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WHO DID KILL INGE LOTZ? hidden motives, crooked cops

**SARS rogue unit
– secret official
report revealed**

**JHB stadium
boss chases
vanity awards**

**Where have all
the Great White
sharks gone?**





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noseweek

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On the nose Welz – a knockout!

WELZ WINS THIS ROUND BY A KNOCKOUT. I respect(ed?) Pauw. The rest of them are a bunch of clueless libtard clowns.

Pan
Via Twitter

I, too, respect(ed?) Pauw. He just needed reminding that being an embedded journalist has its glorious (and profitable) upside, but then comes the inevitable downside. – Ed.

Con-doctor deaned out my mother

THE NOSEWEEK STORY ABOUT DR JA VAN ROOYEN (*nose231*) left me saddened, sick and heartsore. Van Rooyen has been doing this to people for years.

My mother worked for him for 15 years from 1989 until 2005. In that time she lost everything because of him, while struggling every month to get him to pay her salary.

She was a young single mother/widow with three young children. She lent or gave him money at times and after selling our family home (which she owned following my father's death) to downsize, he convinced her to lend him ALL of the money as a bridging loan for a Woolworths lettuce-leaf farm investment. Van Rooyen lost every penny.

He had a weird control over her, she was a depressive and all he ever did was supply her with medication and convince her she was mad.

Our family now live in the UK and though my mother has rebuilt her life, this article scares me for all the elderly and vulnerable he will still prey on.

Sarah Davis
Oakham, Rutland, UK

Now see story update on page 6. – Ed.

Same old players in old-age home

IN SEPTEMBER 2014 (*nose179*) YOU RAN a story headlined "Lose your mind and you could lose your home..." which focused on my (now) late father and his curator, and litigation around these issues.

I was therefore most interested to discover that your recent story about a rogue doctor (*nose231*) mentions the same old-age/frail-care establishment

that my father was eventually taken to under arranged circumstances, duress and against his wishes: Brenthurst in Plumstead, Cape Town. It mentions the same Dr Dietrich who also was overseeing my father apparently in this home, and echoes all the troubles that I had with matron Lizann Painter.

Coincidentally my father also "fell" or experienced some injury which was kept quiet from me.

What has transpired since the [2014] *Noseweek* article: a further lot of high court applications.

My father, through my concerted efforts, got to stay just over two more years in his own home before my sisters arranged his "removal" to the Brenthurst establishment referred to in your January issue, where he lived only two more months.

Shelly van Acker
Cape Town

The true cost of Xolobeni mining

THE COMBINATION OF A GOVERNMENT committed to extractive development at all costs – at the cost of climate, environment, community wellbeing and human health – with rogue Aussie mining concerns is a lethal mix.

Mountain Man
Via Facebook

Interwaste disposal falls short

INTERWASTE'S PLANNED TRASH-TO-GAS plant in Wellington is neither healthy nor sustainable. Even with good technology, incineration (which, in effect, this is) perpetuates the linear concept of extract, produce, use and discard – and is at odds with the zero waste philosophy.

Patrick Dowling
Kommetjie

Changing the game

RE WITS STUDENT KAMAL RAMBURUTH-Hurt's plan to revolutionise the irrelevant economics curriculum: have professors Chris Malikane and Duma Gqubule written textbooks? If so, there's nothing stopping students from reading and debating them. If not, Kamal and others have a lifetime's work ahead of them.

Mo Haarhoff
Stellenbosch

Undervalued properties

WELL DONE ROB McLAREN! WHY DON'T all municipalities pay a commission to whoever generates a valuation increase with an objection?

Greg Beykirch
Pinetown



Inge Lotz - broken and betrayed

ON WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH 2005, THE mutilated body of Inge Lotz, an attractive and talented Stellenbosch University student, was found in her Welgevonden apartment. She was lying on her couch covered in blood.

Supt Neville, a member of the Serious and Violent Crimes Unit with Inspector Pieterse and Sergeant Claasen were amongst the first summoned to the scene. The experienced SVCU officer, known for his thorough and objective demeanour. There was no sign of forced entry. Valuables lay openly displayed. The murder motive was obviously not theft, it was personal.

Supt Neville studied the body of the victim. He saw her broken nose and swollen eyes. Several deep head, neck and chest wounds had been inflicted. There was massive swelling on her left arm and her right arm had numerous bruises and deep cuts on the hand. There were bruises on her legs and lower abdomen. The victim had clearly tried to fend off her attackers. None of this could have happened while the victim was lying, relaxed, on the couch.

The violence that caused wounds of this nature and the obvious struggle that had taken place wasn't evident in the apartment. Everything was in its place and nothing in the immediate vicinity of the victim's body was disturbed. It was puzzling. There were also drops of blood around the body instead of blood-spatter. A neat pool of blood seemed to have been poured onto the floor below the victim's head on the arm of the couch.

Neville had reason to suspect that, wherever the victim was killed, and possibly even tortured, it was not in her apartment.

Most extraordinary of all, an open magazine lay neatly across her feet. In a violent struggle, the magazine would have fallen to the floor. The TV remote control lay between Inge's right thigh and the back of the couch. It could never have remained in that position during a violent unexpected attack from behind. The killers had set about creating a false trail.

A week later Neville was off the case.

For weeks thereafter, the relatively inexperienced Insp Deon de Villiers who, surprisingly, was appointed to take over

as investigating officer, was at a loss and had not identified any suspects. But when the media began raising questions about the lack of progress in solving the case, the Western Cape SAPS's "Mr Fixit", Director "Attie" Trollip, now deceased, rushed to the rescue. True to his reputation, within no time, success! ("By hook or by crook", as several of his older colleagues would later point out.)

The two police experts he brought along with him, Capt Bruce Bartholomew and Supt Johannes Kock, concluded that Inge had been the victim of a surprise, lethal attack from behind while seated watching television. They concluded that there had been no struggle and, with nothing disturbed, it was considered a neat crime scene – as those who had rigged it had intended.

Weeks later, Fred van der Vyver, Inge's boyfriend, was arrested. Dir Trollip cleverly manipulated the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), the media and the public into believing he had a watertight case against the jealous boyfriend.

In 2007, Fred appeared in the Western Cape High Court before Judge Deon van Zyl, charged with his girlfriend's murder.

At huge cost, Louis van der Vyver, Fred's father, sought top experts in the world to scrutinise and dissect Trollip's three pillars of "watertight forensic evidence" against Fred. The Defence, led by advocate Dup de Bruyn, meticulously destroyed the State's triangle of evidence. In the process, Capt Bartholomew and other police members were increasingly subjected to ridicule as their lies and deceit were exposed. In his closing argument, De Bruyn also expressed concern that Mrs Juanita Lotz and Fred's former flatmate (and Inge's besotted admirer) Marius Botha both deviated from their sworn statements made to the police.

In his summary of the State's evidence, Judge Van Zyl stopped just short of using the term "fabrication of evidence". He expressed disbelief in the conduct of some of the policemen involved, especially in the evasive and poor manner they had testified.

In acquitting Fred and ending his two years of horror, the judge went as far as to

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ask why Fred had ever been considered a suspect in the first place.

Strangely, no punitive steps were taken against Dir Trollip, Capt Bartholomew and those who committed obvious perjury during the trial. Since then, the murder of Inge Lotz has been considered “closed” and no efforts have been made to track down the true perpetrators.

In 2014, Alan D Elsdon, a former East London policeman turned author, decided to investigate Inge’s murder. Four years later, he released his book, *Broken & Betrayed: Inge Lotz*. Startling new evidence and a proper evaluation of the existing evidence powerfully suggests that :

- Inge was not murdered in her Welgevonden apartment. Independent medical and forensic crime scene experts are of the same opinion – the true crime scene was elsewhere. The so-called crime scene was staged.

- Supt Kock, a crime scene expert, for reasons unknown, failed to gather standard yet crucial samples of blood and DNA in the apartment, pertinent to identifying the killers.

- Inge’s vehicle was never examined for DNA or fingerprints.

- False witnesses were created to place Inge in her apartment that afternoon. (Cellphone evidence indicated she headed out of town for two hours to an unidentified destination.)

- The doctor who performed the autopsy was not summoned to assess the crime scene, nor shown photographs of it. Instead police investigators falsely led her to believe Inge was attacked from behind and killed with a hammer blow to her head while she lay relaxed on her sofa. In fact the crime scene and the injuries to her body overwhelmingly prove the contrary: she was murdered elsewhere

and attacked face-on while standing and vigorously trying to defend herself with her hands and arms.

- During the autopsy, two rape kits were gathered. These were never sent to the SAPS Forensic Laboratory for testing and were never mentioned during Fred’s trial.

- One of the NPA prosecutors told the doctor who performed the autopsy, that she need not mention anything about Inge’s probable rape in her testimony, despite the fact that injuries found on her body indicated that she had been raped or sexually assaulted.

- An NPA member told the doctor that Judge Deon van Zyl had been consulted, and he had agreed that such evidence need not be divulged in court. This was false.

- Two experts at the SAPS Forensic Science Laboratory in Delft were approached with a “reasonable request” to make certain changes to their findings: Trollip’s experts had vigorously argued that the accused, Inge’s boyfriend Fred van der Vyver had “probably” used a ceremonial hammer he had been given as a gift as the murder weapon. However when subjected to DNA testing, only traces of his male DNA could be found on the hammer. The lab experts were discretely asked to insert in their report that they had also found female DNA and small traces of blood on it. Both refused.

- Other expert forensic pathologists state categorically that none of her injuries were caused by a hammer.

- Evidence doctored by police investigators included copying and planting a fingerprint to falsely incriminate the accused and presenting blatantly false evidence about a blood smear on the bathroom floor.

JUANITA LOTZ, INGE’S MOTHER, WAS THE first witness to testify for the State. When she read her statement made to the police into the court records, Lotz said the first time she heard of Inge’s murder was when told by Marius Botha at her Welgemoed home. This was during the late evening of Inge’s murder. Strangely, she then interjected: “I already knew she had been murdered” and in reply to a question by Adv De Bruyn: “I already heard” [about Inge’s murder].

The cellphone records of Inge and those closest to her were scrutinised. Noteworthy are the long periods of cellphone/telephone silence on the afternoon/evening of Inge’s murder.

Some cellphones were switched off, others lay on charge elsewhere.

Inge: 15:10 until after her death (No cellphone activity)

Fred: 13:36 until 20:11 – 6 hours, 35 mins (No contact with Inge)

Mrs Lotz: 13:34 until 20:13 – 6 hours, 39 min; (No contact, no alibi)

Marius: 13:26 until 21:04 – 7 hours 38 min (No contact, no Alibi)

The guest, “Mr X”: 13:12 until 23:00 – 9 hours 44 min (No contact, no alibi)

Consideration has to be given to the possibility that in some or all cases this was deliberate to avoid their whereabouts being determined.

Inge’s time of death was estimated to have been between 16:00 – 18:00. Her body was found at about 22:30.

In the book, the early involvement of Dir Trollip becomes obvious, as do the numerous lies told by family members, friends, police officers and others. Readers are provided with enough information to identify the key role players and suspects.

For the first time, the most probable motives for the horrendous murder are exposed and considered – the first being Inge’s disturbing discovery of a dark family secret.

Shortly before she was murdered, Inge had made a shocking discovery that she was going to share in her process of “cleansing” within His People’s Church (HPC) – which Fred had recently persuaded her to join. Preparatory to the event, she had already shared the secret with one person at HPC. Within no time the secret leaked out: Inge and one of her cousins were half-sisters and that Prof Lotz was not her father. To substantiate it, DNA tests were later privately conducted by a reliable laboratory. The results were affirmative.

Other possible motives derive from the potential for jealousy amongst her several former lovers and a presumed-gay contender for Fred’s affection, all identified in the book.

Some of them were prominent members of the church – with reason to fear the church would be exposed to a damaging scandal in the student community.

All these situations and much new evidence is described and dissected in this gripping book.

An appeal was recently directed to advocate Rodney de Kock at the Directorate of Public Prosecutions in Cape Town for the Inge Lotz murder investigation to be reopened. The advocate is said to have responded



Director ‘Attie’ Trollip

positively to the new evidence and the identification of likely new suspects.

But others remain sceptical. A decade ago already author Michael Day reckoned there is little chance that Inge Lotz will ever get the justice she deserves. He wrote: "We live in an adversarial system, and so when a headline-grabbing prosecution is shamed as publicly as this one, the wounds cut deep, and reopening the murder inquiry is not part of the healing process – even if it means allowing the killer to get away with it.

Police and prosecutors have a way of dealing with this. It's called denial."

In 2014 senior prosecutor Billy Downer SC told Elsdon: "It will take an earthquake to strike Cape Town before the Lotz case is ever revisited. As far as we (NPA) are concerned, Fred van der Vyver was guilty and extremely lucky to have escaped going to prison for life."

Elsdon's newly released book, which has received no media coverage because of the scary nature of its contents, also deals with the 2005

murders of Jessica Wheeler and Victoria Stadler in Knysna. Once again Dir Attie Trollip was sent from Cape Town to head these two investigations. Days later, Heinrich van Rooyen, a local DJ, was arrested. He was later convicted and sentenced to 30 years imprisonment. Proof has since emerged of a massive police cover-up in Wheeler's murder and the fabrication of evidence in both investigations. Legal advice is being sought to have the new evidence brought before the Appeal Court. ■

Chilling lies and deception revealed

VARIOUS WITNESSES COMMITTED perjury in the course of the sensational trial. Many of the lies were exposed by the Defence, while others slipped past the judge and ended up in the court records.

During her testimony, Inge's mother [*Juanita Lotz*] told the judge, "I arrived home between 09:15 and 09:20 (on the day before Inge was murdered). Soon thereafter Inge called."

Mrs Lotz: "Inge called to sing a birthday song to her dog Gabbi."

Judge: "I hope the dog enjoyed the song." Lotz: "Yes, he did."

To cast light on the investigation, the police acquired the cellphone and SMS records of Inge, Fred van der Vyver and others. These show that when Inge called it was 09:31, and Mrs Lotz was not at home as she had testified. Her cellphone records show that when she took Inge's call, [*Juanita*] Lotz was in the Durbanville Hills area – more than 10km from her home. It was therefore impossible for Inge to have sung to Gabbi during the call – quite apart from the fact that it was housekeeper Magdalena's daughter, Priscilla's birthday that day and not Gabbi's. This was one of the many lies that escaped being exposed.

ON WEDNESDAY 23 MARCH 2005 *Die Burger* ran the headline "Moving farewell of murdered sunshine-child." The article described how about 1,000 people filled the seats and aisles of the Dutch Reformed Church in Welgemoed. Pastor Heerden van Niekerk told the mourners of the SMS Prof [*Jan*] Lotz received from his daughter Inge a day before her murder. The pastor read

the message as provided to him by the professor: "Hi Dad, just want to say you must have a lovely week and enjoy your work."

The records show there was very little SMS or cellphone contact between Inge and Prof Lotz. On the day before Inge's murder, Tuesday the 15 March 2005, Inge received six SMS messages – all from Fred. On the same day, Inge did not send any SMS messages, not to Fred – and definitely not to Prof Lotz.

What motive could anyone have had in claiming to receive such a warm message from their daughter the day before she was brutally murdered? It is clear Prof Lotz wished mourners to believe he and Inge were close – that they enjoyed a wonderful father-daughter relationship. Was the intention to hide a darker truth?

ON THE AFTERNOON OF 15 MARCH, INGE HAD a one-hour meeting scheduled with her church counsellor, Sylvia. That evening Fred arrived to spend the night in her apartment – convenient, since he had an early morning class on Wednesday at the university. He told Inge that he, too, had seen Sylvia that day. Inge had just learnt that Fred and Marius had in the past had a gay relationship. Just the day before he had suggested to Marius that they should perhaps no longer be sharing an apartment. Inge was angry that they had both kept this information from her.

At 19:30 Inge received her usual sunset call from her mother.

Soon after the call ended an expected "guest" arrived at the Lotz seniors' residence in Welgemoed.

At just that time, alone back in the apartment he shared with Fred,

Marius sent an SMS to an undisclosed recipient, then immediately, at 19:36, switched off his phone – most unusual for Marius, a compulsive phone user.

He only switched it back on again at 21:24, just short of two hours later.

THE LOTZ'S HOUSEKEEPER, MAGDALENA was never officially questioned by the police or private investigators about Inge, or asked about the activities at the Lotz residence during the week of her murder. Recently, almost 13 years after Inge's murder, Magdalena, now 65, was visited at her home. In the presence of her daughter Deidré she clearly recalled that on the Tuesday evening, the day before Inge's murder, Mrs Lotz had received a "guest" who spent the night. By then, Magdalena had worked for the family for 20 years, and knew every friend and family member who visited.

The former housekeeper said she had made breakfast for the guest and Mrs Lotz the next morning – Wednesday 16 March 2005, the day Inge was murdered. One of the reasons Magdalena was certain of the date was because it was the birthday of her daughter Priscilla, and Mrs Lotz had given her that afternoon off to go home.

Asked who the "guest" was, Magdalena provided his name without hesitation.

Shortly after Inge's murder, the guest claimed that on 16 March 2005 he was not in the Western Cape. Despite being fully aware of this false claim, Mrs Lotz strangely made no mention in her statement to the police that on 15/16-03-2005, the guest had stayed overnight at her home.

● Extract from *Broken & Betrayed* by Alan D Elsdon ■

Health cheques for 'GP'

'Kind and loving' con-doctor has been at it for years, while HPCSA dismissed a 2012 complaint

ROGUE DOCTOR AND CONMAN Johann Anton van Rooyen (nose231) has been up to his tricks for many years, it emerges, judging from responses to the story about how he exploited 82-year-old Cape Town woman Marguerite Harness-Wood.

But Van Rooyen, who was struck off the roll by the HPCSA in 2017 for unprofessional conduct after using his doctor/patient relationship in another case to enrich himself, is clearly an old hand at the game.

Retired *Sunday Times* investigative journalist Jon Abbott was already on to Van Rooyen in 2011. Abbott, who writes a regular blog titled Dearjon Letter, tells *Noseweek* he encountered the conman-doctor that year when he was commissioned to investigate his relationship with a former patient.

Prior to Van Rooyen's hearing at the HPCSA, Abbott broke the story in his

DearJonLetter about how the doctor had exploited an elderly patient, Richard Rowberry, now deceased. Abbott had submitted a letter of complaint to the HPCSA on behalf of Rowberry's son Eric in October 2012.

At the time, Abbott heard via the grapevine that Van Rooyen was talking about suing him for damages for "prejudging the hearings".

In a July 2016 blog entitled "Caring doctor who cashed cheques for his elderly patients", Abbott wrote: "In 2011 Eric Rowberry, who was then working in West Africa, asked me to look into Van Rooyen's relationship with his father Richard who died aged 69 at his home in Cape Town on 21 July 2010. Van Rooyen had begun treating him four months earlier when he was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer.

"During this time the doctor went to the bank, allegedly on Richard's behalf, and cashed seven cheques made out to cash, totalling R68,000. There was no dispute that the doctor cashed the cheques and the fee he charged for all his services was an agreed R5,000 a month.

"The only statement Van Rooyen gave the family was for a total of R30,000 and as one of the beneficiaries, Eric wanted to know where the rest of the money had gone.

"Eric, who had considerable email correspondence with Van Rooyen, told me, 'The doctor's argument has been that he was doing my father a favour by going to the bank for him as he was too weak and he was worried my father would catch a cold/pneumonia. I don't buy this as he was strong enough to take me to lunch; tour Robben Island and drive himself to Calitzdorp (a round trip of 800km from Cape Town). It was totally out of character for my father to spend money like this. He was frugal to say the least."

Abbott continued: "I saw Van Rooyen at his surgery in Gabriel Road in the Plumstead suburb of Cape Town. He has been practising in the area for almost 40 years. His room was at the end of a passage leading off a dentist's reception area. Van Rooyen's patients waited there but he had no receptionist and the dentist's receptionist evidently did not deal with the doctor's patients. While I was waiting there an elderly woman came through from the doctor's room and said to the receptionist, 'Don't I get a receipt?' She was told to go back and speak to Van Rooyen. She returned soon afterwards saying that everything was now in order. I then went in to see Van Rooyen.

"During our conversation he showed me a cash cheque which he said he had just received. He stuffed it into the top pocket of his jacket. It was probably from the lady he had just seen. He told me he did not pay tax on cash payments. He agreed this was wrong but said that all doctors did this and they had a receipt book for this purpose. He then opened his one to show me. I told him that if he was cheating the taxman how did he expect anybody to believe that he wasn't ripping off his patients?

"The doctor evidently realised he had put himself in an invidious position by cashing the cheques because he asked me what I thought he should do to placate the Rowberry family and I suggested he repay R20,000. He replied: 'I just don't have that kind of money.' He suggested I should get Eric to come and see him as he might consider paying a thousand-or-so to get the whole thing over with. He didn't like dealing with a third party.

"Shortly afterwards Eric returned from West Africa and met Van Rooyen at Knead Café in Muizenberg. Eric told me the doctor had agreed to repay



Marjorie Pelton

R25,000 within six months. The money would come from a family trust.

“Van Rooyen told him he was concerned that if the matter went to the Medical Council he would be accused of malpractice.

“He didn’t pay anything for the first six months and after some email reminders he made a cash payment of R2,000 into Eric’s account. Nothing was paid after that and he stopped answering further emails from Eric.

“In October 2012 I submitted a Letter of Complaint to the HPCSA on behalf of Eric. It contained everything in the report I had given him.

“Just over a year later a Legal Service Officer from the Council replied in a letter saying that the Committee concerned had found that there was ‘insufficient evidence to make a finding’ and that the ‘matter is closed’.

“Included in the letter was Van Rooyen’s ‘explanation’ from his lawyers Michael Matthews and Associates. It read: ‘Our client’s explicit instructions are that these cheques were cashed on behalf of Mr Richard Rowberry as per his formal request and our client was initially extremely uncomfortable in cashing these cheques but Mr Rowberry requested that our client attend to same.

“It was clear that on each occasion the late Mr Rowberry signed each cheque whilst fully compos mentis, although he may not physically have been able to cash a cheque himself, he was completely aware of what he was requesting and doing.

“Whether this matter was irregular or not, we wish to reiterate that it was done at the express instructions of Mr Rowberry.

“Mr Rowberry was attended on by our client in a professional and ethical manner at all times.’

“The only reference to the settlement offered by Van Rooyen was: ‘It appears that Mr Abbott and Mr Eric Rowberry have been trying to coerce our client into making some form of settlement, which our client does not and did not need to do in any way whatsoever, as services were professionally rendered to the late Mr Rowberry, on his express instructions.’

“The Medical Council completely ignored the fact that, not only did Van Rooyen ask me what settlement I would suggest but he then went on to make an offer of R25,000 to Eric and paid one instalment of R2,000.

“This was effectively an admission

of guilt. Had he been as innocent as he claimed through his lawyer he would never even have mentioned the possibility of a settlement, let alone have discussions about it with both me and Eric independently?

“Neither the Health Professions Council nor his lawyer commented on the fact that he told me that he does not pay tax on cash payments.

“The Council is more like a doctor’s protection society than an organisation to keep them in line. Conveniently for them it seems that it never does any of its own investigations. It expects complainants to present it with an open and shut case.

“Conveniently too it doesn’t have the power to order doctors to repay any money they might have taken from a patient. For that the aggrieved person has to mount their own expensive civil action in the high court.

“Even the Council’s former President Dr Nicky Padayachee conceded in its 2007 annual report that the perception was that the Council is ‘soft’ on practitioners.”

Noseweek’s article also referred to the case of Van Rooyen and his elderly patient Marjorie Pelton. Van Rooyen allegedly stole more than R400,000 from the frail 80-year-old, who died penniless in 2012 from a brain tumour. Pelton, who lived in a retirement home in Diep River, Cape Town had been living off her investment account and her pension when, in 2007, Van Rooyen took her under his wing.

Her daughters, Cheryl Bluff and Carol Weber, discovered that Van Rooyen had been taking money from their mother when they found her “very emotional and tearful” in her flat, saying she couldn’t believe a person she loved and trusted could treat her in that way. The sisters then found that Van Rooyen had taken large amounts of money from their mother. In fact, they discovered that her entire life savings had been taken.

At the time, Cheryl said: “Just from the short statement she got from the bank we saw that in February 2009 he took about R57,000; in March R150,000; in April R117,000; and in May R20,500.

“At least 13 of the 39 cheques written after January 2009 did not match the stub amounts he had written into my mother’s cheque book.”

The sisters made two affidavits to the police in 2009 but the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit said they could not prosecute without their key



Richard Rowberry

witness, Mrs Pelton. The case then moved to the HPCSA. Following a lengthy process, in 2017 Van Rooyen was struck off the medical register for fleecing Marjorie Pelton.

Noseweek has also received a letter from Mrs Sarah Davis in the UK: “Your recent article on Dr JA van Rooyen left me saddened, sick and heartsore. The scary thing is that Dr Van Rooyen has been doing this to people for years and I wonder how many lives he really has affected. My mother worked for Dr Van Rooyen for nearly 15 years, from 1989 until 2005. In that time she lost everything because of him.”

(For more detail, see Davis’s letter on the Letters page.)

Another Cape Town woman (who asked not to be named) related how her late husband had gone to see Van Rooyen after an accident involving his finger and a machine. “His work was amazing... but at some subsequent date the doctor asked my husband to lend him money. My husband was shocked and so was I. We didn’t go back to him. We learnt that Van Rooyen was addicted to gambling on the horses.”

Davis sums up: “The (*nose*231) article and the reports a few years ago on the Pelton family scare me for all the elderly and vulnerable that he will prey on.

“As scary: he still has facilities and doctors assist him and help him get away with it. (Dr Dietrich worked with him for years.) I hope he is found, caught and locked up for the rest of his days.” ■



Jacques Grobbelaar with his collection of awards

Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is cleverest of us all?

Vanity awards give a veneer of erudition to fake achievers with the gall and cash to flaunt them

DR JACQUES GROBBELAAR, CEO of Stadium Management South Africa, the company contracted by the City of Johannesburg to manage FNB Stadium, Orlando Stadium, Dobsonville Stadium, and Rand Stadium is an amazing man.

For a start, few people could have received as many awards, both international and local, as he has over the past three years. (Check the list alongside!)

Over the past year the company's CEO has spent an amazing amount of time and money – presumably mostly his employer's time and money – travelling from one international awards

event to the next: Mexico in March; Berlin, then Dubai in April (where he was awarded his honorary doctorate); back in Mexico on 9 June; straight on to Manchester UK on 11 June; Miami Beach, Florida on 25 July; London on 18 November; Las Vegas on 10 December; Oxford UK on 20 December.

Already scheduled for 2019: Lisbon on 10 February and Paris on 2 March. Interspersed amongst these were another half-dozen local award ceremonies.

Obviously Grobbelaar doesn't spend much time in the office, but then who's to complain; the MD of the company is his brother Bertie?

Are you uncharitable enough for

this excess of awards to have made you just a tad suspicious? It did make *Noseweek* suspicious.

An internet search finds a September 2012 report – yes, that long ago already – in Sri Lanka's *Sunday Times* which reads:

“Earlier this year, the ailing State Engineering Corporation (SEC) [of Sri Lanka] proudly announced winning an international award for its ‘high quality service’ at a ‘Standards Conference and Awards Ceremony’ held in Paris. However, the honour came with a €3,900 price tag which the SEC paid to a dubious Spanish company named Business Initiative Directions (BID).” That sure rings

bells! See items 3, 11, 14 and 15 on “Dr” Grobbelaar’s list.

The Sri Lanka paper’s report continues: “The Spanish Consulate in Mumbai said BID was a fraudulent company and the Honorary Consul for Sri Lanka in Barcelona, Agustin Llanas called BID a spam company that sells awards.

“SEC officials said they checked the legitimacy of BID before paying online. SEC, under the Ministry of Construction and Engineering Services, paid for the award plus travel expenses from the corporation’s budget...”

More than a year ago *The Times* of London published a report by Billy Kenber in which he revealed that the Europe Business Assembly (EBA), which advertises itself as an Oxford institution, sells made-up prizes such as “The International Socrates Award” and “The Queen Victoria Commemorative Award” for as much as R135,000.

Former EBA staff are quoted by *The Times* telling how they were told to find award-winners by trawling the internet for email addresses of academics and business executives. Much of this was carried out from the EBA’s Ukrainian office, with leads passed on to English-speaking staff in Oxford.

One ex-employee said that they were told to muddy the distinction between the EBA and Oxford University. “We were selling the idea that they were becoming part of the great Oxford institution,” the former employee said.

They particularly targeted businessmen and academics in developing countries – “where the idea that money buys you credentials is still there” – with claims that they had been nominated for an award.

Anyone who expressed interest in receiving an award would, typically, be given several cost options, including a “VIP package” costing in excess of R100,000 that carried the opportunity to give a speech during the award ceremony, an interview with the EBA’s in-house electronic magazine and three nights’ hotel accommodation [*The cost of air travel was not included*]. The fee was to “meet the company’s administrative costs and for a five-year licence to use the award brand for public relations and marketing purposes.”

That *Times* report buzzed items 1, 2 and 17 on Jacques Grobbelaar’s list of awards.

And the award goes to...

As listed on his website, here are “Dr” Jacques Grobbelaar’s trophies and awards:

1. **Winner** of the 2017 Europe Business Assembly Enterprise of the Year Award “based on research done by the EBA analytic centre.”
2. **Winner** of the 2017 Europe Business Assembly Manager of the Year Award (nominated by the Socrates Nomination Committee).
3. **Winner** of the 2017 International Arch of Europe (IAE) Award.
4. **One** of 15 finalists nominated for the Entrepreneur of the Year 2017 competition sponsored by Sanlam and Business Partners at Hyatt Regency Hotel, Rosebank on 6 September 2017.
5. **Recipient** of the Royal Crown of Excellence Award at a ceremony in Mexico on 10 March 2018.
6. **Honoured** by the Commonwealth University at a graduation ceremony held in Dubai on 6 April 2018, with an honorary doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) specialising in Leadership and Management.
7. **A finalist** in the 17th annual Oliver Top Empowerment Awards. According to Top Media Marketing and Events director Karla Fletcher: “Our judges were seriously impressed with the calibre of entries received this year. ...The marketplace should know that all our finalists have been astutely researched and shown to be the best at what they do.” This awards function took place on 12 April 2018 at Emperor’s Palace.
8. **Recipient** of the Gold and Silver Award for Quality 2018, at a ceremony held in Mexico on 9 June 2018.
9. **“Nominated once again”** for Executive of the Year 2018 Award at the Stadium Business Summit held from 11 to 14 June 2018 in Manchester, UK.
10. **A shortlisted finalist** at Topco Media’s 16th Annual National Business Awards 2018 in the category “Top Performing Leader of the Year”. The awards ceremony took place at Emperor’s Palace on 16 November 2018
11. **Recipient** of the BID Quality Award (BQA), Diamond Category for his “outstanding commitment to quality and excellence” at an award ceremony held in London on 18 November 2018.
12. **Recipient** of the European Society for Quality Research (ESQR) award for Best Quality Leadership at a ceremony held in Las Vegas on 10 December 2018.

His company, Stadium Management SA, received the following:

13. **Awarded** Third Highest Concert Ticket Selling Worldwide Certificate by UK-based Pollstar.
14. **Winner** of Business Initiative Directions (BID) 2016 Quality Crown Award for Excellence
15. **Recipient** of the Arch of Europe trophy at the Arch of Europe Convention in Frankfurt, Germany on 1 July 2017.
16. **Winner** of the National Business of the Year Award made by SA’s Top Performing Publication at Emperors Palace on 16 November 2017.
17. **Winner** of the 2017 International Socrates Award at the International European Quality Awards gala dinner held at The EBA Global Oxford, UK on 20 December 2017.
18. **Winner** of the Bizz Award for Business Excellence 2018 by the World Federation of Business economy (WORLDCOB) at the BIZZ Americas Awards held on 25 July 2018 at Miami Beach, Florida.
19. **Winner** of the Association Otherways Management’s International Achievement Award for Quality and Business Excellence at an award ceremony scheduled to take place in Lisbon on 10 February 2019.
20. **Winner** of the Worldwide Marketing Organisation’s Gold and Silver Quality Award for 2018. (The ceremony is to take place in Paris on 2 April 2019.) ■

According to Wikipedia, The International Arch of Europe Award listed by Grobbelaar is one of several accolades sold by the same Madrid-based company called Business Initiative Directions (BID), referred to above. Sources quoted by Wikipedia also describe them as “meaningless awards”, more widely known as “vanity wards”. It also described the company as “possibly a scam company”. That covers item 18 on the list.

As early as 2010 the consumer

columnist of *The Voice* in Botswana declared BID “remarkably similar to the equally ridiculous Bizz Awards scam” which the paper had previously exposed. That would also have buzzed item 18 on the list.

In April 2016 *Ghana Business News* published an exposé by their reporter Emmanuel Dogbevi, headlined “The diploma mills fooling Ghanaians with fake honorary doctorate degrees.”

An extract: “There are several of these fake universities offering the ‘Honorary Doctorate degrees’. But two

in particular seem to have made good business from Ghana – Dayspring Christian University, based somewhere in the US, and the so-called The Commonwealth University, situated in a two-storey building somewhere in London – but with a registered office in Belize! Yes. Belize!”

(*Noseweek* readers will have noted that The Commonwealth University is the one that honoured “Dr” Jacques Grobbelaar with his honorary doctorate at a ceremony held in Dubai in April 2018 – item 6 on his list.)

The *Ghana Business News* reporter wrote to The Commonwealth University inquiring about how one gets to receive their “honorary doctorate degrees”: “In the case of the Commonwealth University, every email I send returns an automatic reply, suggesting a one-man operation, rather than a major institution. But I later always do get a reply from a real person,” he reports.

“These ‘universities’ are not accredited by the designated accreditation-issuing bodies in these countries. When asked about accreditation, they would admit flippantly that they don’t receive accreditation from the government! This answer should raise a red flag to anyone seeking validation from these obvious scams.

“The Commonwealth University with a registered office in Belize says it has a University in Benin! They even sent me an obviously fake brochure with the photos of President Barack Obama, [Nigerian *business magnate*] Aliko Dangote and Bill Gates.”

Particularly revealing was the reply the Ghanaian journalist received when he told them of his desire to acquire an honorary doctorate in 2016:

“Dear Emmanuel K. Dogbevi,
“The Commonwealth University



Grobbelaar receiving an award



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FNB Stadium (Soccer City), managed by Jaques Grobbelaar

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“This is the time to begin putting finishing touches to your preparations. You need to pay for the Seminar and related expenses now. Full details of the Executive Seminar and how to remit your Seminar fees are contained below:

DETAILS OF THE PROGRAMME:

Seminar Theme:

Business & Leadership Success for Entrepreneurs & Professionals

Seminar Fee:

\$3,000.00 covering course materials, tea, lunch & refreshments

Seminar Date:

April 28-29, 2016
(Arrivals April 27, 2016)

Time:

9.00am – 5pm Daily

Venue:

Hotel Novotel Cotonou, Boulevard de la Marina, Cotonou, Benin Republic

Summary of first steps you need to take now:

1. Confirm your place at the Seminar by paying the Seminar fee of \$3,000.
2. Make your Contribution to the

3. University’s Endowment Fund. Buy your air ticket now to avoid escalating prices due to last minute rush.
4. If you have not forwarded your CV/Profile and photo, please kindly do so.
The last sentence is indeed the punchline: they have agreed to grant him an honorary doctorate without having seen his CV/ profile.

One last internet trawl to find out more about that “Royal Crown of Excellence Award” that “Dr” Grobbelaar received in Mexico in March 2018 (item 5 on his list): the awards are operated by a Madrid-based company called WMKTO, that trades as The International Marketing Association. It claims to be a market research company, but visit its website at *wmkt.com.mx/#page* and you will discover that it is a marketer of awards, much like all the others already mentioned.

Finally, what of this month’s scheduled visit to Lisbon to receive the Otherways Management Association’s International Achievement Award – item 19 on the list?

The name suggests it is sponsored by the Paris-based Otherways Management Association Club, an organisation selling what the Centre for Investigative Reporting has called “meaningless international awards” otherwise known as vanity awards. ■



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SARS rogue unit – secret official report revealed

The SARS 'rogue unit' trial is scheduled to resume on February 14. Noseweek has uncovered a secret report by the Inspector-General of Intelligence that once more puts the spotlight on that murky affair

THE SECRET INTELLIGENCE REPORT into the “rogue unit” at the South African Revenue Service has been kept under wraps for more than four years. Why, when asked about it, did then Minister of State Security David Mahlobo try to fob off media inquiries with a red herring?

In August 2014 Mahlobo instructed Inspector-General of Intelligence Faith Radebe to probe media allegations that rogue spooks from the Special Operations Unit (SOU) of the State Security Agency (SSA) had attempted to destabilise the Revenue Service. Mahlobo promised to make Radebe's final report public.

However, the 62-page report has remained classified “Secret”. But *Noseweek* is finally able to reveal its contents. Up to now, there have only been muted hints: in December 2014 *TimesLive* ran a brief but intriguing note by Mzilikazi wa Afrika and



Minister David Mahlobo

Piet Rampedi speculating that the Inspector-General had recommended criminal charges “against at least four senior SARS officials”.

The only official indication of advocate Radebe's findings came on 5 May 2015 when minister Mahlobo told a pre-budget press briefing that the Inspector-General of Intelligence (IGI) had found no wrongdoing on the part of State Security Agency operatives. “There is no issue about (SA Security Service) rogue elements trying to destabilise the South African Revenue Service,” he said.

Mahlobo only came out with this inconclusive snippet because 12 days earlier Adrian Lackay, SARS's former press spokesperson who had resigned in a fit of pique that February, put out a statement through the DA revealing the opening portion of the testimony of the controversial unit's leader Johann van Loggerenberg to the secret investigation.

Van Loggerenberg, said Lackay, had presented 34 related “instances” to Inspector-General Radebe, and identified over 60 individuals he believed should be interviewed. “He provided the IGI with multiple data and evidence, including a memory stick containing whatever information and data was in his possession.”

Almost right. The IGI's “Secret” report, whose contents we now present, tartly observes that in the first of two interviews with him – where he was accompanied by an attorney and two advocates – Van Loggerenberg



**Inspector-General of Intelligence,
Faith Radebe**

“attempted to direct the interview by proposing that he has 38 themes on which he would like to advise the IGI team. Coupled with this he provided the names of 64 people he felt the team should interview... He was advised he should desist from directing the operation and the team would decide what questions to put to him.”

What's it all about? On 10 August 2014 *City Press* published a story by Jacques Pauw claiming that a 15-strong team of contracted agents from the Special Operations Unit (SOU) of the SSA, with access to sophisticated listening and tracking devices, was conducting a dirty tricks campaign working to oust top SARS management. Targets, said Pauw, included acting commissioner Ivan Pillay and veteran investigator Van Loggerenberg.

A member of the dirty tricks SOU

team, wrote Pauw, was Pretoria attorney Belinda Walter, whose seven-month romance with Van Loggerenberg had ended acrimoniously three months earlier. The *City Press* story followed hot on the heels of Walter's complaint to SARS claiming her former lover was heading a rogue unit within the Revenue Service. She claimed Van Loggerenberg was mentally ill, unstable, corrupt, a pathological liar and a sociopath.

(References to his disturbed mental and psychological condition were not entirely without substance: following incidents after the break-up of their romance in 2014, Walter sought a domestic violence order against Van Loggerenberg in the Pretoria Magistrate's Court. Attached to the opposing affidavit he filed was a letter from his counselling psychologist Dr Elaine Bing stating that "Mr Van Loggerenberg has "never shown aggression in my presence or indicated aggression or anger towards anyone".

Bing goes on to give full details of Van Loggerenberg's mental condition. She states that a psychiatrist, Dr Marlene Viljoen, initially diagnosed him with social anxiety disorder and panic attacks, but after a few sessions with Dr Bing she concluded that he also had bipolar II disorder, with alternating periods of major depression and hypomania. Between January 2010 and the time of her writing the letter, he'd had a total of 113 psychotherapy sessions with Bing.)

In his *City Press* piece Jacques Pauw wrote that Belinda Walter was an agent for the Special Operations Unit of the State Security Agency, when in fact she was registered as Source 5332 in the agency's Economic Intelligence Unit. In her report the Inspector-General commented: "The only possible inference that can be drawn is that this fabricated information was passed on to the media from persons not familiar with the structures of the SSA in an attempt to detract attention from SARS."

The IGI found that no reliance should be placed on Pauw's report "as it contains information that is tantamount to peddling. We further find the media reports seek to diminish the allegations against SARS by drawing attention to the SSA. It is recommended the origin of the newspaper reports be pursued to establish the real motive for this particular newspaper publishing disinformation. And that criminal action be taken against those responsible."



Johann van Loggerenberg

Some of the Inspector-General's more notable findings in the Secret Report:

- SARS created a covert unit utilising covert and intrusive methods in direct contravention of its mandate. Only the President, said the IGI, could establish an intelligence service by way of national legislation. Establishing a capacity which was the exclusive preserve of the intelligence services within SARS was clearly illegal;

- SARS had created an interception and monitoring of communications capability which went beyond targeting tax offenders, but was utilised for political purposes;

- Pravin Gordhan, Ivan Pillay and Johann van Loggerenberg had established the unit and recruited persons with a specific skill set to engage in activities outside the SARS mandate. Strategic planning risk group head Peter Richer had knowledge of the unit and contributed to its functioning. Criminal charges should be investigated against all four.

- Van Loggerenberg had acted in contravention of the Tax Administration Act through the disclosure of taxpayer information to unauthorised persons;

- Payments of legal fees by SARS for legal representation of Van Loggerenberg were unprocedural, and the conduct of Pillay in authorising such should be investigated;

- The payment of Van Loggerenberg's legal fees should be stopped immediately;

- SARS should produce a credible

inventory of operational equipment used by SARS's National Research Group in the course of its covert activities. This must be confiscated and handed over to the mandated structures.

It is clear that a source for the Inspector-General's report is a document circulated years ago by a controversial former member of the covert SARS unit named Michael Peega. Peega (inter alia ex Special Forces and National Intelligence Agency) was stopped at a roadblock in possession of a hunting rifle and bloody poaching paraphernalia. A criminal case against him for rhino-poaching collapsed after mysterious interventions and the docket and a cellphone containing photographic evidence disappeared. Peega claimed he was employed in a sting operation. Rhino poaching syndicates were the subject of investigation by the SARS unit at the time. (Also see *nose191*)

Fired from SARS in 2009, a vengeful Peega released two dossiers claiming to expose the existence of the much-denied rogue unit, and that it had spied on politicians and intercepted communications with sophisticated listening equipment. One dossier was titled Broken Arrow. The second, headed Project Snowman, is attached to the I-G's report as an Appendix.

Pillay and Van Loggerenberg have repeatedly set out to discredit all Peega's claims and Pauw has tirelessly used media outlets to pour scorn and ridicule on him [*and, it must be said, on*

all those who venture to question Pauw's version of a squeaky-clean SARS and its investigative team leader Johann van Loggerenberg. – Ed].

So, who knows where the truth lies in this vicious war between the clandestine unit at SARS and the regular Intelligence agencies?

Inspector-General Radebe, a former member of both the NIA and SSA, was once the commander of the women's section of Umkhonto we Sizwe's security camp at Quibaxe in Angola. But she was seen as an ineffectual Inspector-General of Intelligence: too close to her former spook colleagues to push for the structural reforms of the intelligence services called for by the Matthews Commission. After completing her five-year term in 2015 Radebe was appointed Ambassador to Sweden. She died of stomach cancer last April, aged 66.

Minister David Mahlobo, too, has had his moments. In Parliament he masterminded the jamming of members' cellphones in 2015. A month later he claimed that then Public Protector Thuli Madonsela might be a CIA spy. Mahlobo was firmly aligned to then president Jacob Zuma, who appointed him Energy Minister in 2017 in what was seen as part of Zuma's ploy to push through a trillion-rand nuclear power deal with Russia. Firing Mahlobo was one of incoming President Cyril Ramaphosa's first actions just 11 days after he took over the presidency a year ago.

Despite being cast as a pariah by Pauw's media campaign, Michael Peega appears to have the backing of the Hawks and the intelligence services. He's been listed as a prosecution witness in the forthcoming trial of Johann van Loggerenberg, Ivan Pillay and Janse "Skollie" van Rensburg

on charges of illegal interception of communications and corruption. The charges relate to the alleged bugging of the National Prosecuting Authority offices in an operation called Operation Sunday Evenings. The case is scheduled to continue on February 14.

"You would need to meet Mike in person to understand and appreciate what they did to him," says a colleague. "I can't explain the life-changing experience it is to be lied about that way and have to live with it. Mike's father died believing his son was up to no good and he wrote a little book about it and it was heart-breaking."

The State Security Agency's Chris Burger (inter-alia, informer Belinda

'SARS would hold back evidence and not assist in the prosecution of syndicate leaders'

Walter's handler) had to satisfy himself *[or should have satisfied himself? – Ed].* on Peega's credibility before he passed the Project Snowman dossier to the IGI. A colleague insists: "Chris is extremely thorough and does not trust anything first or second-hand. He would have checked, double-checked and triple-checked and gone to great lengths to find a second, third and fourth verification. He is sceptical of everything and would never present things he was not totally sure of. He could be a real pain in the ass in that sense. He is also no

fool, one of the most intelligent people I have met.

"State Security had a panel doing verification and interviews and they were tough as nails. People who were in the SARS unit spoke up and gave damning evidence, despite Ivan [Pillay] trying to prevent them and control it. They had had enough and realised that their work was not legally sanctioned and were concerned. They also experienced JvL and knew that sooner or later the shit was going to hit the fan."

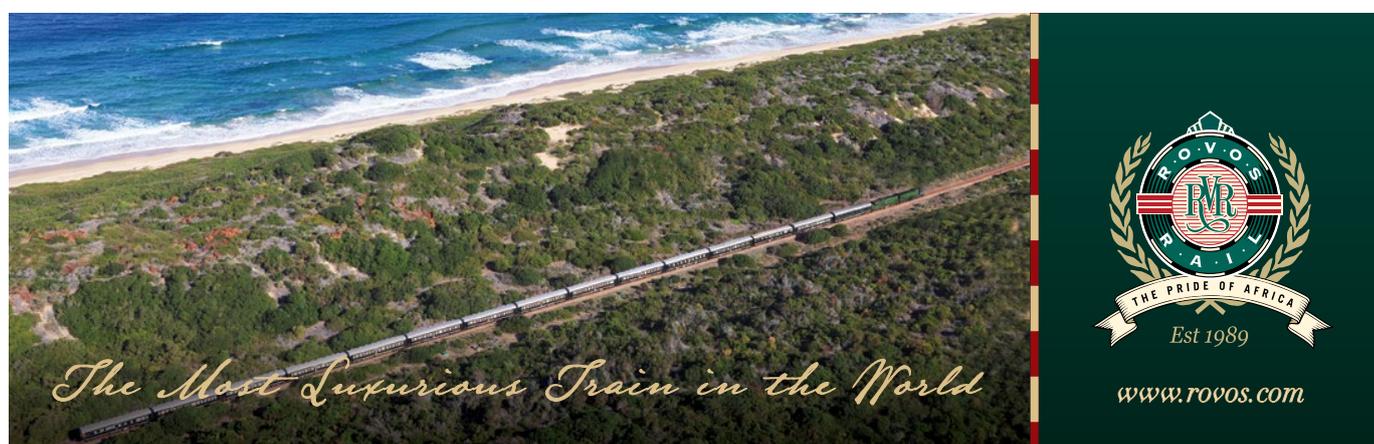
Peega's – and by implication Burger's – credibility will undoubtedly be amongst the issues to be canvassed in the forthcoming criminal trial.

On this subject the IGI's Secret Report states: "Of note is that in April 2014 Mr Peega was approached with a financial offer from SARS and a proviso that he should not divulge any information regarding the activities of the covert unit.

"This raises the question as to why SARS would offer him the money if *[the]* information he has provided on the existence of the unit and its activities is false and untrue."

In his testimony to the IGI, Chris Burger described how in 2000 he initiated a project called Smoke and Mirrors within the SSA's domestic branch, to collect intelligence on tobacco smuggling activities. He also represented SSA on the inter-departmental national task team dubbed Project Smoke, with members from the SA Police Service (leads department), the National Prosecuting Authority, SARS, the Asset Forfeiture Unit and the Financial Intelligence Centre. The SSA provided intelligence and agent briefing.

Cigarette smuggling syndicates were identified through Project Smoke, but the IGI reports: "A concern raised by Mr Burger is that over the past four years



they have managed to prosecute [only] one syndicate leader – and that when the national task team would initiate [action] to take a matter to court or ask prosecutors to build a case, the SARS would hold back evidence and not assist in the prosecution of syndicate leaders.”

The IGI investigators were shown a document, called the Kiran Naik affidavit, which had been given to SARS management in which numerous allegations were made regarding corrupt relationships between SARS officials and civilians involved in tax evasion over a decade. “The Naik affidavit has [also] been in the possession of SSA since 2010 and is allegedly the reason why SARS has poor relations with the SSA,” said the Inspector-General.

(A copy of the Naik affidavit can be found on *Noseweek’s* website.)

Burger’s testimony was that only Gordhan, Pillay and Van Loggerenberg were aware of SARS’s covert unit. Unit members were not paid from the SARS payroll, but from Pillay’s budget through cost code centre 50 20 30/31.

Members, said Burger, were trained in tracking; tracker installation; weapons handling; bugging systems; surveillance (physical, mobile and electronic); systems breaching; building of cover stories; changing of identity; communication security; house penetration; cryptography; and protection of safe houses.

Operations involved stealing mail from residences, interception of emails, mobile phones and landlines, as well as installing tracker systems on vehicles.

Madeleine Schlenther, who worked with Burger in the SSA’s Economic Intelligence Unit, testified that one of her functions was to listen to lawful intercepts. In one, she heard Johann van Loggerenberg warn a tobacco smuggler who was a registered SSA target that he, Van Loggerenberg, was “going after British American Tobacco and will help him [the smuggler] as a smaller company”. Inspector-General Radebe comments: “We submit it is unlawful for Mr Van Loggerenberg to engage in such activities.”

Bob Mhlanga, an SSA member who was Special Adviser to the State Security Minister, gave testimony that a Criminal Investigation team found that SARS had established a covert intelligence unit called National Research Group (NRG) that consisted of five units focusing on special investigations, operational support, surveillance including special functions, as well as research and analysis. The unit was “champi-

oned” by Van Loggerenberg and among the criteria used in selecting cases were instances where the taxpayer was someone significant or requiring “special type” of action due to political considerations.

Mandisa Mokwena, a former general manager within Chief Directorate: Economic Intelligence at the NIA, who worked at SARS as head of business intelligence, told the IGI’s panel that she became aware of a “structure” headed by Van Loggerenberg that was “running covert operations under her business intelligence unit”. She told Ivan Pillay and Peter Richer that she was not comfortable signing claims for a covert structure under her unit when she did not know what its mandate was or even receive its products. In the cost centre there were employees she did not know and was unaware of what they were doing. In response to her complaint, she was told the structure would be removed from her unit.

After taking over from Richer as general manager: risk management, Mokwena said she discovered that a unit of the National Research Group and a company called Pascal Risk Management Services [*in fact: Pasco Management Services (Pty) – see box story*] were conducting intelligence-related operations of a covert nature. She wrote to the then Commissioner Pravin Gordhan indicating her discomfort over the covert nature of their structures and was made to understand

that they were for “dealing with media management and political opponents”.

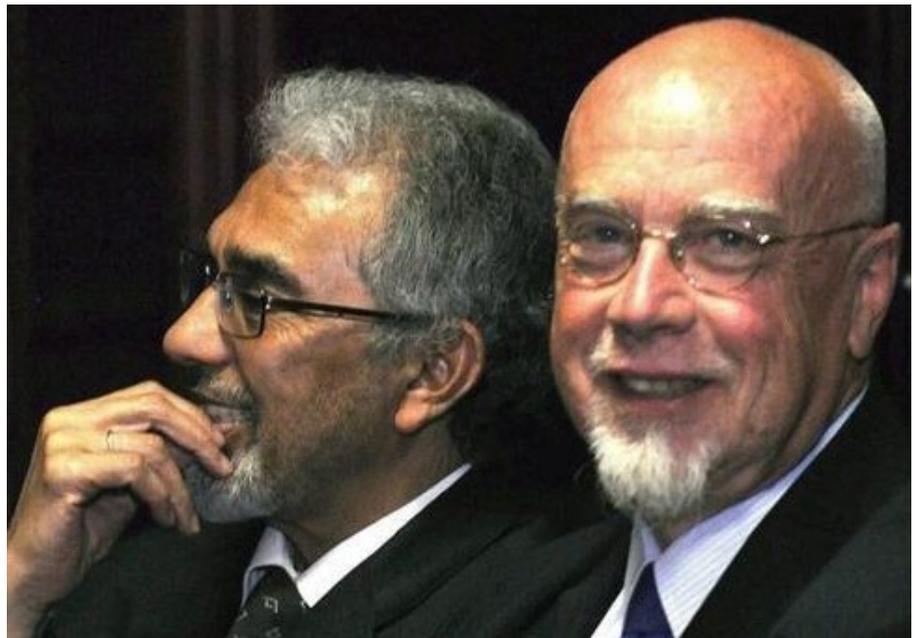
Mokwena told the IGI that Ivan Pillay asked her to appoint covert unit leader Skollie van Rensburg’s wife Laetitia, then a member of the NIA, to SARS. She thought Pillay “wanted to appease Skollie through the appointment of his wife as Skollie threatened to expose SARS covert operations”.

Mokwena, whose husband was a registered NIA source, said she also reported SARS’s covert intelligence unit to the NIA through her former subordinate at the agency, Riana Peach and was paid source remuneration for her reports.

Mokwena, a former business partner of former first lady Thobeka Zuma, was suspended from SARS in 2009 following misconduct allegations and subsequently stood trial on charges of fraud and money laundering (see box). She was found not guilty in 2017.)

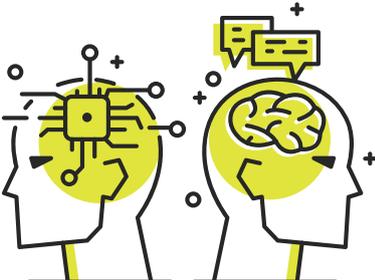
The SSA’s Thulani Dhlomo testified that when Mokwena left SARS, the SSA “received information that there is a special unit within SARS investigating top ANC officials”.

Peter Richer (ex NIA and controversial international security company Kroll), was Group Executive: Strategy and Risk at SARS. In his evidence to the IG’s panel, Richer denied SARS had a covert intelligence structure, although it had a “shielded investigative unit with shielded personnel to protect them against dangerous



Ivan Pillay and Peter Richer

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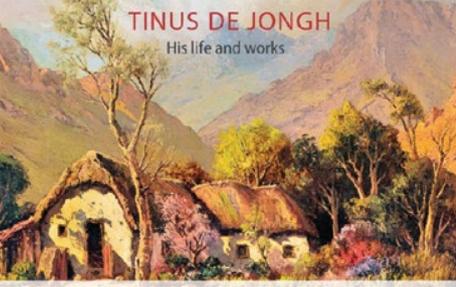
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criminal syndicates who were tax evaders.”

Inspector-General Radebe said Richer “strenuously denied that SARS has a capacity to monitor and intercept communication”. It did, however, do “third-party recording of communication, with the knowledge and consent of the communicating parties.”

The IGI observed: “There is a clear attempt by Mr Richer to provide a credible explanation for the unit. However, evidence points elsewhere. If the intention for the unit was as Mr Richer explained, why was there a need to recruit persons with specific intelligence and covert related skills followed by specific training? It would be far-fetched to accept that members of SARS would require training in sleep deprivation and house penetration, to say the least.”

When Gene Ravele, former head of Tax and Customs Enforcement at SARS, gave evidence to the Nugent Commission into governance at SARS last June he denied that there was a unit that conducted illegal surveillance of taxpayers; the narrative around it was deliberately orchestrated so that enforcement could be halted, he suggested.

However, when he gave testimony behind closed doors to the IGI on 10 September 2014, Ravele sang an entirely different tune: he declared that acting Commissioner Ivan Pillay was protecting Johann van Loggerenberg. He also said that Van Loggerenberg had leaked SARS information to the media, including the allegations against SSA.

As for covert structures, Ravele said that when Van Loggerenberg joined SARS (in 1998) there was an instruction from Mr Pillay for him to work with covert structures. Pillay gave instructions to recruit personnel from NIA, SASS (Secret Service) and Defence Intelligence (DI) to “form the component that was intended to cripple NIA and SASS.” Members recruited included Janse “Skollie” van Rensburg who had worked with Peter Richer at the NIA and had an understanding how the agency worked.

Ravele said that unit members had raided president Zuma’s house in 2006 and seized documents. [*The SARS unit was only formed in 2007 – but see “SARS spies, damned spies and more lies” in nose191.*] The unit

was created to investigate drugs and smuggling, “but it was involved in other things”, said Ravele. They were not hosted in SARS offices since they were a covert structure. It never operated at SARS for the intended purposes.

Ravele said that after Skollie van Rensburg’s son died of cancer, he started blackmailing Pillay saying: “I have other tapes to prove that SARS was monitoring the President [Zuma] before he became the President.” Van Rensburg threatened to release the tapes to the media unless Pillay paid him R20 million. A settlement of R3,150,894 was made.

Notes the Inspector-General: “The burning question is, if SARS did not illegally intercept the President, why would they reach a settlement?” (It is not recorded in the IGI’s report whether Ravele was asked whether he knew all this by direct knowledge or from hearsay.)

Unit member and data systems expert Jappie Tshabalala testified that members recruited in 2007 were trained in surveillance techniques, weapons handling and sleep deprivation. He said that team member Mike Peega acted as bodyguard to then Police minister Fikile April Mbalula and made recordings of conversations between the minister and Julius Malema. Reports were sent to Van Loggerenberg.

Van Loggerenberg testified that SARS “had a surveillance capability to monitor containers in transit”. Asked about interceptions, he said that when these were required the Crime Intelligence division of the police was approached for the necessary applications (for warrants authorising such interceptions).

Ivan Pillay maintained that SARS conducted itself at all times within the prescripts of the law. He denied the existence of a covert unit or the alleged interception capability. Remarked the Inspector-General: “On the contrary, he stated that applications for intercept directions required by SARS are applied for by the law enforcement agencies.”

Brigadier Casper Jonker of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks) said that in January-February of 2014 they had good information on illegal cigarettes. SARS was asked to help take the investigation forward.

Van Loggerenberg refused, saying the Hawks should “just provide the information on the basis of which SARS alone would determine what to do with it and how to handle the situation.” The Hawks chief said that in February 2014, members of Van Loggerenberg’s team stopped multi-disciplinary task team duties, saying SARS had issued a letter saying they should not cooperate with law enforcement agencies including the Hawks, Metro Police, Secret Service and SAPS.

(Nose231 quoted from a document titled “Rules of Play” that Van Loggerenberg had handed to members of the SARS secret unit in April 2008: “If you want to liaise with the SAPS, NIA, SASS, DSO etc, then you can ask

for a transfer to the SARS unit tasked with liaison. Interactions with other government departments is out and not authorised.”)

The Inspector-General notes: “After this communication there was a total breakdown of relationship between SARS and the rest of the law enforcement community.”

As for the interception of communications, Brig Jonker said that SARS had never requested any assistance from the Hawks. Inspector-General Radebe’s comment: “Brig Jonker however indicated he knows that in 2009 SARS had a big campaign of recruiting people with various investigations skills such as technical and surveillance skills.

“From the evidence, it is apparent that

SARS demonstrated an overbearing and officious conduct in its participation in the multi-disciplinary task team, in some instances was even hostile. Mr Van Loggerenberg stated that when intercepts are required for SARS, Crime Intelligence is approached for the necessary applications. In the interview with Mr Pillay he reiterated this view.

“This is contradicted by Crime Intelligence and the Hawks. It is our considered view that there would be no reason for Crime Intelligence and the Hawks to deny this if indeed SARS had approached them for [interception warrant] applications. This actually lends weight to the existence of a covert unit within SARS conducting its own interceptions.” ■

The shadowy firm that helped in covert ops

WHOO IS BEHIND PASCAL RISK Management Services, the shadowy outfit that – according to the evidence submitted to the Inspector-General of Intelligence (IGI) by former senior SARS executive advocate Mandisa Mokwena – worked alongside the Revenue Service’s “rogue unit” conducting “intelligence-related operations of a covert nature”?

First off, Mokwena either got the name wrong, or it was a typo in the IGI’s Secret Report: *Noseweek* has established that the company in question was, in fact, called Pasco Risk Management (Pty) Ltd.

Pasco Risk Management, which had its humble beginnings in 1996 on the dining room table of its founder George Nicholls, quickly became a global risks player with offices in London, Los Angeles and Dubai. Clients in South Africa included the National Prosecuting Authority, the Special Investigations Unit that tracks down misused government funds and the SAPS. (It redesigned the Witness Protection Programme to make it more intelligence-driven.)

Pasco’s services included fraud and dishonesty investigations, IT forensics, information security breach assessments and complex electronic and computer discovery processes.

As mentioned in our main story, Mokwena testified that she became aware of “Pascal” when she was appointed general manager of Risk Management at SARS around 2007/8,

replacing Pete Richer who had left to join controversial security company Kroll – not itself averse to dirty tricks (see *noses*36,40,79&218).

Mandisa Mokwena was yet another member of the intelligence community that infested the Revenue Service around the time Pravin Gordhan, Ivan Pillay and Johann van Loggerenberg – all themselves former spooks – held sway in the organisation.

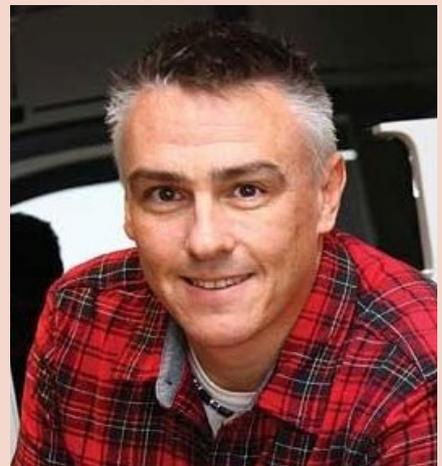
Before she was head-hunted for SARS by Ivan Pillay in 2004, Mokwena was a high-level executive at the National Intelligence Agency, so, as well as airing her disapproval of the covert activity at SARS to then SARS boss Pravin Gordhan, she also secretly filed – and was paid for – reports on these secret goings-on to the NIA. To avoid these reports being traced to her, she filed them in her husband’s name – Bernard Mokwena who was himself a registered NIA source.

Mokwena was suspended from SARS in 2009. As is the vogue in that organisation, she resigned before disciplinary charges could be brought against her, and eventually faced criminal prosecution on more than 50 corruption, fraud, racketeering and money laundering charges relating to SARS training and research tenders involving more than R11 million. After an epic two-year trial she was cleared of all charges in 2017.

Pasco’s founder George Nicholls is a Brit who once worked as a policeman in Hong Kong. He became a South African citizen and started Pasco

in 1996, his first big break coming four years later when he bagged a contract from the National Prosecuting Authority and in the next 10 years the business grew to include offices in London and Los Angeles. In 2014 Pasco was absorbed into UK corporate intelligence giant Control Risks. Nicholls became Control Risks’ senior general manager, Southern Africa.

Nicholls feels unable to discuss the work that his old company Pasco Risk Management did for Pete Richer, at that time head of Risk Management at SARS. “Why are you inquiring?” he asks. “It’s subject to a secrecy clause; it’s a classified government project. It was many years ago and it’s still subject to the Secrecy Act. I wouldn’t be able to put anything on record for you.” ■



George Nicholls

Property & plagiarism

Developer Tongaat-Hulett under fire for blatantly using another firm's plans. By Jonathan Erasmus

DID TONGAAT-HULETT'S PROPERTY arm steal architectural drawings which were then used to raise capital from the Department of Trade and Industry for a luxury property development, from a trusting small consortium of KwaZulu-Natal businessmen?

If so, it fits neatly with the ugly truth about corporate South Africa's tendency to steal ideas from small businesses. *Noseweek* has carried many such stories, from the "Please Call Me" vs Vodacom scandal (*nose200*), to Standard Bank being accused of clandestinely copying keypad software (*nose204*) to Foschini Group copying a unique bread-bin design and when caught, offering a paltry R30,000 to the Cape Town-based kitchen design studio (*nose214*).

Ballito-based Sugarland Resorts and Development (Pty) Ltd is convinced KwaZulu-Natal's largest private property owner and developer, Tongaat-Hulett Developments (Pty) Ltd, used their intellectual property to sell a luxury estate plan to both local and national government, and convince Kuwaiti-based hotel developers, IFA, to come on board, to

construct Zimbali Lakes, a R10-billion project on KwaZulu-Natal's North Coast.

The Zimbali franchise just outside Ballito is synonymous with luxury gated estate living, with its luxury private mansions and hotel often used as quiet getaways by the rich and famous. Former AU chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma has a home in the estate while Robert Mugabe's family are said to have stayed there too.

Sugarland Resorts and Development, led by Ballito resident Colin Mitchell who specialises in strategic planning, business and project feasibility studies, first approached Tongaat-Hulett Developments – then known as Moreland – in 1997/98 about an idea to build a luxury mixed-use development at the mouth of the uThongathi River, adjacent to the Zimbali Coastal Resort and Estate which was developed by Tongaat-Hulett more than 20 years ago. Mitchell's project was named and referred to as Sugarland.

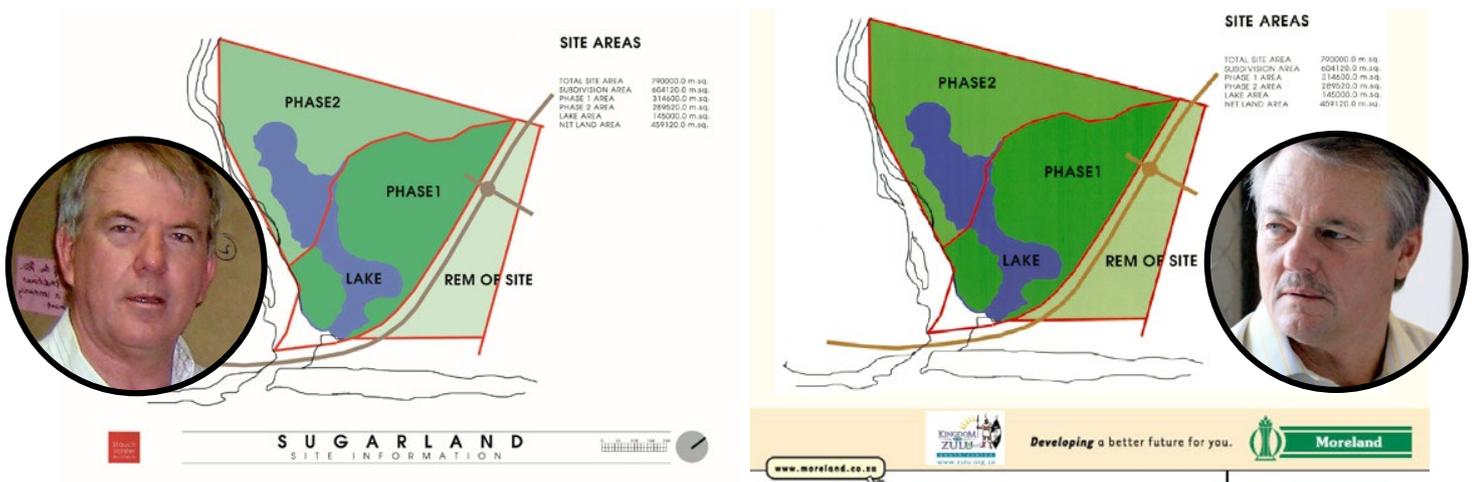
The idea was to include an artificially created lake adjacent to the river while homes would have panoramic sea views. Mitchell and his partners initially plowed about R250,000 in cash into various

studies, including just how the lake would be built, as well as into architectural designs. Mitchell eventually even sold his home to fund the project.

The detailed master drawing revealed that Sugarland included luxury apartments, a hotel, a themed waterfront, a "Zulu village", waterfront entertainment, nature trails and retail space.

Mitchell and his partners' expenditure on planning may in hindsight be considered foolhardy but they had already held several meetings with Tongaat-Hulett executives. In March 1999 Moreland's then managing director Gordon Hibbert, who died in 2008, called the Sugarland Resorts team a "key partner in our developments". They were also in direct personal correspondence with the company's director of planning and development, Neels Brink (*nose73*). In one such letter, sent in November 2000, while apologising for the delays in finalising the project, Brink said they would continue to negotiate with Mitchell "in good faith towards a development agreement".

The delays in getting the project going were linked to the economy with its soaring interest rates and post-1994



Sugarland's Colin Mitchell and their original plan (left) and Tongaat's alleged plagiarised version and director Neels Brink (right)

hangover, seeking political support from a new political dispensation and moving a provincial road known as the M4, which ran along the coastline, to make the project viable.

By February 2003 Sugarland Resorts and Development was still convinced the project was going ahead, having successfully assisted in having the Sugarland development included in the Ilembe District Municipality's Integrated Development Plan while they knew Tongaat-Hulett had been meeting with various role players.

What they did not know was that they were being cut out – and their idea used.

But it was only in 2005 that the penny dropped. Mitchell learnt, only through the use of the Promotion of Access to Information Act (Paia), that Tongaat-Hulett, Ilembe District Municipality and KwaDukuza Local Municipality had already signed a memorandum of understanding in March 2003 to develop what they, too, collectively called “the Zimbali South Sugarland Development”, and that they had subsequently appointed Gotoba (Pty) Ltd to apply to the Department of Trade and Industry for financial support and access to the Critical Infrastructure Fund.

The new version of Sugarland consisted of three phases. In a presentation made by Moreland to Ilembe they put the total investment needed at R1.6 billion, referring in particular to “Sugarland”, which was phase one, expected to cost an estimated R500 million at the time.

Their intellectual property, Mitchell learnt, was also used to convince the municipalities to divert funding to the project, secure the Department of Transport's agreement to moving the coastal road, and to obtain political support from the KZN Department of Economic Development for the project.

Mitchell said that, as he dug further, he realised that the trio had “used artwork in the form of technical drawings that were developed and are owned by Sugarland Resorts and Development (Pty) Ltd” and “developed by Stauch Vorster Architects (SVA)” to pitch to the department which then made a grant of R1.875 million for bulk services to be extended to the site – effectively turning it into viable land for development.

Actual Microsoft PowerPoint presentations obtained by Mitchell clearly show Sugarland artwork used by Tongaat-Hulett to pitch to the council, with a similar presentation made to the DTI. The branding of Sugarland was removed and replaced with that of “Moreland”. In one hasty photoshop, parts of the Sugarland



Architectural drawings from Sugarland Resorts and Development (Pty) Ltd

branding can still be seen.

The problem the small-time business faces is if they want to pursue what they believe to be theft of their property, they need to go it alone.

In February 2016 KZN Commercial Crimes prosecutors Wendy O'Brien and Hazel Siraramen, having studied Mitchell's evidence, were of the view there was “no reasonable prospect of success due to insufficient evidence”.

In their reasons not to prosecute on charges of fraud, they said “after reviewing the matter for over two years” the DTI had said their reasons for funding the project were not solely based on Sugarland, and proving that Moreland had unlawfully misrepresented Sugarland's intellectual property would be difficult. They also said it couldn't be proven whether the intellectual property was “intentionally stolen” and that in any event the Sugarland project was never built and Mitchell could still pursue its development. They reiterated these findings in January 2018 when Mitchell opened another case of copyright infringement.

In June 2008, after approaching Tongaat-Hulett about the possible infringement and the exclusion of Sugarland Resorts and Development (Pty) Ltd, Tongaat-Hulett's then chairman Cedric Savage said the company believed it could “defend the position taken by our executives”. He then said they should contact the head of their property development division if they were interested in pursuing “a development opportunity within Zimbali Lakes”.

It is unlikely Tongaat-Hulett's position has changed. Towards the end of 2018

construction began at Zimbali Lakes, now to a different design from the original Sugarland concept, but still embodying one central characteristic: the construction of a lake.

The 350-hectare mixed-use development will feature a luxury estate with a retail node, short and long-term accommodations, an international hotel, office spaces, a sports facility and medical suites.

The first property transfers are expected to start by the end of 2019 while the 30-hectare lake and the 18-hole golf course should be completed by 2020.

A joint venture with Evergreen Lifestyle, the retirement lifestyle business will result in an R3bn retirement village within Zimbali Lakes Resort.

Mitchell told *Noseweek* that he and his partners felt used.

Mitchell said his attempts to prove the Sugarland concept was used to eventually convince the DTI and others to come on board, has not been easy, with documents either having gone missing, being misplaced or tied up in confidentiality agreements.

“Our concept was used by Tongaat-Hulett to get the Department of Transport to move the M4 in order to make the project feasible and to obtain funding from the DTI,” alleges Mitchell.

“We are still considering copyright litigation but the legal cost is a massive hindrance. Financially, I've never fully recovered from what I put into this venture. I've been told any attempt to take the matter to court will just see it dragged on in a Stalingrad approach,” said Mitchell. ■

Grasping the nettle

A peek inside the life of DA Chief Whip John Steenhuisen. By Sue Segar

THE YEAR GONE BY WAS A TRYING ONE for DA Chief Whip John Steenhuisen, not least for finding himself mired in controversy over the revelation that he has no university degree. There was also the embarrassing accusation about his financial good standing in the party; that his tithes were not up-to-date, which could normally result in a public representative being asked to vacate their position.

“So many people have written me off on so many occasions. I’ve had my political obituary written many times and every time I’ve proved the critics wrong. I’ve come back stronger, bigger and better.”

Sitting in his parliamentary office decked with photos of prominent world leaders, Steenhuisen looks tired – as though he really needs his imminent family break on the Mozambican coast. Behind the overt wit and confidence, there’s a frailty, a slight vulnerability, a sadness in the eyes – perhaps a clue to his early life, which was clearly not easy. When referring to his psychologist father, he sidebarred: “You know what they say

about the cobbler’s children...”

During the interview, two of Steenhuisen’s daughters, visiting from KZN, were making a racket while playing under his PA’s desk. When this reporter asked him to close the door, he declined, saying he has a policy of never being alone behind closed doors with a woman.

He alleges the row about his qualification for the position of chief whip was part of a “personal vendetta” by DA KwaZulu-Natal leader, Zwakele Mncwango. When it erupted Steenhuisen’s supporters jumped to his defence, saying he was a star performer in Parliament. DA leader Mmusi Maimane described him as “a great legislator, chief whip and a friend”.

Steenhuisen said he had no idea why there was a vendetta against him, adding that “internal battles like this” were “short-sighted and silly” and detracted from the bigger task of getting the DA into government. He also denied claims that he was not up-to-date with his tithes in the party.

The feisty Steenhuisen is no stranger to controversy: in 2010, he resigned as DA leader in KZN when it emerged he was having an affair with DA spokesperson Terry Kass-Beaumont. At the time he was married to Julie (née Wright) with whom he has two daughters, while Kass-Beaumont was married to the DA’s then provincial director Michael Beaumont. Steenhuisen and Kass-Beaumont both divorced their partners and now have a daughter between them.

“It was a really tough time. I met somebody, fell in love and ended up divorcing. We’re very happily married. I resigned as I believed it was the right thing to do. Many people wrote my political obituary then,” Steenhuisen told *Noseweek*. He survived the scandal and was promoted to the National Assembly in 2011.

“I love going back and reading what all the talking heads said about me after I resigned the DA KZN leadership. So

many of my political opponents at the time – many of whom are long since gone – said this was the beginning of the end. Look at me now.

“You have to separate the small ball from the big ball, keep your eye on the bigger picture and drive your agenda relentlessly. That’s a key to surviving in politics.” (He frequently resorts to using political clichés.)

Steenhuisen dismissed the furore over his qualifications as “a complete non-issue”. “Firstly I’ve never pretended I had a degree, unlike Pallo Jordan or Hlaudi Motsoeneng. Secondly, to say I only have a matric certificate isn’t true. I studied at university for three years and have a number of certificates of merit from Unisa with distinctions in Politics 1, 2 and 3 and for International Politics. I have studied, I just didn’t finish the degree. That didn’t get into the public domain because it’s inconvenient to the lie and the myth.

“I’ve also done many other courses, including through the London School of Economics on African economic development, leadership, municipal finance and legislative drafting.

“I’ve never been able to use what I learnt at university – a lot of theory that’s not applicable – in my day-to-day political jobs. I’ve benefited far more from focussed further education on key topics and on-the-job training. The notion that I’m an uneducated pillock is simply not borne out by the facts.”

Commenting on speculation that Mncwango and others want to oust him, Steenhuisen said: “I don’t know what the end game is. It’s an isolated minority of people. I’m not preoccupied by Mncwango. Internal battles are a waste of resources. If I’d wanted to join an internal debating club, I’d have joined Toastmasters. I signed up for politics to improve the lives of South Africans. You don’t do that by having a pull-em-down approach to things within the party.



John Steenhuisen

“Mr Mncwango assures me he has no animosity towards me. There might be tension owing to the fact that I’m a former provincial leader and he’s the current one. Predecessors and current incumbents don’t always get on.”

Steenhuisen said the year ahead – with the national election looming in the first half – will be no less relentless than 2018. “It was always going to be a tough election for the DA. Our prospects at the start of 2018 compared to the end of the year are very different. At the start of the year we had Zuma, who has always been the DA’s best fund-raiser, membership recruiter and speech-material writer. It’s difficult to lose your greatest asset. For the ANC, going into the Ramaphosa era is like moving from the analogue to the digital era.

“The DA have had to up our game. We were wrong-footed on a few things in 2018 but I think that, as reality has set in over recent months, South Africans are starting to say of the ANC that this is the same bad wine in a new bottle and it’s not going to taste any sweeter. If we can make a compelling offer of hope and change voters’ minds, we’ll do well.

“The DA will grow, but not as much as we thought we would at the beginning of 2018,” said Steenhuisen, adding: “No doubt the Ramaphosa factor will assist the ANC, certainly on turnout. However, it’s not all plain sailing for them yet. They have big divisions. KZN will be the noose around Cyril’s neck. A low turnout there will affect the national results. Once the results come out and they are not the results Ramaphosa wanted, people will say we have lost votes. Once the blood is in the water, that will precipitate the split [in the ANC].

“I think the DA will get around 25-27%, depending on turnout; the EFF will end up with about 10% and the ANC, about 55 to 57%.”

In 2018, the DA spent “far too much time on internal matters,” said Steenhuisen. Commenting on the party’s handling of the Patricia de Lille matter, he said: “It’s the first time the DA had to deal at such a senior level with someone who has not lived up to the party’s standards. It burnt up a lot of oxygen. Instead of talking to voters we’ve been talking to ourselves. When you do this, voters feel excluded and start looking for other people to have conversations with. The election campaign is the perfect way to start talking to voters, rather than ourselves.”

He said the DA had grown massively from the 1.7% “desolate shack” that it was called post-1994. “Tony Leon and Helen Zille did what they needed to do

and Mmusi Maimane will have his own phase of leadership. We still have a long way to go.

“The internal battles, especially around De Lille, have undoubtedly blown the party slightly off course, but as with any party that’s anchored firmly in principal and in values, the ship might drift but that anchor will always pull it back to our ideological moorings.”

Steenhuisen says political parties need the space for internal debate. “That’s how you arrive at positions. To expect everybody in a party as big as the DA to march in lockstep is wishful thinking. We each have our own opinions and directions that are articulated in the party. It doesn’t mean the party is tearing itself apart. Where you have a situation, as in the ANC, where people are shooting and stabbing each other or hurling chairs at

‘I love going back and reading what all the talking heads said about me after I resigned the DA KZN leadership.’

branch meetings, that’s when you have a problem.”

The handling of the De Lille controversy “was not a moment of pride for the DA” and the party had made mistakes procedurally and politically, he said.

“We had too much of a gloves-on approach to communicating our position. We got played by a formidable seasoned political player, a Travelgate MP who has spun her way out of every difficulty through obfuscation. We underestimated her ability to be wily.

“The DA has apologised for the way we handled it, but what we can’t apologise for is actually grasping the nettle and dealing with it, because in politics when you turn a blind eye to the ‘smallanyana skeletons’ of individuals in a party, you eventually end up like the ANC is today – where the president can’t move against individuals, as everybody’s got something on everybody else. What happened with the ANC is that, at every single critical time, whether it was Sarafina, Virodene, the arms deal or Nkandla, they turned a blind eye to the wrongdoing in the party. Now they’ve ended up with a party that’s so moribund and decrepit, it can’t even act against wrongdoing anymore because there will

be internal consequences.

“I still don’t regret that we took action, because we have to hold our own accountable – more so than any other party – in the same way we hold the government accountable, otherwise we lose credibility.”

How does Steenhuisen think De Lille and her new Good party will do?

“Well, if you’re going to tell people you’re good you’ve got to be good. I think the party will struggle. Parties built on animosity towards others never really succeed in politics. I think she will attract people who have a gripe with the DA but at the end of the day, what does South Africa need? Ordinary South Africans need a party around which they can coalesce, which is able to challenge the ANC for power. There is only one party that comes close to even matching that – and that’s the DA, both in terms of size and ability to govern.”

Has South Africa turned a corner?

“I don’t think so. We’re in a slump and we need to get out of it. I described it best the other day, using the example of the movie *Apollo 13*. They get to a point where Apollo 13 has run out of power and needs to get back into earth’s orbit to be able to shoot back and break into the atmosphere. I think we are in a slump, going round and round and we need that moment to catapult us to a new trajectory and drive us forward.

“Even if Ramaphosa gets elected in 2019, we’ll continue muddling along on the same trajectory. I don’t think the country will go to the dogs economically. Our pension fund reserves are very deep. But we will see a massive growing of social unrest. You can’t continue unsustainably on this path of a massive outsider economy and a very small insider economy. Eventually that centre won’t hold. We’ve seen violence escalating in service delivery protests. We will end up with a Marikana almost on a national scale. We need a trajectory that will get us a solid, stable, centre coalition. The DA’s hinterland does not lie with the EFF as we’re on different ends of the ideological spectrum.

“We require a solid decade of strong, stable, centre government, with a big parliamentary majority that is able to make the structural reforms to get us on to a new path. That means fixing education, reforming our labour market, standing up to unions, following a clear direction with our economic approach and getting rid of doublespeak. You can only do that with a strong parliamentary majority where you don’t have to worry about what’s happening electorally.

“That centre coalition will gravitate around the DA, with parts of the ANC and other opposition parties coming together to keep out the radical left and right. We need a coalescence around values and principles and ideas to hold that centre because if the centre falls to either the far left or far right, the country is going to go to the dogs really quickly. We’ve seen how quickly it happened in Venezuela, and how quickly Recep Tayyip Erdogan took Turkey from a model democracy to a totalitarian dictatorship.”

Steenhuisen believes that a bad result for the ANC in the election could lead to further splintering within the ANC.

“That’s why I don’t buy the argument of [journalists] Peter Bruce, Jacques Pauw and Max du Preez that we have got to strengthen Ramaphosa’s hand. You don’t do it like that. There are a number of key fundamentals that are wrong with that argument. You never reward a party with more votes after it has steered the economy on to the rocks; pushed ten million people into unemploy-

ment; destroyed democracy; looted from the state; and abused Parliament. If they find they can get away with an increased majority after eight years of Zuma rule and ANC misdeeds, they will believe they can do whatever they like and there are never consequences.

“Secondly in South Africa you don’t vote for a candidate, you vote for a party. When you vote for Ramaphosa, you get Nomvula, Bathabile, Ace and DD Mabuza. You don’t reward those people by giving them your vote.

“Thirdly, the trend in politics over the course of the last three presidents shows they were all pushed out before the end of their terms, mostly in favour of their deputies. That should terrify any freedom-loving South African ... that you could end up voting for Ramaphosa, only to see his position taken over by DD Mabuza and his fellow travellers, as they try to regain control of the party.” That, he said was a terrifying prospect, “so people need to weaken the ANC”.

“The tearing up of the ANC and the move to a centrist coalition is where the future lies... We need a golden decade of stable centrist government committed to the rule of law, the free market, the stamping out of corruption, and to turning South Africa into a jobs factory.”

Asked to comment on possible future scenarios for South Africa, Steenhuisen said there were only two – the country



Steenhuisen’s path to Parliament

JOHAN HENRY STEENHUISEN WAS BORN in Durban in 1976, raised in affluent Durban North and matriculated from Northwood Boys High in 1993. His mother, Janine, now retired, was a senior bank executive for Absa and his father, Bruce, was a child psychologist with the then Natal Education Department and is now in private practice. He has two sisters who both live in South Africa.

He arrived at high school as “a pretty troubled kid”. “Family life was a bit of a rollercoaster. School made me realise what can be achieved when you belong to something greater than yourself. At Northwood I learnt how to conduct myself.

Steenhuisen started off in the “bottom” class but ended up a prefect with school colours and many awards.

He played rugby and enjoyed shooting for the first team. His real passions were drama and public speaking.

At school, Steenhuisen, who was “from an apolitical family”, got a sense that something was wrong in South Africa. “A few progressive teachers started sharing what was really going on in the country. When the son of the Transkei ambassador came to our school, I started questioning why he was the only black guy there. I started reading the work of anti-apartheid writers.”

While still at school he got involved with the then Democratic Party and fasted for five days ahead of the 1992 referendum vote on ending apartheid, to pray for a yes vote for South Africa.

After school Steenhuisen, registered for a Unisa B.Comm through Varsity

College. After two years he switched to a BA in politics and law and decided to go into politics: “I learnt early that you can’t be a passive spectator while decisions are being made.”

While doing a tree planting project with Rotaract for Arbour Day, Steenhuisen and colleagues were given such a runaround from the council to get permission to plant trees on the banks of the Umgeni River that they decided to get elected to the council.

In the buildup to the 1996 local government elections, Steenhuisen worked as part of then DP candidate Mark Lowe’s team, handing out pamphlets and helping with transport.

In order to service his student loan, Steenhuisen worked for a property management company for a year, then joined the pharmaceutical business of

would fail or it would succeed. "There's no grey area in between. The current trajectory will end in failure – a failed state, needing an IMF bailout – or we will succeed and that will come through a fundamental change in direction.

"The scenario that worries me the most is that the longer people feel dispossessed, hungry, excluded, without work and without a stake in the economy, the more attractive radical socialist policies will become. I worry that we are standing on a burning platform and not moving fast enough as centre parties to effect the change that will show people there is a ladder of opportunity and hope out of the situation they are in. We must build every rung in that ladder so people can see the green shoots of change... before the radical red tide completely subsumes everything and you have people marching on banks, nationalising things and we see a revolutionary takeover.

"People have got to see that elected representatives are a tool to a better life rather than relying on a system that turns the whole table over."

Which political figures will shape South Africa in the years to come?

"From the danger side, we have to watch out for young, populist leaders who, through hateful rhetoric, start to bring people into that terrible cycle of hatred rather than the politics of hope. Andile Mgxitama, Julius Malema and Floyd

Shivambu are people we really need to be worried about because if they succeed... and the politics of hate overtake the politics of hope, then the future of South Africa is bleak. On the positive side, there are some exciting young leaders across the political spectrum... and some great older people who temper the impulsiveness of younger leaders.

"Do you know that we younger parliamentarians drink together most nights... even after we've had a fight? Far more work gets done in the corridors and the bar than is done in the sittings of Parliament. I always describe Parliament as the floor show. What happens in Parliament accounts for round about 15% of what happens here in the precinct.

"Most South Africans would be pleasantly surprised at the amount of bipartisan finding of each other that happens in committees in the corridors, behind the scenes away from the glares of the camera.

"It's a sign that we can debate things without being disagreeable and we can change positions. For instance, Jeremy Cronin completely changed my view on the Expropriation Bill in a sidebar conversation. It's a pity South Africans don't see more of these interactions."

On speculation that he might not return as DA chief whip after the election, Steenhuisen said: "The selection of

the chief whip is entirely at the leader's discretion. I think I have done a decent job over the past five years. You never want to choose a successor. There are lots of very talented people in the DA."

Asked about his future goals, Steenhuisen said: "The goal is to get the DA into government. For me personally, the ultimate job would be Speaker of the National Assembly. I'd love to reform this institution and turn it back into a real arena of executive accountability. In every one of the major crises that have beset South Africa over the last two decades, if there had been a properly functioning parliament with oversight, where ministers were really held accountable – whether it was on the SABC crisis, Sassa or Nkandla – we'd have avoided many of those crises. An activist, people-centred, robust parliament that's obsessed with accountability is a huge tool in the democratic arsenal and the constitutional framework.

"I love Parliament. I love its quirkiness, its history and its rules. Yet it could be so much more. We're not even firing on one cylinder in terms of what we could be doing.

"Then of course, I'd love the opportunity to be a government minister. I'd thrive on the massive challenge of being given a department to turn around and use it as a tool for change." ■

the father of his girlfriend, Durbanite Julie Wright, who subsequently became his wife in 2000 and is the mother of two of his daughters.

In 1999, aged 22, Steenhuisen was elected as a ward councillor for the North Central Local Council and then was a councillor for the eThekweni Metropolitan Council until 2009.

He worked in the family business as well as a councillor but in 2001 realised he needed to devote himself to politics full time. From 2006 to 2009, he served as an Executive Committee Member of the eThekweni Metropolitan Council.

During the 2009 general election, Steenhuisen was elected as an MPL to the KZN Provincial Legislature. He became provincial leader of the DA that year, a position he held until announcing his resignation in October 2010 amid revelations that he was having an affair with Terry Kass-Beaumont, the DA's provincial spokesperson. He had been married for ten years.

In 2011 he was promoted to Parliament

as an MP and then to chief whip of the official opposition in 2014.

Steenhuisen describes himself as a voracious reader of political biographies and history. "I love reading about people who have changed the world, like John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson who don't play to their base but move people with them through ideas.

Steenhuisen is a big fan of Bill Clinton as well as Jan Smuts who, he says, "was completely under-estimated and under-appreciated" in South Africa. "If the views of Smuts and Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr – had prevailed, and not those of DF Malan, John Vorster and Hendrik Verwoerd, we could have missed the entire travesty of apartheid."

He also admires former British PM David Cameron. "He made a spectacular misjudgement on Brexit, but he is a politician who changed the Conservative Party completely from a nasty, right-wing party to one that dominated British politics for nearly ten years."

His favourite books include Ayn Rand's

Atlas Shrugged. In recent times he's enjoyed; James Comey's *Higher Loyalty* and Tim Shipman's *All Out War: The Full Story of How Brexit Sank Britain's Political Class*, about Britain post the Brexit vote.

"My daughters – Ashleigh, aged 13, Caroline, 10, and Olivia, 2, are my greatest centre of pride and happiness, bringing perspective and a sense of responsibility to ensure they grow up in a country where they have a future."

If not for politics, he'd have pursued a career in theatre or advertising: "I enjoy communicating ideas." His wife Terry runs her own business called Culture Care, which focuses on company culture.

Steenhuisen, an AmaZulu fan, also enjoys gym, squash and loves relaxing in the Cape winelands and at the beach.

He's "petrified" of public speaking and terrified of failure. He loves cigars and collects political memorabilia.

A committed Christian, he concedes: "I've not always lived up to it but I aspire to be better every day." ■

Shark mystery: where have all the Cape's Great Whites gone?

Is the culprit man or beast? By Adam Welz

SINCE 1996, CHRIS FALLOWS HAS taken thousands of tourists and dozens of film crews on his boat into Cape Town's False Bay to see sharks.

Winter is his peak season, when great white sharks congregate around the bay's Seal Island to feed on newly weaned Cape fur seals. Sharks here perform many breach kills, when they fly into the air, making for the spectacular images in the *Air Jaws* series – largely hosted by Fallows – that has had billions of views on the Discovery Channel.

“The flying sharks of False Bay are now the most famous sharks in the world,” he says.

It's become increasingly rare to witness breach kills, particularly in the last two years. For more than two decades, Fallows has been keeping records of kills and attempted kills by sharks from his boat in False Bay. These have dropped from a peak average of more than 11 events per trip in 2004 to about 0.3 events per trip in 2017

and 2018. Others have noted a similar decline. What's happened to the sharks?

Fallows and others in the marine ecotourism business think that the culprit is a long-line fishery that has been targeting smaller species of sharks, including soupfin and smooth-hound sharks, which are favoured prey of great whites. Since 2013, about three to six demersal longliners – fishing boats that set lines with up to 2,000 baited hooks on or near the sea floor – have been working the whole southern coast. Fallows says demersal longliners have collapsed stocks of smaller shark species, which may have led great whites to starve or go elsewhere. The fishery may also be directly killing young great whites and protected hammerhead sharks, he believes.

Some scientists say they've still not figured out why great whites have declined in False Bay. Other possibilities are that killer whales or changing ocean conditions are driving them out.

“There could be some shift in the environment happening,” says Meaghen

McCord, founding director of the South African Shark Conservancy. “With us being on the cusp of possible large climate-related shifts, few scientists are prepared to say anything conclusive just yet.”

Sara Andreotti, a marine biologist at Stellenbosch University, led a study that estimated the total South African population of great whites at only between 353 and 522 individuals in 2011 – making them far rarer than rhinos. She cautions that pointing to killer whales and undefined environmental changes can be “shifting the blame on to something we don't have control upon”. She's worried that observations by shark tourism operators – who spend more time on the water than most scientists – indicate a further population decline since her 2011 study, but says no scientifically peer-reviewed data is yet available to confirm it.

“I'm angry and desperate,” says Wilfred Chivell, an ecotourism operator in Gansbaai. He says that white shark sightings have declined sharply in his area and that fishermen complain that demersal longliners have knocked back the bronze whaler sharks they used to catch. Chivell says he's had to pay locals not to catch bronze whalers so he can have something to show his clients. South Africa was the first country to legally protect white sharks – in 1991 – and now shark viewing and cage diving draws more than 80,000 visitors and helps contribute hundreds of millions of rands to the economy every year, he adds.

Most sharks have few young, mature slowly, and live a long time (soupfin sharks can live to 55), so shark populations recover far more slowly than most bony fishes, over decades rather than years. Given this, and the pivotal ecological role sharks play, Chivell says there needs to be an immediate moratorium on shark demersal longlining,



Great Whites are on the decline in South African waters

“because in a year’s time it might be too late”.

South Africa’s fisheries are largely regulated by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (Daff), whose scientists analyse data to make catch size recommendations. But it’s Daff managers (many of whom are not scientists) who ultimately grant fishing rights based on a range of considerations, many of which are political.

The fishing industry, where many of the biggest players in ANC-linked scandals have their roots, has been corrupt for years. A former ANC Director-General of Environmental Affairs told *Noseweek* that corruption in smaller-scale fisheries had been entrenched ever since Jacob Zuma tasked then-Daff minister Tina Joemat-Pettersson with ensuring that fishing quotas went to ANC donors in coastal party branches. “When those quotas get removed from the donors, you see the local branches collapse,” he said.

A 2014 government-commissioned investigation found at least three entities had obtained demersal shark longlining rights without having the required shark-fishing boats. Imraan “Imie” Patel, head of Letap Fishing CC, somehow got a shark permit with a squid-fishing boat. Another influential player, Sharmilla van Heerden of Fisherman Fresh in Port Elizabeth, has multiple boats and touts her relationships with Daff officials and local politicians. Daff management is under increased pressure to be seen creating jobs since the 2014 launch of Operation Phakisa, a government initiative to “grow the ocean economy” and create a million work opportunities.

Fallows and Chivell do not have conclusive evidence that populations of smaller sharks have totally collapsed or that demersal longliners are to blame, because they have not been given access to Daff’s catch data and Daff scientists have yet to complete stock assessments for these species. But they say that Daff’s non-public data must show that stocks are in trouble; a presentation about fishing rights given by Daff officials to coastal communities in June 2018 includes a graph showing smooth-hound and soupfin sharks as “under heavy fishing pressure” and soupfin sharks as “depleted”. Daff did not respond to requests for comment.

Shark researcher Matt Dicken has tagged 674 smooth-hound sharks in the Coega harbour, near Port

Elizabeth. Dicken says that of the nine tagged sharks recovered outside the harbour, seven were caught by demersal longliners. Unpublished data from an acoustic tagging programme that tracks fish along the entire South African coast suggests high mortality rates among young hammerhead and bronze whaler sharks.

Chris Fallows has documented dramatic drops in young hammerhead sharks in a nursery site near De Hoop on the south coast. Although hammerheads are strictly protected, he says it’s likely they’re being illegally caught by nearby demersal longliners.

WWF South Africa also has raised red flags about shark fishing via its South African Sustainable Seafood

Initiative (Sassi), which scientifically assesses available data to encourage consumers to

buy fish from well-managed stocks. In 2015, Sassi ranked soupfin and common smooth-hound sharks as red species owing to a lack of data and indications that they may be overfished.

Sassi manager Pavitray Pillay, says Daff “is in institutional meltdown at the moment,” its leadership compromised by allegations of high-level corruption. The current Daff minister and the deputy director-general in charge of fisheries are both under investigation for taking bribes from a perlemoen kingpin. Some of the bribe money was allegedly destined for Jacob Zuma.

Pillay says South Africa’s demersal shark longline fishery is legally constrained by Total Allowable Effort (TAE) – not Total Allowable Catch (TAC) – meaning that the number of permitted boats is limited but the number of sharks caught is not. There is therefore no upper limit on the sharks that rights holders can kill. None of the demersal shark longliners have independent observers on board to check if non-target or protected species

are being taken illegally and perhaps being transferred to other boats at sea to evade shore-based inspectors.

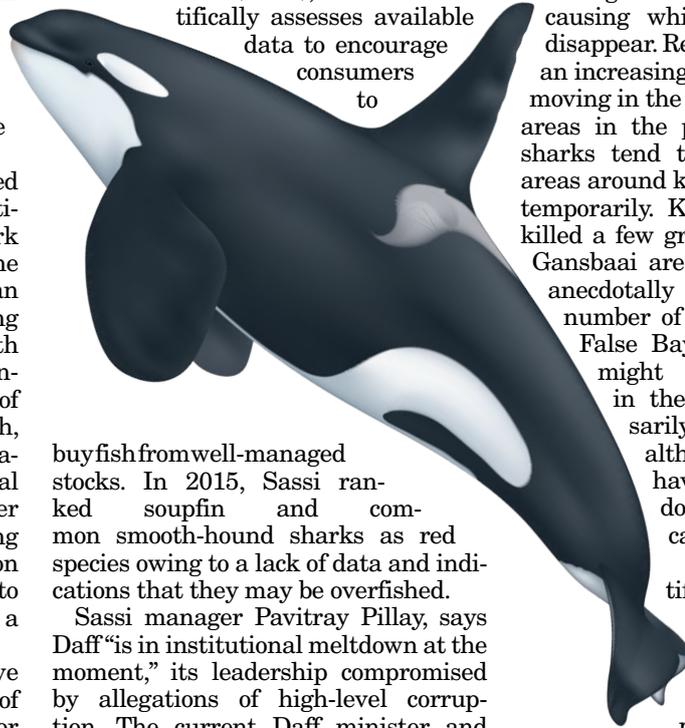
Analysts at Traffic, which monitors the global wildlife trade, have found that almost all South African shark meat is exported, Australia being the largest market. It’s usually made into fish and chips there. Adrian Meder of the Australian Marine Conservation Society says that soupfin shark – known as school shark in Australia – is “woefully overfished” there. “There’s a strong case that species like the school shark should not, given their biology, be considered a fishery species,” he says. The fins of South African sharks also are sold in Asia for shark fin soup.

Not all observers are sure that overfishing of smaller shark species is causing white sharks to move or disappear. Researchers have recorded an increasing number of killer whales moving in the False Bay and Gansbaai areas in the past decade, and white sharks tend to leave the immediate areas around killer-whale pods, at least temporarily. Killer whales have even killed a few great white sharks in the Gansbaai area. Some observers have anecdotally noted an increasing number of shark sightings east of False Bay and Gansbaai, which might indicate a movement in the population, not necessarily an overall reduction, although these sightings have not been rigorously documented or scientifically analysed.

The lack of hard scientific evidence that the demersal longline fishery is causing a collapse of the South African white shark population does not deter

Fallows from his conviction that the fishery must be stopped. He and others argue that the shark-watching industry generates far more income and employment than a few longline boats and thus cannot be risked – not to speak of the handline and shore-based fishers who will lose out if smaller sharks vanish.

“I’ve been on the ocean for most of my adult life,” he says. “This very small fishery has a very large chance of destroying our coast for generations to come. They say that it’s up to us to prove that the fishery is wiping out sharks. We say that the onus is on them to prove that it’s not.” ■





Sparse and haunting

THIS IS THE 29TH BOOK BY TIM Winton, four-time winner of the Miles Franklin Award, twice shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, fierce environmentalist and Australian National Living Treasure. He loves his native Western Australia, except, to judge by his next-to-last novel *Eyrie*, Perth. Indeed, the rawer and more remote the better, as far as Winton is concerned, and it doesn't get any rawer and more remote than the salt flats of this novel.

As in his masterly *Breath* (recently filmed), the protagonist of this novel is a teenaged boy, one Jaxie Clackton, as foul-mouthed a teenager as ever lived (a worthy descendant of that quintessential boy-on-the-run, Huckleberry Finn), fleeing the consequences of a non-crime he didn't commit: his brutal father, whom he calls Captain Wankbag, has been crushed by his own ute, owing to a collapsing jack: "And then it was plain as dog's balls. I didn't even get down on me knees and check. Maybe I should of to make sure and take some satisfaction from it, but I already knew the old turd was cactus." (I quote at length to demonstrate Jaxie's and Winton's mastery of the vernacular.)

Jaxie shrewdly surmises that he will be held responsible for the accident, given what excellent reason he had to wish his father dead: the Captain used to prop up his masculine ego by beating up his now-dead wife and Jaxie himself. The Captain is, indeed, a prime example of the "toxic masculinity" Winton has made it his business to speak up against; and Jaxie, damaged by his proximity to this toxicity, may well be "maturing" into a like brutality: ready to beat up anybody who

offends against his fragile ego, casually racist and sexist, accompanying his father on blood-soaked hunting trips, Jaxie seems set fair to turn into a later model of his bestial father. All that can save him is an inarticulate hankering for a better life, represented for him by his cousin Lee, with whom, to the scandal of her mother, he is in love, and to whom he is making his slow and onerous ways across the salt flats of the outback.

About his mother, whom he remembers with fierce love, Jaxie says: "See, I didn't know her much at all. With Lee I know everything. But it's not the same with your mum. She's there all the time but she's mostly invisible. It's only when she's gone you get that wanting feeling and get curious. Lee wants me to know her. I don't reckon Mum ever did."

Winton has been accused of misogyny, because his novels tend to explore the male experience, with the women a somewhat distant, if often inspiring, presence. Whereas the charge of misogyny is manifestly unfair, it is true that here, too, both the mother and Lee remain offstage. Somewhat unexpectedly, "that wanting feeling" finds its focus, very inarticulately and in the face

of Jaxie's extreme prejudice, in the unlikely, enigmatic Irishman Fintan MacGillis, the inhabitant of the eponymous shepherd's hut, literally in the middle of nowhere. He, it soon appears, is a disgraced priest, and Jaxie, no more enlightened in this regard than any other, leaps to the erroneous conclusion that he must be one of the "pedo" priests that have been in the news in Australia as elsewhere.

Forced together by circumstances, the old man and the boy nego-

tiate first a wary truce (Jaxie keeping his gun by his side at all times) and eventually a mutual trust. The old man dresses the boy's wounds, provides him with food, water and clothing, and seems to discern in him a quality of what in a more overtly religious novel would have been called grace. (The word grace appears only as its antithesis: "Wankbag knocked me down the front steps and said I was a fucking disgrace".)

"Don't you understand me, boy, Can't you see it? Jaxie Clackton, you are an instrument of God.

"Oh, I said. You mad fucker. You been out under the moon too long!

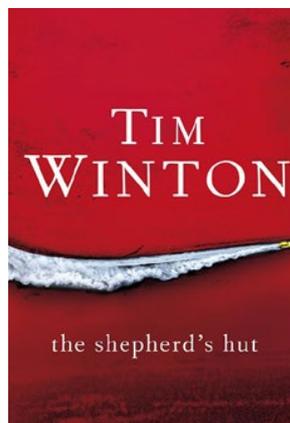
"And we both of us laughed."

The old priest, the nature of whose misdemeanour we never discover, would seem to be as much in need of salvation as Jaxie, only more consciously so. And if Fintan finds in Jaxie something inexplicably sustaining, Jaxie finds a corresponding warmth of understanding in the old Irishman: "It's a dangerous feeling getting noticed, being wanted. Getting seen deep and proper; it's shit hot but terrible too. It's like being took over."

In his wonderful 2006 collection of linked short stories, *The Turning*, Winton explored multiple perspectives on what one could call secular conversion. This novel would seem to be another such, with the disgraced priest as the agent of an unlikely redemption: "He felt me. Always knew what I was. He saw me coming before I knew I was even there. And now I saw him too."

What they come to share is a response to the strange beauty of the inhospitable landscape; and eventually, in a harrowingly violent denouement, a dependence on each other. And young Jaxie, at last on his way to Lee, can say: "I know what I am now. And peace is on its way. It fucking better be."

The Shepherd's Hut is a sparse, haunting, memorable novel, once again proving Winton's technical brilliance and compassionate quest for the humanity of his wayward characters. ■



THE SHEPHERD'S HUT
by Tim Winton

Letter from Umjindi

BHEKI MASHILE



What a kid!

FORTUNATELY, NOSEY ONES, I HAVE never been in a car accident, certainly not a fatal one – or I would not be here writing this column now, would I? However if I were to be involved in one (not fatal of course), I would want to be accompanied by this remarkable kid I happened upon in early December. For I know that with him at my side, our chance of surviving would be that much greater.

Wow what a kid! With Christmas day approaching – the only one in the calendar year that sees most people supposedly able to find it in their hearts to be good to their fellow man – I was given that opportunity early by that remarkable kid.

It was one of those lousy days when I found myself rather bored and experiencing an intense case of cabin fever. Cabin fever on a 70-hectare farm, what is wrong with me?

Anyway, I decide to take a drive into town just, well, to take a drive. I normally would not do that because the cost of diesel, which is a killer for any farm, especially at the price of nearly R17 a litre.

Alrighty then... Argh, the diesel cost is voting against the drive, but here comes that inner voice and it's telling me "Argh man, go for the drive, it will be good for you" and I'm saying, "No way that I'm going to waste diesel". But the voice insists, "Go for the drive".

Then I say to the voice: "Look here pal, last night

I put a bottle of vodka on ice that I want to start enjoying and I want to do some baking and start putting up the Christmas tree so, "no drive, sorry pal".

I go to the freezer and pull out the bottle of vodka to pour myself a nice cold straight-up shot. Ah man! It's a pleasure I gained when I befriended some Russians living in Los Angeles's West Hollywood Fairfax Road area.

But that voice won't back off, it says: "Put that away you have plenty of time for that, go for the damn drive."

I relent – of course not without regret about the diesel I thought I was going to waste. So, as I'm driving along with the Parlotones in the CD player, while saying, "Yeah, this is what I'm talking about – the voice was right to persuade me to go for the drive because right now I'm chillin' like Bob Dylan".

Well, as I made my way around a "deadly" curve on this gravel road, my chillin' would be brought to a sudden halt. And when I say halt, I really mean it – like a cop would stand in front of your oncoming vehicle and command you to stop. I mean, what are you going to do, run the man over?

And, Nosey ones, that is exactly what this kid had done: he'd stood in the middle of the road round a sharp bend. Adding to my shock, he did so while covered with blood that was pouring from several gashes

on his head. His face was so disfigured from the blood that he looked like a

character from some scary movie. To my amazement – thus the "remarkable kid" tag – he was calm and collected and said, "Please, Boet Bheki, can you please take me to the hospital. I was in a car accident".

But here's the thing, Nosey ones, I don't see any car. So I ask where the accident happened. Once again, cool calm and collected he says it's just straight ahead and we have to stop there to pick up my friends who are also hurt.

Now here I am thinking "I've got to get this kid to the hospital pronto or else he is in danger of singing Dylan's *Knockin' on Heaven's Door*".

Nosey ones, this kid is about 10 years old, he had just escaped from a vehicle that rolled over, he is bleeding profusely but yet has the bravery to stop me for assistance in a calm and collected manner. But moreover, he is also concerned about his friends, all four of them.

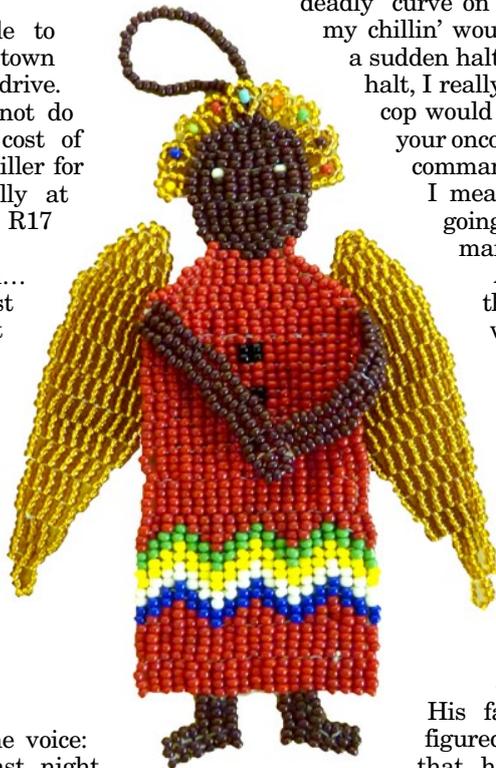
Yes we have heard stories of kids doing similar amazing things – calling emergency numbers, running to the neighbours for help etc. Trust me, if it was an adult they would have been hysterical and most probably thought only about their own immediate need to get to the hospital.

Not only did that kid bring out the good in me, he affirmed the goodness that exists in all of us simply by demonstrating his concern for his friends.

With the assistance of my farmhand, we carefully loaded the five kids on to my bakkie – very carefully so as not to exacerbate any unseen injuries – and took them to Barberton General.

It's not too often one gets the opportunity to do good for others. All I can say is, when it comes, seize the moment and the good feeling you get about yourself after such an act is priceless.

That kid made my Christmas. And that inner voice is what we Africans believe is a calling from the ancestors. I mean, how else can I explain the voice insisting that I go out for the drive? ■





House sitter

DON'T KNOW WHERE BELLUM came from, back in 1937. But he was a Khoi all right, or a San, or a Khoisan or a Bushperson, I don't know what you're supposed to call such ethnicity these days. Like a small skinny jockey with Nelson Mandela eyes, he spoke a sort of Cape Dutch Creole suggesting he perhaps came from Namaqua se wêreld, and he called all pretty girls Nonnie. 'Nonnie' is very courteous, see, if curious; it is to call a young woman a nun, and I suppose that goes way back to early Dutch days in the Kolonie, right back to Holland maybe.

Here he earned his crust as free-lance gardener among our muscular Zulus, much favoured by housemaids who saw him as some sort of sexual imp who might bring one good luck. His personal favourite was a certain Thoko, nice and plump like those Cro-Magnon Venuses. Haaa! die Thoko, said Bellum, hy's too lekka, ek eet hom! Seems it was Bellum's mode of romance to bite his ladies as tomcats do theirs at the moment of truth; it was a symbol of desirability to appear publicly on a Monday morning with his toothmarks all over one's neck. But I'm not here to talk about Bellum's love-life, rather his diet, which was kind of Kalahari.

I don't know where all those locust swarms came from, back in those days, nor where they all went to. They were huge, man, some miles long, and when they passed overhead the sun would noticeably darken as in a partial eclipse, their crap would rain down upon Pietermaritzburg like a monsoon. Then when they'd run out of crap they'd descend and eat every leaf off every plant to make more. And I mean every plant, they'd eat the lawn from under your feet. Bellum would utter strange

supplications to make them land, then he's scoop them up in a bucket and put a plank on top so they couldn't fly off again and go and light a nice fire in the back yard and cook them and eat them. Just grip them by the jumping legs and shove them in the coals and haul them out with a stick when the wings and things were singed off. Sis! said I. Don't you even squeeze the crap out first? Nee-e-e! said Bellum, hy's vir smaak, hy's net gras. Well I'm squeezing mine out, said I, and did, and you know what, it really wasn't as tasty as Bellum's.

Never mind, I fetched the tomato sauce from the fridge, and you know what, he had to agree that mine was now better.



But you know also how family life is, hey; eventually there was a hell of a row over the tomato sauce, every time the locusts came there was none for our school saamies and no sooner had

my ma got to buying bigger bottles of the stuff than these disappeared, too, almost instantly because by then the flying-ant season had started. Sis! she yelled, you've been in the kitchen again deep-frying your bloody flying-ants in the spaghetti pot! And where's the new bottle of tomato sauce, you little bugger?

Accusations of antisocial behaviour! But we went off on a nice holiday to Karkloof and things healed up. Bellum, we said, don't forget to water the lawn and top up the birdbath and clean out Arthur's cage and feed Kitty and Blackie please like a careful house sitter. Arthur was a budgie named after Arthur Askey who had that song which went Tra-la-la! I'm a budgerigar! and Kitty and Blackie were cat and dog, of course.

East, West, home's best. Nice to be back. Tum-te-tum, I stroll round the old patch. Suddenly Hey Bellum, I exclaim, where's the budgie, hey?

Nee-e-e, betlak, says Bellum, you forgot to trim his wings, man, and when I went to clean his cage he just flew away, jy weet mos. Sadly I sit down. I suppose he'll be okay, say I. Ag ja, says Bellum, he is a clever bird, he will eat grass seeds. But a couple of Sundays later I see Bellum off to his Thoko in his Sunday threads, and in his hatband I note a couple of familiar feathers which he has forgotten about. Bellum, say I, you filthy swine, you have eaten Arthur! He can't deny it, they are Arthur's feathers. He was very old, says Bellum. You mean it was a mercy killing? say

I, you ate him to put him out of his suffering? I suppose you put tomato sauce on him, say I, sarcastically. Nee-e-e, chutney, says Bellum. Mrs Ball's blatjang. Tomato sauce is for goggas. ■

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Kanin

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