that as a young child I knew about the Mochudi Mission Station in Botswana, because that was where my aunt worked.

The DRC only allowed white students to be trained as missionaries to be deployed in the DRMC, which was technically under direct control of the DRC. These white student missionaries were all trained at the *Sending Instituut*. However, in 1916, the DRC's *Sendingkommissie* (Mission Committee) decided to start training Coloured men as missionaries, to be called evangelists, and later "Coloured missionaries". The *Sendingkommissie* asked the DRMC if they could use their vestry as a lecture room and the DRMC gladly approved this request at their Church Council meeting on 23 December 1916. After another request from the *Sendingkommissie*, dated 29 December 1923, the church also agreed to their minister assisting with the lecturing of these evangelist-students. When Rev Breedt took over from the late Rev de Villiers, the DRMC again agreed that he would lecture to these students, again in the vestry.²⁶⁴

The first evangelist to qualify was a son of the congregation, Adonis Burns, who came from the Hermon ward.²⁶⁵ Three years later, according to a *Sendingkommissie* letter dated 20 March 1926, he began training Coloured men as ministers, also in the DRMC church vestry.²⁶⁶ These humble beginnings (in the vestry of the demolished church) eventually led to the establishment of a thriving theology department at the University of the Western Cape, and the memory of these small beginnings have led and inspired many of our country's leaders in many spheres of life.

²⁶² Cupido, *Vra na die ou paaie*, 27.

²⁶³ Kriel, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946" (Master's thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950) 204.

²⁶⁴ Ibid, 254

²⁶⁵ Ibid, 200.

²⁶⁶ Ibid, 254.

6.5. The tertiary and scholastic memory

The religious heritage and elements are complemented by other associated buildings such as religious schools, seminaries, halls, parsonages, etc.²⁶⁷ The tertiary footprint and memory of the demolished church are enormous and thousands of direct descendants can trace the foundation of their parents' and grandparents' scholastic roots back to at least one of the church schools established by this church. When the DRC was built in 1840 and the DRMC in 1845, adjacent to each other, the gravitas of school education shifted to the town. Rev Bisseux, in a letter to Grey dated 1857, informs him that they have two day schools, both with 75 pupils, one in Wellington and one in Wagenmakers Valley, and a night school for 60 adults.²⁶⁸ When Rev Pauw arrived in 1879 he bought a parsonage with many outbuildings which he converted into a school. Today, the Pauw Gedenkskool is still on these premises. Teachers were scarce and Coloured teachers even more so and the white teachers did not want to work in these conditions.²⁶⁹ Because of this shortage of teachers, Rev de Villiers negotiated with the Education Department to start training teachers in the church's school and from 1916 until 1926 a total of 54 teachers were trained. The education of the poorest of the poor was greatly improved by the intervention of this church and the heritage and memory of this should be enhanced.²⁷⁰ The church eventually founded six schools namely, Pauw Gedenkskool; Bergrivier; Dal Josafat; Newton; Groenberg; and Beatrix, and their teachers were all paid by this humble church until 1915.²⁷¹

The church also introduced the subjects of woodwork and domestic science, and Wellington is still known today as a town with many apprentices and tradesmen. In 1834 the slaves were freed but they had to work for their owners for another four years until 1838, and in this four-year period they were renamed as apprentices.²⁷²

Rev CP Pauw, son of the late Rev Pauw, confirmed the scholastic contribution of the DRMC by stating in the cornerstone ceremony of the new DRMC in 1941 that all the Coloured schools in the Wellington area were founded by the DRMC.²⁷³

²⁶⁷ Aulet & Vidal, "Tourism and religion: Sacred spaces as transmitters of heritage values", 237-259.

²⁶⁸ Kriel, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946" (Master's thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950), 214.

²⁶⁹ Ibid, 216

²⁷⁰ Ibid, 218.

²⁷¹ Ibid, 245.

²⁷² Ibid, 107.

²⁷³ MDV Cloete, *Die Ligdraer* 12 (Wellington, 1941), 4.

6.6. DRMC Synod

When the Paris Mission Church in Wellington became the first DRMC in 1881, a synodocracy was formed with the DRMC churches in the other towns. Eight of the annual Synod meetings (1881; 1891; 1896; 1904; 1912; 1916; 1920; and 1924) were held in the Wellington church where the leadership of the DRMC gathered to discuss and chart their way forward.²⁷⁴ These very important meetings were all significant in the history and heritage of the church and the DRMC. This memory is now only to be found in the DRMC church archives.



Figure 60: A photo of the Synod gathering in 1904 in front of the DRMC. Rev Pauw is sitting in the second row, third from the right. (Source: Wellington Museum)

²⁷⁴ Kriel, *Die eerste eeu: Geskiedenis van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika 5 Oktober 1881 – 5 Oktober 1981* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekdrukkery, 1981), 49.



Figure 61: A Synod meeting in 1916, photograph taken in front of the DRMC. (Source: NG Kerk 350)

6.7. Sacraments in the DRMC

In the lifespan of the church from 1829 until its demolition in 1941, it played witness to 2 722 wedding couples who promised their eternal love to each other.²⁷⁵ Today the only tangible memory of this would be a few wedding pictures, the memories and postmemories.²⁷⁶

A total of 8 790 babies were baptised during the same period, where the parents promised at the pulpit, with the whole congregation as witnesses, to raise these babies according to Christian values. There are still a few of these babies alive today as elders somewhere, with their own memories, or their children bearing the postmemory of their parents.²⁷⁷

After the many years of Sunday School attendance from 1829 to 1941, a total of 5 728 children were confirmed. The Sunday School teachers were well respected. A Sunday School Superintendent oversaw all the Sunday Schools of the DRMC congregation and its eight wards.²⁷⁸

The church was also the silent witness to shattered families holding funeral services. Many of the deceased were coffined and rested in the area before the pulpit before being taken away for

²⁷⁵ Inauguration programme, 27 and 28 September 1941.

²⁷⁶ Kriel, *Die Eerste Eeu*, 19.

²⁷⁷ Inauguration programme, 27 and 28 September 1941.

²⁷⁸ Kriel, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946" (Master's thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950). 251.

their final journey. With the 1918 flu epidemic, the congregation lost 118 members and many of them were buried in a mass grave. Every year there was a remembrance service to remember these deceased. Sadly, this petered out, according to Bailey, although the church intends to revive this event. These collective memories are all part of a 180-year heritage that was destroyed. In total, the congregation consisted of 5 900 souls, 1 819 congregants, eight Sunday schools with 860 pupils, and six schools with 972 pupils at the time of its demolition.

The hidden heritage footprint of this modest church includes that it is where the DRMC was founded, which enabled the wider church to play a role as catalyst for creating 11 000 jobs for staff, building more than 3 000 mission schools, educating more than 220 000 pupils, erecting 38 mission hospitals with more than 8 000 beds, seven schools for the blind, three for the deaf, three for cerebrally disabled people, one for epileptics, seven old age homes, one home for unmarried mothers, 12 children's homes, ten crèches, eight theological schools, three social work colleges, its own press, and many other initiatives. The DRMC left an enormous footprint in more than eight Africa states and other international destinations – a footprint and landscape that could never be demolished by a single racist DRC church council, somewhere in the Boland town of Wellington.²⁷⁹

6.8. The theocracy memory

When the DRMC was founded in 1881, it was handed a constitution by the DRC as it was regulated by the DRC, with no church order of its own.²⁸⁰ Originally, Rev Bisseux established a Paris Mission Church management system that was very much based on the Presbyterian system, which made provision for the registration of congregants, a baptismal register, and a marriage register, and this system is still used today in the DRMC (URC). When Rev Pauw succeeded Rev Bisseux, he further refined this theocracy that introduced the wards system, accounting system, annual programmes, home visits, church discipline, dress code, timeframes for Church Councils, deacons and elders, and most importantly, the keeping of minutes (which was not done before).²⁸¹ The system of keeping minutes is proving to be of immense value in South Africa today. Church Council meetings were procedural training grounds for civil society. These systems were all designed in the demolished church and are still in use in the DRMC (URC) and other organisations today and is a proud heritage and tradition originating from this church.

²⁷⁹P Coertzen, *350 Jaar Gereformeerd*, (Bloemfontein: CLF Drukkers, 2002): 433.

²⁸⁰ Ibid, 14.

²⁸¹ Kriel, "Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946" (Master's thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950), 185.

6.9. Alcohol

The DRMC Wellington also has a dark history, heritage and memory of a struggle against alcohol abuse in the community, as Wellington was and still is a wine-producing farming area. The church started the *Afskaffers Vereniging* (Abolition Society – an organisation which tried to dissuade people from using alcohol) with branches in all their wards. This was a sad heritage because Wellington had a history of the destructive *dopstelsel* (a system where male and female farm workers were given cheap wine as part of their wages in the morning before work, during lunch time as well as in the afternoon when they stopped working). This was supposedly to keep them going, dependent and accepting of their imposed substandard way of living. When I arrived in Wellington in 1993 there were still a few farmers who used this system.

Rev Pauw submitted written objections to Parliament against a draft bill tabled in 1907, which aimed to establish a liquor market for black mineworkers. The DRC did not support him and refused to publish his open letter in the weekly DRC official publication, *Die Kerkbode*.²⁸² His open letter of objection was however published in the “Ons Land” publication of 18 July 1917. He pleaded against alcohol abuse at a conference in Paarl 6 to 8 March 1889. As a sworn-in constable, he also entered bars to fetch and take his congregants to their homes. This battle against alcohol abuse was continued by his successor, Rev de Villiers, who also combated alcohol abuse. The DRMC Church Council wrote letters to the DRC to support their battle against alcohol abuse, and to the local member of Parliament, PP du Toit, who refused to help as “his constituency was a wine producing area”.²⁸³ In 1924 Rev Breedts urged government to ban the *dopstelsel*.²⁸⁴ Unfortunately, alcohol abuse is still a problem in Wellington today with one of the highest number of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome cases in South Africa.

6.10. Charlotte Cupido

In her publication *Vra na die ou paaie* (Longing for the old roads) Cupido refers twice to the DRMC and the demolition thereof. Referring to a character called Tollie, she quotes the following:

²⁸² Kriel, “Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendinggemeente Wellington, K.P., 1820 – 1946” (Master’s thesis, Stellenbosch University, 1950), 112.

²⁸³ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Gemeente, Wellington, Minutes 14/3/1931.

²⁸⁴ Murray & Hofmeyr, *Dagbreek in Donker Afrika*, 16.

And then came the split in the church. The church is demolished, a new one is being build. The congregation is torn in two. Some accept its fate, others don't. The Tollie character informs all that she will never put a foot in the new church.²⁸⁵

Cupido's description of the whole demolition is gripping:

There it stood. A beautiful building in Dutch building design. A gallery with two choirs, junior and senior, and their seating behind the formal seating. A German, hand-pumped organ, in the one wing, in front of the vestry. And the pulpit! A true beauty made of dark wood. A beautiful gable in front and outside a church bell.

Today there apparently was supposed to be, in the place where the front door was, a sort of monument in commemoration of the old DRMC. At the premises of the next-door business is a sign, indicating "Parking next door".

The last evening in the church, the congregation, some with bitterness, attended the service. I was there. Rev Breedt preached about the clouds of witnesses.

One by one he read out the names of the congregation members, pillars of support, many passed away already, and all the hard work they had done. He acknowledged their love for their church, their steadfastness for their church. As he read out each of their names from the past, the cloud of witnesses, the congregation broke into tears. The whole congregation. Even those who swore not to put a foot in the new church. They also cried.

The next week we all walked, one by one, out of the church, the Reverend Breedt in front, crossing the road. I was there. Across the road, into the new church. A beautiful church. But still, even with all the pomp, the bitterness did not go away, despite Haggai 2, verse 9. And the pulpit cloth exclaims, "In this place I will give peace".

Today this place is, for some of us, a holy place, a parking lot. And one wonders what happened to the "cloud of witnesses".²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ Murray & Hofmeyr, *Dagbreek in Donker Afrika*, 14.

²⁸⁶ Cupido, *Vra na die ou paaie*, 27-28.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

When I was made aware a few years ago, by the late Herman Bailey, of the demolition of the first DRMC in 1941, 82 years ago, by its own congregation, only to have to move and reconstruct another church at least 500 yards away from the white DRC across the road, I had to, first, establish all the facts for myself, as it was totally bizarre. To create space for the new church to be built, they had to first demolish their own parsonage to create the space for the footprint of the new church. He took me to their church hall and showed me five old monochrome photographs, framed as a collective, of the inside and outside of the demolished church, and these five historical pictures from a traumatic past authenticated the existence of that past.²⁸⁷

After careful and thorough analysis of the minutes of chronological Church Council meetings of both churches it was established that the original reasons presented by the DRC to the DRMC were very economical with the truth. After extensively studying the reasons behind the demolition and removal of the DRMC, I could not find any reason for this except for the reason of raw racism in its purest form. It is hoped that this thesis will salvage and guide this 19th-century tragedy from oblivion into the 21st century and beyond.

Churches have been bought and sold since the first church was constructed, and still are. But what distinguishes this DRMC transaction is the fact that they had to sell their church and demolish it, “pack up and go”. If the DRC had approached the DRMC with a legitimate reason and request to purchase their church, the transaction would probably have been plain sailing and accepted by both congregations. Surely the DRC would have been able to find a demolition contractor who would have done the demolition for free in exchange for the material. The concession that the DRMC could keep the building material was a worthless concession as the DRMC is not a demolition company and they had to contract someone to do the demolition, who was either paid or remunerated with most of the building material, minimising the volume of recyclable material available. But, unfortunately for the DRC, their representatives in the negotiations showed their true colours and real motivation in an un-pokerlike fashion and that was the spark to this 82-year-old tragedy. They wanted the DRMC to demolish their own church, to pack it up themselves, personally, and bear witness to the whole process, first-hand, brick by brick.

²⁸⁷ Hirsch, “The generation of postmemory”, *Poetics Today* 29, no. 1 (2008), 107.

I have gone to great lengths to include as much as is necessary in this thesis as I was in the privileged position to personally interview at least a few elderly survivors of this event. This will definitely not be the situation for any future student of this tragedy. When I heard about this story I immediately asked; “But how?” I hope this thesis will shed some light on answering this question in the future.

The site of the first DRMC in South Africa, where this church was founded, is a historical site, containing enormous heritage and memory, and should be treated in a dignified manner (which is not reflected in an exclusive security parking lot). It should be monumentalised in a way that gives credit and respect to the history and heritage of the role that this erf and church played in the social fabric and spiritual significance of the town and district of Wellington and South Africa, as it was the catalyst that spawned thousands of DRMC projects all over Southern Africa.

The site has the potential to be proclaimed as a provincial heritage site in terms of the NHRA and should be treated and seen as a heritage and historical space in transition. The site, in its present form, is dressed in powerful attire and could be kept in its current state as a symbol and reminder of what can happen when people lose their humanity; somewhere we, as a people, nation and community, never want to go again. The other possible option is to rebuild the church as a symbol of reconciliation and *relegare* of the Wellington community.

The strategic-political and ultimately moral-historical question is how to move towards understanding without ever forgetting, but to remember without constantly rekindling the divisive passions of the past. Such an approach is the only one which would allow us to look down into the darkness [...] atrocities of the past and to speculate on their causes at the same time as we haul up the waters of hope for a future of dignity and equality.²⁸⁸

In November 2018, at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, the Roman Catholic Pontifical Council for Culture and the delegates of the episcopal conferences of Europe, Canada, the USA and Australia approved guidelines for ecclesial communities for decommissioning of churches at the aptly titled conference: Doesn't God dwell here anymore? Decommissioning places of worship and integrated management of ecclesiastical cultural heritage.²⁸⁹

I have often wondered how the DRC Church Council would have answered this question when they forced the DRMC to demolish their own church. While analysing all the information,

²⁸⁸ N Alexander, *An ordinary country* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003) as referenced by Annie E. Coombes in *Visual Culture and public memory in a democratic South Africa, History after Apartheid*: 1.

²⁸⁹ Pontifical Council for Culture, International Conference: Doesn't God dwell here anymore?

literature and chronological 13-year negotiations precluding the demolition of the church, I have often wanted to ask these DRC elders just one question –

Didn't God dwell there anymore?

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Rev Bennie van Rensburg, oral interview conducted by author, 10 June 2021.

Annexure A: Interview with Herman Bailey

Herman Bailey, gebore in 1950, September 22 en 71 jaar oud tydens onderhoud. Gebore in Wellington. In Wellington Laerskool en Hoërskool gedoen, en daarna verder studeer. Loopbaan het begin in plaaslike regering in die veld van openbare gesondheid. Bailey was gesondheidsinspekteur in Wellington, eerste uit Bailey se gemeenskap wat so 'n posisie kon beklee het. Daarna het Bailey enkele jare gaan klasgee in gesondheidswetenskap by die destydse Skiereiland se Technikon, deesdae is dit CPUT.

Bailey het daarna belangstelling gevind in die welsynsveld en het by die kantore van SA Nasionale Raad vir Alkoholisme (SANRA) betrokke geraak. Daarna het die idee van landelike ontwikkeling na die voorgrond gekom en het Bailey saam met manne soos Ockie Bosman en Jan Boland Coetzee die Landelike Stigting tot stand gebring. Bailey was daar betrokke vir etlike jare tot en met die sluiting van die organisasie rondom 1995 en 1996.

Bailey het al die jare belangstelling gehad in plaaslike regering en het sedert 1976 betrokkeheid gehad, aanvanklik by die destydse bestuurskomitees wat 'n instelling was vir bruin leiers om in 'n dorp deel te neem aan plaaslike regering, maar slegs in raadgevende hoedanigheid. Daar het Bailey 17 jaar gedien in Wellington en het toe in 1993 in die eerste beweeg na die oorgangsjare en uiteindelik in 1995 die verkiesing vir plaaslike regering vir die Weskaap en was Bailey toe vir 5 jaar burgemeester vir Wellington. Dieselfde periode was Bailey burgemeester vir die Wynland Distriks Munisipaliteit, die destydse SDR. In 2000 met die koms van die nuwe saamgestelde rade na afbakening, was Bailey vir die eerste 18 maande onder-burgemeester vir Drakenstein en tot en met Februarie 2006 was Bailey Uitvoerende Burgemeester.

Gerber: Bailey, kom ons gaan terug na die kerkie. uiteraard is jy 'n gelowige mens, wat onthou jy van die ou sendingkerkie soos dit bekendgestaan het destyds voordat die nuwe een staangemaak is? Wat kan jy vir ons vertel? Die vraag dus: “do you recall anyone in your family talking about the church?”

Bailey: My ouers en grootouers was almal aktiewe lidmate van die kerk. My oupa was kerkraadslid in die kerkie in die hoofstraat, my pa het daar gekatkiiseer, my ma het daar Sondagskool gegaan. My ouma was betrokke by die destydse Sustersbond. Ons het opgegroeï in

‘n milieu waar die kerk nogal vir ons ‘n kern was. Uiteraard was die kerk nie meer daar toe ek grootgeword het nie, maar net die oop stuk grond. Mens het baie vrae gevra en ouers ons vertel van die hartseer dag toe die kerk gesloop is. As kind het ek baie vrae gevra oor die kerk en wat was die redes. Behalwe vir hulle emosionele stories, kon mens nie agter die kap van die byl gekom het nie. Die oop stuk perseel het soos ‘n seer oog daar gelê al die jare, en later jare toe ek as kerkraadslid betrokke raak, toe is ek 22 jaar oud, het die ding nog altyd ‘n belangstelling en ‘n prikkeling gehad. In 1981 het dit ‘n groter betekenis gekry toe die perseel nou aangewend is vir die oprigting vir die eeu gedenksteen. Dis toe die sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika 100 jaar oud was. Die kerk is gestig 5 Oktober 1881. So in 1981 was daar ‘n groot fees, my kinders was toe in die Sondagskool en hulle het deelgeneem aan al die feestelikheid. Ek onthou daai aand spesifiek toe oom Laban van Rooyen, ons oudste ouderling op die stadium, toe hy die gedenksteen onthul het. Dit was ‘n roerende geleentheid. Dit onthou ek van die kerk. En later dat ek uiteraard groter belangstelling getoon het.

Gerber: Watse stories, miskien is daar ‘n paar waarna jy kan verwys, het jou ouers en grootouers vertel van die kerk? Spesifiek wat jy kan onthou?

Bailey: Die eerste wat ek kan onthou is hulle het vertel van hierdie pragtige ou kerkie en ek het later uitgevind dit was ‘n besonderse gebou. Dit was ‘n neo-gotiese boustyl gewees, wat soos ‘n ikoon uitgestaan het op daai hoek. Dit was die een ding. Die tweede ding wat ek onthou hulle vertel het is as dit nou bevoorbeeld nagmaal was hoe die waens en die ander tuiens van die plaas af al die Saterdagand gekom het en kom parkeer het daar want môre is nagmaal of môre is groot kerk. En dat mense van heinde en vêr, ons het ‘n baie groot gemeente gehad ons grense was Malmesbury aan die een kant en Paarl aan die ander kant, so ons het ‘n baie wye uitgestrekte gemeente gehad. Die kerk het ‘n orrel gehad waarvan die orrel se windpomp nog gedraai moes word, en my skoonvader se pa was oom Julie Julies. Hy was die kerk se koster. My skoonpa het vertel hoe hy ook soggens moes gaan help het om die orrel se windpomp te gaan draai daar op die orrel sodat hulle uiteindelik kan musiek hê.

En dan het mense altyd melding gemaak van die pragtige kansel wat die kerk gehad het. Die mense het dit as ‘n baie heilige plek beskou.

Gerber: Wat het hulle gesê in terme van die toestand van die kerk? Was die kerk in 'n bouvallige toestand of was die kerk soos enige ander kerk?

Bailey: Jy weet nou watter datum die kerk opgerig is, en hy is op 'n stadium ook vergroot soos die gemeente vergroot het. Die landelike migrasie van mense het beteken dat die kerke al meer lidmate gekry het. Die eerste kerkie was mos in 1820 in Wamakersvallei in die Bovlei, en toe die oprigting van die kerkgebou in 1834, of daar rond, en dan sy vergroting in 1843. Wat beteken is dat daar tog onderhoud was, daar was versorging van die gebou gewees en dat op sekere plekke meer aandag seker nodig was. Maar die gebou was diensbaar en die mense het hom gebruik om hulle geloof te kom uitleef.

Gerber: Die gebou langsaan, die dubbelverdieping gebou daar, wat nou nog bestaan en in baie goeie toestand is, waarvoor was dit gebruik destyds?

Bailey: Toe ek die gebou leer ken het, was dit twee woonhuise gewees met 'n kantoor van 'n begrafnisondernemer. Dis al wat ek daarvan kan onthou, ek weet nie of hy vroeër 'n ander betekenis gehad het nie. Ek onthou die familie, Theron, wat die gebou besit het. En hulle het die begrafnisondernemer daaruit bedryf.

Gerber: Die gebou staan vandag nog en die kerk het die opsie gehad om daai gebou te koop.

Bailey: Dis korrek, en dis toe dat die NG Kerk besluit het om alle grond om daai kerkie op te koop sodat die kerk nie kan uitbrei nie. Dit staan so in hul notules aangeteken.

Gerber: Dit was hul strategie gewees om dit als op te koop. Dink jy die kerkraad van die NG Kerk destyds, soos wat ek kon aflei vanuit notules, het die meerderheid die koop, sloping en verwydering van die kerkie gedryf? Of dink jy dit was 'n minderheid en die meerderheid het net stilgebly?

Bailey: Ek dink iets wat jy sê daarvan is waar, want daar kom net 'n paar name elke slag op in die notules. Daar was 'n Joubert en so paar bekende Wellington vanne wat hierdie ding gedryf het onder die leiding van die destydse leraar. Ek het op 'n stadium gevoel daar was ook 'n bietjie ongemak gewees by van die lidmate want daar was 'n baie nou verhouding. Onthou op daai stadium het die Groepsgebiede wet nog nie gegeld nie. Mense het gemeng gebly in die dorp en mense het goeie verhoudinge gehad en ek het net die gevoel gekry vanuit my bietjie leeswerk en gesels dat daar ongemak was rakende die inisiatief wat geneem is deur 'n paar individue, waarvan die name oor die sewe jaar se notules opkom.

Gerber: Wat vir my interessant was is toe die kerk vergroot is deur eerwaarde Pauw het die Moedergemeente die Martha saal aangebied om in kerk te hou terwyl die kerk herbou is. En na paar jare toe die proses homself herhaal het die NG Kerk nie weer die gebou aangebied terwyl die kerk herbou is sodat van die materiaal weer gebruik kan word nie. Want met hierdie transaksie kon julle niks van die materiaal gebruik nie.

Bailey: Nee dit is so. Daar was 'n datum gegee en op grond daarvan moes die kerk ontruim word en in daai proses was ons eintlik sonder 'n gebou om in kerk te hou. Ek het nog nooit eers daaraan gedink nie, maar ek bedoel wat het die ouens gemaak? Want ons het nie 'n Breedtsaal gehad nie, ons het nie 'n kerksaal gehad nie, so dit was 'n baie kras besluit gewees. Ek onthou die besluit het baie duidelik gesê dat daar word een opsie vir hulle gegee, hulle moet verkoop aan ons en dit moet minstens 100 treë weg wees van waar die perseel nou is en derdens hulle sal nooit weer toegelaat word om in kerkstraat 'n kerk op te rig nie. Ek meen dat 'n kerkraad sulke besluite kan neem was baie duidelik dat ons was 'n steen des aanstoots, of wat is daai uitdrukking, in hulle gesig wees. Ek onthou in my gesprek met van die ou lidmate dat as die kerk uit was en hierdie vermenging van mense op die sypaadjie het hulle nie van gehou nie.

Dit was fine as ons dorp toe gekom het om inkopies te doen want al die winkels was in besit van witmense gewees, maar ons mag nie saam uit die kerk uit loop op dieselfde sypaadjie nie. Dit was so pettiness.

Gerber: Jy het my eenkeer iets vertel dat die huidige VGK kerk nie 'n toring het nie. Wat onthou jy van dit?

Bailey: Ons het mos die bouplanne opgespoor, uiteindelik, van die huidige kerk. Toe die nuwe kerk gebou is, is daar gesê dat die kerk mag nie 'n toring hê wat hoër as ons (NG Kerk) toring is nie. En daarom, ek het toevallig onlangs die afskrifte van die bouplanne gekry, sou hy met 'n koepel bo-op wees wat nooit gedoen is nie want dit sou te veel na 'n moskee gelyk het. As jy na al drie die kerke in Wellington kyk dan steek almal bo uit behalwe ons s'n en dan mag ons ook nie 'n toring gehad het nie. Ek is bly, ten minste kon ons die embleem voor op die kerk in die toring gevestig het en hy brand nog elke aand. Die ou embleem van die NG Sendingkerk.

Gerber: Herman, ja dit was 500 treë gewees.

Bailey: Ja dit was 500 treë, jy is reg.

Gerber: Iets wat my ook opgeval het is dat hulle gekla het oor die klokke wat dieselfde tyd lui. Dat dit miskien verwarrend kon wees.

Bailey: Hoe mooi sal dit wees as al die klokke in die dorp gelyk kon lui. Sjoe.

Gerber: Daar was ook melding gemaak van die singery wat te hard was. Onthou jy iets daarvan?

Bailey: Nie spesifiek nie. Die klokke storie onthou ek, maar die singery is vir my interessant. Want dis darem 'n hele entjie wat hulle kerk van ons s'n is, het ons dan so goeie stem dat hy doodgesing het aan die anderkant? Ons het 'n baie bekwame orrelis gehad, hy het later eerwaarde Abrahams geword. Ons het baie kore gehad vanuit die streek, ons het baie buitewyke gehad. Ek kan nogal dink op groot geleenthede kon dit goed gegaan het daar binne.

Gerber: Sê my Herman, dan met die sloping van die kerkie, daar was 'n oom wat verongeluk het daar. Wat het daar gebeur?

Bailey: Kom ek wil gou bietjie teruggaan, toe daar nou finaal besluit is en ons kerkraad soort van handdoek ingegooi het, was daar 'n sterk poging gewees om die kerk te probeer hou vir 'n sinodesentrum. Daar was afsprake gemaak om die NG kerkraad te sien, en die kerkraad het hulle nie daaraan gesteur nie. Omdat die kerk daar tot stand gekom het, was die siening van die leraar van daardie tyd om dit te behou as 'n sinodesentrum. Dan sou die gebou steeds behoue gebly het en die sinodesentrum sou kon geld instort om die gebou te onderhou, dit was die groot hartseer.

Toe uiteindelik breek die groot dag van afbreking toe aan. Ons kerk is ingewy ek dink die naweek van 28 September 1941 en toe sê hulle maar daar lê iemand ander die stene begrawe. Oom Siempie is toe daar uitgegrawe. En ons het met ons feesvieringe, toe ons nou die ooreenkoms 1981 met die NG Kerk bereik het, het ons spesiale erkenning gegee vir oom Siempie wat daar gesterf het. Daar was nooit ooit verwys na sy afsterwe nie, nêrens is dit ook geskryf ook nie. Dis net wat ons onthou het en vertellings van die gemeente. Sy kleinkind het eendag by my opgedaag.

Gerber: Dis ook vir my interessant die sterfgeval van die oom want ek het ook niks daarvan in die notules gesien nie. Wat ek wel gesien het in die notules is dat die eerste notule na sy afsterwe daarna verwys dat alle versekering van die geboue in orde is. Ek neem aan dat aangesien daar na versekering gewys word daar wel 'n gesprek op die kerksraad plaasgevind maar dat daar net niks genotuleer is nie.

Bailey: Ja, want een van die vrae wat die kleinseun vir my gevra het was of hulle familie nie geregtig was op 'n eis nie. En my antwoord was dus dat sover ek weet die geval nêrens gerapporteer is nie. Dis vir my baie vreemd want dit moes tog 'n groot gebeurtenis gewees het en mense verwys daarna.

Gerber: So dis vir my baie vreemd dat hulle verwys na versekering maar nêrens na 'n sterfgeval of so iets nie. Kom ons gaan terug na die perseel voor die aandeelhouding soos wat dit nou is, nog voor dit, wat was jou gewaarwording, watter emosie was daar by jou gewees as jy die kerk gesien het en watter significance was die perseel?

Bailey: Kyk, wat gebeur het na die inwyding van ons kerk het daar 'n gedenkboek verskyn. Ek het daai boek van hoek tot kant deurgegaan. My ma was so trots op daai boek want daar was 'n jong foto van haar in waar sy aan die Jongdogtersbond behoort. Sy het daai boek vir al ons kinders gegee om te lees. En dan kom mens elke slag terug na die ou foto toe en dan kyk jy nou watter pragtige kerkie dit was. Ek het op daai stadium baie vrae vir hulle gevra, want elke keer as jy daar verby gestap het in kerkstraat as jy gaan inkopies koop het jy maar met baie verleentheid gekyk na die gebou of die perseel wat nou daar oop lê en dat ons eintlik 'n baie groot verlies gely het. Ek meen dit was prima grond in die dorp wat ons op so krasse wyse verloor het. En dis toe dat die gedagte by my opgekom het om tog iets daaromtrent te doen.

Gerber: So wat dink jy het alles verlore gegaan as jy dit moet breër vat?

Bailey: Wel in die eerste instansie, 'n sterk gedeelte van geskiedenis van die kerkmense het seergekry. Op daai perseel en in daai gebou is die NG Sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika gestig in 1881. Tweedens die eerste sinode en die daaropvolgende sinodes tot en met 1941 het daar plaasgevind. So op daardie perseel is baie, baie belangrike kritiese besluite geneem oor godsdienstbediening aan die bruin gemeenskap van Suid-Afrika, omdat in terme van die Apartheidsmaatreëls kon daar nie een kerk gewees het nie.

Ek onthou so goed, ek was vir so 12 of 13 jaar kassier van ons gemeente en dan werk jy baie met die gemeenteboeke en in die lidmaatregister was daar selfs 'n kolom vir "heidenske naam" en "gekerstente naam". So hulle het begin met al die klomp heidene om hulle nou Christene te maak. So daar het 'n groot stuk godsdienstbediening plaasgevind wat nou van hierdie klomp heidene Christene gemaak het. Maar ons het ook fenomenale leraars gehad wat vir daai gemeente bedien het. Jy weet tot en met eerwaarde Breedt tot en met die afbrekingsproses. En ek dink hy moes onder geweldige druk gewees het, jy weet hy was lidmaat van die NG Kerk

maar hy was predikant by die Sendingkerk gewees. Dieselfde met eerwaarde Kriel, Hernus Kriel se pa. Hernus het altyd so gekla oor sy pa hom kerk toe dryf want Sondaes oggende moes hy kerk toe en Sondagskool by die een kerk en dan Sondaes aande weer kerk toe by die ander kerk. So hy het 'n oordosis gekry, maar dis hoe dit gewerk het. En in al die gesprekke kon 'n mens sien dat eerwaarde Breedt was maar geweldig gekonfronteer deur die NG Kerk, jy weet hulle het hom behoorlik gehamer om daai besluite deur te kry. En dit in sig self is net 'n aanduiding dat, ek dink hy sou dit anders wou hê, maar hy kon net nie.

Daar is 'n mooi storie wat ook gaan toe Dr Andrew Murray by geleentheid in ons kerk gepreek het daar op die hoek en vir die gemeente gevra het "wil julle nie maar hê ons moet een gemeente wees nie?" en die mense het soos in 'n hoera JA geskree op sy vraag dat ons maar een kerk kan wees. Hoekom moet ons dan nou twee kerke wees? En nou praat ons van 'n hele klompie jare gelede toe die idee van kerk-eenwording al in die koppe van sekere mense was. Ons sukkel vandag nog daarmee.

Gerber: En jy weet die feit dat daai erf van die sendingkerk en die erf langsaan deur dieselfde vrou geskenk is. So mense het dit destyds nooit as apart vorentoe gesien nie. So iewers het daar tussen die beskikbaar maak van die Martha saal en die afbreek van die kerk moes dra 'n groot verwydering gekom het.

Bailey: Ja, as 'n mens nou bietjie gaan kyk na wat was die politiek van die dag gewees want hierdie goed het plaasgevind voor institusionele Apartheid wat beteken dat oor tyd kon daar 'n sterker siening van apart wees ontwikkel het. En daarom is ek nogal, en ek noem dit altyd vir mense dat die nie Apartheid se rede was nie maar 'n kerkraad wat 'n oortuiging gehad het dat hulle dit moet doen. Vir watter rede ookal.

Gerber: Wat sal jy sê was die rede hoekom hulle julle wou geskuif het?

Bailey: Persoonlik dink ek dat, ek praat van die term ontbruining van die witdorp, en dit was soort van een van die eerste prosesse. Dat ons gemeente wat in die witdorp was, kerkstraat is

daai tyd as die skeiding gesien, maar ons weet mos wat met “gerrymandering” plaasgevind het in 1975 en hoe die grens gesny is sodat nie een wit gesin geraak is deur die Groepsgebiede wet nie. En dit was vir my een van die eerste prosesse van die ontbruining van die witdorp. Tweede instansie, ek dink polities het witmense begin ‘n sterker houding inneem teenoor bruin mense. Ons was mos maar gesien as die mindere volk. En die kerk was ‘n sensitiewe manier gewees om dit te doen, en na my mening was dit ‘n kwessie van hier kan ons die hardste slaan deur dit te doen. En na 7 jaar se onderhandeling kon die kerk net nie meer verder keer nie. Ek dink hulle was net moeg, moeg, moeg vir al hierdie onderhandelinge.

Gerber: Dink jy die feit dat hulle voor Groepsgebiede wet in werking getree het, ek meen dis amper ‘n dekade voor die Groepsgebiede wet ingekom het. Die feit dat hulle dit al ‘n dekade vroeër kon regkry om ‘n sogenaamde bruinker te skuif, dit dalk vir hulle die deure oopgemaak het om enige iets anders te skuif?

Bailey: “It can be done.” Ek dink dit was ‘n toetslopie gewees en op ‘n baie sensitiewe terrein in die dorp. My buurman het altyd gesê “onthou ‘n bruinman is maar altoos konserwatief en sterk gekoppel aan sy kerk”. Toe ek en Winnie Rust destyds die boek gedoen het oor die verskuifde gemeenskap toe vra Dr Rina Smit by geleentheid in ‘n groep “was julle nooit kwaad vir die mense nie? Haat julle nie die mense nie?” Toe staan ‘n niggie van my vrou op en toe sê sy “ons is deur die kerk geleer om nie te haat nie en om te vergewe, maar nooit kan ons vergeet nie”. Die woorde van haar hoor ek nog so in my ore. En ja, dit was een van daai sensitiewe goed.

Maar jy is reg om te sê dat hulle gedink het “kom ons probeer die een en kyk wat vorentoe gebeur”. En dis nie baie lank daarna nie toe die Groepsgebiede wet ingekom dat dit soos ‘n “rollercoaster” gegaan het.

Gerber: Ek dink dat hierdie een in 1941 gelei het tot al die ander slopings, ‘n domino effek. Dit het dit vir hulle ge-“legalise”, dat hulle daarmee kon wegkom.

Wat was die impak van “forced removals” oor die algemeen in Wellington en die gemeenskap?

Bailey: Kyk Wellington was die eerste dorp waar daar gepoog was om as stadsraad te oorreed om ‘n grens te trek. Dit was in 1975, ‘n skrywe wat ek in my navorsing ontdek het van Dr I.D. du Plessis wat Sekretaris van Kleurling Sake was. In die brief het hy duidelik vir die Raad van Wellington, en ek het die oorspronklike brief, waarin hy gevra het dat daar ‘n skeidslyn getrek moet word tussen bruin en wit. In baie mooi woorde en mooi voorwaardes wat die grootte van die erwe en alles moet wees. Maar die lyn is toe so getrek, ek het die term “gerrymandering” gebruik, die lyn is so krom en skeef getrek dat deur die hele proses nie een wit gesin geraak is nie. Markstraat was die lyn. As hulle Markstraat reguit moes trek vanaf Voorstraat deur tot waar Markstraat eindig, sou daar ‘n klomp wit gesinne in die proses gesnuwel het, maar hulle het dit nie gedoen nie. Toe Markstraat by Pentzstraat aansluit het hulle met so skuins lyn afgekom tot so net agter my huis verby en ander lyne toe gebruik om hierdie grens te trek. Die proses het agt gemeenskappe totaal ontwig. Mense wat toe in die sogenaamde witdorp was en daai mense is toe geskuif na plekke waaroor hulle geen beheer of keuse oor gehad het nie. Ek onthou die eerste klompie huise in Versailles straat was nou nie te sleg gewees nie, maar daarna het dit net slegter en slegter en slegter geraak. Die uiteinde was dat gemeenskappe was totaal ontwig. Daar was geen sensitiwiteit vir “community” nie, vir saam woon en saam wees nie. Mense is bietjie rondgegooi en hulle het totaal gemeenskappe opgebreek wat toe later in Hillcrest gaan vestig het.

Dit was my eie gesin. In my st.8 jaar is ons geskuif. Daar was twee wette gebruik, die een was Groepsgebiede Wet en die ander een wat die Wet op Agterbuurtes. Ons is op die Agterbuurte Wet geskuif. Ek onthou watter ontwigting dit vir my as kind was. Ek het al die jare hier uit Wesstraat gestap skool toe, toe moes my pa ‘n eiendom koop in Pentzstraat. Ons was baie gelukkig in die sin van, in daai stadium het ons kerk reeds huise gehad hier af in Pentzstraat. Baie verwaarloosde huise wat lidmate toe kon koop wat inwoners nie kon koop nie. My pa kon toe opgradeer sodat ons ordentlike woonplek kon hê. Ek sal nooit daai Vrydagaand toe ons alles op ‘n trok moes laai ooit vergeet nie. So twee maande voor die tyd het ons gegaan en opgradeer en skoonmaak en verf en sien hoeveel mense kan in die huis ingaan. Ons was ses kinders gewees en my ma en pa. Ek was dus aan die ontvangkant van dit. Dit was ‘n verskriklik emosionele ding en mense het nie geprotesteer nie. Ek meen die regering van die dag was so

brutaal in sy hantering daarvan dat mense maar hul goed opgepak en getrek het. Mense het in baie swakker toestande gaan bly, veral hier in die later sestiger en sewentiger jare.

My vriende wat saam met my hier grootgeword het, want ek is gebore in Wesstraat in 1950, ons is uitmekaar uit want net twee gesinne van die area waar ek grootgeword het, ons en later ons bure wat kon koop daar. Die res moes na munisipale huise gaan.

Gerber: Herman, ek het jou leer ken as ‘n bouer van gemeenskappe en versoening en daarom wil ek jou vra oor die volgende stap wat jy geneem het oor die kerkie se grond.

Bailey: Ek het altyd hierdie droom gehad dat êrens daar ‘n gesprek plaasvind oor wat gebeur het in 1941, of tussen 1933 en 1941. Maar omdat ek in posisie was as Burgemeester van Wellington en later Drakenstein wou ek dit nie in daai era doen. Dit kon gesien word as my posisie misbruik. Toe ek uiteindelik van die ketting ontslae raak, het ek gedink dis nou my geleentheid om dit te doen. En in ‘n kerkraadsvergadering wat gehou is in 2010 November het ek met ‘n versoek na die kerkraad toe gegaan met die vraag “kan ons nie met die NG Kerk in verbinding tree rondom die gebeure in 1941 nie?”. Die ouens het my so gekyk en amper uitgelag en gevra maar wat wil jy nou praat, ek meen ons praat van 70 jaar terug. Ek sê toe’ “juis omdat dit 70 jaar terug is en ons het nog nooit met mekaar daarvoor gepraat nie”. Die kerkraad het net vir my gesê hulle gee vir my ‘n mandaat as ek die gesprek aan die gang sit waarvoor ek baie dankbaar was.

Ek het toe my gesprekke begin met manne soos ds. Bennie van Rensburg, en ds. Fanie Marais. Ek het vir hulle gesê ek wil hê ons moet gesels oor die gebeure van 1941. Hulle is albei inkomers in Wellington en het niks daarvan geweet nie. Toe het ek alreeds al my leeswerk gedoen en vir hulle ‘n sinopsis gaan skryf. En die volgende jaar, 2011, het ons begin met ‘n inisiatief van gesprekvoering, afgevaardigdes uit ons gemeente en hulle dagbestuur. Daai gesprekke het eindelijk momentum gekry en ons het op ‘n punt gekom waar ons gesê het ons wil graag ‘n versoeningsgesprek om hierdie gebeurtenis hê. Ek sê ons kan ‘n regs-eis instel, maar ek wil nie hê ons moet daai roete gaan nie. As kerke wil ek hê ons moet ‘n versoeningsgesprek hê. Uiteindelik het ons met daai gesprekke begin wat ek baie goed gedokumenteer het. En toe het ek by geleentheid ‘n versoeningsaanbod aan die NG Kerk gemaak.

Ek het daai roete gekies want dis baie moeilik as jy aan die ontvangkant van slegte behandeling is, dis baie moeilik om na die ou wat jou sleg behandel het te gaan en te sê jy wil versoen. Dis baie moeilik vir hulle om daai hand weg te slaan. Uiteindelik het hulle toe besef dat ek is ernstig dat hierdie gesprek gehou moet word. En ons het beweeg in die rigting van, ek het 'n geskrewe aanbod van versoening aan hulle gemaak en hulle moet daarop reageer. Ons kom by geleentheid bymekaar en hulle gee hulle versoeningsaanbod antwoord vir my. Toe het ek gesê “nee, ek gaan dit nie aanvaar nie, julle harte is nie in dit wat julle geskryf het nie, skryf dit weer oor”. Toe het hulle vir Dr Frits Gaum gevra om dit vir hulle oor te skryf en hy het dit toe in beter bewoording gedoen dat dit vir ons aanvaarbaar is. 'n Groot deurbraak is dat hulle het toe gereageer op ons versoeningsaanbod. Uiteindelik het ons toe op 'n punt gekom waar ons gesê het maar wat wil ons uit hierdie ding uitkry.

Eerstens het ons gesê hierdie grond moet teruggaan in gesamentlike eienaarskap van die twee gemeentes, dis gelukkig ook twee erwe maar dan het ons gesamentlike eienaarskap. Dit moes toe natuurlik 'n regsproses word, wat toe gebeur het.

Die tweede belangrike ding is wat wil ons as 'n uitkoms hê vir hierdie versoening en ons het so paar goed gelys, gesamentlike dienste, diens werksaam in die landelike gebiede. Die eienaars van die plase was lidmate van die NG Kerk en die werkers op die plaas was lidmate van die sendingkerk of die VGK. So territoriaal bedien ons dieselfde gebiede maar deur twee verskillende gemeentes. Die verdere ding wat ons gesê het is om te gaan kyk na spesifieke projekte en het ek my droom op die tafel gesit om te kyk of ons eendag weer die buitelyne van daai kerk weer op daai perseel kan bou. Toe het ons besluit op 'n feestelikheid wat in lyn is met die herdenking van ons kerkgebou se 70ste bestaansjaar. Dit het toe plaasgevind die naweek van 28 September 2011. Die Donderdagaand het ons die versoeningdiens gehad deur Professor Nico Koopman, wat 'n uitstaande boodskap was. Ons het 'n fakkeldraf gehad vanaf die kerkie bo in Bovlei tot by die ou perseel, daar het ek 'n toespraak gemaak. Die enigste NGK lidmaat wat daar was, was wyle Winnie Rust en een van die predikante. Van die NG Kerke het niemand opgedaag nie, en dis veronderstel om 'n versoeningdiens te wees. Ek het die aand vir Winnie gevra verteenwoordig sy dan nou die hele gemeente, sy het so skaam geantwoord, “dit lyk so”.

Daai aand het ek 'n toespraak gemaak by daai gedenksteen waar ek die agtergrond van hoekom ons hier bymekaar is gedeel het. Ons gemeente het in groot getalle opgedaag, ek bedoel dat was 'n groot fees vir ons. Die kerkraad was nog in swart pakke en wit dasse. Ons het toe vir Ds Fanie en Ds Rodgers, ons leraar toe, gesê elkeen moet nou 'n fakkel vat en in die Hoofstraat afstap. Ek het my toespraak gemaak en hulle het agterna gestap. En daar voor ons kerk het ons die versoeningsfakkel aan die brand gestee. Dit was 'n baie roerende geleentheid gewees. Toe is ons in binnetoe om die versoeningsdiens by te woon. By daardie geleentheid het twee groot goed gebeur, ons het 'n groot "mural" of reeks skilderye wat onder die leiding van Mariëtte van Velde gedoen is, onthul en ons het by daai geleentheid erkenning gegee aan oom Siempie wat gesterf het. Baie kerkleiers en sinodale vlak het dit kom bywoon. Ons kerk was vol! Dit was 'n baie besondere geleentheid en dis vir my die bewys dat mens kan tog versoening praat. Dit was vir my 'n baie emosionele aand gewees want ek het die ding maar taamlik gedryf en daar was kerkrade wat gesê het dit sal nooit gebeur nie, en daar het dit gebeur. Natuurlik moet jy oor hierdie goed bid ook en 'n stuk geloof hê dat dit kan gebeur.

Vandag behoort die perseel aan ons twee gemeentes saam en ons het steeds daardie drome. Die feit dat dit nou verhuur is en mooi opgegradeer is vir parkering is net om vir ons tyd te koop. Want om so iets te doen as mens uiteindelik die gebou weer wil, oom Fanie is nie meer daar nie en Bennie is nie meer daar nie, ons leraar is nie meer daar nie. Ek is darem herverkies vir nog twee jaar so ek sal darem in die twee jaar nog so paar dinge kan doen, maar al is ek nie op die kerkraad nie ek kan dit dryf vanuit my lidmaatskap. So dis nou nog die groot droom om eendag weer iets daar op te sit, daar is al mense in hulle kerk wat met my kom praat het en sê hulle sal steun verleen. Iemand soos Stefan Spies, wat in die boubedryf is en so aan. So daar is mense wat die droom van my deel. En ons kan dit eendag nog laat gebeur.

Maar dis lekker om te weet ons besit nou weer prima grond in Wellington en al het dit nou op so 'n manier gekom, dis eintlik 'n opwindende proses as ek so terugdink daaraan dat 'n mens dit kon doen.

Gerber: So wat is jou droom fisies op die perseel, as jy nou regtig kon kies wat moet gebeur?

Bailey: Dat ons die buitelyne van die kerk sal oprig en nie benut as ‘n kerkgebou nie maar as ‘n dienssentrum vir die dorp. Waar jy jou welsynsdienste kan doen, jou kerk-administrasie dienste kan doen, geleentheid waar jongmense kan bymekaarkom. Dis my droom. Ek hoop om hierdie droom oor te dra na my kinders toe, na ander kinders in die gemeenskap vir die dag as ek nie meer daar is nie. Jy weet, hierdie is die droom, julle kan daaraan werk.

Gerber: Sê vir my Herman, ek spring nou bietjie rond. Weet jy van nog sendingkerkies wat gesloop is as gevolg van Groepsgebiede Wet? Voor of na Groepsgebiede Wet.

Bailey: Ek weet nie noodwendig van gesloop nie. In Porterville was daar een gewees en dan is daar een in Ladismith wat in ‘n werkswinkel omskep is. In Montagu of Ashton was daar een gewees wat ek dink omskep is in ‘n museum. Ek weet nie wat in Distrik Ses gebeur het nie, ek weet die moskee is behou maar ek weet nie of die sendingkerkie behou is nie.

Gerber: Ek wil gou vir jou nog iets vra, wat jou opinie daarvan is of jou “gut feeling” daarvan is. Destyds met die aankoop van die kerk het ds Joubert en 3 ouderlinge gekom en gesê die regering wil die kerksaal hê vir ‘n poskantoor. Nêrens in die notules is daar enige skrywe daarvan nie. Wat is die storie?

Bailey: Om eerlik te wees ek dink dit was ‘n liegstorie gewees. Ek het dit probeer volg maar nêrens kon ek dit kry nie, dit verdwyn van die agenda af. Ek dink hy was maar suinig met die waarheid daar gewees.

Gerber: Die ander ding wat ek vir jou wil vra, en ds Loft maak melding daarvan, maar dis nêrens in die notules nie, maar eerwaarde Breedt het vir ‘n argitek gevra en die argitek het gesê dat die kerk wel vergroot kan word. Maar nêrens is daai ding ooit weer genoem op ‘n agenda nie.

Bailey: Gaan kyk watter datum dit was, want toe was die druk seker al baie sterk op eerwaarde Breedts om daai idee te berg.

Gerber: Die ander ding is, die pastorie waarin die firma Duvenage en De Villiers nou is, was later aangekoop as 'n pastorie maar op daai stadium was al die eerwaardes wat daar gebly het sogenaamd wit. Wat het gebeur toe julle die eerste sogenaamde gekleurde eerwaarde gekry het wat daar wou bly?

Bailey: Kom ons gaan gou terug, ons pastorie was oorspronklik op die perseel waar die VGK kerk vandag opgerig is. En omdat ons dadelik 'n perseel moes kry om 'n kerk op te bou moes ons vir eerwaarde Breedt skuif, en het ons toe daai gebou in Hoofstraat gekoop. So eerwaarde Breedt was toe een van ons eerste predikante wat in daardie gebou gaan bly het. En die daaropvolgende leraars was nes jy daar sê wit predikante gewees. Na Breedt was dit Kriel, na Kriel was dit Holzapfel, na Holzapfel was dit Steyl en toe Van Rensburg. In 1965 kry ons toe vir Ds Fred Jacobs, ons eerste bruin leraar. Ons is toe deur die Groepsgebiede Wet en die Departement Gemeenskapsbou gesê dat hy nie daar mag woon nie. Ons kry hoogstens 'n jaar en dan moet ons sorg dat ons 'n nuwe gebou het. Hulle het toe gekom met 'n aanbod vir daardie huis en sy drie groot erwe agteraan vir so iets soos R15 000.

Daai gesprekke onthou ek met trane in my pa se oë as hy van die kerkraadsvergadering afgekom het. My pa was nogal so bietjie van 'n "fighter" en het nogal gesê ons moet dit teenstaan, maar die ander kerkraadslede wat staatsamptenare was soos onderwysers en skoolhoofde was maar bang gewees om enigsins 'n siening te hê. Ek weet dit was 'n baie hoogs emosionele ding.

Ons het toe grond gekoop by meneer Sampson, wat een van ons ouderlinge was. En toe moes ons pastorie bou. Ek het onlangs fotos gesien van die inwyding daarvan. Dis net langs die kerksaal. In 1966 was die gebou klaar en kon ons ons leraarspaar met hulle kinders daar intrek. Dis ook een van die goed waaraan ek gewerk het en gesê het maar ons kan dit nie net so laat verby gaan nie, en vyf jaar gelede het ek vir die kerkraad gevra vir 'n mandaat om iets aan daai huis te doen. Ek het net gevoel want ons het 'n regmatige eis, ons is onbillik behandel. En na vyf jaar se onderhandelinge met die staat rakende restitusie en regstelling het ons uiteindelik in

Desember verlede jaar van die staat 'n aanbod gekry. Ek het gesê ek gaan nie met die eenaars lol nie, ek glo hulle het van die staat gekoop en het dus direk met die staat gehandel en ons het 'n bedrag van R1.442 miljoen uit daardie eis gekry wat vandag in die gemeente se koffers is.

Gerber: Vir die rekord, sê gou vir my hoeveel kerkies het julle gemeente gebou en hoeveel skooltjies het julle gebou?

Bailey: In die vroeër jare was Newtown deel van ons gemeente en Dal Josafat. Daar het ons twee skole, 'n kerk en 'n kerksaal gebou. Op Hermon het ons 'n skool gebou en 'n kerksaal gehad, ons het nooit 'n vol gemeente daar gehad nie. Dan in die Wellington distrik is dit die Beatrix gebou en ook Voor-Groenberg. Dan het ons Bergrivier Laerskool en Blouvei Laerskool. Ons het afgestig van Bergrivier VGK gemeente, daar het ons die oorspronklik kerksaal gebou. Die lidmate het hulle stoele geskenk. Ek onthou my skoonma was so trots oor sy en haar man en dogter hulle stoele geskenk het daar. So ja, ons het 'n hele klompie infrastrukture opgerig.

Ek onthou nog die skenking in Newtown wat my pa nog baie ontsteld oor gewees want hy het gesê dis 'n bruidskat, maar daar was 'n klousule gewees wat gesê het hulle moes 'n gedeelte terugbetaal. Ek het maar later vir my pa gesê dis 'n bruidskat, 'n mens vra nie geld terug nie. Ek was al op die kerkraad toe dieselfde gebeur met Bergrivier. Dit was ook gesien as 'n lening wat die gemeente later gaan terugbetaal, maar ons het dit ook afgeskryf. Ons was die sogenaamde Moedergemeente in Wellington en ek het 'n neef wat vir my gesê het “onthou julle het hierdie goed gegee, maar julle kan maar nog gee”

Gerber: En dan die Pauw Gedenk-skool? Wat is die storie daar?

Bailey: Die Pauw Gedenk Skool was 'n kerkskool. Jy sal sien sy logo is ook “vir ons volk en vir ons kerk”. Die oumense het gepraat van die Hollandse kerk se skool. Dan was daar die Engelse kerk se skool, wat vandag daar waar die stadsaal is, daar agter was 'n skooltjie gewees, maar in 1957 het hy toegemaak. Die rede hoekom ek die datum so goed onthou, dit was my Sub A datum en dan het ek en so paar pêle elke dag skool toe gestap dan draai ons af by Pauw Gedenk en dan

stap hulle aan na die Engelse skool. En die skool is toe later vervang met die skool wat in Voorstraat staan, St. Albans Primêr.

Gerber: Is dit die skool wat ook geskuif is as gevolg van die Groepsgebiede Wet?

Bailey: Ek sou dink ja, want hy was binne die grense gewees van die witgebied. Want kyk daar was 'n Hope straat gemeenskap wat aan die oorkant gebly het en dan die skooltjie aan hierdie kant.

Gerber: Dis waar die Verkeers-kantore vandag is?

Bailey: Onder andere en dan is daar 'n bejaardesorg saal. Ek moet jou gou vinnig die storie vertel. Nou is ek Burgemeester en Mev Kroneberg wat die leier van die beweging vir bejaardes is, sy kom na my toe en sê vir my "maar luister hier ek kom maar net ons gebou haal, nê". Ek sê toe mevrou wag jy praat darem nou vinnig van gebou haal wat bedoel jy nou? Sy sê: "dit was ons gebou gewees en ek verwag van jou om daai gebou weer oor te dra aan ons." En ek het dit gedoen, sy het my met geen keuse gelaat nie. Ek het voor haar groot geword in Wesstraat en sy het so baie druk op my geplaas en gesê jy sal die prosesse in plek sit. En sy het groot erkenning gegee daarvoor dat ek daardie gebou sonder vergoeding aan hulle kon teruggee. Daai grond het altyd aan kerke behoort, dit was kerkgrond en geboue gewees.

Toe ek begin werk het as gesondheidsinspekteur hier in die laat sestiger jare of eintlik vroeë sewentiger jare is ek gevra deur ons kerk om 'n opname te gaan maak van al die kerkhove in ons dorp. Met die doel dat daar nuwe wetgewing sou kom dat plaaslike owerhede alle kerkhove sou oorneem. Wat toe wel gebeur het en een van die swakste besluite wat hierdie regering nog ooit kon doen. want dit was 'n netjies, opgepaste kerkhof. Jy weet ons 1918 groot griep slagoffers lê daar. Ons een dominee, ds De Villiers lê daar begrawe. En die gemeente het hulle grafte voor die tyd gekoop, so almal het geweet wie se grafte was wie s'n.

Een keer 'n jaar het ons ook 'n herdenkingdiens gehad vir die slagoffers van die groot griep pandemie en dan een Saterdag dan gaan ons almal. My ma het ons aan die hand gevat met ons grawe en emmertjies en blomme en dan gaan maak ons daai kerkhof skoon. Die “brassband” was al vroegmôre daar en dan speel hulle as die gemeente aankom. Dan het ons herdenkingdiens gehou. Ons een dominee het op 'n stadium gekom en gesê mens preek nie vir dooie mense, ek het toe gesê ons herdenk hulle. Maar daai ding het toe uitgesterf. Hierdie jaar het ons weer 'n mooi opkoms gehad. Die volgende kerkhof is toe die een daar in Hillcrest. En dit was van die begin af al 'n munisipale begraafplaas gewees.

So ja ons het ons eie kerkhof gehad, en selfs vir daai grond was daar geen vergoeding gewees nie. Nou ek weet nie of mens nou vir so grond vergoeding moet vra nie, die punt is net die munisipaliteit het dit net oorgeneem.

Gerber: Sê gou vir my, daar is net een foto van die kerkie se buitekant en jy het dit laat skilder in Duitsland. Vertel gou vir ons die storie van dit.

Bailey: Ek het 'n skildervriend daar is Duitsland, Josef Hawle, en by geleentheid is ek deur die Suid-Afrikaanse Ambassade in Duitsland gevra om vir Josef Hawle so op 'n 14 dae “trip” deur Suid-Afrika te neem om ikoniese plekke en goed te skilder vir 'n kalender. Een van die goed wat ek vir hom gevra het is om die NG kerk te skilder, wat hier in my voorportaal hang en ons het hom deur die land gevat en hy het toe die twaalf skilderye gemaak. Ek is toe genooi Duitsland toe vir een aand funksie vir die onthulling van hierdie kalender en toe ek daardie skildery sien toe sê ek maar hulle kan op die skilderye bie behalwe daai een. Sit hom eenkant, hy is myne. Ek kan nie eers onthou hoeveel Euro's ek vir die ding betaal het nie, maar dis 'n duur ding wat daar hang. Maar dit was mos 'n inisiatief van die Ambassade gewees en ek het toe daai een gekoop.

Op 'n later geleentheid het ek en Josef kontak gehou en ons het 'n ding in Zimbabwe ook gaan doen. Ek het toe vir hom gevra om vir my paar goedjies te doen, hy het gesê ek moet vir hom die fotos stuur en ek het hom gevra om ons kerk en die NG kerk te doen. En by geleentheid toe kom die pakkie hier aan met die skilderye. Ek moet nog kyk wat om daarmee te maak, maar dis

egte, ware besondere skilderye waarop ek baie trots is. Ek sal dit seker vir die museum skenk, dis seker maar waar dit hoort.

Die bouplanne van ons kerkie het ons op afgekom nou die dag. Dit was nog op sulke ou blou papiere, iewers moes dit verlore gegaan het. Ek het maande en maande gesoek daarna en uiteindelik toe kry ek dit. Dis oorgetrek en nou weet ons ten minste hoe dit gelyk het.

Annexure B: Interview with Sam Abrahams, Susan Francke and Ampie de Vries

Ek is Sam Moses Abrahams, gebore 1933. Gebore in Bergstraat, Wellington. Skoolgegaan in Wellington. Sondagskool gegaan in die kerkie ter sprake. Sondagskool was voor kerk en nie na kerk soos vandag nie. Susan Francke, (gebore Abrahams, oom Sam se dogter) en mnr. Adam de Vries (Ampie).

Gerber: As oom die kerkie kan onthou, het mense soontoe gestap of was daar mense wat met perdekarre gekom het en daar uitgespan het?

Oom Sam: Die mense op die dorp het gestap en die mense op die plase het met perde- en donkiekarre gekom. Die perde het sommer so eenkant op die erf gestaan.

Gerber: Die plek vir die perde, was dit by die kerk of oorkant by die ander kerk?

Oom Sam: Nee, dit was sommer by die kerk. Een van die gemeentede van die ander kerk het ook met 'n perdekar gekom en dan ook by die betrokke kerkie kom staan.

Gerber: Wat onthou oom van die kerk in die binnekant? Hoe het dit gelyk? Die kerkbanke, orrel en preekstoel?

Oom Sam: Die binnekant van die kerk was baie mooi. Die preekstoel was 'n baie mooi en hoë preekstoel, baie hoër as die een wat ons nou het. Die kerk was nie baie groot binne nie, die banke kon taamlik mense ingesit het maar die kerkie was nie baie groot nie. Die orrel was nog een van daai outydse orrels gewees, daai wat jy nog gepomp het.

Gerber: En die toestand van die kerk? Was die kerk in 'n goeie toestand, of het die kerk werk nodig gehad?

Oom Sam: Die kerk was in goeie toestand, net nie baie groot nie. Die kerk was toegemaak buite om maar nie met hoë heinings nie, Die dubbelverdieping wat langs die kerk staan was ook eiendom van die kerk en agter die kerk was daar 'n leë stuk grond.

Gerber: Is oom gedoop ook in daai kerk? En watter dominee het oom gedoop?

Oom Sam: Ja, ek is ook gedoop in daai kerk. Daai tyd was dit eerwaarde Breedt.

Gerber: Waar gaan oom nou kerk?

Oom Sam: Ek is nou by dieselfde kerk, in die nuwe gebou. Was op kerkraad en by katkisasie klas.

Gerber: As daar gepraat word oor die kerkie, wat is die mense se gevoel daar rondom? Is daar mense wat voel dit was onnodig? Is daar mense wat voel dit was dalk 'n goeie ding? Wat is die algemene gevoel?

Oom Sam: Almal het verskillende gevoelens, party het gevoel dis goed omdat die kerk te klein geraak het. Dis 'n goeie ding dat daar nou 'n groter kerk is.

Gerber: En die kerk soos wat hy daar was, sou hulle hom kon groter gemaak het?

Oom Sam: Hulle sou dit nie kon groter gemaak het nie. Die eiendom was te klein om dit groter te maak.

Gerber: Wat is oom se kinder herinneringe wat oom daar gehad het, en die herinneringe van oom se maats?

Oom Sam: My maats is ook al amper almal oorlede, maar ons het goed klaargekom. Dit was alles goed en wel vir ons almal.

Gerber: Was oom daar die dag toe die laaste diens in die kerk gehou is en almal oorgestap het na die nuwe kerk toe?

Oom Sam: Ja, ek was daar. Die mense was maar gelukkig om oor te stap na 'n nuwe kerk.

Gerber: Nadat die nuwe kerk nou ingewy is, wat weet oom van die slopery van die kerk?

Oom Sam: Die afbreek het maar baie hartseer gemaak, veral toe die gebou op die een ou geval het.

Gerber: Wat het mense gesê oor die voorval?

Oom Sam: Baie mense was hartseer gewees daarvoor en gesê dit moes nie so gewees het nie.

Gerber: Oom se ouers, het hulle vir oom vertel van die kerk in die ou dae?

Oom Sam: Ja, hulle het daarvoor gesels en was nie tevrede nie. Maar wat moes ons nou doen, die kerk was te klein gewees.

Gerber: Was u ouers lidmate van die kerk toe dit die eerste keer vergroot is deur eerwaarde Pauw, of was u ouers eers na die deel van die kerk?

Oom Sam: My ouers was toe al deel van die kerk.

Gerber: Wat se plekke is daar in Wellington wat oom voel is belangrik in terme van oom se geskiedenis en grootword jare. As oom nou van buite af moet vertel wat vir oom belangrik en na aan die hart is.

Oom Sam: Die kerk is my na aan die hart. Ek was op die kerkraad en het klas gehou by die kerk. Die man wat die kerk gebou het, mnr. Vos, het ek ook goed geken.

Gerber: Wat onthou oom van die Groepsgebiede wet destyds in 1950 toe die mense verskuif is? Het dit oom geaffekteer? Moes oom ook skuif?

Oom Sam: Ons het al voor daardie tyd geskuif na een van die kerk se huise. Ons het reeds geskuif na Verlatekloof, toe bly die mense nog in Joubertstraat.

Oom Ampie: Daar waar die stadsaal nou is, daar het Burgstraat deurgeloopt en Hope straat het daar deurgeloopt. Daai omgewing, Joubertstraat, Hope straat, Kerkstraat so net onder Pauw Gedenk Skool, en Fonteinstraat, Oom Sammie hulle het almal daar gewoon en is gedwing om te skuif na Verlatekloof. Oom Sammie stel dit nou baie sag, want die kerk was ook nie so klein nie. 'n Goeie ingenieur sou 'n gallery kon aanbou. Ons het op 'n plaas in Bovlei gebly en het met perdekarre kerk toe gegaan.

Gerber: Wat vir my interessant is, is dat oom sê oom hulle het al voor 1950 getrek het.

Wat is oom se onthou en geheue van daai tyd toe mense moes skuif?

Oom Sam: Baie ontevrede gevoel oor die verskuiwings, en ons moes dit maar net aanvaar het.

Susan: Dit het my nie veel geaffekteer nie want ek was maar baie jonk. Ek voel die kerk moes tog geld gekry het om die verskuiwing te doen en nuwe kerk te bou.

Gerber: Op grond van wat jou ouers jou vertel het van die kerkie, wat onthou jy van die kerkie?

Susan: Die orrel het 'n belangrike rol gespeel destyds.

Oom Sam: Voor die oorlog uitbreek het, het hulle al daai orrel gekoop. Die orrel kom van oorsee af, Duitsland ek dink. Ek was nog in skool toe die lorries die orrel kom aflaai het. Daar was probleme met die skepe, so die kerk het baie lank gewag vir die orrel. Met die orrel se inwyding het mense van ander dorpe gekom om dit te kom kyk.

Gerber: Jy het genoem dat jy voel die kerk kon 'n beter rol gespeel het in die groepsgebiede wet. Wat het jy bedoel daarmee?

Susan: Volgens my moes ons miskien nooit getrek het nie en daar gebly het waar die kerk oorspronklik was. Aan die eenkant was die bruin mense, en oorkant die pad was die wit mense. Ons aanbid mos dieselfde God, hoekom nie 'n samesmelting van wit en bruin nie. Daar kon eenwording gewees het.

Gerber: Oom Ampie, dink oom die kerk moes of kon iets anders gedoen het?

Oom Ampie: Ja, ek glo ook so. Die masiete van die moslems staan nog. Hoekom het hulle nie die masiete ook gesloop nie? Kon die bruin gemeenskap nie ook kapsie gemaak het nie? Ons kon dit vir iets anders gebruik het as dit te klein geraak het vir kerk.

My ouers en ouma hul het my vertel dat daar was 'n vrees dat daar ondertrouery en weglopery sou plaasvind. Jy loop jou gereeld vas in 'n klomp strukture van die NG kerk. 'n Voorbeeld, daar bo in die dorp waar die spuitfontein was. Hulle het 'n paadjie daar gelê. In 1960 kon ek nie deur daai paadjie loop nie, want net die witmense mag daar stap. Toe jaag hulle my om, ek was op laerskool en moes Blouville toe. Ek moes teerpad om.

Om terug te kom by die kerkie, die gebou kon mos daar gebly het of ons kon hande gevat het. Maar met die dat oom Sammie hulle al in 1950's getrek het beteken Apartheid was toe al aan die gang, dit het net eers later op die boeke gekom.

Gerber: Die ander ding in verband met daai verskuiwing, was oom bewus van die feit dat die nuwe kerk nie nader as 500 meter aan die NG kerk mag gewees het nie.

Oom Ampie: Ja, ons was. Selfs interessant daai beginsel was toegepas op besighede ook.

Gerber: Weet julle van die versoek wat daar was om die kerk te behou vir 'n sinode sentrum?

Oom Ampie: Ja, ons weet van daai versoek. Ons weet daar was te min geld dis hoekom daar vandag nog ook nie 'n toring is nie.

Gerber: Kyk die ou kerk, een van die voorstelle was om die ou kerkie te behou as sinode saal vir die sendingkerk. Wat dink julle het verlore gegaan vir Wellington toe die plek gesloop is? Die ontasbare, wat het verlore geraak?

Oom Ampie: ek het op die plaas groot geword, tog was daar 'n gemeenskaplike gevoel. Daar waar pelikaanstraat nou is, was daar 'n plek gewees genaamd Sakkieskamp. Sakkieskamp het bestaan uit alle kleure en rasse, maar soveel harmonie het verlore gegaan, daai tipiese ons maak staat op mekaar, ons steun op mekaar.

Kom ons vat gou die Paarl, Charleston Hill waar TC Newman hospitaal nou is. Slabbert Burger hulle, Schalk Burger hulle het daar groot geword in daai deel. Met wat in Wellington gebeur het, die vertrouensverhouding tussen mekaar het skade gelei.

Gerber: As oom nou na die ou kerk se perseel toe gaan, en oom stap en ry daar verby. Hoe ervaar oom dit om die plek te sien daar waar die kerk was? Wat maak dit in oom wakker.

Oom Sam: Kyk hoe lyk dit nou. Ons moet dit maar net aanvaar. Hier het ons grootgeword en kyk hoe lyk dit nou. Karre wat nou hier staan in pleks van 'n kerk wat hier kon gestaan het.

Gerber: Wat dink oom moet daar met die perseel gebeur? Ons weet nou daar is 'n parkeerterrein en dit behoort aan beide kerke saam en word verhuur. Maar as mens verby dit kyk, wat dink oom moet gebeur met daai perseel? Wat sal oom graag weer daar wil sien?

Oom Sam: Ek sal graag weer 'n kerk wil sien wat opgebou word daar. Om mense nader te trek aan die kerk.

Gerber: En wat dink oom van die monumentjie wat daar is? Hoe ervaar oom die monument wat daar is?

Oom Sam: Dan dink mens darem baie ver. Dan breek dit jou hart. Ek voel die kerk kan maar weer terugkom het eerder as wat die monument daar moet staan.

Susan: As ek die erf so sien dan laat dit my dink aan Apartheid. Dis baie hartseer dat die kerk daar moes weg en dit sal altyd deur my geheue gaan dis 'n simbool van Apartheid.

Oom Ampie: As dit nou daar leeg staan vir 'n parkeerterrein, 'n monument is nie sodanig funksioneel.

Gerber: Oom, voor ek vergeet net 'n laaste ding van die fisiese gebou, watse dak het die kerk gehad? Was dit 'n rietdak of 'n sinkdak?

Oom Sam: Ek dink dit was 'n sinkdak.

Annexure C: Interview with Reverend B van Rensburg

Gerber: Het u geweet van die kerkie en die sloping daarvan toe u hier in Wellington kom werk het?

Ds. Van Rensburg: Ek was onbewus daarvan toe ek hier aanland in Wellington in 1997. Toe ek egter kennis neem daarvan het ek uit eie inisiatief navraag gedoen en die gemeente se geskiedenis nagevors. Ek het ook by dr. Basson van die Hugenate Kollege navraag gedoen en hy kon my heelwat daaroor vertel. Meeste mense is maar sensitief om die pak te vat van wat daar gebeur het.

Gerber: Wat was die rede volgens die mense et wie u gesels het, vir die sloping en verskuiwing?

Ds. Van Rensburg: Die gebou het glo uitmekaar geval en parkering was glo 'n groot probleem. Hulle is glo ook 'n billikke betaling aangebied.

Die kerk het te klein geraak. Dis die indruk wat ek gekry het.

Gerber: Dink u die gebeure destyds het 'n invloed gehad op verhoudinge in Wellington?

Ds. Van Rensburg: Daar is 'n goeie verhouding tussen die kerke tans.

Gerber: Wat dink u moet met die eiendom gebeur?

Ds. Van Rensburg: As daar geld was sou 'n mens dalk 'n replica van die ou kerkie kon opsit.

Wellington is 'n wonderlike historiese plek met baie geskiedenis. Mens moet die geskiedenis in konteks bekyk. Alles is nie altyd sleg nie. Dit was baie crowded daar.

Gerber: Dink u daar is nog baie herinneringe tussen die gemeentelede van die kerk?

Ds. Van Rensburg: Ek het met ouer garde by VGGK gepraat. Hul onthou nie veel nie.

Ek dink die meerderheid het die verkoop, verskuiwing en bou van 'n nuwe en groter kerk maar stilswyend goedgekeur. Dit was nie sleg nie.

Dis tragies dat gebou weg is.

Ek sal 'n voorstander wees dat daar 'n replika van die gebou opgerig word.

Annexure D: Trees survey

Trees survey

25 Sep. 2020

ERF 793 & 794

Ben-Jon Dreyer

B. Tech: Nature Conservation

The site was visited during September 2020 and five different tree species were recorded:

- *Grevilea robusta* (6)
- *Bauhinia purpurea* OR *B. variegata* var. *variegata* (2)
- *Searsia lancea* (1)
- *Schinus molle* (8)
- *Schinus terebinthifolius* (1)



Figure 1. Map of the demolished church site.

Grevillea robusta (silky oak tree; Australian silky oak; Australiese silwereik) Total of six silky oak trees recorded at the site.

Taxonomy: **Proteaceae** family

Origin and description: originally from eastern Australia. Planted as an ornamental, but also produces good quality timber and often used in making musical instruments and window joinery as its resistant to rotting. Also used in planting wind breaks for citrus plantations.

NEMBA listing: Category 3 invader. The species has recently been observed invading riparian areas from old, cultivated trees in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Gauteng provinces. Controlled through mechanical removal (chainsaw) and cut stump herbicide treatment.

SPECIES	COMMON NAME	CATEGORY / AREA
<i>Grevillea robusta</i> A.Cunn. ex R.Br.	Australian silky oak	3



Figure 2. Flowers and leaves of the silky oak tree.

***Bauhinia variegata* var. *variegata* (orchid tree) OR *purpurea* (butterfly**

Difficult to distinguish as the inflorescences weren't clearly open during the time of the visit. '*variegata*'s' inflorescences are evenly spread out where they are more clustered in the case of '*purpurea*'. Two *Bauhinia*'s were recorded at the site.

Taxonomy: **Fabaceae** family

Origin and description: *B. variegata* is originally from East Asia and the national emblem of HongKong. Introduced mostly as an ornamental tree.

NEMBA category:

SPECIES	ENGLISH COMMON NAMES	CATEGORY / AREA
<i>Bauhinia purpurea</i> L.	Butterfly orchid tree	1b in Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. 3 in Free State, Gauteng, North-West, Northern Cape and Western Cape.
<i>Bauhinia variegata</i> L.	Orchid tree	1b in Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. 3 in Free State, Gauteng, North-West, Northern Cape and Western Cape.



Figure 3. Leaves and inflorescences of *Bauhinia* spp.

Searsia lancea (Karee;

Taxonomy: **Anacardiaceae family**

Origin & description: The karee is a small- to medium-sized evergreen tree that usually grows to a height of 7 m and a width of 7 m but can be larger depending on environmental factors. The karee occurs from Zambia in the north to the Western Cape in the south. It is found throughout the Free State and in parts of all the other provinces of South Africa except for KwaZulu-Natal. (<http://pza.sanbi.org/searsia-lancea>, 2020). One *Searsia* was recorded at the site.

NEMBA category: Indigenous tree



Figure 4. Rooikaree



Figure 5. Leaves and fruit of Rooikaree

***Schinus molle* ('false' pepper tree,**

Taxonomy: Anacardeaceae

Origin & description: Introduced from South America (Peruvian Andes) as an ornamental plant. The word *molle* in *Schinus molle* comes from 'mulli', the Quechua word for the tree. Recorded eight pepper trees at the site.

NEMBA category: not listed.



Figure 6. Large pepper trees (*Schinus molle*) at the site.



Figure 7. *Schinus molle* leaves and fruit.

***Schinus terebinthifolius* (Brazilian pepper tree; Christmas berry)**

Taxonomy: Anacardeaceae

Origin & description: Alien plant introduced from South America as an ornamental plant. Used in South Africa as a fire break. One Brazilian pepper tree recorded at the site.

NEMBA category: Highly invasive and regarded as one of the ‘World’s Worst’ top 100 alien invasive plant species. Controlled through mechanical chainsaw cut stump method. (Bromilow, 2010)

SPECIES	COMMON NAME	CATEGORY / AREA
<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i> Raddi	Brazilian pepper tree	a. 1b in Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. b. 3 in Free State, Gauteng, North-West, Northern Cape and Western Cape.

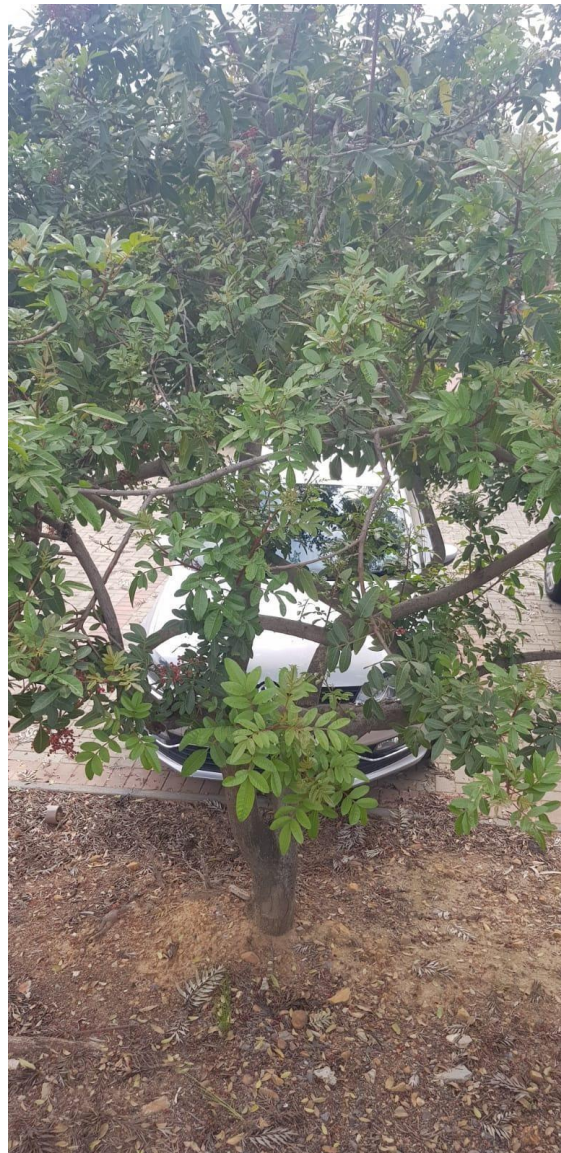


Figure 8. *Schinus terebinthifolius*/ Brazilian pepper tree

***Schinus terebinthifolius* (Brazilian pepper tree; Christmas berry)**

Taxonomy: **Anacardeaceae**

Bromilow, C. 2010, Problem Plants and Alien Weeds of South Africa, Briza Publications, Pretoria

SANBI, 2020, PlantZAfrica.com, 25 September 2020, <http://pza.sanbi.org/searsia-lancea>