

# CHAPTER NINE

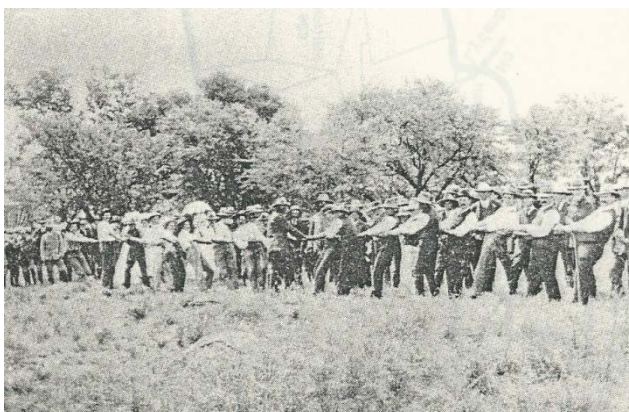
## SOCIAL-CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

### 9.1 Relaxation as recreation

To the Trekkers who settled to the north of the Vaal River, life was not all toil and hardship. The inhabitants of the Gatsrand found time to also socialise and relax. Country sport items such as horse racing, tug of war, sack race, sprints, long jump and target shooting were part of the entertainment on New Year's Day. Although these items, with the exception of horse racing (limited to men only) did not occur in organised fashion, they served as pleasant relaxation and pass-time.<sup>1</sup> Prior to 1937, it entailed mainly country sport (*Boeresport*). Union, for instance, was celebrated by way of *Boeresport* at Bank on 31 May 1914.<sup>2</sup>

Mining officials, who had been working in the northern parts of the Gatsrand since 1937, took leave of the Old Year Day in different ways. On 30 December 1939, a dance was organised in the dining-room of the single quarters of the Blyvooruitzicht mine. The Astra Band of Potchefstroom regularly performed at dance functions of the Blyvooruitzicht mine at a cost of £7 per function.<sup>3</sup>

In the 1940s, there were film shows and games evenings in the dining-room of the single quarters of the Blyvooruitzicht mine.<sup>4</sup> The recreational club of this mine opened a library as well. Books were obtained from the Krugersdorp Library. AB Hagan-Watson was the very first librarian.<sup>5</sup>



A SPORTS DAY AT ELANDSFONTEIN  
NUMBER 289, 1910  
Photo: K du Preez (Fochville)

<sup>1</sup> J. van Wyk, "Landskoonmaker", *Die Boerevrou*, Julie 1950, p.5. Vergelyk ook Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 1: Herrinerige P.F.J. van der Ryst, 23.9.1986. Perderesies as sportsoort word later in dié hoofstuk behandel.

<sup>2</sup> Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 1: Herrinerige M.M. van der Westhuizen, p.3.

<sup>3</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", pp.16, 22.

<sup>4</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", p.16.

<sup>5</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", p.16.



BLYVOOR AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY

Photo: C Rautenbach (Carletonville)

Theatre companies, especially from Potchefstroom, sometimes performed plays in the area. Thus, for instance, the Excelsior Theatre Company of Potchefstroom performed a play entitled *Die simpel seun* ("The silly boy") at Klipdrift in 1922.<sup>6</sup>

In November 1944, the first local variety concert was presented at Blyvooruitzicht. This concert culminated in the founding of an amateur drama theatre company in 1945 headed by AW (Bert) Ozard. Plays and adaptations such as "The Ozard of Wiz" (Wizard of Oz), "Bly Variety" and Pot-Pourri were presented by the local theatrical company.<sup>7</sup> In April 1947, The MOTH branch of Blyvooruitzicht also presented a play entitled "Journeys End".<sup>8</sup>

Until 1948, there were not yet any nature reserves or holiday resorts in the Gatsrand. Past inhabitants can still recall the times when families outspanned in a large sinkhole known as the prehistoric sinkhole on the land of the current Doornfontein mine. In this sinkhole, the inhabitants enjoyed a garden of delight with trees under which they would often outspan for more than a day. It was also a popular venue for picnics. Activities such as sack races, tug of war and long jump would be part of the day's fun.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *De Westelike Stem*, 14.6.1922, p.6. Kyk ook 26.11.1924, p.2 en 4.1.1928, p.5.

<sup>7</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", p.45. Vergelyk ook Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Onderhoud C. Rautenbach, 11.3.1987.

<sup>8</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", p.47.

<sup>9</sup> Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 1: Herinneringe P.F.J. van der Ryst, 23.9.1986. Vergelyk ook verw. 3: Onderhoud K. du Preez, 6.11.1985.

The Wonderfontein Caves, which are located about 2 km from the Wonderfontein Oog (fountainhead), were an attraction to visitors as far back as the 1860s and a venue for relaxation to the inhabitants of the area. The Wonderfontein Caves are a network of tunnels more or less equal in size.<sup>10</sup>

Well-known persons from abroad, such as Karel Mauch, a prospective teacher, and the Czech doctor, Emil Holub, visited the caves. The visitor's fee charged by the owner of the land, J Oberholzer, varied between five shillings and £1 per person. Foreigners obviously had to pay more than Oberholzer's compatriots.<sup>11</sup>

Two other caves that are also found in the area are the Kleinfontein Cave (hut cave) on the current Deelkraal Mine land<sup>12</sup> and the West Driefontein approximately 4 km to the east of the West Driefontein Mine. The latter cave was discovered only after the first shaft had been sunk at West Driefontein. Owing to the cave's close location to the mines, it was never opened to the public.<sup>13</sup>

## 9.2 Sport

Prior to 1902, sport activities in the Gatsrand mainly centred on *Boeresport* (country sport) and shooting competitions/target shooting that were usually practised during picnics. The latter and horse racing were especially popular with men. Every Boer loved to display his shooting skills as well as the stamina of his favourite horse by competing against other Boers.<sup>14</sup> Organised gymkhanas were held at Blyvooruitzicht in 1944 and 1946. Horses and equestrians competed in a wide variety of field and track items.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> J.F. Wolmarans, *Ontwatering van die dolomietgebied aan die Verre Wes-Rand: Gebeure in perspektief*, p.53.

<sup>11</sup> K. Mauch, *The journals of C. Mauch: His travels in Transvaal and in South Africa, II*, p.20. Vergelyk ook E. Holub, *Seven years in South Africa, II*, p.71. C. Rautenbach het in verskeie uitgawes van die koerantrubriek, "Rondom die Gatsrand", persone se besoeke aan die Wonderfonteingrot breedvoerig geskets. Kyk *Potchefstroom Herald and Western Gazette*, 3.6.1983, p.4 en 17.6.1983, p.2.

<sup>12</sup> Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Onderhoud T.F. Dreyer, 6.5.1987.

<sup>13</sup> J.F. Wolmarans, *Ontwatering van die dolomietgebied...*, p.47.

<sup>14</sup> Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 1: Herinneringe P.F.J. van der Ryst, 23.9.1986 en M.M. van der Westhuizen, p.3.

<sup>15</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", pp.36, 44. Vergelyk ook Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Bandopname G.F. Pienaar, 20.11.1986.



THE WOLMARANSES AS GAME HUNTERS  
Photo: JMF Terburg (Florida)

Organised shooting competitions were held in the Gatsrand as early as in 1885. On 21 May 1885, there was a competition on G van der Westhuizen's farm. Competitors had to shoot at targets at distances of 100 m and 300 m respectively. J Labuschagne and J Steyn of Deelkraal were the joint winners, with JF van der Merwe of Leeuwpoort second and JJ Joubert of Rietfontein third. Prizes ranged from one to four bags of gunpowder.<sup>16</sup>

Shooting competitions were also arranged mutually among the rifle clubs that were established after the Union Defence Act (Act Nr 13 of 1912).<sup>17</sup> Results were sometimes published in local newspapers. Thus the Losberg Botha Rifle Club, for instance, lost the competition against the Wonderfontein-Rooipoort Club by 13 points on 4 September 1920.<sup>18</sup>

There were individual competitions as well. In 1913, shopkeeper Sam Rosenthal of Welverdiend donated a cup for the best marksman. In June 1913, WP Grey became the first winner of the Rosenthal Cup.<sup>19</sup>

Members of the rifle clubs also participated in Bisley competitions. The eight best marksmen from all the rifle clubs represented the area under the banner of the Gatsrand Commando at these competitions. In 1923, the Gatsrand Commando had a formidable shooting team consisting of the following members: JB Wolmarans, NJ Grey, H Pieterse, JN Grey, H Kluys, H van der Merwe, HJ Roux and J Kraft. The best marksman in the team during the Bisley shooting competition of 1923 was J Kraft.<sup>20</sup>

In about 1932, the Commissioner of Police offered a cup for the best shooting team among all the commandos of the Western Transvaal. The Gatsrand Commando won this cup and renamed it the Gatsrand Commando Cup. Members of the rifle clubs competed against one another annually to compete for this cup. It was then agreed that the first member of the commando who succeeded in winning the competition twice in succession, could keep the cup permanently. Captain JW Grey won the cup in this way.<sup>21</sup>

A distinction that some of the inhabitants of the Gatsrand could claim in another field, was the big game hunting competitions in which the three sons of JB Wolmarans of Elandsfontein number 360 participated. The competitions were held especially across our

---

<sup>16</sup> Potchefstroom Landdros (TAB), verw. 12: J.T. Martins/Landdros, 21.5.1885.

<sup>17</sup> Anon., "Die geskiedenis van ons", *Paratus*, Oktober 1973, p.9.

<sup>18</sup> *De Westelike Stem*, 26.9.1920, p.3.

<sup>19</sup> Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Onderhoud Kmdt. W.P. Grey (Jr.) 4.5.1987.

<sup>20</sup> *De Westelike Stem*, 19.9.1923, p.4.

<sup>21</sup> Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Onderhoud Kmdt. V.P. Grey (Jr.), 4.5. 1987.

country's borders. In the forties, Manie Wolmarans was designated as the champion big-game hunter of South Africa.<sup>22</sup>

Although rugby was played on an official basis in Western Transvaal by 1920,<sup>23</sup> it was only from 1939 onwards that it was played in an organised way in the Gatsrand. With the exception of a few farmers, the players were mostly mine workers.<sup>24</sup> According to results in a local newspaper, a West Wits rugby team played in the first league to compete for the Nesor Cup of the Western Transvaal in 1939. However, the team's performance left much to be desired.<sup>25</sup> They were not mentioned in newspapers again.

In 1942, two mining officials, namely GF Pienaar and C Truter, started and trained a rugby team with players from farms in the area and mineworkers of Blyvooruitzicht. C Vermaak was the first chairperson and S Bester the first secretary of the Blyvooruitzicht Rugby Club that played against teams from Potchefstroom and other towns.<sup>26</sup>

In 1943, a team was entered for the second league (TOD Suttie Cup). The team was forced to withdraw from the league owing to a shortage of players in August.<sup>27</sup> In 1944, matters took a positive turn for the Blyvooruitzicht rugby team. This team, which once again competed in the second league, played against teams such as those of the Western Reef, PUK (Potchefstroom University College), Ventersdorp, Klerksdorp A and B, Railways, Dominion Reefs and Potchefstroom Town and finished as winners of the competition.<sup>28</sup>

In 1946, the team entered for the first league and went through to the finals against Garrison (garrison of Potchefstroom). They however lost the finals.<sup>29</sup> In 1947, the rugby team of Blyvooruitzicht played against the same team in the finals and shared the cup with them.<sup>30</sup> In that year, the second team entered for the TOD Suttie Cup and did exceptionally well. However, they dropped out of the competition prior to the finals.<sup>31</sup> By 1948, the Blyvooruitzicht rugby team was at the peak of its success. In that year, they won the Nesor

---

<sup>22</sup> Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Bandopname J.M.F. Terburg, 30.9.1987.

<sup>23</sup> *De Westelike Stem*, 5.3.1921, p.4.

<sup>24</sup> Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Bandopname G.F. Pienaar, 20. 11 . 1986.

<sup>25</sup> *Potchefstroom Herald and Western Gazette*, 2.6.1939, p.9.

<sup>26</sup> Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Bandopname G.F. Pienaar, 20. 11. 1986.

<sup>27</sup> *Potchefstroom Herald and Western Gazette*, 20.8.1943, p.3.

<sup>28</sup> *Potchefstroom Herald and Western Gazette*, 20.5.1944, p.5. Kyk ook 6.10.1944, p.3 en Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Bandopname G.F. Pienaar, 20.11.1986.

<sup>29</sup> *Potchefstroom Herald and Western Gazette*, 3.10.1946, p.2 en Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Bandopname G.F. Pienaar, 20.11.1986.

<sup>30</sup> *Potchefstroom Herald and Western Gazette*, 3.10.1947, p.5.

<sup>31</sup> *Potchefstroom Herald and Western Gazette*, 20.6.1947, p.5.

Cup when they beat Garrison. Some of the players that played provincially for Western Transvaal between 1942 and 1948 were C Truter, J Buys, J du Plessis, L Trichardt, C de Villiers and P Roux.<sup>32</sup>

Early in 1938, the very first soccer match was played on the field of the Blyvooruitzicht mine. The game was between two white teams known as the local workers and the contract workers. It was a friendly match. The game was not played on a soccer field, but on a terrain covered with tufts of grass and bushes.<sup>33</sup> It was only by the end of 1948 that a recreation club for the workers of the Blyvooruitzicht mine was envisaged – having in mind the creation of sport facilities and centralising. A start was made, inter alia, with the laying out of a soccer field for whites. Soccer facilities for blacks were not attended to prior to 1948.<sup>34</sup> It is possible, however, that they may have played the game on an informal basis at the mine kampongs.

As far as is known, tennis was played at the farm Elandsfontein number 289 since 1910 and subsequently at Wonderfontein and at the settlement at Klipdrift as well. This type of sport was largely aimed at relaxation.<sup>35</sup> For the maintenance of the tennis courts, club membership fees were collected. In 1926, membership fees of the tennis club at Wonderfontein amounted to eight shillings per annum and admission fees for non-members were five shillings per match.<sup>36</sup> The recreation club of the Blyvooruitzicht Mine also made provision for tennis facilities.<sup>37</sup>



ELANDSFONTEIN NUMBER  
289 TENNIS CLUB, 1910  
Photo: Reverend A Brink  
(Fochville)

<sup>32</sup> Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Bandopname G.F. Pienaar, 20.11.1986.

<sup>33</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", p.10.

<sup>34</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", p.49.

<sup>35</sup> Suid-Afrikaanse Spoorweë (SAB), verw. 292 nr. G13/18: Railway tennis court Wonderfontein, 8.10.1926. Kyk ook J. C. Coetzee, *Pioniers van die skoolplaas Klipdrift: Johan en Johanna Schutte, 1923-1938*, p.72 en Carletonville (PU vir CHO), verw. 3: Bandopname K. du Preez, 6.11.1986 en G.F. Pienaar, 20.11.1986.

<sup>36</sup> Suid-Afrikaanse Spoorweë (SAB), verw. 292, nr. G13/18: Railway tennis court Wonderfontein, 8.10.1926.

<sup>37</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", p.49.

The establishment of mines in the Gatsrand also gave rise to the practising of other types of sport (sport codes). In 1939, a golf course was laid out under the guidance of G MacDavid and N Clark, while bowling was organised in 1942 under the guidance of P Groenewald.<sup>38</sup> In 1947, *jukskei* followed. For this purpose, a *jukskei* field was constructed next to the recreation hall of the Blyvooruitzicht mine.<sup>39</sup>

Cricket was played informally in the north-western parts of the Gatsrand even before 1920. In 1915, the local newspaper, *De Westelike Stem* (The Western Voice) made mention of a Kleinfontein cricket team that would play against Potchefstroom.<sup>40</sup> However, it was only in 1948 that cricket was properly organised and Blyvooruitzicht mine formed a cricket team. *Hockey* was introduced at Blyvooruitzicht in the same year.<sup>41</sup>

### 9.3 Culture

The sprawling rural environment of the Gatsrand is probably the most important reason for there not being actual cultural organisations in the area prior to 1948. As far as is known, the Day of the Covenant was the only *volksfees* (people's festival) that was organised and commemorated locally up to and including 1948. This festival was originally celebrated only in Pietermaritzburg, but after the First War of Independence (1880-1881) it was also commemorated regularly at Paardekraal (north-east of Wonderfontein and beyond the borders of the Gatsrand).<sup>42</sup> Originally, the Day of the Covenant was celebrated only by way of church services. At Paardekraal, however, the Day of the Covenant was celebrated over four days on which there were religious services, country sport (*Boeresport*) and a military review.<sup>43</sup> The inhabitants of the Gatsrand probably attended some of the celebratory events at Paardekraal. By 1890, there was a plea from the ranks of Afrikaners to not merely have this celebration at a few venues, but to celebrate it countrywide annually.<sup>44</sup> Although local feast committees were established at various places, there is no information available regarding the existence of such a committee in the Gatsrand prior to 1915.

It would seem that the Day of the Covenant was celebrated annually at Weltevreden, the farm of L Minie. In the 1920s, G Davidtz was the chairperson of the Dingaan's Day festival

---

<sup>38</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", p.17, 33.

<sup>39</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", p.48.

<sup>40</sup> *De Westelike Stem*, 16.2.1915, p.5.

<sup>41</sup> W. Hagan-Watson, "Down memory lane...", p.49.

<sup>42</sup> P.H. Kapp, *Ons Volksfeeste*, pp.44, 48.

<sup>43</sup> P.H. Kapp, *Ons Volksfeeste*, p.59.

<sup>44</sup> P. de V. Pienaar, (red.), *Kultuurgeskiedenis van die Afrikaner*, p. 272.

[sic] committee in the Gatsrand.<sup>45</sup> The events included prayer meetings, religious services, speeches and historical narratives.<sup>46</sup>

From 1922, covenantal festivities were also held at Klipdrift. C du Plessis was the chairperson and FG Zerwick was the secretary of this festival committee. By that time the festivities covered two days (15 and 16 December).<sup>47</sup> Country sport, plays and performances by school choirs were part of the events. Plays such as *Afrikaner Harte* and *Jong du Preez* were performed.<sup>48</sup>

Historical sights worth seeing in the Gatsrand, such as the AH Potgieter fort/rampart and the Danie Theron Monument were probably used as venues for Covenantal festivities. The AH Potgieter fort/rampart close to Fochville was erected as early as in 1842 by the group of Trekkers led by Potgieter. This fort was constructed in the form of a kraal with a wide gate to the north. It was meant to protect women and children in the event of the Potchefstroom commando having to go and fight against British troops in Natal.<sup>49</sup> A monument was erected for Danie Theron, the scout of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), on a hill of the then farm Elandsfontein number 289 on the spot where he had been killed during the war.<sup>50</sup>

Mining activities in the Gatsrand, together with a population increase in the area, would serve as a stimulus after 1948 for the founding of various cultural organisations.

---

<sup>45</sup> *De Westelike Stem*, 9.12.1915, p.5J 15.11.1922, p.3 en 26.11.1924, p.3

<sup>46</sup> *De Westelike Stem*, 28.12.1915, p.3. Vergelyk ook A. Coetzee, *Die Afrikaanse Volkskultuur*, p.102.

<sup>47</sup> *De Westelike Stem*, 22.11.1922, p.3, 27.12.1923, p.5 en 3.12.1924, p.6

<sup>48</sup> *De Westelike Stem*, 4.1.1928, p.3.

<sup>49</sup> Potchefstroomse Museum, verw. POT 968.0421: Potgieter-skans, 12.3.1971.

<sup>50</sup> Potchefstroomse Museum, verw. THE 968:20481: Danie Theron, p.3. Die huis van P.J.W. Schutte op Buffelsdoorn behoort gerestoureer en bewaar te word. Schutte kan beskou word as vader van die Geref. - Kerkgenootskap in die distrik Potchefstroom. Ook is die eerste Gereformeerde diens deur ds. Postma in sy huis gehou. (See also Chapter 3 on Religious Development).

## RECAPITULATION

Development and events in the Gatsrand and indeed in the areas of the economy, religion, education, politics, administration of justice and defence, administration, communication and culture form part of and are supplementary to the development and history of the broader society of Potchefstroom, Western Transvaal and South Africa.

The Gatsrand, as a range of hills, is not only a well-known geographic landmark in the Western Transvaal, but it also figured as a particular political entity within the framework of the district of Potchefstroom. This is a study of the people and the development of the Gatsrand from the arrival and settlement of whites in the area, that is, since the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, up to the declaration of the town Carletonville in 1948.

In the *introductory chapter*, we focus briefly on a few black tribes that lived in the Gatsrand before Mzilikazi's Ndebele started with their destructive campaign on the Highveld in the 1830s. Tradition would have it that the first white, one Harmse, had settled in the Gatsrand as early as in 1836. According to the earliest available farm registers, the Trekkers settled in the area only by 1839. It is indeed the case that the first farms in the Gatsrand were registered at the same time as farms in, inter alia, the nearby Mooi River area. By applying these data, the names of the first farm owners in the area are highlighted and readers are also given a picture of the rate of the occupation of farms in the Gatsrand. It is highly probable that this is the first time that these farm registers have ever been used in a scientific study. More details regarding the origin of the name Gatsrand and the farm Deelkraal (which are used as points of reference in the farm registers) are also explained.

The inhabitants of the Gatsrand still had an agrarian mindset until early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Actual development of the area began with the creation of the settlement Klipdrift in 1911 and the proclamation of the town Fochville. After the start of goldmining activities in the area in 1937, five more towns were proclaimed, namely: West Wits, Oberholzer, Welverdiend, Bank and Blybank, until Carletonville came into being on the farm Twyfelvlakte in 1948.

As far as the *economic history* of the area is concerned, agriculture as well as stock farming was the major industry in the Gatsrand prior to the start of the gold-mining industry. Initially, the market at Potchefstroom was the closest market area for farmers' products, but subsequently Johannesburg, Randfontein and Krugersdorp met this need. Farmers also supplied, by means of a bartering system, fresh products to a few shops and hotels that opened in the Gatsrand after 1867. The inhabitants of the Gatsrand were constantly hampered in their farming activities by stock diseases, droughts, poverty and wars.

However, it was the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) that brought drastic changes in the way of life of people and which also had dire consequences for the inhabitants of the Gatsrand.

Poverty and over-utilisation of farms on account of subdivision were but two of the factors that caused some framers to have to sell their farms. Some farmers tried their hand at something new: one such farmer was GP Brits, who established a nursery on the farm Jachtfontein. Farmers' associations were founded especially in the twenties to uplift farmers economically and to assist them with advice.

The area greatly benefitted by the arrival of Dutch settlers at Wonderfontein in 1928. It would appear that the settlers mainly concentrated on dairy farming, although enterprises such as a cheese factory, a blacksmith's shop and a bakery also opened in the area.

Since 1937, the gold-mining activities in the northern parts of the Gatsrand stimulated the economy of the area. An even more significant effect of the gold-mining industry was that farmers now had a local outlet/market for their products and that businesses were opened in the newly proclaimed towns – especially in Oberholzer and Carletonville. A need of proper housing and unauthorised squatting were two other effects of the establishment of the gold-mining industry that had an effect on the development of the area. As a consequence of the above-mentioned, the black township of Khutsong was established.

*Religious activities* in the Gatsrand originally followed the same pattern as in the rest of the ZAR. Owing to long distances that had to be covered, church services could be attended at Potchefstroom and subsequently also at Krugersdorp on special occasions such as the *Nagmaal* (the Lord's Supper) only. For the rest, out-of-town services relied on the services of a minister of religion or of a respected elder. In spite of this, the inhabitants of the Gatsrand were reasonably active with regard to church activities. Persons such as FG Wolmarans and FGA Wolmarans played prominent roles in the establishment of the *Nederduitsch Hervormde* (or Reformed) Church in the Transvaal. PJW Schutte was a cofounder of the Reformed Church in 1859, and also the first elder of the Mooi River congregation.

The (Dutch Reformed Church), which was founded in the 1880s, was first to establish a congregation in the area, namely at Fochville in 1925. The *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk* (Dutch Reformed Church) also started a congregation in this town in 1935. However, the first *Gereformeerde* (Reformed) congregation was established only in 1949.

Other dominations were not as prominent or as active as the Afrikaans churches. The Methodist and Anglican churches started with church activities amongst whites in the Gatsrand only after the opening of the gold mines, while the religious activities of Jews and Indians were practised at a more informal level and became more formal only after 1948.

In line with general practice, it was foreign missionary societies such as the Berlin Missionary Society and the Anglican Church that were actively involved in missions in the area in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although individual attempts at missionary work occurred sporadically and on a small scale among Afrikaners, the Afrikaans churches in the area would attend to missionary work actively after congregations had actually been established. An important evolution occurred when the two English dominations applied for the erection of church buildings for missionary work in 1948.

Once the Trekkers had settled in the Gatsrand, there was an end to the uncertain and random education/teaching situation that prevailed during the Groot Trek. Private teachers taught children on farms. As far as is known, state printer JP Borrius, well-known in the history of Potchefstroom, was one of the first private teachers to offer his services at a farm school in the Gatsrand. The appointment of a superintendent of education by the *Volksraad* of the ZAR in 1879 also caused teaching conditions in the Gatsrand to improve. From 1886, farm schools were to be found in the Gatsrand and by 1899, there were about 25 of them in the area.

After the Second Anglo-Boer War and as a result of British administration's encroaching on traditional teaching, Christian National Education schools were established. The few CNE schools in the Gatsrand, as was happening elsewhere, soon had to appeal to the state for funds – thus losing their unique character.

The predominantly primary oriented education in the area, owing to the arrival of the gold-mining industry, had so expanded by the late thirties that a first fully fledged secondary school was established soon after 1948.

In many respects, the Gatsrand acted as a barometer of the broader constitutional and *political complications*. In the settlement years up to and including the Sand River Convention, it was especially FG Wolmarans and PJW Schutte who played a role in attempts to break ties with Britain.

British annexation of the ZAR in 1877 caused the burghers to experience temporary revolt. Probably owing to its centrality, two important *volksvergaderings* (meetings of the people) were held on the farm Wonderfontein on the eve of the First War of Independence (1880-1881). Little is known about the sympathies of the inhabitants of the Gatsrand in the “political” fighting between Kruger and Joubert in the eighties and nineties; as is the case regarding their role in the political restructuring at the end of the Anglo-Boer War. However, what is actually known is that a branch of the *Het Volk* (The Nation) was founded in the area.

With Union in 1910, the wards Gatsrand and Vaal River formed the Losberg constituency. General Louis Botha, first prime minister of the Union and leader of the newly founded South

African Party, represented the electorate of Losberg as member of the House of Assembly in Parliament from 1910 until his death in 1919. During this time, Botha had to deal with weighty matters, among which there was the participation of the Union in World War One (WWI) in 1914. In September 1914, he addressed a large assembly at Bank Station in the Gatsrand in this regard. His suppression of the Rebellion later that year was a blow to his popularity in the Gatsrand, as was the case elsewhere too. As a consequence of this, discontented persons in this area founded a National Party branch after Hertzog had parted ways with Botha.

Post-war conditions, such as the Strike of 1922 on the Reef and economic deterioration, resulted in the National Party's winning the 1924 elections, including the Losberg constituency. At the time of the amalgamation of this party with the South African Party in 1933 in what was thence to be known as the United Party, the majority of voters of Losberg still supported Hertzog.

The outbreak of the Second World War (WWII) in 1939 and the Union's decision to enter the fray evoked mixed feelings in the Gatsrand as well as elsewhere in South Africa. The re-election of a United Party candidate (JB the 1943 elections served as formal proof that the majority of the inhabitants of the Gatsrand were clearly in favour of participating in the war. The inhabitants of the Gatsrand subsequently experienced a unique situation when their member of the House of Assembly changed his political convictions (allegiance) for a second time (prior to 1929 he had been a Nationalist). He was a major critic of the Smuts regime's colour policy and made himself available as NP candidate in 1948, yet he lost against GP Brits. It is significant that the majority of the Losberg electorate – as is apparent from the results of the elections of 1948 – nevertheless supported Wolmarans's stand against the United Party and supported the National Party.

The inhabitants of the Gatsrand contributed much on a *military level* on local as well as on broader national level. This applies, for instance, to the numerous campaigns to ensure law and order within the political borders of the ZAR. The study furthermore pointed out the participation of the inhabitants of the Gatsrand in General Piet Cronjé's mission to Potchefstroom in December 1880 – a mission that triggered the First War of Independence. Burghers of this area also took part actively in Cronjé's prevention of the attempt of Jameson (planned by Rhodes) to overthrow the ZAR government in 1895-1896. In the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) they helped, as part of the Potchefstroom Commando, to defeat the British troops at Magersfontein. Many inhabitants of the Gatsrand were also actively involved in Smuts's activities during the battle of Frederikstad, at the destruction of a bridge at Bank Station, as well as during the takeover of the British blockhouse at Modderfontein. A few burghers of this area subsequently accompanied Smuts on his epic campaign to the Cape Colony.

After the Anglo-Boer War, the military setup developed after the fashion of an own defence organisation. This was initiated in 1912. Burghers of the Gatsrand were divided into eight rifle clubs, each with its own field cornets and assistant field cornets and this new

dispensation was now known as the Gatsrand Commando. Volunteers from this commando participated in the campaign of the Union in South-West Africa in the First World War (1914-1918). Some of the burghers, however, rebelled against taking part in the war and instead took part in the 1914 Rebellion. The Gatsrand Commando also helped to suppress the strike on the Reef in 1922. During the Second World War (1939-1945), volunteers of the Gatsrand once more took up arms. In October 1940, a new phase of the defence system was introduced when the National Reserve Volunteers of which a division was also formed in the Gatsrand, was established for the purpose of manning the sparsely populated parts of the country.

Prior to the proclamation of Fochville in 1920, the field cornet of the Gatsrand ward was responsible for the greater part of the area's *local administration*. By means of tax collection among whites and blacks in the area, the inhabitants of the Gatsrand also contributed to the maintenance of both local and national services. After the Anglo-Boer War, the British administration began to attend to the way in which areas that were located far from municipalities were managed. The Gatsrand would also benefit thereby— especially in June 1944 – when a health board for peri-urban areas took over a large part of the area's administrative management. The creation by this board of an infrastructure contributed greatly to attract prospective inhabitants to towns in this area.

For medical services, the inhabitants of the Gatsrand were, up until 1948, still dependent on Potchefstroom and Krugersdorp, with the exception of the district surgeon at Fochville and the medical facilities of the mines for their workers. This can mainly be contributed to the predominantly rural agrarian character of the area. In contrast, a few *welfare services* were established in the Gatsrand after the proclamation of towns and the opening of the gold mines in the area. These services mainly tried to uplift impoverished people by means of fund-raising efforts.

The development of the Gatsrand in the field of *communication* can be attributed mainly to the central location of the area. It was located on especially two major postal routes, namely from Potchefstroom via Welverdiend to Pretoria and the Potchefstroom-Johannesburg route. The mail-coach services used these routes and as a result of this, numerous postal agencies originated in the area. These two routes would subsequently become the area's two main road routes as well. After 1937, gold-mining activities experienced an urgent need for more and better roads in the area.

The important South-western line that ran from Krugersdorp as far as Klerksdorp and which was intended to ultimately join the Kimberley-Cape Town railway line, ran through the Gatsrand. The Krugersdorp-Frederikstad trajectory with stopping places at Bank, Wonderfontein and Welverdiend, was opened in 1896. In 1927, a railway line was opened between Potchefstroom and Fochville particularly for the benefit of the inhabitants of the

central part of the Gatsrand. By 1948, there was a growing demand for additional expansion of the railway lines in order to meet the needs of the growing mining industry.

There was hardly any possibility of organised *social-cultural activities* in the area in the 19<sup>th</sup> century – with the exception of traditional items such as country sport, horse racing and target shooting. Ever since 1937, a major change was brought about in the way of life of the local community. Blyvooruitzicht mine started a recreation club where dances, film shows, games evenings and plays were organised. The plays were performed by the amateur theatre company of the mine. Apart from the annual commemoration of the Day of the Covenant on 16 December, there was little sign of other social-cultural activities in the Gatsrand by 1948.

Over a period of 100 years, the Gatsrand underwent a radical metamorphosis. The peaceful and rural farming communities at Twyfelvlakte, Wonderfontein, Blyvooruitzicht and Driefontein had to make way for a bees' nest of activities related to the gold-mining industry and which would appear to have exceptional significance for the South African economy. The gold reef known as the West Wits Line would soon after expand to the west. Additional research on all of the above-mentioned aspects, but in particular on the influence of the economy with regard to the development of the area, is being envisaged.