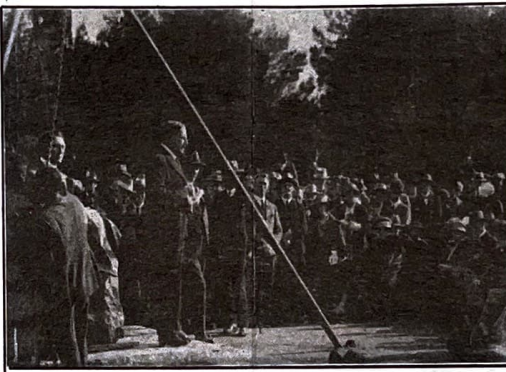




This issue is sponsored by The Pinelands Ratepayers and Residents Association  
Focus is a regular report back to the Community by Councillor Brian Watkyns

# A NEW TOWN IN THE FOREST

The founding of Pinelands was as a result of the Cape Town Spanish flu epidemic of 1918 which claimed 6 342 lives from a population of 199 570. It was conceded that overcrowding and poor housing had been a major factor in the spread of the epidemic. The Citizen's Housing League started to lobby for housing legislation. In response, the chairman of the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce, Richard Stuttaford, proposed that a garden city should be built. In 1907 he had met Ebenezer Howard, the originator of the Garden City concept, who introduced him to the idea. When the Chamber rejected his idea, Stuttaford



Jan Smuts with Richard Stuttaford laying the Foundation Stone at Central Square in 1923

went directly to the Government and offered 10 000 pounds as capital for the project. In June 1919 the Government resolved to hand over 800 acres of the Uitvlugt Forest Reserve. However, Stuttaford did not have widespread support. The Administrator of the Cape, Sir Frederick de Waal, considered him irresponsible. This lack of official support caused problems with the loan scheme for the houses. Stuttaford put up his own personal securities for each loan made. Eventually, in 1922, the first resident moved into Pinelands, the first town-planned area in South Africa.

## TREES AND PINELANDS

In the middle of the last century historians referred to the Pinelands area as being a sandy waste sporadically covered with scrub. The sand so closely resembled the Kalahari desert, that camels were trained here. Bishop Colenso visited the Uitvlugt farm in 1880 and described it as a miserable place with inhospitable soil.

The first pine trees were planted in 1864 to prevent the sand from blowing onto the Wellington railway line. A belt of stone pines was planted in the area where Links Drive, the Town Hall and the Blue School now stand. Cluster pines were planted further east in 1884. Port Jackson and other acacias were introduced from Australia as wind breaks in the 1880's.

The planting of trees on Arbour Day has always been a part of the Pinelands calendar. The very first arbour day organised by the Horticultural Society took place on 31st August 1929 at Broadwalk.

Cubs planted 21 trees. The planned sport event was rained out, but postponed to the Saturday when 300 children participated. Each child received a commemorative trowel plus sweets and balloons. The day ended with a



Pinelands in 1920 where Acacia Way now intersects with The Bend

"bioscope show".

In 1953 Pinelands celebrated Arbour Day to coincide with the exact day of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth. On June 2 1953 all Pinelands children who shared their birthday with the queen planted pines at Coronation Park. Sometimes other events have overshadowed the tree planting. For instance in 1939

the Athletics Club broke 15 of its own records at an Arbour Day celebration.

The festive aspects have been lost but fortunately the significance of Arbour Day tree planting has not.



# AN INDEPENDENT MUNICIPALITY



Cllr. G F Gardiner



Ald. Basil Cullen



Ald. Ron Strybis

Garden Cities Trust was initially established by an Act of Parliament in 1919. Ratepayers were allowed to elect 4 trustees once the number of houses exceeded 2000. The Trust was to have functioned as a Local Authority to run the Town, but the trust was unable to receive Government Housing Loan benefits and so a Local Board was established. The Board consisted of an appointee by the Administrator, a representative of the residents and a member of the Trust.

In 1946, after a stormy poll, residents voted in favour of replacing the Board with a Municipal Councillor. The key issues seem to have been : a concern that Cape Town would attempt to incorporate Pinelands, the Board was undemocratic and a Municipality would have more powers. The first Municipal elections were held on 14th May 1948 when six Councillors were elected. The first Mayor was G.F. Gardiner and Mrs O Smith was the first deputy Mayor.

Pinelands continued to be an independent Municipality until it's amalgamation with Cape Town in June 1996. The last Mayor of Pinelands was Ron Strybis and the last Deputy mayor was Dr Tshabalala.

The longest serving Mayor was Basil Cullen who served as Mayor for eight years. Alderman Cullen was also the longest serving Councillor, having served for over 27 years.

## DID YOU KNOW ?.....

That the original name suggested for Pinelands was Midwood.

That the bottom of South Way was a river with miniature waterfalls and popular with canoeists.

The shopping area at Central Square was originally planned to be at the top of Broadwalk

That a market hall was planned for Northwalk.

The first school in Pinelands was opened in 1926 by Miss Ross in Central Avenue.

The first public meeting held in Pinelands was in 1922 to protest against permission being granted for a cow to be kept in Links Drive.

The first sporting institution in Pinelands was the Tennis Club started in 1922.

The Pinelands Civic Association held it's first meeting in 1923.

That Pinelands was once used as a plague camp during the bubonic plague in 1900.

The first recorded increase in burglaries in Pinelands took place in 1925 when it was reported that up to three houses were being broken into every night.

That the City of Cape Town first tried to take over Pinelands in 1935.

That Alice's Ride and Princess Path are named after Princess Alice who used to ride her horse along the fire path in the vicinity.

That at the turn of the century, the largest brick

factory in the Southern Hemisphere was located in the area of Alice's Ride/ Forest Drive intersection

The first library in Pinelands was opened in 1924.

The first recorded opposition to the sale of liquor in Pinelands was in 1954.

There was, at the turn of the Century, a rail link to Maitland from the area of the BP Garage.

That in 1723 three murderers hid in a paddock situated where 5 Homestead Way now stands.

The entrance to the old nursery was on the corner of Riverside and Alice's Ride.

That a block house was situated in the area of the High School.

That in the early 1920's a steenbok was shot where the Pinelands Post Office stood in Central Avenue.

That the entire area of The Mead and Meadway is a National Monument.

The British Army camped near Camp Road during the Boer War.

That over the years, the Freedom of the City has been granted to four Pinelands Residents i.e. Cllr and Mrs Gardiner, Mr Croxford and Alderman Basil Cullen.

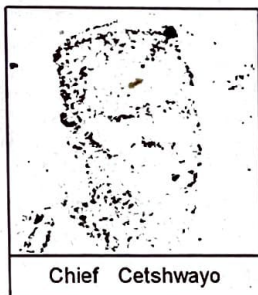


# CETSHWAYO, LANGALIBALELE AND PINELANDS

Cetshwayo, the last Zulu King, once hunted, with Chief Langalibalele, on the farm Uitvlugt less than 40 years before it was developed into the Garden City of Pinelands.

Cetshwayo was born in 1826 and in 1872 succeeded the throne when his father, Mpande, died. By 1828 he was at war with the British resulting in the disastrous battles of Isandlwana and Rorkes Drift for the British. He was defeated at Ulundi and was brought to the Castle in Cape Town. On January 15 1881 he was transferred to Oude Molen, a farm situated where the Alexandria Hospital is now sited. Among the visitors he received were Prince Albert and Prince George (later King George V).

The farm Uitvlugt adjoined Oude Molen where the exiled chief of the amaHlubi tribe, Langalibalele lived. Many years previously, Langalibalele had quarrelled with Cetshwayo's father and, to escape, went to live in the foothills of the Drakensberg. The tribe had, over the years, collected a small arsenal. When they



Chief Cetshwayo

refused to register their firearms, Langalibalele was sentenced to life imprisonment on Robben Island for treason. However, Bishop Colenso pleaded Langalibalele's case resulting in him being transferred in August 1874 to Uitvlugt with two sons and a two of his seventy wives with a number of his retainers and a boy named Fifi.

The run down farmhouse was sited in an area now bounded by Forest Drive, Links Drive, Peak Drive and the Fairway. The seven-roomed main dwelling house was a mud and stone structure located in Homestead Way. An extra kitchen was built so that each of his wives could have their own kitchen.



Chief Langalibalele

It is well documented that together, Cetshwayo and Langalibalele spent many hours taking long walks and gossiping about the past as well as hunting jackals, rabbits and birds with "throwing sticks" on the land that is now Pinelands. During roadworks in 1935, the skeletons of the two female Zulu retainers, complete with traditional beadwork were unearthed.

## LIFE IN EARLY PINELANDS

In 1929, there were no shops among the thatched houses. The butcher and baker called daily in their horse drawn carts. The grocer called once a week as did the shoe repairer. Milk was obtained from Peacock's farm in the area of Dagbreek, while fresh vegetables were available at the morning market in Central Square. While most roads were of sand, Forest Drive was made from gravel quarried from the Central Square area. Residents travelled out of Pinelands over a level crossing which was operated by a gatekeeper.

Public transport was limited to a single decker bus which travelled to Cape Town via Mowbray. The owner/driver dropped off parcels and delivered messages. A steam train to Cape Town picked up passengers at both Raapenburg and Pinelands stations.

The many vleis attracted yellow billed duck, pheasants and partridges but also attracted mosquitoes which plagued residents. In the

thick bush steenbok, duiker and hare were commonplace.

Relaxation took place at the tennis and bowls clubs which were situated next to the police camp and the disused brickfields. Spiritual needs were met by St. Stephens Anglican Church built in 1926.

There was no water borne sewerage but there was an efficient bucket system serviced by the Dichfield Sanitation Company.

Residents had the option of both electricity and/or piped gas. There were a few street lights on wooden poles making hurricane lanterns a necessity.

The 1900 bubonic plague huts now housed elderly residents and in August of 1929 the Brown and Annie Lawrence Home for the elderly was built.

Also in 1929 the first five houses were built for what was to be the coloured housing section of Pinelands.



# NEWS IN BRIEF

## ATHLONE POWER STATION ENQUIRY

After more than two years of fighting, Council has agreed to Councillor Watkyns' request for an enquiry into health aspects of the Athlone Power Station.

## LIQUOR LICENCE FOR PICK 'N PAY

The application for a Liquor Licence at Pick 'n Pay met with hundreds of written objections to the Magistrate in Goodwood and should help diminish the chances of the licence being issued.

## LIQUOR LICENCE FOR 7- ELEVEN

Despite the hundreds of written objections against the licence application by Pick 'n Pay, 7-Eleven subsequently also applied. Objections close on 28 Novmeber.

## WOOLWORTHS FOR PINELANDS

It is understood that Woolworths may be opening a food-only store in Pinelands in June or July next year. The store is to be in the building currently used by Standard Bank printing press.

## PICK N PAY EXPANSION

Pick 'n Pay, it is rumoured, intends expanding and upgrading their store in Howard Centre to the standard of their Claremont branch. Parking is another story.....

## INFORMAL CAR ATTENDANTS

Car Guard is a private company operating at Howard Centre without authority. What do you think ? Do you think they should go or stay ?  
**LET ME KNOW.**

## STAFF APPOINTMENT

Mrs Finnan, was appointed to the post of Man-

ager : Administration and Costing (Municipal Services) in the Civic Centre. Her cheerful and helpful nature will be missed by residents. Good luck Brenda.

## PINELANDS POLICE STATION TO MOVE

The lease on the present Police site will soon come an end and there is a need for the detectives to be housed in the same building. Four alternative sites are being investigated and the Pinelands/Thornton Community Police Forum is keeping a watchful eye on the progress.

## PINELANDS RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION AGM

At the AGM of the Association held in October, a number of new Executive Committee members were elected. Angela Chester has been re-elected Chairperson with the Executive now consisting of : Harry Harvey (Vice Chair) Corinna Boshoff (Treasurer) Norma Davison (Secretary) Don Aberdien, Peter Henry, Basil Clayton, John Berry, Benita Berry and Mark Krober. Congratulations and good luck.

## PINELANDER OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to TONY DAVISON who was elected Pinelander of the year for 1997. Tony served Pinelands on the Ratepayers Committee for over ten years including six years as Chairman. Much of what the Association achieved during that period was due to Tony's in-depth financial knowledge and sound reasoning on planning matters. His hard work over the years has been greatly appreciated and his ability to rationally argue local issues was invaluable. Well done Tony!

## GRUMBLE /SUGGESTION SHEET

NAME : Mr/Mrs/Mlss

ADDRESS :

PHONE NO. :

FAX NO. :

PLEASE RETURN TO:

COUNCILLOR BRIAN WATKYNs  
6 POPLAR WAY PINELANDS 7405

PH : 531 5112 or 083 444 4807

FAX: 5315863

E-Mail : bwatkyns@cmc.gov.za

Do you object to 7-Eleven's liquor licence application ?

YES NO

Do you want Car Guard to remain at Howard Centre ?

YES NO