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Finding Aid - JC de Villiers Research Collection (BC1586)

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University of Cape Town Libraries: Special Collections (Manuscripts and Archives)

University Avenue, Upper Campus

Western Cape

South Africa

Telephone: +27216507014

Email: michal.singer@uct.ac.za

<https://atom.lib.uct.ac.za/index.php/bc1586>

Table of contents

Summary information	3
Administrative history / Biographical sketch	3
Notes	4
Access points	4
Collection holdings	4
BC1586_A, Occupants of Clee and Mostert Roads, Observatory (1933-1969)	4
BC1586_A_A1, Text of "Clee and Mostert Roads ..." (1933-1969)	4
BC1586_A_A2, Research correspondence (1989-1993)	5
BC1586_A_A3, Draft material	6
BC1586_A_A4, Photographs	6
BC1586_B, Avenue House, Mowbray	6
BC1586_B_B1, Text: Avenue House, Avenue Road, Mowbray	7
BC1586_B_B2, Research and correspondence	7
BC1586_B_B3, Photographs	7
BC1586_C, Groote Schuur Rugby Club: 25th anniversary reunion (1969)	8
BC1586_D, Slides	8
BC1586_D_D1, Early medicine at the Cape and Europe	8
BC1586_D_D2, Art and medicine	9
BC1586_D_D3, Military gravestones and hospitals	9
BC1586_D_D4, Negatives related to Series A and B	9

Summary information

Repository: University of Cape Town Libraries: Special Collections (Manuscripts and Archives)

Title: JC de Villiers Research Collection

ID: BC1586

Physical description: 4 archival boxes, of which 2 contain textual material and 2 contain slides and negatives.

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Jacques Charl 'Kay' de Villiers studied Medicine at the University of Cape Town. Following graduation and internship at Groote Schuur Hospital, he commenced general practice in Swellendam for four years before taking up a lecturer post in Anatomy in 1957 at the newly established University of Stellenbosch Medical School, as a prelude to the FRCS exam and surgical training in London in 1960. Encountering a family where five generations had suffered from polycystic kidney disease, he started researching this, culminating in an MD thesis on the genetics of this condition.

Kay de Villiers spent five years in the UK, undergoing neurosurgical training at the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases, Queen Square and Atkinson Morley's Hospital, Wimbledon. During this time he was mentored by Mr Wylie McKissock, doyen of British neurosurgery. Training in neurosurgery before the advent of the CT scanner was brutal and relentless but he found time to immerse himself in history, literature and poetry, and excelled academically, winning a research fellowship to spend a year studying head injury in the laboratory of Dr Tom Langfitt in Philadelphia.

Upon his return to South Africa in 1966, Kay de Villiers was appointed as the first full-time neurosurgeon at Groote Schuur Hospital, and devoted the remainder of his career to this institution. He followed De Villiers Hamman as Head of Department in 1972 and was honoured as the first incumbent of the Helen and Morris Mauerberger Chair of Neurosurgery.

While his research interests were those of any dedicated clinician, reflecting the diversity of conditions he encountered in his daily practice, he made special contributions to the understanding of head injury in children, in work done with Dr Marian Jacobs. Prof de Villiers was the face of Neurosurgery in South Africa, pioneering new techniques through time spent in Zurich, Charlottesville and Paris - the latter allowing him to bring back the new technique of trans-sphenoidal pituitary surgery.

He led Neurosurgery at UCT for 22 years during which time the clinical service moved from its first home in J Block to the New Main Building. Prof de Villiers' contributions extended beyond the hospital, making an enormous impact on Medicine and Higher Education in South Africa. His decisive leadership found him serving as president or chair of several learned organisations including the Society of Neurosurgeons of South Africa, and is the only South African elected an Honorary President of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies. A highlight was his tenure as Chair of Council of the University of the Western Cape in the 1980s, where his talent for annoying the political establishment was rewarded with an Honorary DSc in 1989.

In addition to his love of clinical neurology, his over-arching passion was history. A Wellcome Foundation travelling fellowship in 1998 enabled him to research medical aspects of the Anglo-Boer War, which led to numerous publications and culminated in his magnum opus *Healers, Helpers and Hospitals: A history of Military Medicine in the Anglo-Boer war*, winner of the UCT Book Award in 2011. He was determined to bring history to life and devoted his retirement to establishing the Cape Medical Museum which established the annual Kay de Villiers lecture in his honour.

Notes

Title notes

Immediate source of acquisition

Donated via Emeritus Professor Peter Gordon

Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published
-

Access points

- Eminent domain (subject)
 - Dwellings - Social Aspects (subject)
 - Medical students (subject)
-

Collection holdings

Series: BC1586_A - Occupants of Clee and Mostert Roads, Observatory

Title: Occupants of Clee and Mostert Roads, Observatory

ID: BC1586_A

Date: 1933-1969 (date of creation)

Publication status:

Published

Subseries: BC1586_A_A1 - Text of "Clee and Mostert Roads ..."

Title: Text of "Clee and Mostert Roads ..."

ID: BC1586_A_A1

Date: 1933-1969 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

The full title is "Clee and Mostert Roads: A Review of People and their Activities in these two roads from 1933-1969". Besides an Introduction, the chapters are as follows:

Chapter 1: Historical information on Mostert and Clee

Chapter 2: The environment

Chapter 3: The residences

Chapter 4: Social activities of the students

Chapter 5: Stories about Clee and Mostert Roads

Chapter 6: The expropriation

Chapter 7: List of students who lived in Mostert and Clee Roads

Acknowledgements

Contextual note: This residential area was situated in close proximity to the original Groote Schuur Hospital, and many who lived there had a close association with the hospital, whether as staff, students or householders who took in medical students as lodgers. The area was expropriated in 1969 for the purposes of developing the new Groote Schuur Hospital.

Physical description: 8 folders

Note [generalNote]:

Many original print photographs of the location and occupants are included in the text (which is in the form of a computer print-out). Photographs are also contained in file A4 of the collection.

Publication status:

Published

Subseries: BC1586_A_A2 - Research correspondence

Title: Research correspondence

ID: BC1586_A_A2

Date: 1989-1993 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Correspondence with former residents of the area, particularly medical practitioners who lived there as students, and related material, filed alphabetically according the surname of the correspondent.

Physical description: 2 folders

Note [generalNote]:

Contains substantive information and photograph of Dr Hieronymus van Praag Koch (1926-1973).

Publication status:

Published

File: BC1586_A_A3 - Draft material

Title: Draft material

ID: BC1586_A_A3

Scope and content:

Probably earlier drafts of some parts of the final text.

Physical description: One folder

Note [generalNote]:

Publication status:

Published

File: BC1586_A_A4 - Photographs

Title: Photographs

ID: BC1586_A_A4

Physical description: One folder

Note [generalNote]:

Negatives are kept in cold storage.

Publication status:

Published

Series: BC1586_B - Avenue House, Mowbray

Title: Avenue House, Mowbray

ID: BC1586_B

Scope and content:

Text and research concerning the history, owners and and occupants of Avenue House, Avenue Road, Mowbray, which is now owned by the University of Cape Town.

Physical description: 3 folders

Publication status:

Published

File: BC1586_B_B1 - Text: Avenue House, Avenue Road, Mowbray

Title: Text: Avenue House, Avenue Road, Mowbray

ID: BC1586_B_B1

Scope and content:

Text concerning the history, owners and and occupants of Avenue House, Avenue Road, Mowbray, which is now owned by the University of Cape Town.

Physical description: One folder

Note [generalNote]:

The text contains original print photographs. Other photographs are included in file B3 of the collection.

Publication status:

Published

File: BC1586_B_B2 - Research and correspondence

Title: Research and correspondence

ID: BC1586_B_B2

Physical description: One folder

Publication status:

Published

File: BC1586_B_B3 - Photographs

Title: Photographs

ID: BC1586_B_B3

Physical description: One folder

Note [generalNote]:

Negatives are kept in cold storage.

Publication status:

Published

File: BC1586_C - Groote Schuur Rugby Club: 25th anniversary reunion

Title: Groote Schuur Rugby Club: 25th anniversary reunion

ID: BC1586_C

Date: 1969 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Circulars, lists of names and addresses, and song lyrics.

Physical description: One folder

Publication status:

Published

Series: BC1586_D - Slides

Title: Slides

ID: BC1586_D

Physical description: 2 archival boxes each containing a round slide tray and a folder or sleeve.

Note [generalNote]:

This material is kept in cold storage. At least two days' notice is required to provide access.

Publication status:

Published

Subseries: BC1586_D_D1 - Early medicine at the Cape and Europe

Title: Early medicine at the Cape and Europe

ID: BC1586_D_D1

Physical description: One round slide tray contained in archival box

Publication status:

Published

Subseries: BC1586_D_D2 - Art and medicine

Title: Art and medicine

ID: BC1586_D_D2

Physical description: One round slide tray contained in archival box

Publication status:

Published

File: BC1586_D_D3 - Military gravestones and hospitals

Title: Military gravestones and hospitals

ID: BC1586_D_D3

Publication status:

Published

File: BC1586_D_D4 - Negatives related to Series A and B

Title: Negatives related to Series A and B

ID: BC1586_D_D4

Publication status:

Published
