

## HISTORY OF KLEINMOND, BETTY'S BAY, PRINGLEBAY AND ROOIELS.

Early traces of habitation have been found at Cape Hangklip. Stone hand-axes from the Neanderthal era dating back 20,000 years have been unearthed.

Khoisan strandlopers left their fish traps and kitchen middens along the beach from Kleinmond to Hawston as well as in mountain caves bordering the seashore. The area was isolated because of the Kogelberg Mountains that served as a barrier to the European expansion in the Western Cape.

For two centuries this area became the stronghold of outlaws or “drosters”, runaway slaves, criminals and the remnants of Koisian tribes, which had been decimated by measles.

During 1739, a grazing farm near to the present day Betty's Bay was granted to Andries Grové, the first Grové in South Africa, who married Anna Niel [Nell] from Franschoek, in the year 1721. The area continued to be mostly uninhabited by humans, though by accounts given by William Paterson, who travelled this region from Somerset West to Bot river in 1771, wild life such as hyenas, zebra, bontebok, buffalo and eland roamed freely.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, a small fishing community had established itself at Jongensklip which is the small fishing harbour at Kleinmond.

It was about the same time in the 1860's, that the area became a favourite holiday spot for the surrounding farmers. Farmers from as far as Caledon and other nearby areas began making this an annual pilgrimage to camp near the Palmiet lagoon and the Klein Bot river mouth near to where the hotel stood. Mr. P J [Ouman] Delpont built the hotel in 1939 and managed it with Blanche Delpont for about 5 years. It was later sold to John Pitt.

Church Services were held on the banks of the Kleinmond lagoon during the end of the year holiday period, from as early as 1902. The tree which still appears on the banks of the lagoon, earned the name of “the Preekboom” [the sermon tree] because the ministers conducted and still conduct the services from under it.

The original Lamloch farm was subdivided in 1910, and the brothers Kaplan bought the portion upon which they laid out the present town of Kleinmond. The industrial area in Kleinmond is named after Robert Kaplan, one of the original owners of the land.

During 1913, a whaling station was erected at Stony Point on land that belonged to the Walsh brothers. They leased 30 morgen to a Mr Frank Cook. He was the owner of a small shipping company. It was known as the Waaigat Whaling station and the Southern Cross Whaling Company started its operation there. The Company was however liquidated in 1915, and the buildings stood empty until whaling was again restarted in 1925. By 1930 the price of whale oil had fallen to such an extent, that the whaling station finally closed down.

The surrounding land was used for grazing and collecting of wild flowers. Everlastings [*Helichrysum Vestitum*] were used for wreaths and the stuffing of mattresses. After the death of John Walsh, the farm was sold to a consortium of Arthur Youldon, Jack Clarence and Harold Porter, who called it the Hangklip Beach Estate. Three townships were established. They were Rooiels, Pringle Bay and Betty's Bay. Harold Porter laid out the present Harold Porter Botanical Gardens as well as the street plans for the said townships in the mid 30's. Betty's Bay was named after Arthur Youldon's daughter, Betty. Italian prisoners of war during the Second World War did construction work and helped build the road from Gordon's Bay to Rooiels.

During the said war, Cape Hangklip assumed strategic military importance as a sentinel, guarding the eastern shore of False Bay from the lurking menace of U-boats.

The townships and Kleinmond continued to develop slowly. In 1948 the first Village Management Board was established. Fishermen, who stayed near to the harbour in Kleinmond at that time, were moved higher up on the mountain slope and the harbour area was declared an industrial zone in 1954.

The development of an infrastructure began in 1966. Tar roads, a town hall, municipal offices and a library were built. By 1978 the town got its own coat of arms and a town planning department as well as camping sites that were administered by the local municipality.

At present all four towns are expanding at a phenomenal rate as not only retired people settle here, but new varied businesses are being established as well as allied light industries, especially in the building trade.

[A copy of a rendition issued by the Kleinmond Municipality with a few minor additions]