

Mei 2011

Dagsê alle belangstellendes in die geskiedenis van ou Pretoria,

Ek het Vrydag na die uitsending van die koninklike troue op televisie gekyk en dit baie geniet. Vandag sien ek in die koerant dat die bruid 'n takkie mirt [Engels = myrtle] in haar ruiker gehad het. Dit is 'n plant wat vir die Engelse Koninklike familie baie belangrik is en wat hulle deur die jare by verskeie geleenthede geplant het. Dit het my laat besluit om oor Pretoria se eie mirteboompie en die Prinses Christian tehuis te skryf. Die Prinses Christian tehuis was die eerste ouetehuis vir arm mense in Pretoria. Verskoon maar as ek in die oorspronklike Engels skryf – dit is baie makliker en vinniger.

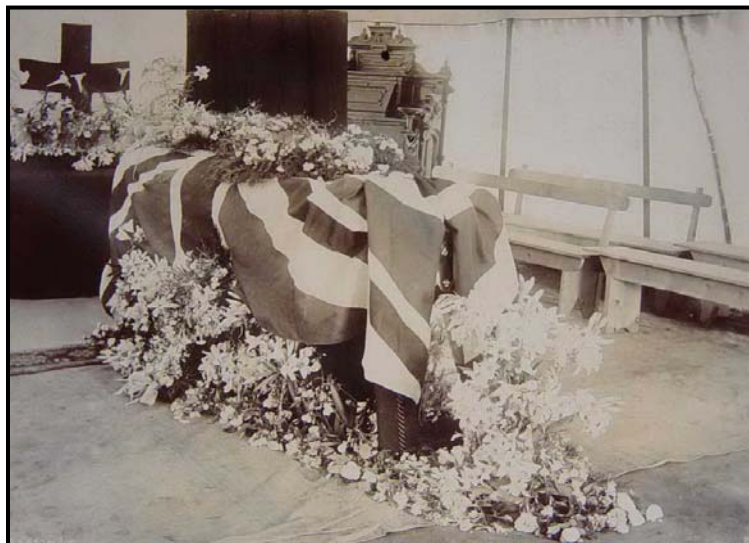
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Die volgende kom uit Hermien Schonge se boek **The Princess Christian – Home for a Century** oor die geskiedenis van die Princess Christian tehuis:

The mother who gave her name to the first home of this kind in Pretoria was Her Royal Highness Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, Princess of Great Britain and Ireland. She was born on May 25, 1846, the fifth child of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Helena (or “Lenchen”, as she was called) married prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein in 1866. The couple had four children, one of whom was eventually to find a grave six thousand miles from home.

It was only three years after his death that his mother was able to visit her eldest son's grave... ..

The son was Prince Christian Victor Ludwig Ernest Anton von Schleswig-Holstein, born 14 April 1867. Having completed the conventional education of the British aristocracy, Prince Christian embarked on a military career, spending the rest of his life in the service of the British Empire. During the second Anglo-Boer War (1899 – 1902) he had 'n brief spell on the Natal front as an officer in the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the King's Royal Corps, to be followed by an appointment as an extra aide-de-camp to Lord Roberts, stationed in Pretoria after the takeover of the city in June 1900. On 29 October 1900 Prince Christian died of enteric fever – three months before his grandmother, Queen Victoria, who seemed to have been very fond of this “soldier-grandson” of hers.



Kis van Prins Christian tydens die diens in die tent op Meintjeskop wat as kapel gedien het

In accordance with his wish to be buried among his comrades, Prince Christian Victor found his last resting-place in the Church Street West Cemetery in Pretoria, in a coffin suitable indeed for a British Prince – one that had been prepared for the President of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek, President Paul Kruger, who was spending the last years in voluntary exile in Switzerland. President Kruger died on 14 July and his body was returned to South Africa to be laid to rest in Pretoria on 16 December 1904.



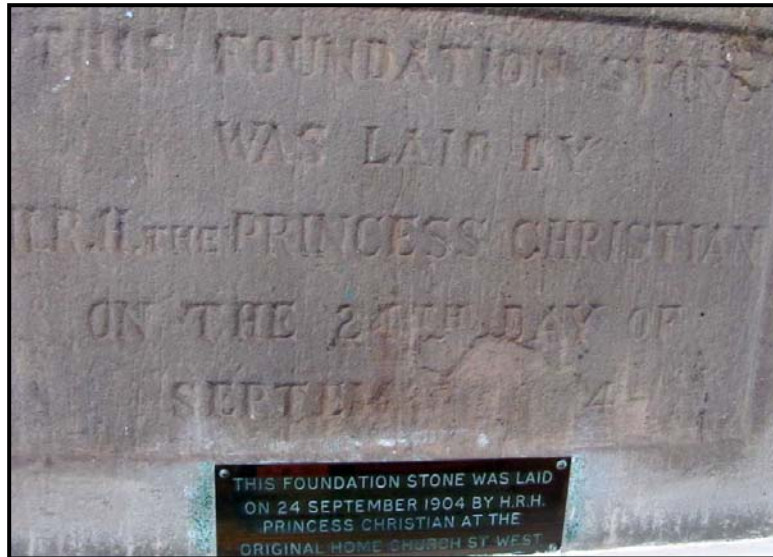
#### Op pad na die begraafplaas. Begrafnisstoet van Prins Victor

In 1904 Princess Christian, accompanied by her daughter Helena Victoria, undertook the long journey to South Africa to visit the grave of her son. When on that Friday afternoon 23 September 1904, she stood at her son's grave, reading the inscription "I HAVE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT, I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH, I HAVE FINISHED MY COURSE", she would surely have given a thought to the multitudes of mothers who would never be so privileged even to know the place where their sons, who had also fought their good fights, had been buried .....

On Saturday, 24 September 1904, the memorable event of the laying of the foundation stone, and the "christening" of the Princess Christian Home for the (Poor) Aged, took place on the premises situated on the corner of Cowie Street and Church Street West, near the cemetery. At the same time the open ground opposite the cemetery was named Prince's Park, in honour of Prince Christian Victor. His mother planted an oak sapling from the garden of Queen Victoria in the park, as well as a sprig of myrtle from the same source on the grave of the Prince. Unfortunately neither has lived to see the centenary .....

Many years onward, the two sisters of Prince Christian would each pay a visit to the Home that bears the name of their mother: Princess Marie Louise in 1923 and Princess Helena Victoria in 1928.

[Het iemand nie miskien 'n foto van die oorspronklike tehuis in Kerkstraat nie? Al wat ek tot dusver kon opspoor is die skildery in die nuwe tehuis in Muckleneuk.]



Hoeksteen van die Prinses Christian tehuis in Kerkstraat

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### Die volgende kom van Felicia Fourie

#### Kate's wedding bouquet – and the Pretoria connection

Prince William's bride's wedding bouquet contained some sprigs of myrtle taken from a bush at Windsor Castle which was planted from the myrtle sprig originally used in Queen Victoria's wedding bouquet. For generations since sprigs of this myrtle have been part of Royal wedding bouquets.

In Pretoria there are myrtle bushes which also originate from "Victoria's myrtle".

On September 27<sup>th</sup> 1904 Queen Victoria's daughter, HRH Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, visited Pretoria to visit the grave of her son, Prince Christian Victor. He had died of enteric fever in Pretoria whilst serving as ADC to Lord Roberts, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in South Africa during the Anglo-Boer War. He lies buried in the cemetery in Church Street West.

Princess Christian's visit to S.A. included stops in Kimberley, Johannesburg, Ladysmith and Pietermaritzburg, with numerous official functions to perform on behalf of her brother, King Edward VII. However, the visit to Pretoria, with the specific purpose of visiting her son's grave, was the focal point of her visit to South Africa.

She had brought with her a sprig of "Victoria's myrtle" to be planted on her son's grave. Seventy years later, Mrs. Miles Bourke, then in her late 80's, recalled that the horticulturist given the task of planting the cutting, had taken a little sprig for himself from which he cultivated a robust plant – and then "bequeathed" a sprig to Miles Bourke, son of Eddie Bourke, and a keen gardener. It was planted in the garden of their home Cloghereen, which today is the home of Unisa's principal. Although the original plant on the Prince's grave has not survived, this plant in Muckleneuk has flourished.

A "descendant" of this bush is at the French Embassy, which was formerly Beckett's Estate. Beckett allowed Lord Roberts to use the property for a military hospital and it was in a room on the south side of the house that Prince Victor died. A recent French ambassador was very interested in the Anglo Boer War and actually established a little museum in the embassy residence. He planted a twig from the "Cloghereen" garden and when it had grown he had a formal unveiling of a plaque on the wall next to the bush to commemorate the death of



the Prince – who was Christian of Schleswig-Holstein although he was an Englishman.

Before leaving Pretoria, Princess Christian had laid the foundation stone of the Princess Christian Home. On this home's centenary commemoration in 2004 a sprig of the myrtle from Cloghereen was given to them – and it, too, is flourishing.

Incidentally, Princess Park was named after Princess Christian after she had officiated at the ceremony to re-name the old Sports Ground.

The official [Royal W]edding web site states that Kate's bouquet contains stems from a myrtle planted at Osborne House, Isle of Wight, by Queen Victoria in 1845, and a sprig from a plant grown from the myrtle used in the Queen's wedding bouquet of 1947. The tradition of carrying myrtle began after Queen Victoria was given a nosegay containing myrtle by Prince Albert's grandmother during a visit to Gotha in Germany. In the same year, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert bought Osborne House as a family retreat, and a sprig from the posy was planted against the terrace walls, where it continues to thrive today. The myrtle was first carried by Queen Victoria's eldest daughter, Princess Victoria, when she married in 1858, and was used to signify the traditional innocence of a bride.



Mirteboom by die Prinsess Christian tehuis  
[Februarie 2010]

Princess Park of Prince's Park ??

Op Donaldson en Hill se kaart van 1899 staan daar "Proposed Park" en staan die straat aan die oostekant van die park bekend as Park Street.

Op Paff se kaart van 1929 staan dit bekend as Princess Park en die straat se naam word aangegee as Princess Park Ave.

Op die Stadsraad se kaart van 2000 word die park benoem as Prince's Park en die straat se naam word aangegee as Prince's Park Ave. So dit lyk asof dit eers Piness Park was en of dit later verander het na Prins se Park.

Groete tot volgende maand, Rosa Swanepoel

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Die volgende navraag van Danie Erasmus

More Rosa, ek het groot waardering vir jou navorsing. Ek vind dit so waardevol, ek kan nie wag dat die volgende nuusbrieff my bereik nie.

Ek doen gereeld "grafjag" as daar tyd is, maar Augustusmaand is die beste want dan is die buite-stedelike gebiede swart gebrand en dan is die grafte mees sigbaar.

Dra jy enige kennis van grafte in die omgewing van Bon Accord Heuwels? Ek soek na Jacobus Lourens Erasmus of Jacobus Lourens Rasmus Erasmus. Ek soek ook na 'n neef Jacobus Lourens Rasmus Bronkhorst.

Weet jy dalk wie begrawe is by die Pienaarsrivierstasie?

Ek soek ook na grafte van Barend Jacobus de Lange en sy vrou Petronella Aletta de Lange geb. Prinsloo na wie Petronella Stasie vernoem is.

Ek soek ook sy seun Prins Willem de Lange wat met 'n Jordaan getroud is.

As jy 'n wenk het kontak my asb.

Baie dankie

Danie Erasmus