

SKN 4.

The first Schmelen Church at Bethuel

Cape Town, 6 June 2009.

Hello, I trust this finds you well.

In my first Schmelen-Kleinschmidt newsletter I made mention of the first church Hinrich Schmelen built at a place called Bethel or Bethuel, a place behind the mountains where the Komaggas church and buildings subsequently (from 1831 onwards) became the principal place from where he directed his mission work. I attach a picture of the faint outline of the Bethel church as I found it with the help of Ds. Jetro Cloete earlier this year. Also attached is a picture passed on to me by Calvin van Wyk, someone with possibly the most extensive knowledge of the Rhenish mission up the west coast. The picture dates from 1896 and was taken by the Rev. Gottlieb Meyer, the last Rhenish Missionary to work in Komaggas. Like many of the other buildings of that time, bricks were made of dried mud. Every rain washes off a layer of sand. The remnants of the Komaggas church are currently subject to the same process.



Two further matters:

1. If you did not get my Newsletter Number 3, please let me know. It seems the large number of pictures included in the text caused it not to reach all the intended destinations. I can (now) send it without the pictures. Please email me back if I should mail you Newsletter 3.

2. I have had no feed-back on the work I did on the family tree. It is possible that I did not explain myself clearly. I did not offer to mail it without an explicit request as the file is very large and would clog many a system. The tree now covers 250 years, 7 generations and has some 200 name entries. With additional work, not yet captured electronically, I have now been able to add missing details in a number of cases and was able to add a further 68 names. One, maybe the best option, would be for me to put the tree, once I have added the 68 names, on to a CD and then mail it to you, if indeed you want it. I would need your respective physical addresses.

I will be in touch again shortly, about the Otjimbingue graves.

Kindest regards,

Horst.