

# STREET NAMES OF PRETORIA

Owing to unforeseen circumstances the usual article in the origin of the street names of Pretoria could not appear in this issue, in stead of which we are publishing the following letter by Mr. C.J. Beanes.

(The Editor)

*The Secretary,  
Association Old Pretoria.*

Your invitation to me to attend the lecture by Mr. Cooper at the Technical College was very much appreciated and the evening was most instructive and enjoyable.

The Presentation of a copy of "*Pretoriana*" was particularly pleasing and the Society need not be ashamed of such a publication.

Future research workers into Pretoria's history will obviously place some reliance on the contents of "*Pretoriana*" and for that reason alone every care will I hope be taken to ensure that the articles will contain only authoritative knowledge and not be merely entertaining to read and with guesses accepted as certainties.

With your kind indulgence and with the sole object of being helpful and constructive I will endeavour to answer a few of the questions asked and comment on some of the articles.

*Du Preezhoek*

I found this article really delightful although I had to get a friend to help me out with it (I am ashamed to have to admit that).

Mr. Rudke, it states, has never heard who built Jess Cottage. In the Book "*Jess*" it simply says that the cottage consisted of two rooms, a bedroom and a good sized sitting room. The deed conveying the land to Rider Haggard was, forty years ago, and exhibit in the Boom Street Museum. I have not noticed it of recent years. Perhaps that would show if the cottage was in the grounds when Rider Haggard purchased the property.

*Palace Street*

There can be no doubt that this street was originally known as

Court Lane because Dr. M.Kirsch had his works at 274 Court Lane. 274 is the number of the erf on the west side of the street.

**The question** is was it an official name? Palace Street and Parliament Street were so named by the Municipality in the early days of the century. Parliament Street was formerly known as Church lane and Theatre Lane. The choice of the name Court Lane was surely prophetic in 1885 when there was probably no thought of the Supreme Court occupying one whole side of the lane.

*Ek onthou*

In this interesting account of old times Mr. B.J. Kleynhans states that he does not remember where the Raadsaal was situated in his boyhood days. When Pretoria became the capital of the Transvaal the Volksraad and Government offices appear to have occupied Erf 412, the eastern half of the present site of the Raadsaal. The western half (Erf 411) was occupied by the European Hotel. According to an article by the late E. Rooth M.P. "during the building of the Raadsaal in the early nineties the President of the Republic with the Executive Council and their staff, occupied a small thatch-roofed house on the western side of the Transvaal Hotel. The Volksraad (which consisted of about twenty two members) met in a small hall on Church Square." The shops Nos. 209 to 217, on Erf 462 Pretorius Street, known as Van Erkom's Buildings, were erected in 1903 and replaced the building which for a while accomodated the President of the Republic and the Executive Council. In the 1890's Van Erkom's advertised their address as Old Government Buildings, Pretorius St.

Miss J.H. Davies, on page 6, in connection with the making of Palace Street, mentions the "Oude School Gebouw" which stood at the N.W. comer of Church Square and part of which building had to be demolished to make room for the new street. Was that the meeting place of the Volksraad mentioned by Mr. E. Rooth? The European Hotel closed 30th November, 1888, having been sold to the Government for £7,000. 0. 0d.

#### *Historical collections of the Transvaal Museum*

The Market Building which housed the Museum for a few years was the Little Market Hall on the east side of Market Hall and at present occupied by a firm of Market Agents. The Museum in Boom Street was opened to the public on the 15th December 1904, just after its completion.

It is unfortunate that in the reference to the Kruger Museum the address is incorrectly given as Church Street West. The correct address is 60 Church Street. It is very inconvenient and often misleading that in Pretoria there are two streets, one named Church Street and the other Church Street West and each has its own set of numbers. Church Street commences at Park Avenue and goes eastward to Hatfield and Colbyn. Church Street West also commences at Park Avenue but goes westward.

*The origin of our street names*

It is to be hoped that the origins of our street names to be published in "Pretoriana" will not repeat the guesses that appeared in the "Pretoria News" in November, 1949. Such guesses as Hamilton Street after Robert Hamilton, Wessels Street after Sir John Wessels, John Street after John Dougall, Reitz Street after President Reitz, Shepherd Street after the Shepherd should not be perpetuated.

I cannot entirely agree with the origin of the name Bank Street as shown in the first issue of "Pretoriana". It would be sufficient to mention only the Standard Bank.

The Natal Bank did not open in Pretoria until 1886 and for some years occupied a portion of Erf 368 on Church Square where the Palladium Cafe is today. The Bank moved to the corner of Bureau Lane and Bank Street in the middle nineties - I cannot locate the year - and I think that you will agree that the name Bank Street was in common usage much earlier than that. In fact, was it not known variously as Bank Street, Avenue and Lane before the Natal Bank opened in Pretoria?

The architects, Soff and de Zwaan, who had one of the offices in the courtyard behind Hoffmann's Buildings advertised their address as Bank Avenue.

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