

## **PART ONE**

### **THE PIONEERING PHASE OF THE DRC MISSION WORK IN SEKHUKHUNELAND – CHURCH-MISSION PARTNERSHIP**

#### **3. MPHAHLELE – AN OVERFLOW FROM KRANSPOORT MISSION INTO SEKHUKHUNELAND**

Maree (1962:96) tells about a mission journey undertaken by a French group who visited Marabastad in 1873. They met a certain Josias who had started working among chief Molepo's people south-east of Pietersburg (now Polokwane). Chief Molepo did not approve of the Gospel being preached to his people and he persecuted the Christians. A few days later they met Jonatan, a converted Pedi man from the French Mission Basutoland. He had been granted permission by chief Mphahlele to teach and preach in his village.

Mphahlele was situated more to the east, on the other side of the Strydpoort Mountain which one could reach by travelling through Chuenespoort. Christians here were also persecuted. Some fled to Berea, a farm where Swiss missionaries worked.

Between the French, Berlin and Swiss Missions there was an agreement that the Swiss Mission would work amongst the Shangaan people. The Sotho speaking evangelists preferred to work among the Sotho speaking people. However, some did not want to work with the Berlin Mission and decided to work with the "Ned Geref Kerk instead." Thus Josias, Samuel, Jesaja, Johannes and Raphela became evangelists under Rev Stephanus Hofmeyr. Hofmeyr visited Josias at Berea in March 1880. He also visited the chiefs of Molepo, Dikgale and Mphahlele, all of whom fell under the rule of chief Sekhukhune (Maree 1962:97). In one way or the other they were all related. Berea, which later became Palmietfontein, was a few miles south-east of Pietersburg. Josias' successor was Moseto Masekala. Rev Daneel in 1893 wrote of the devotion and zeal of these Christians. Samuel and Miga were some of the evangelists who worked at Mphahlele, 34 miles south of Pietersburg, during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. The revival continued among these Northern Sotho speaking groups, especially at the time when the capital of Molepo was being further developed (Maree 1962:98).

### **3.1 MOLEPO**

In 1886 chief Molepo opened up his village to the mission. Rev Burger of Middelburg and Rev Andrew Murray of Wellington had a meeting with the evangelists of the Kranspoort mission at Molepo in 1887 (Maree 1962:98). Evangelist Frederik Molepo, who was baptized in the St. Stephens Church of Cape Town, had been working there since 1883. He had a membership of 60, with 40 children at school. At the end of October 1891, Rev SP Helm began working at Molepo, where he served until 21 June 1892, when he went to Banyailand. He was succeeded by Rev JW Daneel, who shortly afterwards moved to Goedgedacht, a move that was not accepted by the congregation. They requested that he should be replaced as soon as possible. He was succeeded in 1903 by Rev Hendrik Hofmeyr, son of Rev Stefanus Hofmeyr. These early missionary efforts at Mphahlele and southern station outposts of the Soutpansberg mission opened up the way for later mission work in Sekhukhuneland.

### **3.2 REV SP HELM**

We read further (Maree 1962:113) that Rev Stephanus Hofmeyr received help from Rev SP Helm who arrived in 1887 and started working immediately. This enabled Rev and Mrs Hofmeyer to go on long leave, whilst the work was continued by Rev Helm. On Rev Hofmeyr's return on 26 June 1889, Rev Helm went on a journey to Banyailand, but soon returned and in August resumed his task by visiting the outposts. He lived at Molepo. From May to December 1891 he wrote that he had travelled between 800 and 900 miles by wagon, horse and on foot. He had three evangelists who were responsible for the following outposts: Dikgale, Nkuana, Palmietfontein, Marabastad, Makapansgat, Klein Maraba, Maletse-capital and Mphahlele. This was an important area with Pietersburg at the centre of a 70 mile radius.

### **3.3 REV JW DANEEL**

Rev Helm was succeeded by Rev JW Daneel, the son of Rev AB Daneel, who was the DRC minister at Heidelberg, Cape from 1862 to 1899. He arrived at Soutpansberg in April. In June 1892 he started in Rev Helm's place at Molepo when Rev Helm went off to Banyailand again. In August 1894 he reported to the Mission Commission that he was serving 35 500 people at nine outposts: Molepo, Mphahlele, Makapansgat, Palmietfontein,

Marabastad, Machachane, Maletseland, Nkuana and Dikgale. He had between 570 and 600 people who partook of Holy Communion, 12 schools with 307 pupils, as well as 12 evangelists. He married Rev Hofmeyr's daughter on 12 October 1893. After six years he was transferred to Kranspoort where he fulfilled his life's vision. He worked for 44 years and when he died in 1906 the total statistics read as follows:

*Church goers: 3 127*

*Adults that were baptized: 1 182*

*Holy Communion users: 777*

*Catechumen: 340*

*Conversions during the year: 131*

*Midday school: 681*

*Evening school: 305*

At Mphahlele in Sekhukhuneland the following figures were reported:

*Church goers: 141*

*Adults that were baptized: 28*

*Holy Communion users: 20*

*Catechumen: 8*

*Conversions that year: 6*

*Midday school: 30*

*Evening school: 36*

*Sunday school: 43 (Maree 1962:161).*

### **3.4 MPHAHLELE**

On Sunday, 30 August 1903 (Maree 1962:174), Rev Hendrik Hofmeyr, son of Rev Stephanus Hofmeyr, was ordained as missionary under a tree at Emmaus, near Marabastad. The two brothers-in-law shared the outpost. Rev Hofmeyr was responsible for Bethel (Molepo), Marabastad (Emmaus), Kalkfontein, Berea, Mphahlele, Sebati, Moyapelo, Doornfontein and Eland (districts of Waterberg) with a total membership of 708. In January 1904 Hendrik married Susan Fölscher, a missionary teacher in Mashonaland. The wedding took place at Swellendam. They lived at Molepo. Susan died 29 days after the birth of her third son on 27 May 1915, at the age of 36, and was buried at Molepo.

After the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) annual general conferences were continued. Local members, together with the evangelists of the mission, gathered for spiritual enhancement. On 4 July 1903 the first conference was held at Kranspoort, the main station. In 1905 it was held at Mphahlele. At this conference the evangelists requested that more workers and teachers be sent because of the many opportunities and spiritual needs. The next conference was held at Potgietersrus in June 1906. Mphahlele remained an outpost of Molepo under Rev Hofmeyr until the *TVSV* (Transvaal Women's Mission Society) took responsibility for it as an outpost of Burger mission. This came about when the first missionary, Rev Abraham Rousseau, started the new mission station at Mooiplaas in 1929. Many evangelists and ministers worked at Mphahlele during the Burger mission era. Their names and work appear under different headings. The first black minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa, Edward Moleke Phatudi (1912-1983) was born and raised at Mphahlele (Phatudi 1989:1). Mphahlele remained an outpost of the Burger congregation until 1966 when new borders were set for the presbytery of Burger. Following this, the congregation of Potgietersrus East was responsible for services at Mphahlele. Another man who, almost throughout his life played a very important role in the ministry in Sekhukhuneland, was Rev MJ Mankoe, born 23 May 1932 at Mphahlele (Mankoe 2009b:2).

### **3.5 1926 TO 1965**

It was decided by the Kranspoort mission that the new missionary of the Burger mission would serve Mphahlele congregation, which was situated much closer to Burger than to Kranspoort (*TVSV*-Feesnommer 1905-1930:91). Mphahlele boasted a well-built house for the evangelist and a small church with a pulpit and a neat pulpit cloth with the words: *Modimo o Lerato* (GOD IS LOVE) embroidered by Mrs Hofmeyr, the missionary's wife. The evangelist at Mphahlele was Willard Sefara. He died at the end of 1931 (Louw 1972:19).

When the Burger congregation was officially formed in 1932, Mphahlele became an outstation of Burger. Rev Rousseau served the congregation of Burger and assisted the evangelist. A new church building was started and completed by Rev LC van der Merwe, who succeeded Rev Rousseau in 1941. The opening took place on 13 September 1942 (Maree 1962:221). When Jacobus Murray Louw and Edward Phatudi were ordained as the first *dominees* at Mphahlele on 27 March 1943, Rev van der Merwe left for Belfast

because of ill health. Rev Louw was assisted at Mphahlele by evangelist Mojapelo. He was succeeded by ordained minister, Phineas Kutumela, a converted Nyasa policeman who worked as evangelist in Burger from 1951 to 1954, when he went to Stofberg Memorial School and completed his studies in 1957. On 25 January 1958 he was ordained as a minister and co-pastor for Rev Louw (Louw 1972:32). He worked at Mphahlele for four years. In May 1962 he was called to Boschfontein, where he died in July 1964. Ev Abiël Motau succeeded him. When JM Louw (Koos) was ordained as second missionary on 31 January 1959, Burger congregation was divided into three minister's wards.

Rev Koos Louw took all the outposts of Maandagshoek, while Rev Murray Louw remained at Maandagshoek hospital in his capacity as administrator and Bible translator. He also served for many years as scribe of the presbytery of Kranspoort and on various commissions. Rev Kutumela, stationed at Mphahlele, was responsible for the area around the Olifants River, a total of seven outposts. Working together, Rev Kutumela and Rev Louw Jr. held various youth camps, including one at Mphahlele in May 1959. Rev Kutumela also concentrated on church schools.

In 1944 a private school was opened at Zebediela. At Mphahlele a devoted Mr TJ Kriel was the principal of a secondary school with 70 pupils. He was able to preach in Sepedi and often preached the Word in the Mphahlele church. He and his wife lived at Mphahlele. Rev Kutumela, who started on 25 January 1958 as minister, left in May 1962 (Louw 1972:32). He was replaced by Rev Ramaipadi, who at first had some opposition from certain community members, but persisted and later was completely trusted. He was also elected to serve on school committees as well as the school board. In 1965 when Mphahlele became a ward of Potgietersrus East (*TVSV*) Rev Ramaipadi was moved to Penge. Rev KM Leshilo became the new minister in 1965 (*Ned Geref Kerk Jaarboek* 1987), and remained until his retirement in 1980. He was succeeded by Rev MC Mpe in 1984 and Rev PW Mashabela in 1986. Since 1968 the congregation was known as Lerato, with Mphahlele as a minister's ward together with Groothoek, the missionary's ward. Groothoek, including the mission hospital, became the main station (*NG Kerk in Afrika* 1968:4).

#### **4. MOTHOPONG (MANKOPANE) – THE FIRST CONGREGATION IN SEKHUKHUNELAND**

According to old mission reports, this place was referred to as Mankopaan (*TVSV-Verslag* 1932:26). Mankopane was the first name of chief Nchabeleng. His village, together with other villages around and towards Apel and Strydkraal, are presently known as Ga-Nchabeleng. It is situated on the southern side of the Leolo Mountains, very near the Olifants River. The Mohwetse River also flows through the village and the road from Apel to Schoonoord passes through the village along the southern slopes of the Leolo Mountains. This village is a few kilometers from Mohlaletse, the capital of the Sekhukhune chief. A number of families who became Christians lived at Mankopane. Among them was Phillipus Shaku (Mantsena). His full name was Letlakane Phillipus Shaku. He has a remarkable history which started when he was a young boy of 15. Born as a son of the Nchabeleng clan, he was from the kraal of Molongwane. He and his friends went to the Cape Colony to look for work. When the others returned home, he remained behind. In those days many members of the Bapedi tribe left for the Cape Colony, where they served as labourers on the farms. Mantsena reached Tulbagh, where he met Rev Robert Shand of the local Dutch Reformed Church. Rev Shand employed him, while his colleague, Rev Zahn, instructed him in the Word of God. He was converted to Christianity and became a member of their congregation (*TVSB Ligpunte* 1975:18).

##### **4.1 1875 TO 1897**

In 1875 Mantsena returned to his homeland with his wife, Johanna, who was a descendant of the old Malabar slaves. She could only speak Afrikaans. He arrived unexpectedly and that is why they nicknamed him *Mantsena*.

The year of Mantsena's return is indicated as 1890 in the missionary's reports (*TVSV-Verslag* 1932:18). According to the research of the Nchabeleng brothers of Mothopong, however, the year was 1875 (Nchabeleng 1993:1). Back among his own people, he started to minister to the following members: Makgobong Shaku, Senche Piet Shaku (father of Saron), Boloile Daniël Moroaswi, Joël Makatane Shaku, Silas Mathulwe Maila, Johannes Marweshe Moroaswi, Abel Senche Shaku and Apolos Mathato Mashoene. The congregation held their services under the Marula trees. The church grew and the first to be baptized were Helena Tjebane (Shaku), the wife of Michael Tjebane, and Elias Shaku

in 1902. They were the children of Makentane Shaku. Mothopong was an outpost of the Mphahlele congregation under evangelist Willard Sefara, who was one of the evangelists of Rev Hendrik Hofmeyr of the Kranspoort Mission, Bethal (Nchabeleng 1993:1).

#### **4.2 1898 TO 1925**

In 1904 Mantsena went to Rev AP Burger of Middelburg to introduce himself. When Mantsena approached the reverend and his wife, they immediately gave him their full support. As an evangelist, he was given a few donkeys as well as a monthly salary of one pound. He received further assistance from Rev JTA Maré, the first missionary of the DRC of the Transvaal Church. At the time Rev Maré was stationed at Jakkalsdans near Pretoria (1885-1903). From 1903 to 1913 he was stationed at Middelburg (Crafford 1982:67). Rev Maré visited Mantsena and his wife at Mothopong. The small congregation of Mothopong requested Rev Maré to help them, so two evangelists who were trained by Rev Maré were sent there by the Middelburg DRC in 1897. This support however, was suspended during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902).

After the war, Mantsena, although in his seventies, was still looked upon as an evangelist. He was again visited in 1908 by two missionaries, reverends Vogelzang and Van Rensburg. They wrote as follows: “At the request of Rev Burger of Middelburg, a mission journey to the Leolo Mountains was undertaken by us. Firstly we met Phillipus Mantsena, evangelist of our church, who worked in the village of Mankopane, vice-chief of Sekhukhune. We arrived here on 3 January. When we reached his village we were met by the old friendly evangelist who was not in a position to work far from his home. His wife supported him well and they were regarded as shining lights in their community. He complained about his donkey, which he regarded as willing in spirit but weak in the flesh” (*TVSB Ligpunte* 1975:18). “After this visit an anonymous person from Pretoria provided him with a donkey as well as a saddle” (Louw 1972:11).

#### **4.3 THE MOTHOPONG CHURCH BELL**

The members of the congregation at Mothopong decided to buy a church bell long before the first church building was erected. The men, who went to Middelburg in 1907 to buy the bell, were Johannes Letswalo Nchabeleng, Phillipus Mantsena and Boloile Daniël Moroaswi. They went to Middelburg on foot, a distance of more than 200 kilometers, and

physically carried the bell back to Mothopong. The bell was in use until the first church building in Sekhukhuneland was erected in 1936. The bell was placed outside the church on concrete pillars. When the new church building was erected in 1988 the bell was moved to the new premises. Every Sunday when the bell rings, it echoes the history of the Gospel being preached for more than a century in this village (Jordaan 2006:3).

At the fifth annual meeting of the *TVSV*, which was held at Pietersburg in 1910, Rev B Saayman of Lydenburg presented a report about the work in Sekhukhuneland. He requested support for two evangelists and told the congress about a bell which had been bought for 14 pounds by Phillipus Mantsena and his congregation (Louw 1972:13).

In 1913 Rev Maré moved to Carolina and was replaced by Rev CP van der Merwe of Middelburg. He was succeeded by Rev W Bruwer in 1917, who was also able to visit the congregation of Mothopong (Crafford 1982:151). As from 1920 the work was transferred to Rev PJ Maritz of Lydenburg (Maritz 1977:16).

Rev Maritz baptized Elizabeth Makeke Moleke (nee Maila), Mabopetja Rebone Dipee (Moroaswi) and others. Both Mantsena's wife and Piet Senche Shaku died in 1914. Makgobokong Stefane Shaku, Makantane Joël Shaku and Mantsena all died in 1915. Mantsena was 90 years old when he died. He and his wife were buried in the mission church graveyard at Mothopong.

This graveyard is still regarded as belonging to the mission church, although much has changed over the years. Both in the time of the NGKA and since 1994, when the church became the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, only members of the church have been buried here. The Lutheran Church also has its own graveyard.

The son of Mantsena, Michael Shaku, was sent to Stofberg by Rev AP Burger to become an evangelist. He not only completed his studies, but also taught at one of the mission schools. There was a Dutch school as well as a Lutheran school at Phokanoka (Nchabeleng 1993:1). The school of the DRC was discontinued, but that of the Lutheran Church remained. The Mankopane School developed from this school at Phokanoka. Michael Shaku was transferred to Hoepakranz, but was later replaced by Piet Khomo of the Kranspoort Mission. He was succeeded by Johannes Nkosi. Both Michael Shaku and Johannes Nkosi were sent for training by Rev AP Burger. Nkosi was the son of the chief

of the Swazis of Hoepakranz. He was stationed at Mothopong, but was sent to Hoepakranz when his father died.

#### **4.4 1926 TO 1943**

The *TVSV* sent Rev AJ Rousseau (Purnakana) to start a mission named Burger. The mission station was situated at Mooiplaas near the Olifants River at Apel. This station was only about 10 kilometers from Mothopong. Rev Rousseau was nicknamed Purnakana, because he had a strange manner of walking. “How did he walk?” I asked my informant. He answered: “He was a short man who walked like a tall man” (Nchabeleng: oral communication). According to the *TVSV* report of 1932 a visit was paid by the leaders of the *TVSV* to Mankopaan, where a conference was held. There were seven Christian families, and their homes were built separate from the village. Among them was a blind man called Abel. The elder, Silas was very helpful and a devoted Christian. “A service was also held at chief Mankopane’s lapa” (*TVSV-Verslag* 1932:26).

#### **4.5 MISSION SCHOOLS**

Rev Rousseau encouraged the Mothopong children to attend school and they were also sent to colleges for further training while staying at Burger hostel. A person, who passed Standard 10 in those days, passed the equivalent of Grade 12 today. The first teachers were: SM Nchabeleng (1940), NN Mashoene (1942), VL Maila (1943), SM Maila (1945) and SM Mashoene (1946). The school of Burger Mission continued under Cedric Namedi Phatudi, who became well-known as Pedi leader and later as Prime Minister of the Lebowa Government. Mr Kaboet Rousseau said that he attended school with Cedric Phatudi and the two of them wrote Standard 6 together at the mission school. Kaboet and Cedric both qualified as teachers (Kaboet:tape recording). The Mothopong church was built by Rousseau in 1936. In 1986 the congregation celebrated its 50 anniversary (Jordaan 2007:1).

#### **4.6 1944 TO 1995**

With the relocation of the mission station to Maandagshoek on 1 April 1944, evangelist Mokwena was stationed at Mothopong, where he continued working. Evangelist G Mphahlele succeeded him and when the congregation of Burger was divided in two in

1946, Mphahlele served under the new missionary, Rev AS van Niekerk, who was stationed at Klipspruit. Evangelist MJ Matemane arrived in 1966 and was stationed at Mothopong.

#### **4.7 BURGER MISSION STATION RELOCATED TO MAANDAGSHOEK**

Immediately after the two ministers Edward Phatudi and Murray Louw were ordained at Mphahlele on 27 March 1943, plans were made to relocate Burger station to Maandagshoek. It took time and this caused Murray Louw some concern, but finally they relocated on 1 April 1944. Louw went to Maandagshoek, while Phatudi took responsibility for all the outposts south of the Leolo Mountain, including Mothopong. Phatudi went to Gembokspruit on the Highveld near Nebo. He extended his ministry to places such as Groblersdal, Marble Hall and even as far as Zebediela. At Zebediela, Stephen Njuweni became the evangelist for the Nyasa workers of the Zebediela orange farm estate. Rev Louw also extended his work towards Penge mine, where a congregation of 39 Nyasa Christian mineworkers was established. After three years Rev Phatudi left, having received a call to Magaliesburg (Louw 1972:30).

A new congregation, called Sekhukhuneland, seceded from Burger. On 10 August 1946 they welcomed their first missionary, Rev AS van Niekerk, at the new mission station, Klipspruit, only a few kilometers from Gembokspruit where Rev Phatudi resided. Rev van Niekerk was succeeded by Rev JS Malan on 12 August 1950. Under his ministry a new church building was erected at Strydkraal in 1953, only 15 kilometers from Mothopong and 5 kilometers from the old Burger station. When Malan left, Rev HJ Grobler arrived on 30 March 1961. He left in 1964. During his ministry the outposts at the Olifants River and Mothopong were cared for by Rev JS Mnisi. He was a son of Sekhukhuneland, who began his ministry in 1962 in the congregation where he was reared. He was stationed at Strydkraal, where a parsonage was built next to the church. This became a minister's ward post for all the outposts along the lower Olifants River, including Mothopong.

On 24 October 1964 Rev CH Delpont was inducted at Klipspruit. Rev Mnisi left for Belfast and evangelist MJ Matemane was received at Mothopong. In order to establish new borders for the different congregations of the presbytery, Rev Delpont and Rev

Conradie of Marble Hall were appointed by the presbytery of Burger to form a Planning Committee. In 1966 their proposals were accepted by the presbytery.

The congregation of Sekhukhuneland was divided in two. The southern section remained as it was under Sekhukhuneland, with five evangelists and with Klipspruit as the main station where the minister lived. The northern section was added to Marble Hall with one minister's post at Strydkraal and one post for the missionary at Goedvertrouwen mission station (today called Matlala), as well as two posts for evangelists (*Ned Geref Kerk in Afrika* 1966). The reason for this division was that Sekhukhuneland was too large an area to be served as a whole. Some of the outposts of Sekhukhuneland could be served more effectively by the mission of Goedvertrouwen because they were nearer. Hospital clinics were already functioning at some of these outposts.

Mothopong became an outward for three ministers, one staying at Goedvertrouwen and the others at Strydkraal and Marble Hall.

From 1966 the following ministers have served at Mothopong:

P Conradie	Goedvertrouwen	1961 to 1975
ME Moloto	Leeuwfontein (Marble Hall)	1966 to 1985
JS Phetla	Strydkraal	1967 to 1971
VWM Magagane	Strydkraal	1964 to 1966
MLS Phatudi	Strydkraal	1977 to 1981
GJ Jordaan	Matlala	1977 to 1995
JJ Makgae	Strydkraal	1987 to 1989
MJ Moloantoa	Strydkraal	1990 to 1995
MJ Moroaswi	Leeuwfontein	1999

AM Kupa	GangKwana	1999 to 2010
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Rev Moroaswi grew up in Mothopong. His parents were Christians and members of this congregation throughout their lifetime. His brother, Erasmus Moroaswi, still lives here with his family. In 2007 Rev Moroaswi was transferred to Mothopong following the secession of Leeuwfontein from Lepelle in 2008. Dr AM Kupa was ordained in July 1999 and has served the congregation of Lepelle since this date. As he and his family live only a few kilometers from Mothopong at Gangkwana, he is also available to serve the congregation of Mothopong. His parents were baptized by Rev AJ Rousseau, the pioneering missionary of Burger.

#### **4.8 THE NEW CHURCH BUILDING AT MOTHOPONG**

The church building erected by Rev Rousseau in 1936 was too small for a congregation of about 200 members. On 23 November 1986 the congregation celebrated their 50 anniversary in this church. A new stand was presented to them next to the main road in the village surrounding chief Nchabeleng's kraal (*Mošate*). Rev MLS Phatudi helped the congregation with a ground-breaking ceremony. In 1986 the local church council under the leadership of AL Nchabeleng applied for a steel structure. I was the minister at the time. I consulted Dr J Theron at the Synodical Mission office in Pretoria. He provided the necessary funds and the structure was completed in the same year. I also contacted the Christian students of RAU. We managed to obtain funds to start with the foundation during the July holiday of that year. They stayed at Matlala and we travelled to Mothopong every day for two weeks. It was during the time of the political riots. On our first day the police officer in charge at Mothopong would not allow us to travel or work in the area. I pleaded with him, explaining our situation and the weeks of preparation that went into this project. He relented, but we had to obtain permission from the riot police stationed at Veeplaats before we could travel any further.

We managed to hire a concrete mixer, which was a great help. During these two weeks we moved and used 52 bags of cement and 48 loads of sand and rock with a two-ton truck. Quite a few years passed before we could start building. Mr AL Nchabeleng, as chairman of the building committee, worked hard to solicit funds. They completed the building and

on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1993 the church cornerstone, donated by Mr Danie van Wyk of Groblersdal, was unveiled by Rev Murray Phatudi.

Rev Murray Phatudi is the son of Edward Phatudi, the pioneer black minister of the Dutch Reformed Mission in Sekhukhuneland. The three of them, father, son and Rev Murray Louw were all ministers of this congregation ward at some stage in the past: First Burger, then Sekhukhuneland and now Lepelle. The pulpit was a gift from the Technical College of Ndebele near Marble Hall. The guests included Rev Andries Louw of Valleisig DRC congregation and some of his members and Rev Jan van Jaarsveld of Action Labourers of the Harvest in Pretoria. A former minister, Rev JS Phetla, who also attended Rousseau's school at Burger, conducted the service. Elder MS Nchabeleng, brother of elder AL Nchabeleng, chairman of the building committee, gave a speech about the history of the congregation. He said that the inaugural ceremony was in memory of one hundred years of mission work since Phillipus Mantsena started this congregation in Sekhukhuneland. He rendered valuable assistance with the research into the history of this mission (Jordaan 2007:1). The old church building across the river, which was erected by Rev Rousseau, is still in use, together with the parsonage for evangelists. A crèche is run on the premises by the community. Being the oldest DRC mission church in Sekhukhuneland we have already discussed ways and means of restoring the old church and having it registered as a tourist attraction.

## **5. THE BURGERS OF MIDDELBURG AND MISSION WORK IN SEKHUKHUNELAND**

During the 18 century hundreds of Pedi went to the Cape Province in search of jobs, money and guns. On record (*TVSB Ligpunte* 1975) are Jan Mafadi and Jacob Mantladi, who went to Port Elizabeth, where they were instructed in God's Word. They returned to Sekhukhuneland as believers. They were the first Christians in Sekhukhuneland who worked together with the Berlin mission in 1861.

The history of the DRC mission started with Rev AP and Mrs J Burger of the Middelburg congregation. They had a desire and a vision for mission work in Sekhukhuneland ever since their arrival at Middelburg in 1884. Rev Burger married Miss Janie Boshoff, daughter of the Treasurer-General of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek. She was born on 12 November 1863 in the small Free State town of Boshoff, which was named after her grandfather, President Boshoff. In those days there were only three ministers of the DRC in the whole of the Transvaal. The Burger couple lived at Middelburg (1884-1928) and their congregation was called Nasaret (Olivier 1952:413). Mrs Burger conducted Scripture reading and prayer for the servants every day and had a Bible class as well as a Sunday school for Africans (*TVSB Ligpunte* 1975:17).

In 1897 the native commissioner, SP Trichardt, told Rev and Mrs Burger that he had met with chief Sekhukhune and that the chief was in favour of mission work amongst his own people, especially chiefs Malekote and Mapote near Jane Furse on the Highveld of Sekhukhuneland.

The Burger couple immediately contacted the missionary, Rev TJA Maré, who was residing at Middelburg at that time. He sent Paulus de Klerk and Silas Kahle. Paulus was called Stuurman before he was baptized on 1 March 1869 by the pioneer missionary, Stephanus Hofmeyr of Bethesda (Maree 1962:71).

These two evangelists were trained by Rev Maré at Jakkalsdans and were able to render some services at Goedgedacht, Marabastad and Jakkalsdans (Maree 1962:78). Paulus and Silas were sent to Sekhukhuneland at the expense of the Middelburg Women's Association (*Zusters Zending Vereniging* of Middelburg). In 1899, however, they were withdrawn because of the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War. Their work was not fruitless

though, because chief Sekhukhune agreed that he would send his son, who was to succeed him, to Pretoria for further education.

After the war, in 1904 a certain Phillipus Mantsena visited the Burgers at Middelburg. Mantsena told them that he had worked in the Cape Colony for 47 years. He was converted under the ministry of Rev Robert Shand of Tulbagh, and had now returned to his people near Mohlaletse, where chief Sekhukhune was stationed. The mission ladies of the Middelburg congregation gave him two donkeys for his work as well as a monthly salary of one pound (*TVSB Ligpunte* 1975:8)

Mantsena's son, Michael, was taught by the Burgers at the Middelburg parsonage to read and write. They also undertook to support him so that he could study to become an evangelist at the Stofberg Memorial School.

### **5.1 THE TRANSVAAL VROUE SENDINGVERENIGING (TVSV)**

The strong influence of Mrs AP Burger with the *Zuster's Zending Vereniging* at Middelburg and her vision that all women of the Transvaal DRC should be organized into a united front for the specific purpose of supporting mission work, contributed to the inspiration which led to the establishment of the *TVS Vereniging* (Transvaal Women's Mission Association) on 15 November 1905 (Louw 1972:11). The part played by Mrs HS Bosman of Pretoria was the final impetus needed for such a mission movement to be launched. As a child, Mrs Bosman was challenged by the pioneer missionary of the Kranspoort mission in Soutpansberg, Rev Stephanus Hofmeyr. He once saw her and placed his hand on her saying: "Lettie, what are you doing to spread the love of the Lord Jesus to the non-believers?" Mrs Bosman arrived in Pretoria from Stellenbosch in 1876 as a young minister's wife. During those years the zeal for mission work in Stellenbosch was high, following the Mission Conference of 18 to 19 April 1860 held at Worcester. Ministers like Andrew Murray, his brother-in-law Rev JH Neethling, and Prof NJ Hofmeyer of Stellenbosch urged the DRC to be obedient in preaching the Gospel to the unreached nations of the African Continent (Louw 1972:11).

An opportunity came one day, while she was on her way to her women's prayer meeting, to talk to them about the necessity of mission work. As a result, a regular monthly collection for mission work was held and the money was donated to the Cape Women's

Mission Society (*Kaapse Vroue-Sendingbond*). Slowly the idea of a similar movement in the Transvaal developed. Just before the Anglo-Boer War, three ministers' wives met to discuss the possibility of such a movement. At first they were a bit hesitant, but the discussions led to the forming of the *Predikantsvrouevereniging* (Ministers' Wives Association) in 1897 (Louw 1972:12). It was also decided that each of the 12 women would contribute £2 for mission work yearly. Further, that this initiative should be made known to the women of their congregations. Unfortunately the war started and the congregations had to care for their widows, orphans and the poor instead. This need forced the church to establish the now well-known women's organization, *Die Suid-Afrikaanse Vrouefederasie* (The South African Women's Federation – 1904) (Olivier 1955:13).

When the war was over, Rev and Mrs Louw arranged a social meeting for ministers and their wives at the Boksburg Lake in the form of a picnic. Mrs Bosman again stressed the need for mission work, which was positively received. She then wrote a letter to *De Vereniging*, which was published on 21 October 1903. Mrs Louw confirmed her co-operation and suggested the establishment of a *Zuster's Zending Vereniging* (Louw 1972:12).

This was followed by a ministers' conference at Middelburg in 1904. Here the ministers' wives gave their approval for such a movement within the church. Mrs HS Bosman, wife of Dr Bosman of the Dutch Reformed Church in Pretoria, together with Mrs JM Louw, went to see Mrs Burger at Middelburg in 1904. The three ladies discussed mission work and prayed about it in Rev Burger's study. They decided on a steering committee with Mrs Burger as president and Mrs Bosman as treasurer. After this, Mrs Louw and Mrs Meiring drew up a proposal and in September a call was made to all congregations to send delegates to Pretoria with a view to establishing a Women's Mission organization.

On 15 and 16 September an organization was established with the name: *Transvaal Vrouwen Zending Vereniging*. The first ladies to serve on the management were Mrs HS Bosman as president, Mrs AP Burger as treasurer and Mrs JM Louw as secretary. In his opening speech, Rev Neethling of Lydenburg congratulated the ladies and said that before the Anglo-Boer War his congregation and the ladies of the presbytery of Lydenburg were involved in reaching out to the Pedi of Sekhukhune with the Good News. It was agreed that the management would consist of a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and three other members, who would be elected annually at the general meeting. All the ladies

of the DRC were involved and were asked to contribute six pennies per month or six shillings per year. In 1975 Mrs JF Linde wrote: “In 1905 a mustard-seed was sown that became a tree. Today it is a tree with shade for the many souls who seek the message of salvation” (*TSVB Ligpunte* 1975:16).

## **6. THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH OF LYDENBURG AND THE SEKHUKHUNELAND MISSION OUTREACH**

Pioneering mission work at Lydenburg and the district of Lydenburg played a very important role in the later work done in Sekhukhuneland. The missionary, Rev PNJ Maritz, was the main mover (Maritz 1977:1). He was supported by Rev GD Worst of the DRC (1917-1929) who had a zest for mission work. He believed his church council and congregation should take responsibility for this vast area (Olivier 1952:406).

Rev Maritz was a young man of twenty-six when he served temporarily at Hope Town in the Cape Province. Rev Worst advised him to get married before he went to Lydenburg. The lady in his life, Katie Rossouw, consented and they got married. When they arrived at Lydenburg in 1920 he was ordained by Rev Paul Nel, who conducted the service. His induction took place beneath a canvas specially erected for the occasion. The following Sunday Rev Maritz preached in the DRC at Lydenburg. He was not allowed to use the pulpit, but had to speak from the floor. A missionary was known as a reverend (*eerwaarde*) while a fully qualified Dutch minister was called *dominee*. The missionary parsonage had not been built yet. For a month the couple stayed at Rev Worst's parsonage.

A man who was of great assistance to the Mission Commission was General Schalk Burger. He lived on a farm 17 miles from Lydenburg, and he donated 30 morgen of land to the church to be developed as a mission station. A small house was built on the farm, called Goedgedacht, north of Lydenburg. Their furniture was stored on the stoep while Mr Coetzee was completing the house.

Rev Maritz mentions in his writings that it is impossible to start missionary work without the aid of the indigenous people. One such person was Samson Mnisi. For many years Samson taught at Goedgedacht and diligently tried to keep the small mission congregation going. Some other churches tried to persuade the members of the DRC to join their denominations. Samson was very loyal and tried his very best to prevent members from leaving. He went to one of these church ministers to discuss the problem with him. This minister's argument was: "If straying sheep arrived at your door when it was cold, would you not care and protect them?"

“Yes sir,” Samson replied “but I would set them free the next morning when the sun was shining again.”

Rev Maritz wrote that he experienced much resistance from many European farmers, because they saw in him a ‘Philips and Read.’ The Lord, however, gave him wisdom to deal with them. Some farmers agreed that he should preach the Gospel to everyone, but reckoned he should not educate them. He argued that they should also be able to read the Word of God, but they viewed this as a political danger. The mission commission, however, continued supporting the missionary and his needs. They provided him with a cart and two mules to visit the farms and the outposts as well as the vacant congregations.

The Goedgedacht church could seat about 60 people, compared with the 80 of the church at Lydenburg. Much travelling had to be done in mountainous terrain. The congregations he served were Ohrigstad, Pelgrimsrus, Sabie, Witrivier, Nelspruit, Waterval-Boven, Machadodorp, Dullstroom, Roossenekal and Sekhukhuneland.

In the short space of about three years Rev Maritz succeeded in building six schools around Lydenburg and Ohrigstad. He had very little assistance from local farmers, but was able to make and burn clay bricks. He was strong, healthy and a hard worker, and built the schools single-handedly. The schools were also used for church services, Sunday school and the training of catechists. He mentioned the names of the families who helped him in erecting these schools. They were Malan, Broekman, Du Preez, Swart, Maré, Kruger and Bezuidenhout.

The Maritz family lived at Goedgedacht, 17 miles north of Lydenburg, from August 1920 until January 1927. The mission commission decided to build a new parsonage for the missionary at Lydenburg, from where it would be more central to reach the outposts. Mr Achterberg donated two stands for this purpose. Maritz’s old Dodge car gave in after two years. In 1926 it was replaced with a Chevrolet for the sum of R360,00. In the interim, although extremely difficult in the mountainous terrain, he made use of a bicycle. He and Rev WS Bruwer of Middelburg were the only two missionaries to cover an area bordering Sekhukhuneland, Middelburg, Witbank, Ogies, Morgenzon and Swaziland. Rev Bruwer served in nine congregations and Maritz was responsible for thirteen. Maritz founded all but three of these congregations. He later also succeeded in persuading the mission commissions of three of these DRC congregations to call full-time missionaries. The

*TVSV*, under the inspiration of Rev and Mrs AP Burger, decided to secure a missionary for Sekhukhuneland by calling Rev A Rousseau. Barberton managed to call Rev Stadler, and Ermelo called Rev JH van Schalkwyk.

### **Sekhukhuneland**

This was a vast area with great opportunities that awaited the spread of the Gospel. Rev Maritz and Rev Bruwer were already visiting small groups at Mankopaan (Mothopong), Ga-Mphahlele as well as the Swati group of chief Ngobe at Hoepakranz. Rev AP Burger of Middelburg was also assisting these congregations, and the Burger family sent a son of Ngobe, Johannes, to be trained as an evangelist. The arrival of Rev Abraham Rousseau was a further stimulus to the work being done. However, the question was where to establish his mission station. Platinum had been discovered east of the Leolo Mountain near Maandagshoek, and Rev Worst and Rev Maritz managed to obtain a stand of approximately 12 morgen from the Department of Land near these mines. The place was called Garatau.

At a Presbytery meeting at Lydenburg, Rev Worst pleaded that a mission station be started at Maandagshoek. Rev AP Burger pleaded for one on the western side of Sekhukhuneland. The presbytery commission decided to send the four missionaries of the Lydenburg presbytery to investigate the possibility of a mission station in Sekhukhuneland. They were Reverends Bruwer, Van Schalkwyk, Rousseau and Maritz.

They travelled by car to Zoetvelden, near Nebo, to a place owned by Rev Rousseau's brother. There the four of them stayed for a week, repairing an ox wagon to travel to Sekhukhuneland. Their first stop was at Mahila, situated on the western side of the Leolo Mountain, where they paid a visit to the Native Commissioner. They left the wagon at Mahila and went on foot to reach Hoepakranz on top of the mountain, the place of the Swazi chief Ngobe.

Maritz reports:

*We held a service for them, and from there we descended on the eastern side of the mountain. Rev van Schalkwyk got tired, and the chief gave us four donkeys and a saddle. I knew this area and I also knew that the donkeys were going to cause trouble. When we reached the foot of the mountain, we entrusted the donkeys and saddle to a young man.*

*From there we went on foot to Garatau and Maandagshoek. We investigated the area and returned to where we had left the donkeys, only to discover that the young man and our saddle had disappeared. We had to ascend the mountain again with our donkeys and no saddle.*

*We met someone who enquired where we are heading. 'To Mahila', we replied. He stated that he was also going to Mahila and knew a short cut. We decided to follow him. When we reached the top of the mountain, I realized that we were lost. 'Young man, is this the road?' 'Yes, but I travelled here long ago, but I am sure this is the correct road.'*

*Only at this stage I asked him his name, and he replied: 'Satan.' I remarked: 'Oh, what on earth, on a strange mountain, a dark night, lost without a torch and with Satan as our guide!'*

*We walked further until nine o'clock when Rev van Schalkwyk remarked that the donkeys were gone. We only had a box of matches. In the dark of night, in a prickly pear bush, we were searching for the donkeys with matches. We also discovered at this stage that there were two Mahila villages. From here we walked further in the dark on a broader road, which was easier to follow. At sunrise we arrived at the correct Mahila and our camp. We were very hungry, thirsty and footsore. By then we knew each other well. We realized that Sekhukhuneland had taught us love, born out of hardship, pain and sacrifice.*

*From Mahila we travelled in a westerly direction all along the southern side of the Leolo Mountain. We met chief Sekhukhune at Mohlaletsi and arrived at the Olifants River. There a farmer was willing to sell his farm, which we considered as a possibility for the mission station. The farm was called Mooiplaats. We returned from there to Soetvelden and from there by car to Lydenburg, where we reported our findings to the Commission of the Presbytery. We, in turn, informed the TVSV management, and as a result Mooiplaats was purchased. Rev Rousseau could then start making preparations to erect a new station, which was called Burger, in honour of Rev and Mrs AP Burger of Middelburg, who had exerted themselves over many years for mission work in Sekhukhuneland (Maritz 1977:16-18). (Author's own translation.)*

In January 1943 Rev Maritz accepted a call to Carolina. A few years later, in August 1945, he accepted a call to Ermelo. This was actually just a changing of stations, since for many years he had been the relief clergyman for the region.

When he retired in June 1960, having served as a missionary for 41 years, the Maritz family settled at Kloofsig near Pretoria. On his retirement, the Church Office Commission of the NGKA invited him to assist in the bookshop called the *NG Kerk Mission Book Room*, now known as Dibukeng. His daughter Joey was also working there. Years later the old missionary finally retired.

## **7. THE TVSV MISSION PROJECT IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE PRESBYTERY OF LYDENBURG DRC**

In August 1904, the three women who gathered in the study of the Middelburg parsonage drew up a proposal for the envisaged mission organization. According to the rules of the *TVSV*, the purpose was firstly, to “support mission work in general, by trying to create interest for the expansion of the Kingdom of God within each congregation of the DRC; secondly, to supply information about mission work; thirdly, to collect funds for mission work and to use it accordingly.” Their stipulated vision was to reach “those within the Transvaal as well as those outside its borders, the indigenous inhabitants and others, like non-believers and Jews” (Louw 1972:12).

On 15 and 16 November 1905, 70 women from 17 congregations gathered in the Susanna Zaal of the Pretoria Bosman Church to approve this proposal. At the same time an amount of £325 was collected, of which £30 was paid over to the Synodical Mission Committee of the DRC as the first contribution towards mission work (Louw 1972:13).

At their second congress in 1907, held at Klerksdorp, they decided to send a missionary to Sekhukhuneland as soon as an amount of £50 could be put aside for this purpose (Louw 1972:13). They also approved an amount of £50 for the work in Sekhukhuneland to be continued, as decided at their 1906 congress, held at Middelburg. At that particular congress, Rev HT Gonin of the presbytery of Lydenburg proposed a yearly donation to the presbytery of Lydenburg, designated for the Commission of Missions and to be used in Sekhukhuneland (Louw 1972:13).

At the congress of 1908 an additional amount was approved for two mules, with the provision that the mules were to be vaccinated and used twice a year for travelling to Secoecoens Mountain.

Another important decision was taken at the 1908 congress. It was agreed upon to support the mission work in Angoniland in Portuguese East Africa. After Rev AG Murray of Mlanda addressed the congress regarding the urgent need of the 600 000 non-believers who had not received the Gospel as yet, it was decided that the *TVSV* would make provision for the salary of Rev AG Murray, the DRC missionary in Portuguese East

Africa. This support of the *TVSV* would continue until 1922 when the DRC had to withdraw from Portuguese East Africa.

Rev N Saayman of Lydenburg wrote to the *TVSV* on 28 January 1909: “It is not advisable to go into Sekhukhuneland during January to April, due to fever. For this reason I went during December 1908. We visited the station of old evangelist Phillipus Mantsena. He is still doing great work. We also recognized other missions like Berlin and the Wesleyans, but there are still many villages that cannot be reached.”

At the fifth annual congress held at Pietersburg in 1910, Rev Saayman of Lydenburg was present and he reported about the work in Sekhukhuneland. He asked for two evangelists and also reported about the church bell which evangelist Mantsena and his elders had bought in Middelburg. An amount of 50 pounds was agreed upon, but the delegates were not satisfied that the yearly contribution was sufficient for such an important mission project (Louw 1972:13).

In 1911 the congress of the *TVSV* learned that thousands of Pedi at Sekhukhune’s Mountain were not reached. In 1913, through the missionary of Lydenburg, Rev N Saayman tried again to do some mission work in Sekhukhuneland, but without any success.

The reason why the *TVSV* could not employ a full-time missionary in Sekhukhuneland was that the work in Portuguese East Africa received priority. They were able to fully support the mission work at Mphato with Rev AG Murray as missionary (Louw 1972:13).

In 1916 Rev AP Burger, who still had a zeal for Sekhukhuneland, together with Rev JHM Stofberg, requested the *TVSV* to send a missionary or evangelist to Secoecoens Mountain. This congress and management reported as follows: “The management decided to request the *TVSV* congress to maintain the salary of a missionary for Secoecoens Mountain, providing that the missionary should live at the mountain among the people and that he must be able to speak their language.” Mrs Bosman remarked that it was interesting how the Pedi people desired the white man’s church, notwithstanding the fact that their chief was involved in a fearless fight with the ZAR government. The proposal of the management was approved with a recommendation for a special collection to be held (Louw 1972:14).

On 12 February 1919 the management of the *TVSV* met in Boksburg. On the table was a letter from Rev JHM Stofberg, Mission Secretary, in which he stated that problems were encountered in establishing a mission station with a serving missionary in Sekhukhuneland. The management was not satisfied with the situation.

The next year, in 1920, the secretary reported to the congress as follows: “The work in Secoecoens remains unsatisfactory. We still contribute to the mission committee of the presbytery of Lydenburg. Our aim is still to obtain the necessary property through the Synodical commission and to have a full-time missionary. We are prepared to pay his salary” (Louw 1972:14). The synodical commission was informed that the *TVSV* was still keeping its promise made in 1918 to carry the salary of a missionary, but if this did not materialize within three years the money would be spent on another inland mission project. At the next congress the management committee reported that they had been informed by Rev Theron, the new synod mission secretary that missionaries Hofmeyr and Maritz visited the Secoecoens Mountain three times a year. The congress decided to increase the amount from £50 to £110 in order to have a full-time evangelist under the Lydenburg missionary’s care, in the hope that it would help in the procurement of a missionary soon.

However, in 1923 the Portuguese government closed all the stations in Portuguese East Africa. The same year Rev D Theron, the Mission Secretary of the DRC at that time, suggested that the Lord wanted them to concentrate on the thousands of indigenous people in our own country. He asked the ladies to take full responsibility for the mission in Sekhukhuneland.

The congress in 1923 decided to take responsibility for the mission station to be established at Nebo. Nebo, from where the police and magistrate’s offices were operating, was thought to be the ideal place for a mission station. This, however, did not materialize (Louw 1972:15). At the meeting held on 24 August 1924 the management of the *TVSV* stipulated clearly that funds were needed, but nothing had been done. At the next congress in Heidelberg, the mission secretary reported that everything was in place and that the stations would be erected under the banner of the *TVSV* as soon as a missionary was available (Louw 1972:15).

With the reports before them, they decided to call a full-time missionary to Sekhukhuneland. A call was made in 1925 to Rev and Mrs AJ Rousseau, missionaries in Nyasaland (Malawi). The Rousseau's however declined.

Not long after this, they received a second call and this time they seriously considered it. A nephew of Rev Rousseau reminded him that he had promised God that he would enter the ministry and serve Him in Sekhukhuneland. This happened during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) while he was serving with the ZAR army in Sekhukhuneland. He became gravely ill, and prayed to God to be healed. He took an oath that if he was healed, he would return to the Pedi people of Sekhukhuneland as a missionary. God healed him. He went to Wellington to study theology and after completion of his studies, the DRC sent him to Nyasaland, where he worked for the next 15 years. In 1925 he responded positively to the *TVSV*'s calling and returned during the same year. He lived on his own farm, Eensgevonden, near Nebo. His brother, Frikkie Rousseau, owned the neighbouring farm, Zoetvelden, now called Kgarathuthu.

## **8. BURGER MISSION STATION**

Rev AJ Rousseau reported in person to the delegates at a congress of the *TVSV* held at Ermelo from 4 to 6 December 1926. He told them that the following denominations were also working in Sekhukhuneland: Lutheran, Wesleyan, Episcopal, Bapedi-Lutheran and the Ethiopian churches. He mentioned that some evangelists of the DRC had been working in the area for the previous 20 years, and reported that the Synodical Mission Commission had obtained a piece of land at Garatau near Maandagshoek with a view to starting a mission station there. However, he had decided not to use this property for a mission station, since it was divided in half by the Leolo Mountain on the one side and the Steelpoort River on the other. Secondly, it was peaty-ground and therefore not suitable for building. Close by was a large location at Maandagshoek, where the Platinum Mine workers stayed. Rev Rousseau mentioned the names of evangelists Johannes and McDonald Chitja, who were helping him at Garatau, Hoepakranz and Mankopaan (Louw 1972:16).

### **8.1 SECOND CONGRESS**

At the second congress in 1927 Rev Rousseau reported about his work at Garatau, Hoepakranz, Mankopaan, Eensgevonden, Zoetvelden, Korenkopjes and Masetleng.

At a presbytery meeting in Lydenburg, Rev Worst of Lydenburg made a plea for the new missionary, Rev Rousseau, to start his mission station at Maandagshoek, in the east, while Rev AP Burger favoured the western side of the Leolo Mountain. The presbytery's decision was to send the four missionaries in their service, Rev Bruwer, Rev van Schalkwyk, Rev Rousseau and Rev Maritz, to investigate the area with a view to a recommendation. They travelled by car to Rev Rousseau's brother at Zoetvelden, from where they proceeded by ox-wagon. This story is told by Rev Maritz in his biography. From Zoetvelden they undertook an extensive tour of the Leolo Mountain and the lower Olifants River to find a suitable location for a mission station. Eventually the four missionaries recommended Mooiplaats at the Olifants River near Apel. In 1928 the *TVSV* bought this farm for £2 000 (*TVSB Ligpunte* 1975:19).

The same year Rev Rousseau moved with his family to the neighbouring farm, Strydkraal, where a house was available for them. They stayed here temporarily while the parsonage

and other buildings were being erected at Mooiplaats. In 1929 the parsonage was completed and the family left their small three-roomed house for a better home.

## **8.2 THIRD CONGRESS**

At the 1928 *TVSV* congress it was reported that the farm Mooiplaats had been bought by the *TVSV*. The first building project, a parsonage for Rev and Mrs Rousseau, was already under way. Rev Rousseau was the supervisor-cum-builder and with the assistance of local indigenous people, the building was completed for an amount of £300. He also fenced off the area with barbed wire. Rev Rousseau informed the congress that he received no support from the European farmers in the area. He was also concerned about the few conversions: only six non-believers were allowed to become members and receive baptism, one of them the old mother of the chief at Masetleng. He mentioned that the Roman Catholic Church had bought 1 600 morgen for £5 000 ten miles from the Anglicans. Immediately the Roman Catholics formed a working relationship with a medical doctor, as well as with teachers, nurses, agricultural workers and technical people. The DRC had none of these skilled workers and urged the congress to consider all options (Louw 1972:17).

## **8.3 BURGER MISSION STATION AT MOOPLAATS**

In 1929 the mission station of Burger was officially opened. The parsonage, a small church and a small hospital were in operation. Fruit trees were planted and a vegetable garden was established. The opening of the mission station was attended by several chiefs, church members and various guests. Major Hunt, the Native Commissioner, also conveyed good wishes. Rev Olivier and Rev Endemann took part as visiting missionaries. Since he was able to speak Northern Sotho, Rev Olivier took the lead. On Sunday morning he conducted a small meeting where Holy Communion was served to twelve European and six African believers (Louw 1972:17).

The Rousseaus and their three children, together with Sister Pietersen and Mr Schraader, formed the official staff of Burger mission station. In 1929 Miss Bettie Schutte joined them as teacher. During 1930 to 1931 the following staff members were added: Mr and Mrs Swart as well as another teacher, Miss Retha van der Merwe.

A house was built for the evangelist and a corrugated building served as a girls' hostel and nurses' home. There were 52 day-school and 22 evening-school children at Burger. The school had a total of 57 pupils in 1932, but more than half of them were non-believers. Of the pupils 40% were baptized in other churches and only 10% belonged to the DRC. At the school a Christian Youth movement was organized, which was attended by all, even the non-believers.

The work developed sufficiently for the congregation of Burger to be registered in February 1932. This development allowed Rev Rousseau and the elder to attend the first Mission Synod held in Johannesburg in March 1932 as delegates. They represented the 120 members of the DRC of Burger congregation. In December 1935 the statistics were as follows: 175 members; 525 souls and 509 pupils in day schools (*TVSV-Verslag* 1935:40).

#### **8.4 MEDICAL MISSION**

Sister van Schalkwyk was in charge of the hospital. From June to October 1932 a total of 1 219 patients were treated: 784 children under the age of 12; 298 women and 137 men. Most of the patients suffered from whooping cough, influenza, colds and other ailments, including malaria. The medical work was important in establishing good relationships with the community. The first medical doctor arrived in August 1934 and only stayed for three months. In 1936 Sister van Schalkwyk got married and was replaced by Sister Robbertze, who was very keen that a medical doctor should be appointed, but this only happened in 1938, when Dr I le Roux was appointed. Miss Maggie Mare became matron of the girls' hostel and Mr Gerrie Jansen started as a male nurse, assisting Dr Le Roux. Miss Maggie Mare got married to Rev Conradie and Dr and Mrs le Roux left. This was a serious blow to mission work in Sekhukhuneland. However, they were replaced by Miss Wasserman and Miss van Rensburg as mission workers, and Mr AD Fourie, a master builder who renovated the buildings at the mission station. On 27 October 1940 Rev Rousseau retired and accepted demission due to ill health. In February 1941 Miss Welham came as school principal, but left again to continue her studies. Miss Wasserman joined the Sudan Mission (Louw 1972:20).

## **8.5 EVANGELISTS WHO WORKED WITH REV ROUSSEAU**

1. McDonald Chitja was stationed at Garatau. He also worked at Hoepakranz on top of the Leolo Mountain, where thirty members already formed an outpost for Burger Mission. He also served at the platinum mine at Maandagshoek and was financially supported by the *TVSV*.
2. Aaron Moraka was stationed at Gembokspruit and was financially supported by the *Manne Sendingbond* (Christian Mens' Movement). He was responsible for the farming area.
3. Silas Mohoje was stationed at Eensgevonden. He was financially supported by the *Kindersendingkrans* (Children's Mission Movement).
4. Isak Khopochane was stationed at Buffelsfontein. He was supported by the Women's Mission Society of Middelburg and the Sekoekoene branch.

It was here that the Roman Catholic Church had purchased a piece of land.

5. Edward Mafanyolle was stationed at Gaataan, approximately 28 miles from Marble Hall on the Olifants River. He was supported by the *TVSV*.
6. Alfonso Mokoena was stationed at Mankopaan. It was a strong outpost, but matters deteriorated when the evangelist returned to his old ways.
7. Willard Sefara and his wife were stationed at Mphahlele (*TVSV Feesnommer* 1905-1930:90-91).

## **8.6 OUTPOSTS OF REV ROUSSEAU – BURGER MISSION – 1935**

(Report of the *TVSV* Congress held at Utrecht, 30 November to 3 December 1935)

### **Mphahlele**

Mphahlele was an outpost of the Kranspoort Mission of Rev Stephanus Hofmeyr. Kranspoort was handed over to the Burger Mission which considerably enlarged the membership of that congregation. At Mphahlele a house was built for the evangelist as well as a church with a pulpit. The pulpit cloth, embroidered with the words *MODIMO O LERATO* (The Lord is Love) was made by Mrs Hofmeyr. An existing small school was

run by the mission in co-operation with the community. The incumbent evangelist, Willard Sefara died towards the end of 1931. He was succeeded by Evangelist Isak Khopochane. Rev and Mrs Daneel of Kranspoort conducted a conference with a theological group of women in October 1935. Mphahlele was the strongest of the Burger outposts.

### **Garatau**

Garatau was an important outpost 58 miles from Burger mission, which at one stage had been under consideration as a main station, but was found to be unsuitable. The station consisted of 30 morgen of land at the foot of the Leolo Mountain and next to the Maandagshoek platinum mine. This piece of land was purchased by the mission commission of the DRC. Evangelist McDonald Chitja was already working here under difficult circumstances. After a visit by Miss Nettie Bosman, a daughter of Rev and Mrs HS Bosman, Nettie came to the following conclusion: “The small church building is a disgrace to the mission, because it is dilapidated and has no windows or doors. Liquor plays an overwhelming role in the community, to the extent that several church members are not able to resist the temptation. It has happened on many occasions that Rev Rousseau came to serve Holy Communion and had to leave without doing so” (Louw 1972:18).

Garatau was one of the new missionary outposts where Holy Communion could be served. He also visited the adjoining mine, where a few hundred mine workers from Nyasaland were employed. In total about 800 mine workers were living in the mine’s hostel. Rev Rousseau requested permission from the mine manager to preach to the workers. The manager replied: “If it is the DRC that worked in Nyasaland, you have my permission, because these workers are polite, responsible and submissive.”

### **Buffelsfontein**

The following remark appeared in the 1905 to 1930 special issue of the *TVSV* Journal: “Just as the Lord needed an ass for his journey to Jerusalem, He sometimes needs a small piece of land on a farm for His work, which is sometimes refused” (*TVSV* Feesnommer 1905-1930:90). According to the 1935 report, however, Phillip was sent here and started a school with 32 children. A few years later Evangelist Isak Khopechane was transferred to Buffelsfontein.

### **Hoepakranz**

Hoepakranz, the village of Ngowe, was situated on top of the Leolo Mountain, a climb of 3½ hours on foot. It had a church with approximately 30 members who received Holy Communion. The incumbent evangelist stayed in the Swazi community. Services took place in the school. In 1935, 13 adults who had become full members of the church were baptized. A Zulu speaking evangelist, Thomas Dennis, was placed here. The school had 30 pupils.

### **Gaataan**

This village at the Olifants River was only 28 miles from Burger and an important outpost. Evangelist Edward Mafanyolle was stationed here. He also worked on the farms in the area. In 1935 Pako Tema, an elder from Bethesda, was the teacher. Under his guidance the number of pupils attending the school increased to 55.

### **Eensgevonden and Zoetvelden**

These are two adjoining farms. Rev Abraham Rousseau started a school on his farm, Eensgevonden. The farm Zoetvelden, where a school for European children existed, belonged to a relative, Frikkie Rousseau. Rev Rousseau's two sons, Kaboet and Joubert, attended this school. A more complete history of these outposts is included elsewhere in this dissertation.

### **Eensgevonden**

Silas was still visiting this village. The chief of Marishane had started his own tribal school and did not encourage his people to send their children to the mission schools. We were nevertheless able to baptize a number of people who were converted to Christianity.

### **Mankopaan**

Mankopane was the first name of chief Nchabeleng of Ga-Nchabeleng's father, Mankopane Nchabeleng. This name changed to Mothopong with a unique history of its own, because it was here that the pioneer Mantsena, started the DRC mission with the aid of Rev and Mrs AP Burger.

### **Korenkopjes**

Korenkopjes is a farm situated about 10 kilometers from Eensgevonden. (Unfortunately this outpost, like many others, ceased to exist after Rousseau left. It was revived again in 1985 under the ministry of the Matlala mission – Jordaan 2006:23.)

### **Masetleng**

Rev Rousseau reported to the *TVSV* congress of 1928 that six non-believers, elderly women, had been baptized during the year and a few attended the catechism class. One of them was the mother of the chief at Masetleng.

### **Seseseo**

Seseseo (Sesehu) is 1½ miles from the station. With their permission, a small building belonging to the German congregation was used as a school. Maputheo was the teacher of 16 pupils. (Today this place is still called Sesehu although spelled differently in the reports because of fixation of the orthography of Sepedi. In former times the service station here was known as Apel. The name Apel can still be found on road signs.)

### **Leswatsi (India)**

This post was situated 12 miles from Burger station. Leswatsi was the tribal chief. The school had 45 pupils and we erected a small church which could be used for services on Sundays and as school during the week. (This building, built from blue rock stones, was demolished by the school committee, after which a new church was erected in 1987 in exactly the same spot – Jordaan 2006:14.)

### **Libia**

This post is 14 miles from Burger station, but the school is not functioning too well.

### **Phaahla**

This school is a registered school with 28 pupils. A few Christians are also staying here.

### **Gemsbokspruit**

Here old Aaron is still doing good work and several non-believers have already been baptized. A local farmer, Mr Paul Mills, renders invaluable assistance.

### **Uitkyk**

Due to Aaron's efforts, a new school was started here with Miriam as teacher and with 18 pupils.

### **Klipspruit**

This place is owned by the local community. A sister-mission group brought their own teacher along to start a new school six miles from the existing one, but this was met with resistance from the community. They started their own community school with 18 pupils. The community is Zulu-speaking and do not want the Sotho language to be used in the school. Flora Nkuleni, formerly from Goodhope, is the teacher. Her departure led to the temporary closure of the Goodhope School.

### **Krokodilheuwel**

Evangelist Silas Mohoje, previously from Eensgevonden, was transferred here. His daughter, Susanna, is the teacher at the school and there are 26 pupils. There are as yet no Christians in this community.

### **Vlakspruit**

The school has 24 pupils and Jackson is the teacher. Although he has not achieved great academic success, one thing is certain: the children have a good knowledge of the Bible.

### **Malemati**

This school was transferred from the Mission to the Location Council of Mphahlele, since it was preferred that all surrounding schools be regarded as branches of the main school at Mphahlele. This proved to be an unfortunate error. When the transfer took place, the

school had 90 pupils, but the number has now dwindled to 78. We are in the process of applying for registration as an independent school of the mission of Burger.

### **Lesetsi**

A small church building is being erected at Lesetsi, but because of problems with the Location Council of Mphahlele, the work has been delayed. [The report on schools and outposts is contained in the Congress Report of the *TVSV* held at Utrecht, 30 November to 3 December 1935 at Utrecht (*TVSV-Verslag* 1935:37).]

### **8.7 REV LC VAN DER MERWE**

On 27 October 1940 Rev Rousseau retired because of ill health. He accepted a call to Stofberg Theological School in 1940. The missionary post remained vacant until the arrival of Rev L van der Merwe in November 1941. He immediately started to pay attention to the spiritual needs and upliftment of the people. With the assistance of Mrs van der Merwe, Gerrie Jansen and a theological student, Edward Phatudi, he held refresher courses for all the school teachers at a winter camp. Rev van der Merwe only stayed for 13 months, but in that time he succeeded in organizing the congregation, completing the new church building at Mphahlele and registering several schools. Unfortunately he became ill and had to return to Belfast in 1943 (*TVSB Ligpunte* 1975:19).

## **9. PIONEER OF MAANDAGSHOEK MISSION STATION: THE LIFE AND WORK OF MURRAY LOUW: 1 APRIL 1944 TO 21 JANUARY 1962**

I consider Jacobus Murray Louw Senior, who was to transfer the Burger mission from Mooiplaats to Maandagshoek, as the pioneer of this new mission station. Dr Louis Louw, also a Dutch Reformed Church minister, who was born and grew up at Maandagshoek, wrote about his father's work and included it in his treatise for a BD degree from the University of Pretoria. Much of the present material was gleaned from what he was able to obtain from his family and what he himself could recall.

### **9.1 EARLY LIFE**

Jacobus Murray Louw was born on 18 September 1918 in Boksburg. His father, James Murray Louw, was the DRC minister of that congregation. His mother was Gertruida Johanna Louw who, together with two other minister's wives, Mrs AP Burger and Mrs HS Bosman, was a founder member of the *TVSV* (Louw 1972:22).

In 1922, as a boy of four, Jacobus was present at Graaff Reinet when the Murray family celebrated his great-grandfather, Rev Andrew Murray Senior's arrival in South Africa. Rev Murray Senior was the father of Dr Andrew Murray, whose writings have been an inspiration to many.

After matriculating in Boksburg, Jacobus Murray Louw (better known as Murray) enrolled at the University of Pretoria, as one of the first six students of the newly formed Theological Faculty of the DRC. He obtained his BA degree in 1938, after which additional studies took him to Europe for a year. On his return, he continued studies at UP until 1940.

Murray was interested in mission work in Mashonaland, but submitted himself to God's will, to send him wherever He chose and in His own time. The Lord spoke to him through Psalm 27:14: "Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord". On 26 November 1942 he was ordained and on 11 January 1943 received his first call to Randfontein mission, which he declined. On 25 January he received a second call, this time to the congregation of Burger.

## **9.2 ORDINATION AT MPHAHLELE**

The *TVSV* was overjoyed when the young Louw accepted the call to one of their mission stations! He was installed at Mphahlele on 27 March 1943, together with Edward Phatudi as co-minister. Edward was the son of the local Chief Mphahlele and a fully trained minister of the mission church.

They were commissioned at a ceremony which took place under a thorn tree, as the church building was too small. Rev Ben Marais, later professor at UP, spoke on behalf of Murray and Rev CB Brink on behalf of Edward. Mrs Louw, Murray's mother, and one of the ex-presidents of the *TVSV*, had the privilege of robing him in his father's ordination gown. It was an unforgettable and emotional moment. That same day Murray and Miss Helena Kritzinger got engaged. She faithfully supported him for the next 19 years – 1 year awaiting marriage and 18 years as his wife and faithful assistant in Sekhukhuneland.

On 30 March he arrived at the mission station where he was welcomed by male nurse Gerrie Jansen. Two days later he went to Maandagshoek to investigate the possibility of an envisaged new mission station, and on 4<sup>th</sup> April he preached at Burger.

## **9.3 FROM BURGER TO MAANDAGSHOEK**

Rev Louw only stayed at Burger for a year, during which time he and Helena got married. On 3 March 1942 Rev C van der Merwe gave the following reasons why the work at Burger ought to relocate to Maandagshoek (Louw 1972:27):

1. Burger was well catered for by other church organizations, notably Lutheran, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, AME and Roman Catholic.
2. The non-believers there preferred to associate with the older churches.
3. Burger was situated near the AME Head Office.
4. The school hostel could only accommodate 25 of the 67 pupils who came from nearby villages.
5. Because of the unhealthy climate at Burger, members from the Highveld did not send their children to school.

6. Water was scarce and the soil of poor quality, so an agricultural school was not an option.
7. Burger was too near to Jane Furse (Anglican) Hospital, which did not favour the possibility of establishing another hospital in the vicinity.
8. It was situated in a tropical area.
9. There were too few members in Burger.
10. New buildings had to be erected and this could as easily be done elsewhere.

Reasons for favouring Maandagshoek were the following:

1. At Garatau, a few kilometers from Maandagshoek, the mission already had a school of 75 pupils.
2. East of the Leolo mountains about 40 000 people had not yet heard the Gospel. Only the Lutheran school was involved on a small scale.
3. The final argument was that a medical mission at Maandagshoek would have a great impact on the people of Sekhukhuneland.

Rev Stofberg of the Mission Office was already negotiating with the mining company, which required an amount of £12 500 for the entire property of 4 993 morgen. This was more than the *TVSV* had available at that stage. The negotiations continued and in God's time and plan the *TVSV* was advised that the Native Trust had decided to buy Maandagshoek from the mining company and also to buy Burger mission station (Louw 1972:18).

In the case of Maandagshoek, the Trust was willing to give occupation rights to the DR Mission for 100 morgen of land. This was reported at the congress of the *TVSV* held on 5 to 7 October 1943. Much uncertainty and a long wait for the missionaries preceded the finalizing of this whole transaction. No projects could be planned, continued or completed. Finally the negotiations were settled and on 1 April 1944 the move became a reality.

In his annual church report Rev Louw stated:

*It is a great privilege to write this report here at our new mission station, Maandagshoek. By the Lord's grace Mr Gerrie Jansen, my wife and I arrived here on 1 April 1944. A long-awaited dream was now realized.*

*On March 30 the thought of 'Ebenhaezer' came to us when we spoke to the school children of Burger. On Sunday morning, 2 April, at our new place, we committed ourselves to the Lord's service, encouraged by the Scripture that came to us from Psalm 24:3-5: 'Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation.' We are extremely grateful to the TVSV, the mission secretariat and the Native Trust office who had made this move possible (Louw 1972:21). (Author's own translation.)*

In an article written by Mrs Leen Louw, she reported as follows:

*On the closing of the Burger Mission, the personnel were transferred to Maandagshoek, a farm on which platinum was discovered. In the beginning of 1925 it was world news – a world famous South African geologist announced it in the Government Gazette. As a result, fortune seekers from all over the world flocked to the Southern part of the Leolo Mountains to try and become rich overnight. What they did not know is that this discovery opened the way for the establishment of the Maandagshoek Mission Station (Louw 1975). (Author's own translation.)*

On 1 April 1944, after months of preparation, three young people, Rev Murray Louw, his wife Leen and a male nurse, Gerrie Jansen, started their journey through the Leolo Mountains to Maandagshoek, near Burgersfort, in the eastern part of Sekhukhuneland. Maandagshoek would be the new venue for the Burger church.

The mine at Maandagshoek was not very profitable, so the buildings were abandoned and made available for the mission's use. Altogether 12 buildings were thus inherited. Immediately the old mess hall was turned into a hospital, the laboratory into a school, one of the single quarters into a home for Gerrie Jansen and the mine manager's house into a parsonage. Other buildings were used as a hostel and as teachers' accommodation.

The missionary was assisted by nine evangelists and a minister, who worked in different parts of Sekhukhuneland. All over, small schools were started which at the same time served as outposts for mission work consisting of Bible classes, catechism and services for those who became members.

The outpost nearest Maandagshoek is Garatau. Evangelist Philip Mophethe and his wife, Emily, were stationed here. Another outpost, called Hoepakranz, was situated right on top of Leolo Mountain and could not be reached by vehicle. Mrs Leen Louw used to visit this outpost together with Mma Emily, the wife of the evangelist. They were usually accompanied by other praying ladies (*bomme ba thapelo*). Mrs Louw said: “When we reached the top and the school was in sight, Mma Emily usually requested that we should kneel down in prayer, to ask God's blessing on the prayer meeting” (Louw 1972:24).

Male nurse Gerrie Jansen worked faithfully and diligently, establishing outpost clinics and administering treatments for general ailments. He was assisted by Lot Gondwe, who came from Malawi. Lot was helpful with the filling of bottles of medicine. The first mission doctor, the well-known Dr Paul Bremer, arrived in 1947.

While Mooiplaats was sold to the Native Trust, the mission kept occupational rights to the boys' hostel, the school and the house of the evangelist. This house served as a clinic. The spiritual work was handed over to Evangelist Mokoena, who was staying at Mankopane (Mothopong) eight miles away. Everything – the hospital, the hostels and the Standard 6 class was relocated to Maandagshoek, where 12 buildings with altogether 60 rooms were available to accommodate the new mission station (Louw 1972:29).

Rev Louw started at Maandagshoek with the help of seven evangelists: Mojapelo at Mphahlele, Mophethe at Garatau, Mpe at Eensgevonden, Matome at Buffelsfontein, Makoena at Mankopane, Moraka at Gemsbokspruit, and Nkosi at Hoepakranz. Moruti Phatudi stayed at Gemsbokspruit, near Klipspruit.

Following his inauguration (1 April to 30 June 1943), in his first report, Rev Louw expressed his gratitude for the good meetings held during Pentecost. A total of 230 full members received Holy Communion. He found the vast area to be covered and the organizational work very taxing. In addition, he was sowing the seeds for the forming of a new congregation as an extension to Burger (Louw 1972:25).

In 1943 another two evangelists were appointed: Evangelist Stephen Njuweni (Nyasa) was placed at Zebediela and Evangelist John Sasa at Buffelsfontein. The latter died from malaria soon after his arrival on 15 May 1944.

During 1944 three new outstations were established: Hopefield, Steelpoort and Mooihoek. In 1945 the mission was served by 10 evangelists, including Evangelist Chitja, who returned after an illness. He replaced John Sasa. Another Nyasa man, Raphael Nambuzi, was placed at Penge, where he served 1 000 Nyasa mine workers. In 1944 the membership of the DR Congregation of Burger was made up as follows: 190 Bapedi, 100 Swazi and Mapors and 70 Nyasalanders. Penge alone had 39 Nyasa members (*TVSV-Verslag* 1945:42).

The Sebetiela outstation developed from the Burger congregation to form a new congregation called Potgietersrus East. Evangelist Chitja was transferred from Buffelsfontein to Ottensville, but the people who came to his services were scoffed at by the non-believers. (Buffelsfontein and Ottensville are closely situated to each other.)

#### **9.4 BURGER DIVIDED**

A new congregation was formed south of the Leolo Mountains in 1946. Rev AS van Niekerk was appointed minister of the congregation on 10 August 1946. He had three evangelists working with him and, to begin with, 120 members out of a population of 50 000. Burger retained 255 members in an area with 50 000 souls. Rev van Niekerk had four evangelists working with him (Louw 1972:30).

Three new evangelists were added: Philip Mophethe returned from Johannesburg and was placed at Maandagshoek; Evangelist Shadrack Banda was placed at Penge, and Evangelist Thomas Masekela at Rostok, where a new church building was erected and opened on 10 May 1948. This church outstation was renamed Kwano. Through the name change the community indicated their satisfaction with this church. Evangelist Thomas Masekele left and Evangelist Malope succeeded him.

At Maandagshoek the old church building collapsed and the congregation started to collect funds for the building of a new one. At Hoepakranz Evangelist Abraham Malope, who was converted under the ministry of Rev AJ Rousseau, was placed following the completion of his studies at Stofberg. In 1952 five new evangelists were welcomed: Abiël

Motau (Mphahlele), Stefanus Nkosi (Mashishi), Herbert Luhanga (Maliptsdrif), Ishmael Thoabola (Hoepakranz) and Isak Chakalane (Maandagshoek) (Louw 1972:33).

### **9.5 AFTER TEN YEARS: 1943 TO 1953**

Membership increased from 320 in 1943, to 411 in 1953. Zebediela and Sekhukhuneland were not included. More than half of the 618 new members left the congregation to work elsewhere. Four out of five were baptized as adults. The missionary had to serve Holy Communion 38 times per year because of the increased number of outstations. Three young men went to Stofberg for training as evangelists and one person went for training as a minister.

### **9.6 1954 TO 1961**

On 4 September 1954 a newly built church was opened at Maandagshoek, seating 350 people. It was available to the personnel and patients of the hospital. The membership in 1955 was 470, with 100 new candidates for confirmation. Chief Mashishi and two of his daughters were also baptized. The congregation had 18 outstations.

On 18 September 1956 the Mission's builder, Hannes Potas, died and was buried at Maandagshoek. He was replaced by Willem Smit (Louw 1972:34). In 1957 three new church buildings were opened: Malemati, Moshira and Masete. Rev Murray Louw had to undergo a kidney operation on 12 September 1958. His health deteriorated and on 10 May 1961 he had a second operation. Fortunately, when his many-sided activities – church duties, hospital-related tasks, administration and many other responsibilities – caused further weakening, a second missionary was called to assist him. Jacobus Murray Louw, the missionary's nephew, was inaugurated on 3 January 1959 at Maandagshoek. To avoid confusion, since he was the son of AA Louw, when referring to the nephew, this was usually indicated by adding 'AA' (Louw 1972:34).

### **9.7 MAANDAGSHOEK MEDICAL MISSION**

The medical mission of the DRC played a big role in reaching people with the Gospel and winning the favour of the chiefs who were ruling their tribes.

## **9.8 MALE NURSE GERRIE JANSEN**

Gerrie did monumental work at the Mooiplaats Burger mission, from 1 July 1942 to 30 June 1943. Under difficult circumstances as many as 39 patients and 1 332 outpatients were treated at the hospital, and another 2 470 outpatients at the four clinics which he visited every 14 days. During this period, a total of 668 injections were given (Louw 1972:36). The people around Burger mission were unhappy when the medical section was transferred to Maandagshoek. Gerrie accompanied Rev Murray and Mrs Helena Louw to Maandagshoek. Immediately the number of patients increased, while the out-clinics mushroomed to six in all. Morning devotions were held by Rev Louw, Gerrie, the nurse and some prayer group ladies. Gerrie went for further training in 1946 and returned to Maandagshoek on completion of his studies.

## **9.9 THE HOSPITAL**

A year after settling in at Maandagshoek, Miss Zülch of the St. John's Ambulance came and assisted in the medical section free of charge. Angelina, the sister of Rev Phatudi, also joined the medical staff as a nurse. Lot Gondwe was a faithful medical assistant (Louw 1972:36).

The mission's builder, JL Potas, had erected a sluice-room, a bathroom for women, a pantry and an isolation ward. His wife took care of the linen. Dr H Vlok joined the staff on 1 January 1947. Drs PM Pienaar and ACK Malherbe also joined, but stayed for a short period only.

Dr Paul Bremer, the first permanent doctor, was appointed Assistant District Surgeon. Sister Joey Stephenson came in 1948. Dr Bremer left the same year and was replaced by Dr PJ Jacobs. Dr Jacobs was able to equip the hospital with the necessary medical instruments and other utensils. Sister Nortjé, the mission farmer's wife, joined in 1949 and the daughter of evangelist Mophete further supplemented the medical staff (Louw 1972:36).

## **9.10 A NEW HOSPITAL**

At the *TVSV* Congress of 19 to 21 October 1945, held in Witbank, the Congress allocated an amount of £4 000 for the building of a new hospital. This was undertaken by the

mission's builder, Charles Hockey, who made sure that enough space was allocated for a fully equipped hospital.

Mr JD Janse was the mission's farmer. He left on 12 December 1946 and was replaced by Mr and Mrs Nortjé, who worked at Maandagshoek for almost 10 years. Mrs Nortjé assisted the hospital staff and both of them were eager to do spiritual work among the patients and staff. In 1949 a total of 21 beds were available, 31 414 outpatients were seen and 11 519 patients were treated at the nine district clinics. The Provincial authorities took over some of the hospital services (Louw 1972:37).

Funds were obtained by means of fees charged in the case of patients who were able to pay, such as mine workers. Provincial support under the hospital ordinance of 1946, plus some financial contributions for infectious diseases from the Department of Health, also helped to augment the budget for medical work. In October 1950 Gerrie Jansen returned to Maandagshoek as a qualified male staff nurse.

In 1951 the Administrator of the Transvaal, Dr William Nicol, unveiled a plaque at the front entrance to the hospital with the Scripture text: "Lord, the one you love is sick" (John 11:3). Dr Nicol also explained the policy of the Administration: They would pay for medicines and medical and hospital equipment as well as the salaries of hospital staff; the church would be responsible for the buildings, but would be subsidised on a pound-for-pound basis (Louw 1972:37). After Mr Gerrie Jansen left in 1951, Dr and Mrs W Zöllner came from Berlin to help out on a temporary basis (*TVSV-Verslag* 1952:17).

On 10 October 1953 the hospital with 115 beds was officially opened. On this occasion, the President of the *TVSV* and mother of the missionary Murray Louw unveiled the cornerstone of the mission church, built near the front entrance to the hospital. Dr WM Eiselen, Secretary of Native Affairs, unlocked the doors and addressed the guests. He spoke in Sepedi and encouraged the Bapedi to start projects themselves, which would develop their life-skills and contribute to a better and healthier standard of living.

With the departure of Dr Pieter Jacobs in 1953, Dr HC Boshoff, Mrs Niewenhuysen and Dr A Schröder joined the staff. Dr Boshoff became Hospital Superintendent. He married Mrs Niewenhuysen in 1954. The Hospital was named after him in 1970 (Louw 1972:37).

Between 1954 and 1955 the number of outpatients treated at the 37 clinics increased to 200 per month and the patients to an average of between 140 and 160. A Nurses' Training College was started at Maandagshoek, a TB clinic was built and Dr Chris Jacobs joined the staff.

In the following year Dr IV de Jager came as third medical officer and Mrs NJ Bos was appointed hospital secretary. She assisted Miss W Neethling, who had been working there for a long time. Dr Wessels helped out for several months, and Dr JM Smalberger was appointed as fourth doctor. Sisters Spaargaren, Nortjé and Benecke were replaced by Sisters Zeeman, Van Zyl and Calitz. Sisters van Heerden and Schröder brought the total to five trained sisters and 40 nurses in training.

The hospital had 175 beds; an average of 178 patients per day were treated in 1956, and 200 per day in 1957 (*TVSV-Verslag* 1961:82). In 1959 Dr Chris Jacobs and Dr Smalberger left and Dr DP Cronjé replaced them. The TB hospital with 160 beds was added, bringing the total of beds available to 316. A total of 286 patients per day were treated. At the out-clinics a total of 29 257 were treated.

### **9.11 DR HC BOSHOFF**

When Dr Chris Jacobs left, Dr HC Boshoff was appointed as superintendent. From the 1960 to 1961 report we learn that Dr W du Plooy, Sr JJ van der Merwe and Miss SSM Kritzinger joined the staff. Miss Kritzinger did valuable work in teaching the patients all kinds of handcraft. Another three nursing sisters came – Sisters C de Putter, E Retief and Mrs M le Roux.

On his own initiative, Dr Boshoff started a pig farm. The 1961 report contains the following: “The pig farming enabled us to enlarge certain sections of the hospital, such as another wing, offices, an abattoir and an enlargement to the children's ward. His pig farm consisted of a total of 1 400 pigs” (*TVSV-Verslag* 1961:81).

Under the inspired leadership of Rev Murray Louw, the medical mission of the DRC, which started as a small mission clinic with four outside clinics run by one person, Mr Gerrie Jansen, burgeoned into a big modern mission hospital at Maandagshoek, with 300 beds and more than 40 clinics. The crippled evangelist, Joseph Mashabela, worked

untiringly every day to spread the Gospel to the patients. The hospital afforded opportunity for daily evangelization in the wards and clinics.

## **9.12 HISTORY OF MISSION SCHOOLS**

Rev Murray Louw, in his first report given on 26 August 1943, advised the *TVSV* as follows: “This very important channel for evangelization in Sekhukhuneland is still a powerful vehicle for bringing the Gospel to people. Church schools are being built at this moment at Goedvertrouwen, Leeuwkraal, Rietfontein and Vlakplaas.”

Notwithstanding the influence of the traditional schools, the attendance of the schools doubled in comparison to the 1941 and 1942 figures of 620 pupils.

In June 1943 there were 1 270 children in 21 schools with 29 teachers – 14 teachers in the six registered schools and 15 teachers in the 15 church schools. The church did not have enough teachers of their own, so they appointed teachers from the Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian churches as well (*TVSV-Verslag* 1943:46).

As from 1944 another teaching post was granted for Garatau by the Department of Bantu Education, while the church was able to start a school at Zebediela and also at Maliptsdrif. The *TVSV* also had bursaries available for those pupils who wanted to attend the DRC secondary school and training college at Bethesda. The children trained at this institution proved to be willing, mannerly, and obedient, able to speak Afrikaans well and loyal to the Dutch Reformed Church (*TVSV-Verslag* 1944:9).

In 1945 the pupils in registered schools totalled 700 and those in private schools 525. There were a total of 17 private schools, of which three had to be closed because of poor attendance. When the Sekhukhuneland congregation was formed in 1946, the Burger congregation retained two registered schools and six private schools. The new congregation was responsible for the running of four registered schools and seven private schools. Altogether a total of 1 435 pupils were under the care of the mission (*TVSV-Verslag* 1945:43).

A big problem was that pupils did not care to go much further than the grades before leaving school. In August 1948 there were five teachers and 495 children – 75% of them still in the grades. Another problem was to get qualified teachers. The Education

Department also widened the gap between its own objectives and the mission's aim for more and effective religious education.

Although the registered schools increased in 1949 from two to five, Rev Louw was not satisfied. He presented his case to the Education Commission (Louw 1972:39). The number of pupils continued to increase and in 1951, 612 children, of whom 521 were in the grades, attended the nine schools. They received Bible tuition on a daily basis and it remained a very important source of candidates for confirmation and membership of the church. Rev Louw was pleased that the school project increased the DRC mission's favour with the authorities. In some places, such as Malipitsdrif, their initiative was preferred to that of the Roman Catholic Church. In 1951 Rev Louw received five invitations from chiefs to start schools and spiritual outreaches. It all depended on the availability of funds and personnel (Louw 1972:40).

### **9.13 THE GOVERNMENT TAKES OVER**

It was government policy to take over all schools gradually and to incorporate them as part of the Department of Bantu Education. Yet the church still had good relations with school committees. In 1955 there were still nine schools to be transferred to the government. By 1957 twelve of the fourteen schools were controlled by the government. In most of these the teachers continued with good religious teaching. Most of the young candidates for confirmation came from the schools where the teachers faithfully proclaimed Christ (Louw 1972:40).

### **9.14 REV MURRAY LOUW AS MISSIONARY**

Rev Louw played a major role in church, hospital and schools. His untiring and humble work greatly contributed to a breakthrough in establishing a Christian stronghold in Sekhukhuneland. He learned to speak Sepedi within 18 months after starting the work in 1943. From 1954 until his death in 1968 he was a member of the Commission for the Revision of the Bible in Northern Sotho. While at Maandagshoek, he acted as scribe to the Transvaal DR Mission Synod from 1951 to 1962. He was also scribe to the presbytery of Kranspoort during this period. In 1960 he served as chairman of the presbytery of Burger. Other positions included members of the Commission for Evangelization, the Commission of the Federal Council of Mission Churches (*Federale Raad van Sendingkerke*), and the

Law and Revision Commission (*Orde en Revisie*), curator of the Wellington Institute and member of the local management committee of Stofberg (Louw 1972:40).

His first priority was his work and call as missionary to Sekhukhuneland and to his own congregation. During his ministry in Sekhukhuneland, he baptized 933 and catechized 750 people. Mrs Louw faithfully supported him. The Lord blessed them with five children:

Marietjie	born 1944/11/07	at Carolina
Murray	born 1946/10/26	at Zebediela
Louis	born 1950/02/28	at Maandagshoek
Gerda	born 1956/07/20	at Maandagshoek
Andrie	born 1958/01/29	at Maandagshoek

A unique occasion for the Louw and Phatudi families was when, in February 2009, Andrie and Legodi were both sworn in as judges in Pretoria. They are the youngest sons of Murray Louw and Edward Phatudi. As the two fathers had stood together on 27 March 1943 for their ordination, so these two young men stood together to take the oath as judges!

In a letter to Murray, a Lutheran minister who knew him well wrote as follows on 13 June 1960: “I must admit that you are like a brother to me, not only in the Lord but also in different ways.” When he heard about Murray’s illness and possible operation, he wrote: “I am willing to be a kidney donor, so that you may be healed. As soon as they can confirm that you would be healed if such an operation could be done successfully, I want to donate my one kidney to you.”

### **9.15 REV LOUW ACCEPTS A CALL TO PRETORIA**

In 1961 the NGKA North synod invited Rev Louw to become their secretary and he accepted. On 31 October 1961 he wrote to Mrs JF Linde, President of the *TVSV*: “I was willing to work here until my death, but I am convinced that it is God's Spirit who guided

me to accept this call. I am going to Pretoria in faith to become the Head of Administration for the NGKA” (Louw 1972:41).

On Sunday, 21 January 1962, he delivered his farewell sermon in the Maandagshoek church, from 2 Corinthians 5:14, the same text he had used for his inauguration 19 years before: “For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.”

Rev Louw served in only one congregation, Burger. While working in Pretoria he became the manager of the DR Church Missions Bookstore (*NG Kerk Sendingboekhandel*) with shops in Pretoria and Johannesburg.

As a young man who worked at Heart Publishers in Johannesburg in 1963, I came to see Rev Louw at his office, 512 Bosman Street, regarding the publishing of Sunday school text sheets. His office was situated in an old house. He was friendly and helpful and gave me an order, for which I was grateful.

At that time I did not know that God would one day also call me to become a missionary in Sekhukhuneland and that I would tread where he had trod. Neither did I know that the bookshop where he served would become *Dibukeng* where I too would work from 1<sup>st</sup> June 1996, after retiring from serving in only one congregation, Lepelle.

He served on many church and mission commissions while in Pretoria. Although he had to undergo regular kidney dialysis, he untiringly laboured till the end of his life. He died on 28 August 1968. At his burial his son concluded with a eulogy written by his friend and colleague, Edward Phatudi and which was published in *Die Kerkbode* (Phatudi 1969:13). Edward was ordained with him on 27 March 1943 at Mphahlele.

“In sincere and loving remembrance I want to lay a wreath on his grave. Rev Louw was ordained on 27 March 1943 at Mphahlele as missionary for Burger congregation in Sekhukhuneland. He served for 19 years. This area encompassed Pietersburg, Middelburg, Lydenburg and Groblersdal. There is evidence of his work in all these districts. We find in him a man of God who came to Sekhukhuneland, an untiring worker, a man who challenged the heathendom in the Name of Christ” (EM Phatudi).

## **9.16 JACOBUS MURRAY LOUW – BORN 19 NOVEMBER 1930**

Jacobus (Koos) Murray Louw was ordained on 3 January 1959 in his first congregation, the Burger Dutch Reformed Mission Church at Maandagshoek. He is the son of AA Louw, the eldest brother of Rev Murray Louw (Louw 1972:33). He married Anneleen de Beer on 2 April 1950 at Maandagshoek and the Lord blessed them with four boys: Arno, born 26 October 1961 by means of a caesarean operation, was the first white baby to be born at this hospital. Ferdinand was born on 17 April 1963. After they left Maandagshoek for Bronkhorstspuit (1963) and Ratanang, Bourke's Luck (1966-1972), they were blessed with two more boys, Murray and Perold, born on 1 June 1966 and 24 June 1968 respectively (oral communication).

Extracts of reports written to the Board of the *Transvaal Vroue-Sendingvereniging* or *TVSV*, who commissioned them, appears in the addendum.

## **9.17 EVALUATION**

### **Murry and Koos Louw reports**

Many pioneering missionaries of the DRC, like Rev Murray Louw, suffered because of the unhealthy climate of the Sekhukhuneland lowveld. This was the case also with Rousseau, Van der Merwe and Burger. In this part of Sekhukhuneland, the heat during summer time is unbearable. There are no clear seasonal differences. The six months from September to March with extreme heat from November to March are not good for overworked human beings. The roads were bad and the distances between the posts far away from each other. Services on Sundays were usually in the morning, but also in the afternoon at another post. During the week, schools, building projects and meetings had to be attended to. The burden which a missionary carried because of the unreached people with a shortage of workers, with some workers causing many problems and the weak spiritual condition of the believers could also have contributed to the fact that the *TVSV* decided to send a second missionary to Maandagshoek. He was Murray Louw's nephew, Jacobus (Koos) Louw. He was a great encouragement to the senior Rev Murray Louw whose health deteriorated to such an extent that he could not cope with the workload. I noticed that these two missionaries worked together in the congregation of Burger for four years. It was the only time in the history of the presbytery of Burger that an assistant missionary

post existed. Koos Louw's reports indicated that he and another black minister Rev P Kutumela of Mphahlele served as partners together in an area which was divided in 1966 so that one section was added to Lerato congregation (Mphahlele section) and the other section (Mphaaneng and India) was added to Lepelle. Kutumela and Koos held youth camps at Mphaaneng. The sketches and reports about these missionaries, evangelists and black ministers particularly indicate with whom they served together, the period they worked together and new posts they started. This was a mission in partnership. Prayer letters and news from the missionaries later also pointed out clearly that they all worked together as 'missionaries.'

## **10. THE FIRST BLACK MINISTER IN SEKHUKHUNELAND – EDWARD MOLEKE PHATUDI – 1912 TO 1983**

### **10.1 EARLY LIFE**

Edward's father was chief Mmutle III, also known as chief Phatudi III. Edward was the first-born son of wife number eight, who gave birth to six children, four sons and two daughters. His mother was the daughter of the late Kgoši Sekhukhune, which meant that Edward was of royal lineage on two sides, i e Sekhukhune and Mphahlele. Chief Mmutle III, his father, accepted western civilization. He was strongly opposed to tribal schools because he believed that they were hampering progress. He also wanted his chieftainship to come to an end. He therefore warned Edward that if he dared crown himself as a chief of Mphahlele in his youth, in manhood or even in old age, he would never see the sun rise again. Chief Mphahlele said that he was the last chief of the Mphahlele tribe and not one of his sons should ever succeed him as chief (Phatudi 1989). His biographer wrote:

*Edward Moleke Phatudi realized at this point that he would never be a chief of the Mphahlele tribe; he then received the calling to become a minister and spent the years during 1939 to 1942 studying. He negotiated with his brothers and chief Phatudi Mphahlele to change their surname as a way of identifying their generation. The chief advised them to take his first name as their new surname, Phatudi.*

*The reason for this was that the surname Mphahlele was well-known. Edward Phatudi had realized this fact and he wanted the people to make a distinction between the Mphahleles and the royal blood family in future. The second reason for changing their surname was that their first names were more or less the same and people were reading documents not meant for them.*

*Unfortunately only a few, like his younger brother the late Cecil Seputule Phatudi, who was an agriculturalist, and a half-brother, the late Dr CN Phatudi, who became prime minister of the Lebowa Local Government, followed his idea. Some preferred to keep the old surname Mphahlele while others combined the two: Phatudi-Mphahlele (Phatudi 1989:4).*

## **10.2 THE SCHOLASTIC DAYS**

Edward started his education at the Dutch Reformed Mission, but after a few months he returned to the mission school of the Presbyterian Church at Mphahlele, his hometown. In 1921, at the age of nine, he entered the Mphahlele Community School established by his father and the Mphahlele tribe – the first community school in the Northern Region. The school was initially named Mabjana-Maswana and is today known as Matsobane School. Thereafter he and his brother CN Phatudi went to Kilnerton Methodist Training Institution. He qualified as a teacher in 1933 and started teaching at Mamabolo School at Mamabolo village. In 1936 he was appointed principal of Hofmeyr Community School at Dikgale village. In the same year he was appointed as a lecturer at Bethesda Training Institution, where he was to lecture Northern Sotho. He was also appointed as the first hostel principal (Phatudi 1989:7).

## **10.3 AS A MINISTER OF THEOLOGY**

In 1937, while teaching at Bethesda, Edward went to Rev CL Brink, who was the minister at Bethesda, to inform him of his intention to study theology. Rev Brink agreed to this.

Rev Brink realized that Edward Phatudi was the eldest son of Chief Mmutle III and, from a traditional point of view, had to be his successor. Rev Brink therefore went to Chief Mmutle III to obtain written consent for the proposed studies. Chief Mmutle III was angry, because he had hoped that his son would become a medical practitioner. He wrote a letter of consent, but told his son that he would not pay for his school fees since he had no respect for a minister of theology, which he regarded as the lowest of all professions.

From 1938 to 1942 Edward went to Stofberg. With the money he had, he paid for his studies. For the first time, on his arrival at Stofberg, he also had to study Afrikaans as a subject (Phatudi 1989:13).

The first congregation that Rev Phatudi served was Burger, in the region of Sekhukhuneland. On the 27 March 1943, history was made when for the first time a black minister and a white minister, Rev EM Phatudi and Rev JM Louw, were simultaneously ordained under a tree at Mphahlele village. Rev Phatudi served the congregation from 1942 to 1946 (Phatudi 1989:19).

Rev Phatudi had many obstacles to overcome. Chief Sekhukhune first attempted to kill him when he refused to marry his daughter, Thorometsane. The second attempt was when he refused to take over the kingship of Mphalele. Dr HF Verwoerd, the Prime Minister of South Africa during the early sixties, once offered Rev Phatudi an excellent post as leader of the North, but he declined the offer. He felt that he had to remain obedient to his vocation as a minister of religion. He served in Dr Verwoerd's Indaba from 1953 to 1963, representing the DRC. Dr Verwoerd also wanted the DRC of Sekhukhuneland to call Rev Phatudi so that he could be nearer to his office, but he refused. By then he was minister at Heidelberg, where he assisted the congregation in building a beautiful church. He rejected the call since, according to him; it was not a calling but a temptation. When the second call came from Sekhukhuneland, he resigned from the Indaba in 1963 (Phatudi 1989:13). Before this, he had served Burger from 1942 to 1946, Magaliesburg (1946-1949) and Pretoria West (1949-1952).

#### **10.4 EDWARD PHATUDI, THE FAMILY MAN**

When Rev Phatudi retired at the end of 1982, he and his wife moved to Lebowa-Kgomo. His text at his demission service was 2 Timothy 4:7: "I have run the great race, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." They had their own house built near Chuenespoort, not far from the place where he was ordained as minister of Burger together with Rev JM Louw (27 March 1943). Since those early days the mission in Sekhukhuneland had expanded and one new congregation after another was established. In 1982 the presbytery of Burger consisted of the following congregations: Burger, Sekhukhuneland, Lepelle, Philadelphia, Motetema and Lerato. When the Phatudis retired, Lebowa-Kgomo was part of Lerato. Rev Phatudi was still willing to serve. During that time I was the relief clergyman at Lerato. He contacted me, and the church council of Lerato agreed that Rev Phatudi could be called to assist the congregation. In January 1983 I ordained him in a school hall at Lebowa-Kgomo as assistant minister. He served for one year only.

He married Malesolo Grace Mojapelo on 9 December 1943. From this marriage four daughters and three sons were born. Murray Seputule, the eldest of the sons, became a minister. Mrs Phatudi played a very important role in the CVV (*Christelike Vrouevereniging*) from 1949 to 1983. She was honoured as lifelong President of the CVV

of the Northern Transvaal. Throughout her life she supported her husband in his work (Phatudi 1989:23).

### **10.5 MURRAY LOUW SEPUTULE PHATUDI**

His eldest son, Murray Phatudi, was also preparing for the ministry. He finished his studies at Turfloop and was called to Lepelle as their new minister for the Strydkraal ward. This ward is the oldest part of Burger mission. The church and parsonage at Strydkraal, where the young Phatudi started his ministry, is only 10 kilometers from the old Burger mission station of Abraham Rousseau, where his father and Murray Louw started their ministry in Sekhukhuneland in 1943.

*Die Sendingblad* (November 1977) reported as follows:

*On Sunday, 27 March 1977, candidate minister Murray Louw Seputule Phatudi was ordained in the big church at Tsimanyane in the office of minister with the laying on of hands. More than 600 people gathered in and around the church among the green trees. Thirty four years before, on 27 March 1943, candidate minister Phatudi's father, Rev Edward Phatudi, and Rev Murray Louw were ordained at Mphahlele as ministers of Burger congregation. This day, 27 March 1977, was a special day of remembrance, also a day decreed by the Lord: candidate minister Murray Phatudi had been named after his father's colleague, the late Rev Murray Louw. Rev Louw was ordained as minister on 27 March 1943. Thirty-four years later to the day, another Murray Louw was ordained to serve in the same region. This time it was a black Murray, son of the man who had been ordained together with Murray Louw back in 1943 – a son of the DRC in Africa. This event brought the Louw and Phatudi families even closer together. Today the eldest son of the late Rev Murray Louw, also named Murray Louw and minister of the DRC in Africa, and the eldest son of Rev Edward Phatudi are serving together in the same church, the DRC in Africa. The white Murray and the black Murray (Jordaan 2006:386).*

Mrs Leen Louw, the wife of the late Rev Murray Louw was present at this inauguration, as was her son, Murray, also a minister and translator of the Year 2000 Pedi Bible. His mother wrote the following letter:

Pretoria 3/4/1977:

*Dear Friends,*

*I want to thank you heartily for the hospitality I received last week-end. It was refreshing to have visited a mission station again and especially Matlala. So many memories went through my heart. I could not believe that it was real. Firstly, it was wonderful as spouse to be at the side of the man Murray Louw senior, who was so dedicated to the Lord's work. He loved the Bapedi. After his first kidney operation, when he was still under the influence of the anesthetic, he urged us to pray for the Bapedi. When he became Church Secretary of the Synod of the DRC in Africa in Pretoria, he mentioned to different people that if he could be healed by the doctors giving him the kidney of a baboon he would return to Sekhukhuneland. Through Murray Phatudi I feel that I am again connected with the work in Sekhukhuneland. I pray for you all by name – and remember, the greatest privilege is to be in the Lord's service. Love, Tannie Leen. (Author's own translation.)*

Before Murray Phatudi arrived, his parsonage at Strydkraal had to be renovated. It is an old house built in 1953. Strydkraal is 50 kilometers from the Leolo Mountains. The DRC of Marble Hall assisted with funds to restore the house. The roof and ceilings needed attention. A new front door, a new coal stove and window panes were installed and the rooms were painted. The church, built in 1953, was also renovated and diamond mesh fencing was put up. One night while Jack Mampolo, Johannes Nkogatse and I were sleeping inside, an unwelcome intruder was prevented from entering when Jack woke up to close one of the windows. He battled to close it properly but managed anyhow with a bit of force. The following morning when we woke up, a snake was hanging outside with its neck squashed near the window handle. It was a night adder. God had protected us.

Rev Phatudi got married to Annah Moshokoa soon after he was ordained. Their first son, Edward, was born at Strydkraal on 24 March 1978. With the help of his father, who was then serving as minister of Tshwane at Atteridgeville, Rev Phatudi purchased their old church benches when the Atteridgeville congregation installed new ones. I arranged with a farmer, Mr Kryn Roodzant, to collect them with his five-ton lorry. These benches were installed at Strydkraal as well as in a newly built church at Masanteng, near Tsimanyane.

Rev Phatudi also helped to start a fund for the building of a new church at Mothopong. The Mothopong church council managed to obtain a piece of land on the road to

Schoonoord in the new village of Mothopong. The ground-breaking ceremony was conducted by Rev Phatudi. In 1981 he accepted a calling to Mokopane, and on 24 July 1993 had the privilege of unveiling the cornerstone of the new church building at Mothopong.

**11. EVANGELISTS OF THE BURGER MISSION – AS REPORTED BY  
REV MJ MANKOE**

The evangelist who worked with Rev Abraham Rousseau at the Mooiplaats station of Burger mission for twenty years (1926-1946), was Alphons Mokoena. His wife, Maria, had a good relationship with Dora Mshane, the daughter of chief Sekhukhune. She was a believer who witnessed for the Lord and she had great appreciation for the Mission of the DRC (Rousseau, Kaboet:tape). She travelled with Mrs Rousseau and they did wonderful work among the women, youth and children.

Other evangelists whose names appear on the list of those who were present at a church council meeting held at Mphahlele on 5 February 1935, were S Mohole, J Khophochane, McDonald Chitja, A Moraka and Johannes Nkosi. At this time, evangelist P Mophethe served at Mphahlele.

**McDonald Chitja**: He was the pioneer evangelist for Garatau near Maandagshoek. He also served Hoepakranz on top of the Leolo Mountain, the place of the Swazi chief, Ngowe, where about 30 members resided. To reach them, a climb of 3½ hours on foot was required.

**Thomas Masekela** married Martina Pahlase on 27 February and started at Kwano on 25 May 1947. He pioneered this outstation, where he worked for a few years before accepting a call to Kempton Park.

**Lazarus Masege** married Helena and was placed at Ga-Mphahlele on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1947, but left in 1951 for Zeerust. The couple had six children.

**Abram Molope** married Maria and started working at Hoepakranz on 11 January 1950, but left for Bethesda after a few years. The couple had four children.

**Solomon Letoaba** and his wife, Salome, worked at Maandagshoek from 4 May 1949 to December 1951. They had four children and received a calling to Nylstroom.

**Ishmael Mosiuoa Hoabala** married Anagleta Mapetla. They served at Hoepakranz from 8 December 1951 to the end of 1952, when they departed for Harrismith. They had five children.

**Bajuwel Phiri**, born 1907, and his wife Nazibet worked at Penge from 31 August 1950 to 18 October 1953, when they returned to Nyasaland. The couple had two children.

**Phineas Ngoanapheme Kutumela**, born 17 July 1911, married Julia Ntebele. They had five children. He finished his studies as evangelist in November 1950 and was inducted on 24 December 1950 at Kwano. In June 1954 he was transferred to Mphahlele. From there he went to Stofberg Theological Training School on 25 January 1955, where he studied further to become a minister. On 14 December 1957 he received a call to Burger congregation. He was inducted as minister at Mphahlele on 25 January 1958.

**Joël Rasefako Makakaba**, born 1906, grew up in Nylstroom district. His wife was Foibe Moima. They were childless, but adopted three children: Fransina, born in 1936, daughter of Naftali Makalaka; Foibe, born in 1942 and Aletta Moima, born in 1946. Evangelist Makakaba studied for two years at Stofberg, but failed to pass his exams. He started as an evangelist at Morotse on 12 February 1951 and was officially sanctioned by the synod in March 1956. On 31 July 1960 he left for Soekmekaar congregation.

**Abiël Jacob**, born in 1905, was a Mo-Sotho from Basutoland. After completing Standard 3 on Miss Annie Watermeyer's farm, Elgin, he started working. He went to Decoligny near Umtata for his training as an evangelist from 1949 to 1951. Abiël was married to Alina. They had five children. He started his work in Burger congregation on 28 January 1952 at Ga-Mphahlele. In 1955 he went to Taung. In 1960 he went to Morotse and from there to Ga-Mashishi.

**Kadali Robert Sangweni**, born on 15 March 1927, was a Zulu from Mahlabathini. He had his training at Dingaanstat and started his ministry at Hoepakranz on 24 January 1953. He married Mina Dhlamini. They had two children. On 18 May 1956 he left for Natal and served later at Babanango, but returned to Hoepakranz in March 1957. In July 1959 he left for the congregation of Empangeni.

**Isak Topollo Chakalane**, born on 6 March 1918, was a Mo-Sotho. His wife died on 18 April 1952. The couple had two children. He married Salmína Kutumela (born Khanya) on 12 June 1954. In January 1957 he left for the congregation of Dealesville.

**Herbert Lulanga**, born April 1917, was a Nyasa who lived with his parents in London, where he passed Standard 5. His mother died in 1950 and his father in 1952. After his father's death he returned from London and worked in the Rustenburg district and also at Dundee. From 1950 to 1951 he studied at Stofberg. He started as an evangelist in Burger congregation on 16 January 1952, but only stayed for one year. In December of that year he left for Barberton.

**Stefaans Josias Nkosi** was born on 16 April 1926. He was a Swazi from Klipspruit mission near Nebo. He went to study at Stofberg after he passed Standard 7 (Form 2). He was the first evangelist who started working at Ga-Mashishi. On 27 July 1953 he was married to Marta Matsipa, a member of the Bapedi Lutheran Church. They had four children. In June 1960 the church council suspended him.

**Abel Molefe Makakaba**, born on 4 October 1902, was a Mo-Sotho who grew up at Nylstroom. While he was studying at Stofberg, his wife passed away in 1953. The couple had ten children. In 1954 he started his ministry at Steelpoort, on the farm of Mr JRG Louw. In 1954 Abel was married again, to Ellen Molefe. In January 1956 he was transferred to Ga-Mphahlele but returned to Maandagshoek at the end of that year. His services were discontinued by the church council on 6 May 1961, after which he left for Sibasa.

**Ernest Marokana** started as an evangelist at Pietersburg in 1943, but moved to Burger where he began his ministry on 1 August 1954. His wife was Blandina and the couple had six children. He later moved to Soekmekaar.

**Edmund Kapari Marengwa** was born in 1926 and baptized in 1950. He could not complete his studies at Stofberg in 1953, but worked at the mission of Boekenhoutfontein. From there he was transferred to Mafafe on 1 February 1956. He left for further training at Dingaanstat on 31 January 1957.

**Mafiwa Edgar Moloko** was born at Bethesda in 1911. He was baptized at Sophiatown when he became a member of our church and started as an evangelist at Malemati on 30 July 1959. His wife was Fransina and the couple had six children. Previously he studied at Stofberg and worked at Seleka congregation from 1951 and at Ga-Molepo in 1954.

**Josef Mashabela** was born in 1927. In 1958 he was paralyzed but managed to study at Dorothea Mission in 1959. He married Anna and the couple had three children. He started his ministry on 6 February 1960 at Horp.

**Zachariah Goud Mofututsi** was born on 1 January 1934 at Vereeniging. He started working at Phiring (Sterkspruit) on 7 January 1961.

**Benjamin Moroane Ephraim Marokana** was born on 24 June 1930 at Smithfield. He married Maria Sebatana. He first stayed at Welkom during 1955 and came to Maandagshoek on 28 June 1956. The couple had three children.

**Solly Ramaipadi** studied at Turfloop Theological School, where he completed his studies in December 1961. He arrived at Morotse that same month and was transferred to Schoonspruit in August 1963.

**Petrus Phahlamohlaka** completed his studies at Turfloop in December 1961 and started working at Penge where he remained until 2002, when he retired.

**Mphofe Thomas Maduane** was born on 1 January 1939 at Ga-Magologolo, also known as Houtbos, near the Leolo Mountains in Sekhukhuneland. From 1956 to 1963 he stayed with Rev Murray Louw at Maandagshoek where he worked as a gardener for Dr du Plooy. He was married to Magdalene Sagoeme Ntsoane, born 2 February 1946. They had five children, two boys and three girls. He went for training as an evangelist at Turfloop Theological School from 1963 to 1965.

From 1966 to 1967 he served in the congregation of Meetse-a-Bophelo and thereafter at Ratanang (Bourke's Luck Hospital) near Pilgrimsrest. Here he worked for six years with Rev JM Louw (son of AA) until 1974. In the same year he returned to his place of birth in Burger congregation at Maandagshoek. His wife was a trained nurse who was able to help the family financially during all his years in the service of God.

During his long service at Maandagshoek he was responsible for many of the outposts: Hoepakranz, Mashishi, Waterkop, Moshira, Mooilyk, Kwano, Ntwampe, Mashabela, Modimolle, Shai, Waterval River and Motsepula. During this time he worked with the following missionaries at Maandagshoek: Dr JJ Kritzinger, Rev J Nieder-Heitmann and Rev JPT Koen. He also worked with the following ministers: Rev MJ Mankoe (Praktiseer), MP Mojapelo (Ntwampe) and TM Banda (Praktiseer), and with the following evangelists: MJ Makwana, Mokoena, ZG Mofurutsi, AB Makakaba, P Phahlamohlaka, J Mashabela, MB Shaku and LP Chaba.

He served the congregation as treasurer and scribe. He is a gentleman who was very meticulous in his work.

These men worked with the missionaries. They played an important role in spreading the Gospel and establishing the church. In writing the history of the DRC in Sekhukhuneland, their names, life-sketches and their contributions are considered of importance to future generations of church members of the Uniting Reformed Church (URC) in Sekhukhuneland.

## **12. MAANDAGSHOEK MISSION 1962 to 1976**

Several missionaries and ministers came and went after Rev Murray Louw left. Rev JPJ Zeeman of Ficksburg started in March 1962 at Maandagshoek. Rev ES Ramaipadi started in 1963 at Mphahlele. Rev Koos Louw received a calling to Bronkhorstspruit/Premier Mine and left in June 1963. Rev Zeeman left in April 1964. He was replaced by Rev IM (Sakkie) van der Merwe. After two years, Sakkie left for Phalaborwa. During his time he was assisted by co-minister Enos Ramaipadi, while Burger congregation also had the services of evangelists Piet Moatshe, Solomon Ramaipadi, Petrus Phahlamohlaka, Hendrik Maphanga, Aron Metsileng, Abiël Motau, Joseph Mashabela and Pieter Matebe (Louw 1972:49).

### **12.1 REV IM (SAKKIE) VAN DER MERWE**

Rev van der Merwe was ordained as the new minister to replace Rev JPJ Zeeman at Maandagshoek. Rev van der Merwe reported to the *TVSV* that the spiritual state of the members of the congregation was at a very low level. At two outstations some of the elders were placed under censorship because of alcohol abuse. At the hospital almost all but four of the local male personnel were guilty of alcohol abuse, three of whom were from Zimbabwe and Malawi. The population of the Bapedi in the area covered by Burger congregation was 70 000, of which 75-80% were still non-believers or belonged to independent sects. He was also concerned about the conduct of the European personnel at the hospital, although some of them contributed to spiritual work at the hospital and others helped at outstations.

He reported that 56 new members had joined the congregation, increasing its total membership to 434, with 103 catechists and 1 012 Sunday school children. Moruti Enos Ramaipadi was Sakkies' co-minister with the assistance of six evangelists, Piet Moatshe, Solomon Ramaipadi, Petrus Phahlamohlaka, Hendrik Maphanga, Aaron Metsileng, Abiël Motau and two lay evangelists, Josef Mashabela (hospital) and Pieter Mateba. Moruti Ramaipadi had a difficult time at Mphahlele because the members did not like his way of doing things. Slowly, however, he overcame their opposition and was accepted. He was also chosen as a member of various school committees and councils.

At the hospital a new children's ward was opened. A borehole, two power generators and a cowshed were put into use during the dry seasons. A new minister's parsonage was built at Penge for Moruti Ramaipadi, who moved from Mphahlele to Penge when Mphahlele became an outpost of Grootshoek (Potgietersrus East) in 1966. Rev Sakkie van der Merwe left for Phalaborwa in 1966, two years after his arrival (Louw 1972:49).

## **12.2 REV SCHALK BURGER AND HIS WIFE, ANNA**

Rev Burger was ordained as missionary on 12 February 1967. The service was attended by friends, family members, the executive of the *TVSV*, members of the local congregation and hospital personnel. The relief clergyman, Rev Pierre Joubert of Klipspruit Mission, conducted the service. Rev Burger's first task was the spiritual enhancement of the Burger congregation. Missionaries were usually also responsible for administration, building and the renovation of church buildings. He started to renovate the local church at Maandagshoek, completed the local church at Mashishi where evangelist Motou was stationed, and helped to complete the local church at Naboomkoppies. Both these churches were built with funds provided by the Transvaal Women's Mission Society (*TVSV*). A copper plaque with their emblem was placed on top of the tower at the Naboomkoppies church (Louw 1972:50).

The congregation of Burger had six church buildings already in use, but there were 14 wards that did not enjoy the use of a church building. The congregations gathered in schools or under trees. The first church building under Rev Burger's ministry was opened on 14 June 1970 at Mashishi, fourteen miles from Maandagshoek. The next day the 94-year-old Mrs (Rev) van der Worst, who personally had contributed royally to its erection, had the honour of unlocking the doors. The Maandagshoek church had been renovated and was also re-opened the next day. Mrs Nettie Bosman, who had also served for many years on the management committee of the *TVSV* and who was still an honorary member, unlocked its doors. This church was also named the Memorial Church in honour of the pioneers of the *TVSV*: Messrs JM Louw, AP Burger and HS Bosman (Louw 1972:50). On this occasion a plaque of remembrance was unveiled with the words: *PULAMADIBOGO – TOT EER VAN GOD – GEDENK KERK*.

### **12.3 PULAMADIBOGO – TO THE GLORY OF GOD – MEMORIAL CHURCH**

In gratitude, this newly renovated church was dedicated in remembrance of the 1905 pioneers of the *TVSV*, namely Messrs (Rev) JM Louw, (Rev) AP Burger, (Rev) HS Bosman and all those who worked together for the expansion of the Kingdom of God in Sekhukhuneland.

“And great was the company of those (women) who proclaimed it” (Ps 68:12). Pulamadibogo means to open up the folds so that the carriers of the Gospel could deliver the Good News. Several DRC congregations assisted in providing funds for the building of ward churches, including the DRC congregations of Valhalla and Bronberg who, in turn, helped with the building of the Ribastat ward church and others at Naboomkoppies, Gowe (Louw church), Ntwampestat (Apie Rossouw church), Praktiseer and Bothashoek (Bronberg church) (Louw 1972:51).

### **12.4 CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR LOCAL MISSIONS (*SENTRALE PLAASLIKE SENDINGKOMMISSIE*)**

A very important development was the establishment of a Central Committee for Local Missions, as a link with the DRC congregation of Burgersfort and the *TVSV*. This Committee and the *TVSV* would in future share responsibility for the Burger church. The members would be as follows: the missionary, three members of the Burgersfort church council, three from the *TVSV* management and a local *TVSV* member of Burgersfort congregation. Rev Burger reported to this commission on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1971 that membership of the congregation was 892, with 1 725 children in the Sunday school. This was only a small percentage of the 100 000 Bapedi within the borders of Burger congregation (Louw 1972:51).

In this report he also stated that the outposts were as follows:

*Hoepakranz, Steelpoort, Naboomkoppies, Penge, Mabotsha, Krommelen-boog, Makofane, Weltevrede, Leoloskool, Riba, Mohlarutse, Watervalsrivier, De Grootboom, Gowe, Mototolong, Mooihoekmyn, Mashishi, Diphala, Mashabela, Masete, Moshira, Shai, Mmutlane, Waterkop, Kwano, Grootthoekmyn, Mpuru Mamphahlane and Sehlako. Evangelist A Motau was at Mashishi; P Chaba at Moshira; M Makakaba at Burgersfort; M Matlala at Moeilik; B Shaku at Penge; P Phahlamohlaka at Steelpoort, while Joseph*

*Mashabela still worked at the hospital and evangelist Makakaba who stayed at Maandagshoek, was responsible for Mpura and Mamphahlane (Louw 1972:51). (Author's own translation.)*

## **12.5 THE MISSION HOSPITAL BECOMES A GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL**

Another major development took place on 20 August 1968. The mission commission of the synod was informed that, as from this date, the hospital was to be taken over by the government. Since all the mission hospitals run by the DRC had come under pressure because of lack of personnel, this was an important step.

The mission's co-operation with the Department of Bantu Administration and Development as well as the Transvaal Provincial Administration had always been good, which made things easier. On 28 November 1968 the Synodical Missions Committee's executive formed a sub-commission called the Commission of Medical Missions. As from February 1969, this commission appointed Mr CA Jansön as liaison officer between the government and the different hospitals.

A second liaison officer, Mr JCK Opperman, was also appointed (Louw 1972:52). It was agreed that the medical mission of the church would continue and to this end a proposal was drawn up to serve as guidelines for Bantu management committees. The Commission of Medical Missions convened a meeting for the first time at Maandagshoek on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1971.

In August 1970 the number of beds reached the maximum of 430, and as a result no more new wards were erected. In honour and acknowledgement of Dr Boshoff's contribution, the hospital was to be renamed the HC Boshoff Mission Hospital (Louw 1972:52).

In spite of the limited number of beds, the hospital had as many as 618 in-patients on any given day. The statistics for 1967 to June 1970 were as follows:

	1967/8	1968/9	1969/70	Apr-June 1970
General illnesses	167	184	244,4	357,2
Maternity cases	29,2	18,7	26,9	26,4
Babies	17,2	19,7	24,7	23,4
Contagious	161,5	170,4	116,8	133,5
Total	374,9	392,8	412,8	540,8

(Louw 1972:53).

The mission staff and personnel of the hospital, as well as the community as a whole, were saddened by the news that the hospital secretary, Mr M Visser (Uncle Duke) had died in a motorcar accident on 18 December 1970. Although in serious condition, Mrs Visser survived. Dr Hennie Boshoff, hospital superintendent, left and Dr Joubert was appointed superintendent. In June 1971 the hospital employed seventy nurses, most of them students, and 147 workers in the different sections. A total of 68 clinics were visited weekly. The personnel kept up the old tradition of morning devotions at 6:30. The death of Rev Schalk Burger on 30 November 1971, after a serious illness, was a severe setback. This man of God tried his utmost, in as short a time as possible, to do as much as he could for the people he loved and for the expansion of God's work. This probably caused a deterioration in his health. He was buried at the mission station and Rev (Dr) Dons Kritzingler succeeded him.

## **12.6 THE LOUW CHURCH**

On the same day that Rev Kritzingler was ordained, the congregation celebrated the opening of the Louw Church at Gowe (Driekop). A brother of Rev Murray Louw unveiled the corner stone on behalf of the Louw family. A son of Rev Murray Louw unlocked the door and Rev Koos Louw delivered the opening sermon. On the corner stone the following

words were written: “In grateful remembrance of Rev JM Louw, minister of the DRC at Boksburg”.

Mrs GJ Louw, the president of the *TVSV*, passed away in 1963 and their son, Rev J Murray Louw, served as a missionary at Maandagshoek from 1943 to 1962. He died in 1968 (Louw 1972:53).

In 1975 the congregation of Burger consisted of almost 900 members, with both a black and a white minister to serve this vast area. There were many preaching posts and wards for serving Holy Communion. More than 120 000 people were living in the eastern part of Sekhukhuneland, but only about 20 000 of them had some relationship with the church. They had small church buildings and eight evangelists working in different areas. Dr Kritzinger concentrated on enhancing the spirituality of these small congregations. The area was too vast to try and cover or reach everyone in one way or the other. He believed in empowering each member spiritually in order for them to witness and persuade others to follow Christ. In the meantime, he started to build a conference centre. At this conference centre Bible Study and Discipleship courses were presented to the Christian Youth Movement (CYM), Christian Men’s Movement (CMM) and the Christian Women’s Movement (CWM) (Kritzinger 1975:34).

Dr Kritzinger wrote: “The history and establishment of Maandagshoek is an example of a typical mission station. It is a symbol of a traditional mission. At this stage we look forward to a development from traditional mission to a new era of congregational maturity which is centered on Christ. No longer a mission station, or buildings, but the building of God, the body of Christ” (Kritzinger 1975:33).

### **12.7 THE TVSV WITHDRAW FROM MAANDAGSHOEK (BURGER)**

For 53 years the *TVSV* was responsible for mission work in Sekhukhuneland. In 1976 this era came to an end when the work at Maandagshoek was transferred to the synod of the Northern Transvaal. Thereafter the *TVSV* would only be responsible for Klipspruit mission station. As pioneers of mission work done by the DRC in Sekhukhuneland, the management of the *TVSV* paid a special visit to Maandagshoek to officially celebrate their mission involvement over the years. For the last time they gathered with many other ladies from the *TVSV* and Burgersfort at Maandagshoek. Mrs Sibs Marais was the president at

that time. She addressed the visitors who gathered under the big Jacaranda tree and on behalf of the *TVSV*, unveiled a plaque at the front entrance to the hospital in remembrance of their work. In the evening, wreaths were laid at the graves of Rev Schalk Burger and Mr and Mrs Potas, who were buried at Maandagshoek. A prayer meeting was also held at the parsonage under the Jacaranda tree. God was praised for the black ministers and evangelists who faithfully contributed to the establishment of the kingdom of God among the Bapedi in Sekhukhuneland. Evangelist Maduane conducted the service. He compared the white mothers with the mother of Moses, who made provision for her child's well-being, although the child himself did not know of any danger (Bruwer 1976:243).

### **12.8 ENOS SETJAKADUME RAMAIPADI**

Enos Sejtakadume Ramaipadi was born at Mohlaletse village in Sekhukhuneland on 19 July 1929. He married Tryphina Mmatlou and the couple had seven children, three boys and four girls. From 1954 to 1958 he was a schoolteacher and principal of Hopefield Primary at Marishane village in Sekhukhuneland. After completing his theological training at Stofberg, he was ordained on 2 April 1962 at Mphahlele in the congregation of Burger and started his ministry. He worked with Reverends JM Louw, SW Burger, JPJ Zeeman and JJ Kritzinger. He also worked with evangelists LJ Makwana, MS Makakaba, MP Phahlamohlaka, TM Maduane, BM Shaku and SP Ramaipadi. His wife wrote about him as follows: "He was a loving and caring husband and father, and a dedicated minister. In 1973 Rev ES Ramaipadi and Rev SW Burger built a church in Ga-Motodi village (Naboomkoppies). The church building can still be seen today. He was a cheerful giver who always took care of the needy. He opened his home to everyone. Enos also transported the elderly to and from church every Sunday free of charge. He was the biological father of seven, but a father to the whole community." He died in a taxi accident on 28 February 1976. He was buried at Ga-Motodi cemetery (Mrs Tryphina Ramaipadi).

### **13. SEKHUKHUNELAND CONGREGATION – Klipspruit Mission**

Burger congregation grew to such an extent that one missionary was unable to cope with the demands of such a vast organization. Rev Murray Louw pleaded his case to the management of the *TVSV* and requested them to make a decision on dividing Burger and creating a new post for another missionary and mission station (Louw 1972:43).

On 7 March 1946 the commission for the Presbytery of Kranspoort convened in a small school hall at Gemsbokspruit, which was previously used as a farm school for European children. The meeting was attended by the following members of the presbytery commission: Rev CL Brink (Chairman), Rev PJ Joubert (Scribe), Rev VW Fick while Rev JMM Louw (Snr) as well as some members of the church council of Burger. On that day a new congregation seceded from Burger.

The school was situated only three miles from Klipspruit, the farm bought by the Transvaal Women's Mission Society (*TVSB*) in 1944 when Burger mission, which was situated on the farm Mooiplaats, was sold to the government. The amount of R6 000 thus obtained was sufficient to pay for Klipspruit. At the *TVSV* congress in 1945, it was proposed that a second congregation be formed with the name of Sekoekoeland. (The synod changed the spelling to Sekhukhuneland at their session in 1964.)

The result was that in 1946 a new mission station was founded at Klipspruit. Rev and Mrs AS van Niekerk were welcomed on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 1946 as the first missionary couple at Klipspruit, to serve the congregation of Sekhukhuneland.

The old Burger mission station, which was relocated to Maandagshoek, was included in the borders of the new congregation. That meant that the western area began at the Olifants River and stretched eastwards all along the southern slopes of the Leolo Mountains to Steelpoort River, and from there all along the Highveld escarpment, including Tafelkop near Groblersdal in the south and Nebo, where the magistrate's office was. The *TVSV* was solely responsible for the finances.

#### **13.1 REV AS VAN NIEKERK**

At Rev van Niekerk's ordination, Rev PJN Maritz' text was Acts 5:20. Rev Maritz was the missionary at Ermelo. The next day Rev van Niekerk served Holy Communion to 40

members at Klipspruit. The parsonage had not yet been completed, and they had to stay in a small farmhouse at the Native Trust in the meantime. Mr JN Graaff became the farm manager. Mr JL Potas of Maandagshoek, the mission's builder, erected the missionary's house and it was completed during the following year. The congregation of Sekhukhuneland was served by the following evangelists: G Mphahlele at Mankopane, N Maluleke at Eensgevonden and M Chitja at Buffelsfontein, two evangelists, Aaron Morake and A Mokwena, at Klipspruit. A total of 650 pupils attended the six registered schools and 180 pupils attended private religious schools (*TVSV-Verslag* 1947:51).

Rev van Niekerk immediately started two new outposts: one at Leeukraal and another at Buffelspoort, and schools were re-opened at Hopefield and Phaahla. The registered schools were not mission orientated, because the school committees consisted of some non-Christian members. In October 1947 a clinic was opened at Klipspruit and this was occasionally visited by the district surgeon. Rev van Niekerk wrote as follows:

*We are grateful to have settled in our new and practical parsonage at Klipspruit. It will take time to get the garden in shape.*

**13.1.1 Farming:** *With the £90 the 'Kinderkrans' donated and the money of last year's corn harvest, we were able to purchase 13 cows. Mr Johannes Graaff is our able farmer and we hope to become self-sufficient.*

**13.1.2 Clinic:** *This was started in October but it is not functioning to its full capacity because there is no medical doctor.*

**13.1.3 Congregational labour:** *The new outstations were established at Leeukraal and Buffelspoort. Evangelist Mackweja's house is nearly completed. Mr Oosthuyzen gave us a few morgen at Buffelskloof and elder John Nkgadima is working faithfully to begin a new congregation. At Hopefield and Phaahla the schools were closed. We have five evangelists and two lay-workers who are trying their very best to reach the non-believers.*

*We experience opposition and enmity among the non-believers. The congregation has 53 members. During the year 16 new converts were confirmed.*

**13.1.4 Schools:** *We have six registered schools and seven Church schools. Almost all our teachers are church members. At all these Sunday schools activities are taking place (*TVSV-Verslag* 1948:7).*

*In 1949 lodgings for the evangelists at Leeukraal and Buffelskloof were completed. At Leeukraal evangelist Mark Makwenya worked diligently in spite of severe opposition from the Roman Catholic Church. Mr Graaff left the mission station and Mr PS Greyvenstein started in 1950. Mr Putto assisted temporarily (TVSV-Verslag 1950:41). Three new evangelists were appointed, bringing the total to seven people who were serving the congregation. The school at Gemsbokspruit was moved to Klipspruit, which was also used as a gathering place for Sunday Services (TVSV-Verslag 1947:51 – Author’s own translation).*

### **13.2 REV JS MALAN**

Rev van Niekerk accepted a calling to Stofberg Theological School. He was succeeded by Rev JS Malan on 12 August 1950. While Rev van Niekerk concentrated on the outstations, Rev Malan gave special attention to the upgrading of the Klipspruit mission station (TVSV-Verslag 1951:72). He was assisted by the farm manager, Mr PS Grevensteyn. Rev Malan also concentrated on erecting a school for the blind (TVSV-Verslag 1953:88). In co-operation with the Department of Education in Pretoria an amount of £15 000 was provided: two-thirds was donated by the government and the balance by the TVSV. When Mr Greyvensteyn left, Mr T Botha replaced him as farm manager and builder, in June 1952. The church building at Klipspruit was planned and an amount of £2 500 was budgeted. Mr Botha started building the church at Strydkraal, not far from the old Burger Mission Station near the Olifants River. The cornerstone read ‘*Built in 1953*’. An unknown person donated £500 towards this project. The church was opened with a week-long conference, held with the aid of Dorothea Mission (TVSV-Verslag 1955:85).

### **13.3 THE BOSELE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND**

On 7 August 1957, the Bosele School for African Blind was officially opened by the mission secretary, Rev JHM Stofberg. The name *Bosele* means DAYBREAK, which is true of the boys and girls who studied here. The place where the school, hostels and administration offices were erected is called MPUDULLE, which means ‘to blow the dust from the eye.’ The hostel could accommodate 50 pupils. Nineteen Pupils were enrolled in November 1957. Phati Topola of Germiston was the first pupil to arrive at the school. Miss OJ Morrison of the Worcester School for the Blind was the first school principal. This school was unique and looked upon as the first of its kind for the African Blind. After

one year, Miss Morrison had to leave to pioneer another school. She was succeeded by Mr Wynand Malan. In 1962 Mr H Lemmer became the principal of Bosele School. Mr CW Malan was a member of the staff and he was also called Wynie. The two Malan families were not related.

Under Mr Malan's guidance, a beautiful house was built for the principal by the mission builder, Jeremiah, a black man who was an expert with quarry stones found nearby. Mr Wynie Malan's son, born in 1952 and named after his father Charl Wynand, drowned tragically, at the age of 8 in one of the cattle-dip-tanks on the farm. He was buried next to the Klipspruit church in 1960. His grave was made of stones, without any inscription. In 1977 when we had the Presbytery of Burger sitting at Sekhukhuneland congregation, I enquired about the meaning of the heap of stones. I was informed that a young child was buried there. No more details were available. However, on 27 August 2008 a man named Bennie Malan visited me at Dibukeng Christian Bookstore in Bosman Street, Pretoria. He enquired about books and Christian literature in Sepedi for a school near Jane Furse in Sekhukhuneland. He mentioned that his father had been a teacher at Bosele. When I enquired about the grave next to the church, he told me that his younger brother was buried there. The family still has plans to erect a plaque with an inscription on it. He said that his parents went to Kwa-Zulu Natal in 1961, where his father became the principal of the Vulega School for the Blind and Deaf (Malan, Bennie:oral communication).

In 1968 Mr H Lemmer became principal of Letaba School for the Retarded. In 1974 the first black man, Mr Pasha, was appointed as vice-principal at Bosele. He had been a teacher at Bosele since its inception (*TVSB Ligpunte* 1975:40). Another development at Bosele was the Bosele workshop, which was started to help pupils finishing school to earn an income. The Bosele school hall was opened in 1978 (Marais 1980:27). In 1978 a school for the deaf was also started next to the school for the blind. When pupils left school they could immediately start working in the workshop. This project was launched in 1979 and was also financed by the Lebowa government. It has a weaving section for the weaving of mats and tablecloths with sheep's wool and sisal. The *TVSV* was still responsible for this project. In 1980 the financial obligations of the VSB of Northern Transvaal with regard to the congregation of Sekhukhuneland were transferred to the Synod of Eastern Transvaal (Marais 1980:27). "Rev Phatudi, as a minister at Burger congregation played the most important part in naming schools such as Bosele (School for the Blind) and Mpudule" (Phatudi 1989:15).

### **13.4 LIFE-SKETCH OF REV MALAN**

After being legitimated in 1939, Rev Malan was ordained in his first congregation at Carolina in 1940. He subsequently served the congregations of Wakkerstroom (1942); Sekhukhuneland (1950); Witbank/Witbank South (1961); Biesjesvlei (1966) and Swaziland (17 October 1970). He served as a missionary at Klipspruit (NGKA-Sekhukhuneland) for 11 years. While at Klipspruit, he took a special interest in the evangelization of the Swazi people of Ngobe at Hoepakranz, on the Leolo Mountain near Maandagshoek, in the district of Lydenburg.

He also studied part-time at UP, where he completed a BA Honours and later an MA degree in Anthropology, with a thesis on his research among the Swazi of Hoepakranz. Many of his friends called him ‘Uncle Swazi.’ During his stay at Klipspruit the Bosele School for the Blind was erected. As was the case with most missionaries in the field, Rev Malan’s children attended boarding school at Laersdrift, not very far from Klipspruit. They were Johan, Nicola, Hendrik and Dawid. For their secondary school education they had to go to Middelburg. Antonie Christoffel, another of their sons, contracted meningitis and as a result was mentally retarded. This was a serious blow to the family. He needed constant supervision. In the parsonage at Klipspruit, he was severely burnt when, because of a burning candle, his bedding and curtains caught fire. Eventually he was placed in an institute at Howick in Natal. Johan, the eldest son, studied anthropology at UP and received his doctor’s degree in 1972. From 1978 to 2006 he was professor at the University of the North. During his time as lecturer he became involved in the work of Gideons International. They mainly distributed Bibles and New Testaments to pupils in Sekhukhuneland at Apel and surrounding villages (Malan, Johan:correspondence).

During Rev Malan’s ministry he saw the opening of a beautiful church building at Klipspruit on 26 May 1956. He also saw the erection of a clinic thanks to a donation of £1 000 by the *Kinderkrans*. The clinic formed an integral part of mission work not only for the community but also for the needs of the children. Rev Malan also believed in evangelistic campaigns. He had just over 20 outposts to be served; he held a 10-day campaign in the congregation in August 1969. He was assisted by five Bible school students, who were part of the DR evangelistic team and helped house-calls. At this stage there were seven students at the Stofberg Memorial School – five studying to become

evangelists and two to become ministers. During the evangelization campaigns many people of various ages started catechism classes (Louw 1972:45).

### **13.5 REV HJ GROBLER**

When Rev Malan left, Rev CL Brink assisted on a temporary basis until Rev and Mrs HJ Grobler arrived on 30 March 1961. The Bosele School then had 56 pupils. Mr Phasha was appointed as teacher and hospital patron. He became the first male teacher on the staff of the school (Louw 1972:41). In October 1963 the congregation had a membership of 360, with five evangelists, a missionary and a black minister, Rev JS Mnisi. Mr HR Lemmer was the principal of Bosele and there were 74 pupils in 1962 (Louw 1972:45).

### **13.6 REV CH DELPORT**

When Rev and Mrs Grobler left in 1964, Rev and Mrs CL Brink returned to help up to the arrival of Rev and Mrs CH Delpport on 24 October 1964. Two evangelists left, as did Rev Mnisi, who had accepted a call to Belfast. Evangelist JM Matemane came to Mothopong. Rev Delpport played a very important part in the division of the borders of the presbytery of Burger. A new mission station was erected by Rev JT Jordaan within the borders of Sekhukhuneland on the farm Goedvertrouwen near Marble Hall. He left in 1959, and was succeeded by Rev Pieter Conradie. To improve the ministry and mission work, he and Rev Delpport were instructed by the Presbytery of Burger to investigate the changing of the borders of Burger, in order to ease the work-load of the missionaries (Louw 1972:46).

### **13.7 SEKHUKHUNELAND BORDERS**

An important decision taken by the presbytery of Burger in 1965 had far reaching results. The Commission for Planning presented a report in which it was suggested that a large part of Sekhukhuneland should change hands and be added to the new neighbouring congregation of Marble Hall (Lepelle). It was signed by Rev CH Delpport of Sekhukhuneland and Rev P Conradie of Marble Hall. The following reasons were given:

- 1. The borders between the adjacent congregations were not clear.*
- 2. Certain areas were not included anywhere.*
- 3. Certain areas were served by two different congregations.*

4. *Development plans by the Government compelled the church to keep pace.*
5. *In order to be effective with the placing of mission workers, finances and administration had to be shared evenly (TVSV-Verslag 1965:7 – Author’s own translation).*

Major changes were suggested between Marble Hall and Sekhukhuneland. The area marked D12, D13, DII, 5, H2, D9, D10, D8, B5, 3 and B3 and D7 on the attached plan were now included in the congregation of Marble Hall. All these places are posts that were started by Rev Abraham Rosseau, the pioneer missionary of Burger Mission station. His old station (D12) which was abandoned in April 1944 is only one kilometer from Apel’s church building (DII) (now called Sesehu). When we look at the history of Marble Hall (Lepelle), the history of all these outposts is accounted for in detail.

It is also clear that within the borders of the Sekhukhuneland congregation, three other mission stations were in operation. At Glen Cowie, the Catholic Church had erected a hospital. Not far from there, the Anglican Church built a hospital and schools. The Lutheran Church started a conference centre at Lobethal near Marishane, which is presently an outpost of Lepelle.

### **13.8 FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AT BOSELE**

In 1963 there were 74 pupils at Bosele, which increased to 95 in 1965 (59 boys and 36 girls). A third of the children were totally blind and 14 of the 95 were albinos. Unfortunately these pupils had nowhere to go after completing their schooling. On 1 April 1965 Mrs Lemmer became the vice-principal. When Mr and Mrs Lemmer left, Mr GJ le Roux became vice-principal as from 2 October 1968. Mrs Lemmer appointed Simon Seabelo, who had passed the Standard 6 departmental examination first class in 1963, as a full-time weaver. He was later also appointed as a teacher. The pupils were taught various skills such as cane work, braiding and weaving with plastic, sisal, cotton and wool.

In August 1967 Bosele celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The school was started in 1957 with four class-rooms, one hostel and an office. In 1967 Bosele had nine class-rooms, three offices, two hostels, a store-room, a staff-room, a workshop, wash-room and work-rooms. The number of pupils increased to 115 and the annual expenditure was about R40 000. A class-room equipped with books, magnifying glasses and other necessities, was installed in

1967. Mr and Mrs Lemmer left in September 1968, when they were called to Letaba School for the Mentally Handicapped. They were succeeded by Mr EH Hodge. Mr JG le Roux remained behind as vice-principal (Louw 1972:47).

## **14. GOEDVERTROUWEN MISSION STATION 1956 to 1959**

### **14.1 DR JT JORDAAN (HANS)**

Rev JT Jordaan was ordained as minister of Marble Hall Dutch Reformed Church congregation on 6 April 1956. Mr Kaboet and Mrs Zella Rousseau were asked by the church council to care for the couple for the first week-end of their ministry at Marble Hall. Kaboet told the new minister of his childhood days at Burger mission station, where he grew up. His parents, Rev and Mrs AJ Rousseau, built and operated this first mission station between 1926 and 1940. At a later stage, Kaboet accompanied Rev Jordaan to the place where this old mission was established near Apel. Rev Jordaan observed that half of the farms constituting the congregation of Marble Hall at the Lower Olifants River Irrigation scheme had been bought up by the Trust in order to establish villages for the Pedi of Sekhukhuneland. Plans to resettle the Ba-Koni tribe of Chief Frank Maserumule were well under way. At Skerp Arabie, 35 kilometers from Marble Hall, a school for the sons of Pedi chiefs only, called Boaparankwe, had been established.

The congregation of Marble Hall was deeply in debt, and therefore a full-time missionary could not be considered. To apply to the synod of the DRC for the development of a new mission station was considered too time-consuming in view of the urgency of the matter. Rev Jorrie Jordaan took the following measures as minister of the DRC congregation of Marble Hall:

1. He wrote to Dr HF Verwoerd, the minister of Bantu-affairs, to provide a farm next to the Olifants River which could be developed as an irrigation project. He had his eye on a farm which was already under irrigation, and he wanted the mission to be self-supporting.
2. Secondly, he advised the church council to investigate the possibility of doing mission work among the Pedi that were settled on the Trust farms.

Rev Jordaan wrote the following about the formation of a new mission station on the farm Goedvertrouwen:

1. Rev CWH Boshoff was at this stage minister of the DRC congregation of Belfast. He advised Rev Jordaan that he was negotiating with the Department of Native

Affairs to obtain a farm in the Lowveld with a view to establishing a mission station. At the same time Rev 'Brood' Potgieter was available to start a mission station at Bosbokrand.

Rev Boshoff managed to start at Meetse-a-Bophelo and Rev Nico Smith started at Sibasa, which later became Tshilidzini. These strong movements of the DRC ministers that became available for mission work among the up-coming tribes of the Lowveld inspired Rev Jorrie Jordaan to make himself available on a full-time basis for mission work within the borders of the congregation of Marble Hall. The church council agreed to his decision and ruled that he would remain co-minister of Marble Hall while they would call another full-time minister.

2. Dr HF Verwoerd replied that the Department would start their own irrigation scheme, but that a section of the farm Goedvertrouwen could be reserved as a mission station. On this section was the old farm house which he could use as a residence, paying a rental fee of just R2,00 annually. Somebody in the Department of Native Affairs gave instructions that this house be renovated at the Department's cost. This move delayed occupation of the farm house and he had to live temporarily in a rented house at Marble Hall, which belonged to a teacher.
3. Rev Jordaan immediately started negotiations with the Department of Health at Pietersburg for the establishment of a TB hospital. Dr Brink was in favour of the idea and immediately started the lengthy application procedure. In the meantime the mission residence was ready and the Jordaan family was able to move in on 17 December 1956. Rev Jordaan borrowed the truck of his friend, Kaboet Rousseau, to move his furniture from Marble Hall to Goedvertrouwen. They were the only Europeans in that area at the time. From here he launched his mission project in 1957.
  - a) He started with services in a small church in the Marble Hall location. It was made of clay and only had half a roof.
  - b) He also showed slides and held services on farms. He arranged with kind-hearted farmers beforehand and held services for the farm workers with the help of a generator and an interpreter.

- c) He also held services in the villages surrounding the mission station.
- d) He was assisted by three evangelists. Two of the evangelists came from Stoffberg Gedenkskool in the Free State. One of them, Zello, lived at Goedvertrouwen with the missionary. One of the evangelists was placed on the farm Onverwacht of Andries Schoeman on the road to Nylstroom. The farm had a small church built by Andries' father, Karl Schoeman. ES Nonyane was the evangelist who was stationed there. In 1962 Nonyane was relocated to Goedvertrouwen and replaced by evangelist Molefe. He lived at Onverwacht till his death. The other Schoeman brother, Hendrik, also built a church on his farm, Moos Rivier. One of the evangelists was stationed there.
- e) Rev Jordaan received permission to start with the TB Hospital at Goedvertrouwen. Mr Bill Hockey was the mission-builder. Mr Hockey used local labour and purchased the building material in Johannesburg from Mr DA van der Walt at a special discount. He also bought a Thames lorry for the purpose and administrated the whole project. A crusher belonging to the Trust was used for concrete. All the sand and stone were collected in this area.
- f) The Transvaal DRC congregations were visited by the missionaries to obtain support and funds. The province was divided in a way which restricted missionaries to their own areas. A newsletter, printed on an old Roneo machine, was sent out to all friends and supporters.
- g) In 1958 the NGKA Marble Hall Mission congregation was established (Jordaan 2006:24 – Author's own translation).

## **14.2 THE HOSPITAL**

Mr Bill Hockey was called by the DRC Mission Office in Pretoria to another mission station. His place was taken by Mr Martiens Venter, and the hospital, as well as several houses for the personnel, were completed. The first medical superintendent was Dr Frikkie van Niekerk who was 23 years old. He was a handy man, who even helped with road-construction. He made certain apparatus himself if it was not available. When he and his wife left, Sr Tokkie van der Schyff had to do much of the work he had taught her. Serious

cases were sent to Philadelphia Mission Hospital. Routine operations were done with the help of Drs. P Conradie and Hentie Terblanche of Groblersdal.

Sister Tokkie van der Schyff wrote that she was also assisted by Sister Annabel Ferreira who left at the end of 1960, and Sister Marina van der Walt, who later married Dr Frikkie van Niekerk.

### **14.3 INAUGURATION OF THE MISSION HOSPITAL**

The hospital was opened in January 1959. Rev Coen van Rensburg, the moderator of the NGKA for Transvaal was the speaker. Chief Frank Maserumule, chief of the Matlala tribe named the hospital the Matlala Mission Hospital. The hospital was opened by the first secretary of the hospital, Mr Kaboet Rousseau. He was the son of the first missionary in Sekhukhuneland who started the Burger mission further down the Olifants River. He gave up farming to take up this position as mission hospital secretary. Previously he also served at the Katete mission station of the DRC in North Rhodesia (Zambia). Rev Jordaan left Goedvertrouwen in February 1959. He wrote that he saw God's hand in this move.

### **14.4 1959 TO 1961**

This was a period without a missionary. All the mission work and the hospital administration took place under the auspices of the secretary, Kaboet Rousseau. He was well equipped for this task. He could speak Sepedi and knew Sekhukhuneland well because he was raised there. As a small boy, he and his brother, Joubert and their sister Ella, came from Zambia with their parents. His father, Abraham Rousseau, accepted the call to become the first DRC missionary for Sekhukhuneland. The *T/VS* bought the farm Mooiplaats near Apel, only 60 kilometers from Matlala, where Burger mission was founded by him in 1926. Kaboet first went to school at Kgarathuthu, five kilometers from Eensgevonden which was his father's farm. They temporarily lived there till Mooiplaats was developed enough to provide the basic requirements for a family. He attended the second primary school at Strydkraal, close to Mooiplaats. There he completed Standard 6 and left to train as a teacher. Those years were important to him, because of the pioneering work done together with Rev Jorrie (JT) Jordaan at Matlala. His wife, Zella, assisted him in this task.

Kaboet felt the need to continue with the mission project. He consulted the missionary of the nearest DRC mission station at Philadelphia, near Groblersdal, Rev Jacobson. He arrived with a tent and some of his evangelists to conduct a campaign at chief Maserumule's kraal at Mohlalaotwane (Vooruitzicht) about 10 kilometers from Matlala. The services of an evangelist from Dorothea Mission was obtained for follow-up work (story told by Kaboet in person on tape – Jordaan:27 – Author's own translation).

#### **14.5 1961 TO 1975 – REV PIETER CONRADIE**

Rev Conradie arrived as the new missionary in March 1961. He immediately started to serve all outposts and to stabilize the work at the mission hospital. Together with the hospital staff, he worked diligently to obtain funds for the building of a chapel at the hospital. At the inauguration of the chapel which he had built himself, he married one of the sisters, Tokkie van der Schyff, on 13 January 1962.

Her husband did not want her to continue working. So she decided to become his permanent assistant. He was involved in the upliftment of the congregation of Lepelle, which had been vacant for more than two years. He served Holy Communion to members in schools, huts and even under trees. He was also the link between the PSK, the mission hospital board and the church council of the NGK Marble Hall. He served as an elder of the DRC of Marble Hall. At that time, the staff of the Arabie Agricultural College, six kilometers from the hospital, and the staff of the hospital formed a ward of the congregation of Marble Hall. The ward was called Goedvertrouwen.

A teacher, Freek Vercueil of the Boaparankwe School for the sons of the Pedi chiefs, also at Arabie, was the deacon of the Church. Rev Conradie had training sessions with the staff on a weekly basis for spiritual upliftment. Every day at 06:45 morning devotion was held where staff members took turns to conduct the devotional service. This was followed by a short service conducted by a staff member in each ward. The staff also had a weekly prayer meeting as well as a service every Sunday evening, alternating between Arabie and the mission station.

#### **14.6 OTHER BUILDING PROJECTS AT MATLALA**

The parsonage was enlarged with an extra bathroom, sitting room and main bedroom. He also built a study, with two rooms that were to be used as storage for mission equipment, and an open garage. A separate building with two garages, two single rooms at the back and an outside toilet were added. Between the garage and the study he built a rondavel.

In 1964 he started building an old-age home for mineworkers. In March 1965 the first elderly person moved in. The home consisted of a well-equipped kitchen, a hall and two wards for the sick as well as 50 rondavels, each to accommodate four people. The name of the place was called Boputswa (the gray-haired ones). The first Superintendent was Mr SH Kriel. When Mr Hen van Zyl left in 1978, the home was placed under the supervision of the hospital. Gradually the number of residents decreased and in 2007 the home was closed. The rondavels are now being used by the hospital staff. The main building is no longer in use.

In addition to all his building activities, he also handled the administrative work. Missionaries usually did not have the services of a secretary. He served all the outposts with whatever they needed. He also served as treasurer on the commission for the presbytery of Burger as well as on other commissions. The most important work he and Rev CH Delport did for the presbytery was to submit a report in which the borders of the congregations of the presbytery of Burger were reviewed and changed at a special meeting of the presbytery held at Groothoek on 18 June 1965 (Ring van Burger 1965). (This will be discussed later with the history of each congregation.)

The first church building which Rev Conradie erected was the church at Apel (Sesehu). His second big project was the building of the church at the Matlala mission station. He and his wife, Tokkie, and all the staff of the hospital worked diligently to obtain funds for this project. The congregation of Marble Hall contributed well, as did friends and family members of the staff. Mr Anton du Toit was the architect. On 1 April 1972 the building was inaugurated. Mrs Conradie was very ill at the time, and the staff of the hospital took care of their children while Rev Conradie was engaged in the building operations. Mrs Conradie wrote as follows:

*The Women's Service Group of the congregation of the DRC Marble Hall was the caterers at the inauguration of the church on 1 April 1972, the date of my birthday. I was in hospital for three weeks but was able to return to unlock the doors of the new church building. There were many members of the congregation of Marble Hall and Lyttelton East. Nearby mission stations and many of our own congregation members were present as well. The whole place was filled with guests. Fébé van Vuuren, wife of the hospital superintendent, made all the curtains. A few choirs performed and the nurses sang Händel's Halleluja. (Author's own translation.)*

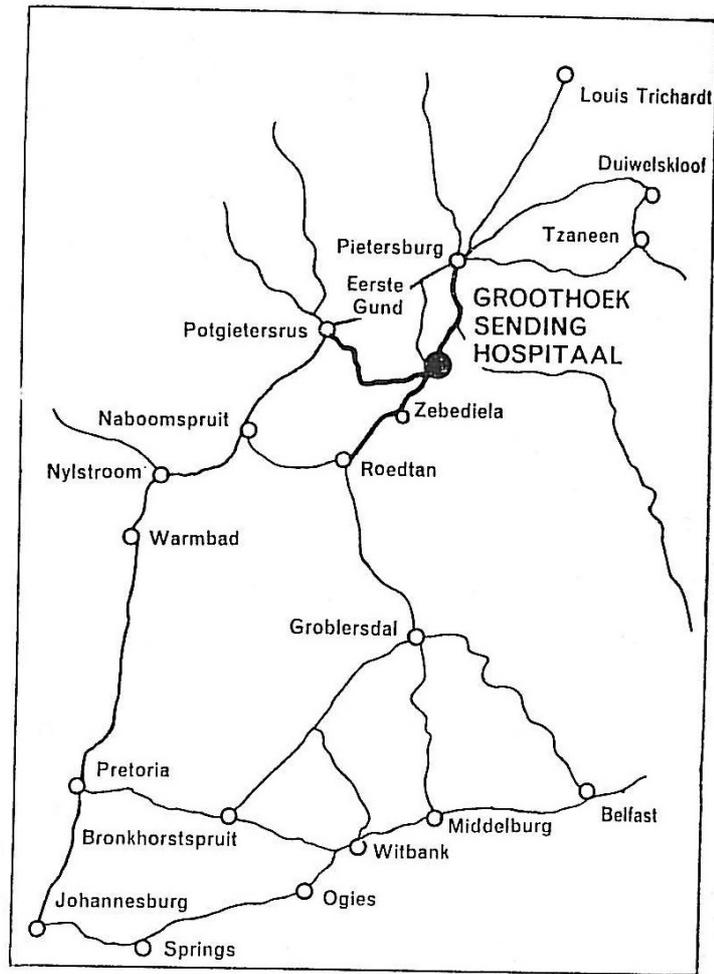
Rev Conradie and his wife had four children, Nico, Pieter, Johan and Annemarie all born at Matlala. He was busy building the church at Leeuwfontein in 1975 when he received a call from the DRC of Marble Hall, the congregation that was responsible for his salary while he was the missionary of the NGKA congregation of Lepelle, with Matlala as its main base. In the 14 years that he was at Lepelle he received more than 40 calls to different congregations. The congregation of Marble Hall allowed him to complete the Leeuwfontein building project while Lepelle was vacant. The salary of the missionary was used to fund the building of the new church at Leeuwfontein. Being minister of Marble Hall as well as building contractor, Mrs Conradie wrote, he worked for long hours without a day off and proper rest for two years till the end of 1967. He was a dedicated worker with a love for carpentry. During his time, he worked with Rev JS Phetla, who was stationed at Strydkraal and Rev VWM Magagane, who succeeded Rev Phetla. Rev Conradie also worked for many years with Rev ME Moloto, who was stationed at Moos Rivier. He worked with evangelist S Rhatabeng, ES Nonyane, A Makakaba and DM Phala at the hospital. Evangelist HH Mohatle was at Mataphisa and evangelist John Nkgadima at Mohlalaotwane (Tokkie Conradie: Correspondence).

#### **14.7 DRC MARBLE HALL AND THE DRC LYTTTELTON EAST**

Soon after Rev Conradie arrived, the congregation of Lyttelton East started supporting the missionary effort at Matlala. The two congregations, Marble Hall and Lyttelton East, formed a joint commission for mission work. The women of both congregations were responsible for the salary of the social worker at Matlala Hospital. The joint mission commission usually met twice a year at the mission station. Some members of Lyttelton East regularly brought youth groups along and assisted with local projects such as visiting wards and supporting the aged. They also contributed financially.



DIE SENDINGBLAD, Oktober 1963



DIE SENDINGBLAD, Oktober 1968



## **15. THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF BURGER**

### **15.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GROOTHOEK MISSION: SEBETIELA MISSION CONGREGATION**

As early as 1862, mission work was contemplated in the vicinity of Zebediela (Ring van Burger 1966:13). It became a reality in 1945 when Rev VW Fick of the DRC congregation of Potgietersrus started mission work in Zebediela and surrounding areas. The Zebediela Citrus Estate was the centre of organized mission work because of the labour force from Nyasaland, the local Southern Matabele and the Bapedi. Another important factor was the very small beginning of a mission hospital at Groothoek, next to Zebediela in 1941.

The Zebediela DRC Mission congregation was established in 1947. In 1950 this mission congregation consisted of 1 200 people, of whom 130 were members. Rev GC Olivier arrived in 1949 (*Ned Geref Kerk Jaarboek* 1950). In 1951 the following evangelists were recorded in the *Jaarboek* (Year Book): A Ntaopane, J Molahloe, E Mojapelo and M Chibwana. In 1953 the names of the following evangelists were added: I Mpé and N Khomo. More names appeared in the 1955 edition: M Kadiaka, S Molefi and E Modike, serving a congregation of 1 700 people with 220 members. After the congregation's name was changed to Potgietersrus East, the last entry (*Ned Geref Kerk Jaarboek* 1958:571) mentioned 384 adherents and 130 members, with the following evangelists: P Mabuza, T Chunga, M Kadiaka and L Kekana. Rev Gerrit Cornelis Olivier retired in 1957 (Maree 1962:196). During his time at Zebediela, Rev Olivier worked hard for the construction of a small church building within the hospital grounds of Groothoek. Today it still stands as a monument to this man's life and work in the mission through many years in the Transvaal (*Die Sendingblad*, Oktober 1968:340 – author's own translation).

The inscription on the cornerstone of the church building reads:

*DRC MISSION CHURCH – THY KINGDOM COME (Matt 6:10).*

Laid by Rev GC Olivier – 05.05.1956.

## **15.2 THE DRC MISSION CHURCH OF POTGIETERSRUS EAST**

Rev Olivier was succeeded by Rev SZ Venter in 1958. He continued the work done by Rev Olivier as minister of Zebediela DRC congregation. These two ministers served both the DRC and the mission congregation. As from 1957 the mission congregation was called Potgietersrus East. It fell under the presbytery of Seleka (*Ned Geref Kerk Jaarboek* 1960:518). In 1960 the evangelists assisting the ministers were T Chunga, M Kadiaka, S Molefe and S Sepuru. From 1962 a new black minister, Rev RM Kgatla, also served the congregation. Rev Venter left in 1961 (Ring van Burger 1966:13). The evangelists working with Rev Kgatla were T Chunga, J Ntjie, L Ledwaba, J Moloantoa and P Mahlobogoana (*Jaarboek* 1964:551). In 1965 a second minister, Rev MP Mabotja, was appointed to assist Rev Kgatla. He left in 1966. Rev Kgatla remained, with evangelists JDS Moloantoa, P Nkomo and P Mahlobogoana and ZM Maredi (*Ned Geref Kerk Jaarboek* 1966:457).

In 1967 another three evangelists joined: SP Ramaipadi, S Mathabatha and A Metsileng (*NG Kerk Jaarboek* 1967).

### **15.2.1 The First Full-time Missionary**

A new era started for the Groothoek mission when the synodical mission committee and the Harmonie congregation of the DRC guaranteed the salary of a missionary for Groothoek. Rev JPM Stapelberg accepted the call to become the first missionary as from 1967. He was ordained as minister of the Potgietersrus East NGKA congregation (Crafford 1982:331). His parsonage was directly opposite the church in the grounds of the Groothoek hospital.

At the Circuit meeting of Burger, which started on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1968, his call was approved and he was declared a member of the NGKA Circuit of Burger. On 13 January 1974 he accepted a call to the NGKA congregation of Irene, Pretoria (*Ned Geref Kerk Jaarboek* 1975:EI 61).

### **15.2.2 The Congregation of Lerato NGKA**

Careful planning was done by Rev CH Delpport of Sekhukhuneland congregation (NGKA) and Rev P Conradie of the Marble Hall congregation (NGKA), presbytery of Burger, in

1965. Border alterations were suggested which included the outposts of the minister's post of Mphahlele, which still fell under the Burger congregation (Burger Planning Commission). Another important change came when the commission suggested that the names of Potgietersrus East and Marble Hall be changed to Lerato and Lepelle respectively. The new names were approved at a meeting of the presbytery on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1968, which was in session at Goedvertrouwen (Matlala Mission Hospital).

### **15.2.3 Groothoek Mission Hospital**

Ever since 1940, when he had discussions with Dr Piet Quinn, the manager of Zebediela Citrus Estate, Rev JM Stofberg, mission secretary of the DRC of the Transvaal, had plans for the erection of a mission hospital. In 1943 the Estate contributed to the establishment of a small hospital with 12 beds. Further developments took place on the initiative of the medical superintendent, Dr JN (Niel) du Plessis. In 1958 a TB hospital and in 1966 a hospital for the mentally ill were erected. More wards were added.

From small beginnings with 12 beds, one mission doctor and one nursing sister, the hospital grew to a 700-bed institution, with eight doctors. The hospital maintained a high academic standard for many years. Specialist services were rendered by visiting doctors from Pietersburg. Twenty-five years after the hospital was started, it had a staff of 56 European and 346 Black employees. There was also a nursing college. The hospital equipment for the use of the specialists and paramedical staff was of the highest standard.

Miss de Waal, a veteran who worked at Groothoek for 23 years, was responsible for the domestic department. She was also a spiritual worker who continued her spiritual ministry after her retirement. Most of the hospital staff contributed to mission work and towards the salary of an evangelist working in the congregation. Their contributions guaranteed the salary of a spiritual social worker. Some of the staff even helped with services at some outposts and in the wards, visiting patients and using MEMA-slides. Mr MC Botha unveiled a plaque on 14 September 1968 at the entrance to the new administrative building. When the hospital celebrated its 25 anniversary, the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, Dr O'Brien Geldenhuys, the moderator of the DRC North Synod was also present (*Die Sendingblad*, October 1968:340).

The Mission Commission placed an article in *Die Sendingblad*, dated October 1968, under the heading: **GROOTHOEK 25 YEARS OLD**. The following is quoted from the introduction:

*Groothoek Mission Hospital is situated on the road to the North, approximately 26 miles from Potgietersrus and approximately six miles from where the historical trek of Louis Trichardt and Van Rensburg passed through the Strydpoort Mountains. Also nearby is the well-known picturesque spot called Chuenespoort. (Author's own translation.)*

Words from the Bible *DAG NA DAG DRA HY ONS* (Day by day He carries us) appear on a plaque at the main entrance to the hospital. In 1968 it was testified that the truth of these words from Psalm 68:20 had been experienced during the previous 25 years. Today this is the biggest DRC mission hospital in the Northern Transvaal.

*Dr JN du Plessis said: "This institution is the result of the efforts of the staff. The personnel of the past as well as the present ones have done two principle jobs, caring in the first place for the body and also looking after the spiritual welfare of the patients. We believe that the Lord will also carry us day by day in the future." Matron de Villiers remarked: "Medical work is giving us unique opportunities in these days." (Author's own translation.)*

Reminding those present of their humble beginnings, Dr PJ Quin, Chairman of the Hospital board said:

*Groothoek, do you remember the days when you stood in the shadow of the old Marula tree? Today, after 25 years, this old tree is standing in the shadow of the Mission Hospital (Die Sendingblad 1968:338 – author's own translation).*

Eventually it became the biggest mission hospital in the country with 1 213 beds. Dr JS Roos succeeded Dr du Plessis and worked for many years. On 1 April 1975 this hospital became a state hospital. A year later, on 1 April 1976, it was transferred to the Lebowa Government along with Zebediela Citrus Estate. It is still one of the biggest hospitals in Sekhukhuneland. For many years the hospital was the centre of mission activities.

**15.2.4 POTGIETERSRUS EAST: Summary by The Planning Commission of the Presbytery of Burger – 1965**

1. The section around Mphahlele, West of the Olifants River, was to be added to Potgietersrus East congregation.
2. In co-operation with Potgietersrus East, the church council of Burger should consider transferring the minister of Mphahlele to Penge, which was vacant.
3. The placing of the evangelists around Mphahlele ward should be arranged between the two church councils of Burger and Potgietersrus East.
4. Seceding of the area around Zebediela was a possibility. After secession a certain portion would remain with the congregation of Potgietersrus in the presbytery of Seleka.

The section around Zebediela and Mphahlele formed a geographical unit. This was also the area which fell under the services of Groothoek Mission Hospital, i.e., between Chuenespoort Mountains, the Olifants River and eastward towards Mafafes location. The Groothoek mission station did not have a missionary.

5. The commission recommended that the borders of the congregation of Potgietersrus be altered so as to include Zebediela in the Potgietersrus East congregation. The consolidation of Potgietersrus East would fall under Burger presbytery and the remaining area of Potgietersrus under the presbytery of Seleka.
6. The commission recommended that one of the two ministers of Potgietersrus East be called to the congregation of Potgietersrus and the other moved to Mphahlele. Also, that a new post for a missionary be created for the congregation of Potgietersrus East situated at the Groothoek Mission Hospital.
7. The commission suggested that the Northern Transvaal Synodical Commission be responsible for the missionary's salary, and funds provided by the *TVSV* be used for the buildings at Mphahlele. The two evangelist posts which the *TVSV* subsidized within the Mphahlele ward would be taken over by the SSK (synodical mission committee). All subsidies, whether *TVSV*, SSK or congregational, would be under

the control of the PSK (local mission's commission) of the DRC congregation of Zebediela.

8. Following this 1965 report, the Planning Commission proposed that each church council within the presbytery of Burger should present a detailed report to the presbytery at their next meeting in 1966, containing the following data:
- a) The history of each congregation.
  - b) The population within the borders of the congregation.
  - c) The total number of full members, catechumen, Sunday school children, Sunday school teachers, women's movement (CVV) and youth movement (CJV) at each main station, outpost and preaching point.
  - d) The commission also required a report concerning the buildings at each post, their condition and who was responsible for maintenance; whether Bantu Administration had given occupation rights and to whom, the DRC or NGKA.
  - e) An assessment of funds required should stipulate whether for general needs or building projects.
  - f) A summary to be submitted of the evangelists' posts, where they were stationed and who was responsible for their salaries.
  - g) A report on the financial state of each congregation was required. These reports were to be presented to the presbytery at its next meeting and, thereafter, circulated to the PSK, the SSK and the *T/VS/*.

Signed: CH Delpont and P Conradie 1965/6/18. (Author's own translation.)

### **15.2.5 1965 – Suggested Borders for Potgietersrus East Congregation**

#### **Northern Border**

From the north-western corner of the farm Portugal 55, all along the northern and eastern borders of this farm to the north-western corner of the farm Highlands 60, and along the northern borders of Highlands 60, Meinhardskraal 61, Hartbeesfontein 62, Nooitgedacht

64, the northern and eastern borders of Vrederust 67, the eastern borders of Vrederust 75, and all along the northern borders of Farm 360, Kransrand 267, Tiegerkloof 268, Driekant 270, Farms 272, 274, the western and northern border of Driehoek 236, the northern border of Stylkloof 235, Farm 223, the eastern borders of Farm 223, Vaalpunt 228 and Farm 227. Farm 225, the northern borders of lots 120, 121, 123, 125, 126, Parker's Pass 292, Hooggenoeg 293, lot 280, Tubex 295, the western and northern borders of lot 301, the Northern borders of lots 302, 303, the western, northern and eastern borders of Bokhara 38, the northern and eastern borders of Fertilis 37 and Vallis 36.

### **Eastern Border**

From the eastern border of the farm Vallis 36 all along the eastern border (southwards) of Canyon 63, Gemini 62, Horn Gat 60, lots 291 and 292, up to the Olifants River.

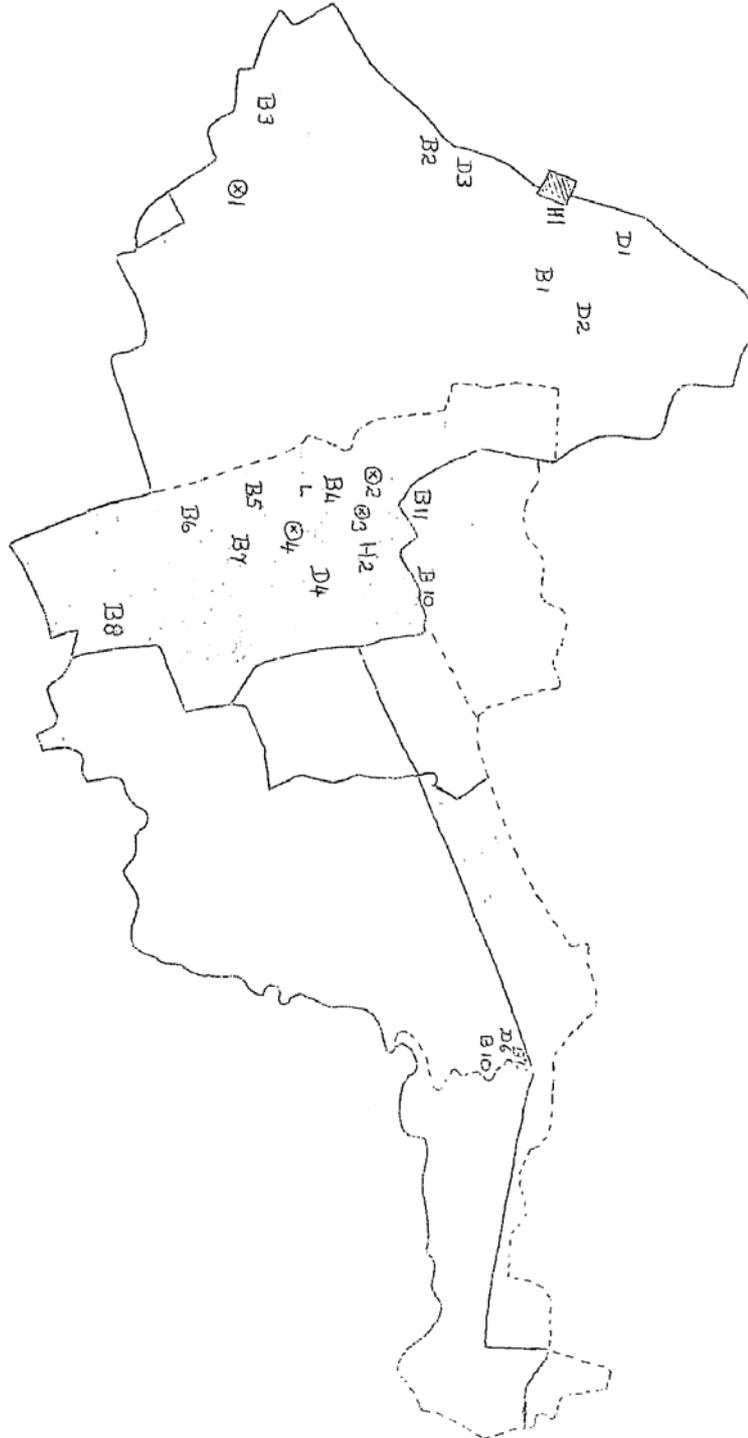
### **Southern Border**

From the point where the Pietersburg-Letaba district border meets the Olifants River at lot 291, westward along the Olifants River to the southern border at Adriaansdraai 759, further westward along the southern borders of Adriaansdraai and Byldrift 170, the northern border of Eerste Geluk 571, the southern borders of The Smugglers' Union 570, Charlotte's Lust 56 and Charlotte's Dale 568.

### **Western Border**

From the most southern corner of Charlotte's Dale 568 all along the western border of this farm and of Madras 566, Keulen 565, Gewenscht 165, Volop 164, Taaiboschlaagte 163, Ongegund 124, Zebediela Landgoed, Oostenryk 92, Schietfontein 58, Grootvallei 57 and Portugal 55.

**Chart 4: POTGIETERSRUS EAST**



## **POTGIETERSRUS EAST**

H1	-	Potgietersrus
H2	-	Groothoek
01	-	Blinkwater
02	-	Seksie 6
03	-	Pakhuis
04	-	Moletlane
B1	-	Planknek
B2	-	Drummondlea
B3	-	Zoetfontein
B4	-	Mogoto
B5	-	Manaileng
B6	-	Hlotlo
B7	-	Mamohashoa
B8	-	Molapo
B9	-	Platnek
B10	-	Doorn River
B11	-	Marsfontein
D1	-	Uitkyk (Amatava)
D2	-	Weenen
D3	-	Rooipoort
D4	-	Rakgwata
L	-	Hlakane

### **15.2.6 The Outposts of Mphahlele Minister's Ward of Burger Congregation (before some became Potgietersrus East NGKA in 1966). (Author's own translation.)**

#### **Mphahlele**

This ward was the centre of all the wards because the residing minister was responsible for the following outposts: Morotse, Malemati, Lenting, Mashite, Buildrift, Serobanang,

Lesetsi, Bewaarkloof, Voorspoed, Uitkyk, Mafafe, Mphayaneng, Malekopane, Marulaneng and Tjiane.

Mphahlele initially was a ward of the congregation of Kranspoort during the time of Rev Hofmeyr and later became part of Burger. The population of Mphahlele was 2 200.

### **Buildings**

There was a church building and a parsonage for the black minister, as well as a small one-roomed house for the missionary to be used during visits and festivals. The two deacons who were chosen in 1964 to support the minister as church council members, also served the congregation. The black minister was remunerated by the *TVSV*.

### **Youth Work**

The Sunday school consisted of 67 children and a youth group (MBB) was functioning. The first group of 10 young people was dedicated on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1965.

### **WARDS**

**Malemati:** This ward was created in 1932 during the time of Rev AJ Rousseau of Burger mission station. This is where he started with the help of Evangelist Thusane. Thusane was succeeded by Ev Kgopotjane. One of the first converted persons, Philemon Mphahlele, requested that a church building be erected. He donated the piece of land on which a small church was built. Rev JM Louw succeeded Rousseau and he erected a new church as well as a residence for the evangelist. The evangelist's salary was paid by the *TVSV*. The population was 300.

**Marulaneng:** Marulaneng was a new ward started by Rev ES Ramaipadi at the end of 1964. It consisted only of a school with a small Sunday school, and was served by the evangelist of Malemati.

**Serabaneng:** This was a new ward started by Rev ES Ramaipadi in January 1965. It had a Sunday school with 45 children, and was served by the deacon and the minister of Mphahlele. The village had a population of approximately 100.

**Buildrift:** This ward was started by Rev PN Kutumela in 1961. There were no buildings other than a small school. The population numbered about 50.

**Tjiane:** Work in this ward only started in March 1965. There was only a school and no youth work was being done.

### **Recommendation**

With a growing population at Mphahlele, the local minister recommended that another two or three evangelists be appointed to assist the minister and the two evangelists already working in that outstretched area.

Signed: Rev ES Ramaipadi. Date: 1965.

**Morotse:** Morotse was started in 1932. It had no church building, only a school and a residence for the evangelist. Approximately 386 people were living here. The evangelist was paid by the *TVSV*.

**Malekapane:** Malekapane consisted of a school with about 200 pupils. The Methodist Church worked here previously.

**Bewaarkloof:** This was a mining town and the missionary work was started by Rev JM Louw. A small thatched-roof church was erected by Rev Louw. Rev SG Njuweni worked here and from 1952 to 1965 resided in a mine house. Only one elder was assisting the minister. There were about 400 people and no youth work was being done.

**Voorspoed:** This was also a mining town served by two elders, one deacon and a Sunday school teacher.

**Uitkyk:** This mine ward was started by Rev ES Ramaipadi in 1963, with only one elder conducting a small Sunday school.

**Mafafe:** About 600 people resided here. The only elder started building a small church from clay and without a roof.

**Mphayaneng:** This ward was started by Rev JM (Koos) Louw (son of AA Louw). Rev PN Kutumela erected a small church, which was left incomplete. They had two elders, one deacon and one Sunday school teacher. There were about 200 people living in this village.

**Mashite:** This was a new ward started by Rev PN Kutumela in 1959. The village had a population of about 300. Only the Sunday school was functional.

**Lesetsi:** This was an old ward started by Rev Rousseau in 1932. The village, with a population of about 400, had only one school and a Sunday school. Two of our own members, Jan Mmowa and John Mankoe from this ward, studied at Stofberg Theological School to become ministers of the church.

### **15.2.7 Potgietersrus East**

#### **Statistics and Proposals**

The population living within the borders of the congregation was 40 000, of whom 27 000 were Bapedi, 10 000 Matabele, 2 000 Shangaan and 1 000 Zulu and Cinyanaja.

<b>Outposts</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Catechumen</b>	<b>Sunday school children</b>	<b>Sunday school teachers</b>	<b>Women's movement</b>	<b>Youth Movement</b>
Groothoek	73	5	28	3	1	14
Seksie 6	84	4	32	1	12	2
Pakhuis	32	6	41	1	8	5
Moletlane	77	1	49	1	34	1
Mogoto	35	6	62	1	8	2
Manaileng	22	2	-	-	13	-
Hloto	30	4	21	1	8	6
Mamogashoa	31	1	-	-	-	-
Molapo	25	1	24	1	-	-
Platnek	-	-	-	-	-	-
Doornrivier	4	-	42	1	1	-
Marsfontein	6	-	75	1	-	-



Matome	34	6	39	1	12	-
Mphahlele	42	11	65	2	16	10
Malemati	12	1	25	1	3	-
Morotse	12	-	-	-	6	-
Mashite	9	5	25	1	3	-
Letsetse	1	-	35	1	1	-
Bewaarkloof	3	-	15	1	-	-
Voorspoed	19	3	19	1	4	-
Lenting	10	-	45	1	2	-
Uitkyk	2	-	-	-	1	-
Serobaneng	1	2	48	1	-	-
Malekapane	1	-	-	-	-	-
Maralaleng	1	2	19	1	-	-
Tšiane	-	2	10	1	-	-
Mafafe	3	8	-	-	1	-
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>569</u></b>	<b><u>70</u></b>	<b><u>719</u></b>	<b><u>23</u></b>	<b><u>134</u></b>	<b><u>40</u></b>



<u>Ministers:</u>	Vacant	:	Groothoek
	Rev RM Kgatla	:	Mphahlele
<u>Evangelists:</u>	APM Matsileng	:	Malemati
	P Matheba	:	Morotse
	Z Maredi	:	Moletlane
	JDS Moloantoa	:	Pakhuis
	P Malobogoane	:	Seksie 6

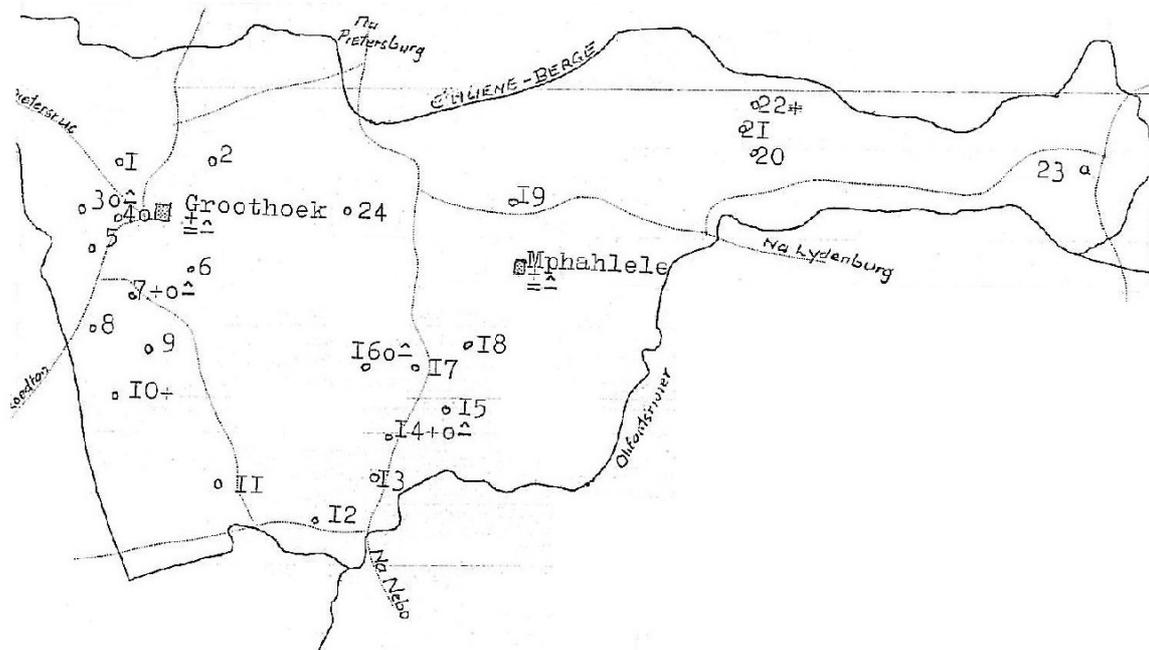
<u>Buildings</u>		
Groothoek	Church	Residence
Seksie 6	Church	Residence
Hlotlo	Church	
Moletlane	Church	Residence
Matome	Church	
Mphahlele	Church	Residence
Malemati	Church	Residence
Morotse	Church	Residence
Bewaarkloof	Church	

### Proposals

1. The missionary post at Groothoek to remain as is.
2. The Bantu minister's post at Mphahlele to remain as is.
3. A second Bantu minister's post to be created at Moletlane.
4. The evangelist posts to be decreased to four.

5. The missionary and evangelists to be mainly responsible for reaching out to non-believers and those not belonging to a church.

**Chart 5: CONGREGATION: POTGIETERSRUS EAST**



- + : Church
- = : Minister's Post
- o : Evangelist Post
- ^ : Residence

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Marsfontein | 13. Tsiane      |
| 2. Doorn River | 14. Malemati    |
| 3. Section 6   | 15. Mararaleng  |
| 4. Pakhuis     | 16. Morotse     |
| 5. Mogoto      | 17. Lenting     |
| 6. Rakgoata    | 18. Malekapane  |
| 7. Moletlane   | 19. Seroboneng  |
| 8. Manaileng   | 20. Voorspoed   |
| 9. Mamohashoa  | 21. Uitkyk      |
| 10. Hlotlo     | 22. Bewaarkloof |
| 11. Molapo     | 23. Mafafe      |
| 12. Byldrift   | 24. Platnek     |

### **15.3 EVALUATION OF PART ONE**

This section described the history of the pioneer phase of the DRC mission work in Sekhukhuneland. Phillipus Mantsena was converted under the ministry of a Dutch minister at Tulbagh and when he returned to his hometown he started a congregation. His loyalty towards the DRC originated from his relationship with the DRC congregation of Tulbagh.

The role that the pioneer lay preacher, Phillipus Mantsena, played was very important. His approach led the DRC to become involved, which eventually led to the establishment of the first mission station of the DRC in Sekhukhuneland at Mooiplaats, which was called Burger. Mantsena's approach can be seen as a small step towards a partnership in mission work. He worked alone and he needed support.

It was indicated how he obtained support from the DRC congregation of Middelburg. His son, Michael, and another young man, Johannes, received basic education from Mrs AP Burger, the minister's wife. They stayed at home until their education was on a level where they could continue further training as evangelists (Nchabeleng brothers, Louw 1972:11).

The second phase of the pioneering stage described how the first missionaries were placed and mission stations were erected.

The author has indicated that the church was planted in Sekhukhuneland. The strategy which was followed is generally called a *comprehensive approach*, which means that schools, clinics, mission hospitals, farms and mission stations were established. They were headed by the missionaries.

Their co-workers were the evangelists, school teachers and staff of the hospitals. The available material and oral testimonies indicate that they had mutual respect for each other. I could find no indication of any conflict and animosity. The area the first missionary had served at Mooiplaats was surrounded by black settlements. There was no accusation from the white farmers around that the mission work could develop an attitude of equal rights. The only complaint Rev Rousseau had, was that he received little support from these farmers. All their farms were eventually bought by the Government and prepared for the settlement of the smaller tribes of Sekhukhuneland.

Can the relationship between the missionaries and their co-workers be described as a partnership? If partnership requires equality, it cannot be seen as partnership. It must be kept in mind however that during the era of the pioneering phase some white people disapproved of mission work among black people, because they feared that it would lead to equality between white and black. This opposition strongly manifested in the neighbouring area of Lydenburg. The fact that the missionaries continued the work and the education of children show that they accepted the possibility of equal relationships in the future. One could call this an era of preparation for partnership, or an era of laying the foundations of equal partnership.