

**lakemichelle**  
NOORDHOEK

The History  
of  
Lake Michelle

By  
Allan Collins



Cover pic courtesy of Pat Mc Kune

# THE HISTORY OF LAKE MICHELLE

## FOREWORD

Hi...I settled in Lake Michelle in March 2014, so, I am sure you realise that I was not around when most of what I am about to share with you happened. I have done a fair amount of research and have had to rely on what has been written and recorded about the history of Lake Michelle as well as what kind folk have told me. I have tried wherever possible to corroborate data that I have found or what has been told to me. There are likely to be some errors or interpretations “lost in translation”. I apologise for that, and am happy to be corrected and provided with the correct information for my own edification.

This started off as a “brief” history of Lake Michelle at the request of Mally Macarthy for *The Buzz* – our quarterly newsletter. As I researched information it became more of a project of much larger proportions that was spread over four editions of *The Buzz*.

I am possibly the last person that should be handling this project because I hated history at school and dropped it as a subject when I got to high school. The choice was History or Latin and I ended up making the wrong choice as it turned out. We used to say .... “Latin is a language, as dead as dead can be. It killed the ancient Romans, and now it’s killing me.” I have, however, really enjoyed putting this together. In the process I met and/or interacted with so many lovely engaging people and discovered so much interesting information. I have so many people to thank and written sources of information to acknowledge, which I will do at the end.

## Lake Michelle – Historical Timeline

| Year   | Activity   |
|--------|--|
| 1821   | Jacobus Hurter became the owner of the Noordhoek Farm which included the salt pan on which Lake Michelle is now built. Cattle were farmed to supply meat to the Simon’s Town D.E.I.C winter anchorage.   |
| 1830 ± | The pan started being worked for its salt content. Initially production was very low (about 65 bags pa).   |
| 1846   | The salt pan was purchased by Pierre Rocher at public auction for £131 2s 4p (being £1 per acre). This portion i.e. the salt pan became known as farm 949.   |
| 1895   | Eventually Mr van Blerk of Kalk Bay purchased the rights and increased production to 6 000 bags pa.  |
| 1925 ± | The pan started being used as a motor racing track on a recreational basis.  |
| 1930   | The pan became the first racing circuit in the Peninsula (in 1935 the Pollsmoor track became the preferred track for motor racing, and the salt pan was only used for recreational racing, model aeroplanes and as a soccer field).  |
| 1960s  | The wetlands between what is now the BP Service Station and the salt pan was used to grow vegetables by the Louw family.   |
| 1970   | Farm 949 (the pan) was bought by Great Lakes Development Company. It was to be called Island Glades Marina with a yacht harbour, riding stables, tennis courts, swimming pool, 18 - hole golf course and shopping complex and would have included the land on which Masiphumelele is built. Planned occupation was for 6 000 people. Due to lack of funds only Lake Michelle was developed |
| 1974   | The lake was dredged to the depth and shape that it is today, except for a strip in the middle that in effect created two lakes. This strip had a path used by horse riders to cross the lake.   |
| 1987   | Rezoning to residential was granted by Western Cape Regional Services Council  |
| 1990   | First houses built in Phase 1, which had to be sold out before phases 2 & 3 were placed on the market.   |
| 2003   | Approval, with certain conditions and modifications, was given for the development of Phases 4 to 7 after objections were considered from NEAG (Noordhoek Environmental Action Group), Noordhoek and District Civic Association and SANParks   |
| 2004   | An EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) was undertaken to assess the impact of stormwater outfall into wetlands.  |
| 2005   | Land surveyor approves the inclusion of part of Farm De Goede Hoop (4096) with Farm 949, and ERF 3823 is registered, which is the extent of Lake Michelle footprint as we know it. This ERF included Phase 8. When the individual sites in phases 4 to 7 were surveyed and registered Phase 8 became the remaining portion of ERF 3823. Development of phases 4 to 7 commences.            |

## CHAPTER ONE – The Early Years ...

The history of Lake Michelle is inextricably a part of the history of the Noordhoek Valley, so, that will be covered in the first part. That history in turn can be divided into two parts – before and after European settlement in 1652 (If that is when Jan van Riebeeck arrived in the Cape – some “pundits” appear to think it was much later based on their belief of the impact he has had on some current events in South African life).



Evidence has been unearthed (excuse the pun) by archaeologists that the area was inhabited by Middle Stone Age (280 000 to 50 000 years ago) and Later Stone Age (50 000 to 2000 years ago) dwellers. This information emerged as a result of various studies including a Heritage Impact Assessment undertaken of the Lake Michelle site in 2004 by Jayson Orton of the Department of Archaeology, University of Cape Town on behalf of Andre van der Spuy Environmental Consultants on the request of Great Lakes Development Company. (More about this in a later part.) In April 2015 the skeleton of a child was found on Noordhoek

beach during a community cleanup operation. It was buried in a sitting position. According to Professor Tim Hart of the Department of Archaeology, University of Cape Town, this was typical of burials of pre-colonial people on the coast. During this time the Valley was mainly covered by indigenous forest, which was cleared for farmland after European settlement. In 1960 Jalmar Rudner found the remains of 26 pots in a midden near the pan (the original salt pan on which Lake Michelle is built).



These were possibly the very first residents of Lake Michelle – or at least in the area close by. This Peers Cave mural is in the Fish Hoek Museum and is published with their kind permission. The mural was painted by Heather Maltby who is a member of the Fish Hoek Art Society

It is believed that the forested area was not inhabited, but that the sandier area closer to Noordhoek beach was, as is evidenced by where artefacts have been found. This obviously makes sense as the name “Strandlopers” originated from people that “walked on the beach”. There was no monitoring of artefacts during the initial excavation of the Lake in 1970

In the 18th century more farmland was needed to provide fresh produce and meat to the Dutch East India Company vessels after Simons Bay (Simon’s Town) was declared the official D.E.I.C. winter anchorage in 1743. Three farms were “granted” in the valley between Fish Hoek and Kommetjie. They were De Goede Hoop at Noordhoek, Poespaskraal (which is now the Old Homestead, Sunnysdale) and Slangenkop (now Imhoff’s Gift). These were “loan farms, with a weaker form of property rights”. Christina Russouw – widow of Frederick Russouw, went to the Castle and requested a loan farm from Baron van Imhoff in 1743. She was given Goede Hoop and Slangenkop. In 1821 Jacobus Hurter became the registered (as opposed to loan) owner of De Goede Hoop farm, which included the salt pan on which Lake Michelle is built. The title deeds indicate that there was a restriction placed on the salt pan: “That a space of sixty feet be left around the salt pan for the preservation of the same, without cattle being allowed to graze within such space”

In 1846 Pierre Rocher purchased the Salt Pan (approximately 56 hectares) for £131-2s-4d at a rate of One Pound per acre. It became known as Farm 949. It changed hands many times until it was eventually bought by Great Lakes Development Company Proprietary Limited in 1970 – recorded as the 12th owner.

## CHAPTER TWO ... After The Early Years Up To Start Of Development Of Lake Michelle

The salt pan on which Lake Michelle is built had quite a checkered life from the early 1800s to 1970 when it was eventually bought by the Great Lakes Development Company for the Lake Michelle development.

### Salt Mining/Harvesting

During the winter storms the waves used to come over the low dunes adjacent to Noordhoek Beach and flood the salt pan as well as what is known today as Wildevoëlveli close to Imhoff's Gift. It is likely that salt was gathered/harvested informally from the pan in the 1800s (and possibly even the mid to late 1700s). Cattle were being farmed in the valley and the salt would have been used to make salt licks.

In 1813 Andries Bruijns was granted a five-year lease of the salt pan for 250 rixdollars per annum. His efforts in extracting salt flopped and in the *Cape Town Gazette* of 25 May 1818 the lease of the pan was advertised. It was granted to J.A. Hurter in 1821. He too had little success in extracting salt. Pierre Rocher took over the lease in 1832 after J.A. Hurter died in 1831. The original proviso, that a 60 foot perimeter space be left around the pan, was still enforced for "preservation purposes". This was mainly to prevent cattle from going onto the pan and soiling the salt as well as damaging the surface for salt gathering.

The pan was eventually sold to Pierre Rocher in April 1846 for £131-2s-4d. At the time Pierre Rocher also owned Imhoff's Gift, which he had purchased in 1814. In front of the Imhoff homestead was a vlei – later known as Wildevoëlveli. In terms of his quitrent, Rocher was prevented from fishing in the vlei, which was dry during summer. In winter the rain and high spring tides filled it up bringing in many small fish, known as Springers (Mullet) ... which also existed in Lake Michelle until the fish population was decimated as a result of the water quality in 2016. Rocher was permitted, however, to harvest salt during the summer months. This most likely prompted him to buy the salt pan. He too was unsuccessful in making it into a going concern and only harvested about 65 bags per annum.

In about 1895 a Mr van Blerk from Kalk Bay, owner of the farm Clovelly, purchased the rights to work the pan. He was successful because he changed the method of harvesting the salt. He dug wells in the pan and extracted the brine which he transferred through pipes to concrete pans. This increased the production to 6 500 bags per annum. However, winter rains flooding the pan, and the lack of fencing allowing cattle to wander onto the pan, soiled the salt and damaged the beds, putting an end to this. By the early 1900s the pan reverted to its original state.



*"The Salt Pan near Klein Skool"* by Dorothy Moss Kay

This painting is housed in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Museum,  
Port Elizabeth.

(three email requests for permission to reproduce were unanswered)

While not on our salt pan (this is near Port Elizabeth) – it shows how salt was gathered before brine was

## General Recreation



Late Nikki Spengler on Can-Can, mom Louise Spengler & Eve Holloway nee Spengler on Sunspot. (c.1986)

It appeared that owners of the pan were very tolerant of it being used for recreational purposes, and none more than horse riding as Noordhoek became more and more popular with the horsey crowd, especially after the motor racing stopped.

Thanks to Chris Spengler for these pics.



c 1960 l to r - Celia Hobbs, Bertha Dowley (Louise Spengler's & Gillian Kerr's late mom), Pam Freeman, Sandra McKenzie & Gillian Kerr (nee Dowley – now living in Lake Michelle).



Late Nikki Spengler on Can-Can & Eve Holloway nee Spengler on Sunspot. The salt on the pan can clearly be seen

Jeff Louw said that it was used by the Cape Hunt and Polo Club for “drag” hunting. He used to ride with the club member responsible for laying the “fox trail”, because he knew his way around the pan and the surrounding wetlands. They would soak a bundle of hessian bags in linseed oil and drag it behind a horse.

It was also used for radio-controlled model aeroplane enthusiasts and was a popular spot for kite flying.

During the wet winter months the pan filled with water and became a popular spot for boating enthusiasts. The depth of the water can clearly be seen from the kayaking that took place.



Duncan Barson and his brother Brian launching their kayaks.

Thanks to Duncan Barson for these pics, which were taken about 1969/1970. This was before the lake was dredged in 1974.



Duncan Barson enjoying a day out on the pan

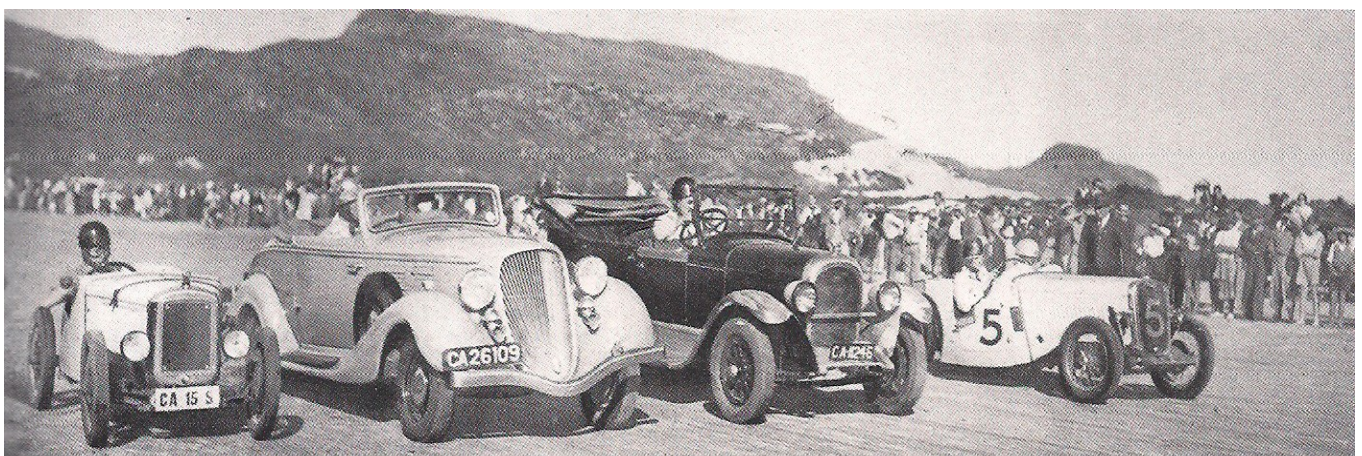
## Motorcar and Motor Cycle Racing

Before going into the actual history of motor racing itself I was fascinated by who the owner of the pan was and whether racing was done with owner's consent and also if for reward.

I was not able to ascertain much – other than ownership, and that too is somewhat confusing. Here is an excerpt from the Transfer Register...

|    |      |            |            |         |           |  |     |             |
|----|------|------------|------------|---------|-----------|--|-----|-------------|
| 9  | 4810 | 11.6.1930  | WHOLE 9    | 65.19   | C.S.      | ERNEST CHARLES TAYLOR                              | 11- |             |
|    |      |            | 1/2        | 335.50  | PRENTICES | EDWARD JAMES ROSCOE                                | 10  |             |
|    |      |            | 1/4        | 8       |           |  |     |             |
| 10 | 8572 | 9.12.1930  | WHOLE 9    | 65.19   | E.C.      | ERNEST CHARLES TAYLOR                              | 11- |             |
|    |      |            | 1/2        | 335.50  | ROSCOE    |  |     |             |
| 11 | 294  | 17.11.1954 | PORTION 70 | 23.1087 | E.C.      | THE DIVISIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CAPE                 | 11- | 96.9/11     |
|    |      |            | 1          |         | SF        | (NEW DISCARD)                                      |     | 65M 25M 30M |
| 12 | 9554 | 16-6-1970  | Portion    | 110     | 55.9235   | Est Late E.C. Taylor Company (Proprietary) Limited | 11- | 7176/70     |
|    |      |            | 1          |         |           | Whole group  |     |             |

- It shows that it was purchased in 1930 (about the time that “formal” racing started) by Ernest Charles Taylor and Edward James Roscoe. They were clearly happy with motor racing happening on the pan, but I could find no information as to whether it was done with some compensation being paid to Taylor & Roscoe. I have since obtained a copy of a programme from 27 December 1947 (included at end of this part) acknowledging Mr E.C. Taylor for the use of the pan.
- In 1935 Ernest Charles Taylor became sole owner, so either Roscoe passed away, or they had a bit of a fallout about motor racing.
- It was about this time that the pan ceased being used as a “formal” race track, because the track at Pollsmoor was built in 1936
- It looks like (the date that is) that the pan was transferred to the Divisional Council of the Cape in 1954.
- It was bought by Great Lakes Development Company (Pty) Ltd in 1970 – but, here’s the confusing bit – it shows Est Late E.C. Taylor as being the transferor, so who actually owned it between 1954 and 1970? It is shown as having been transferred to Divisional Council in 1954?
- It appears to have continued to the early 1970s even after the pan was purchased by the developer.

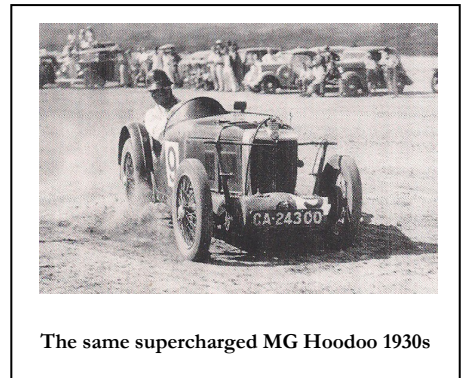
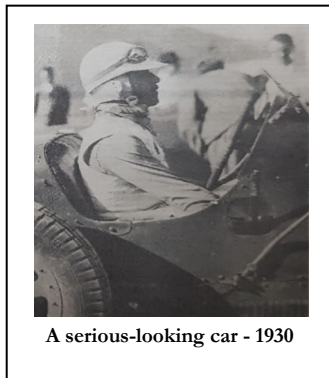
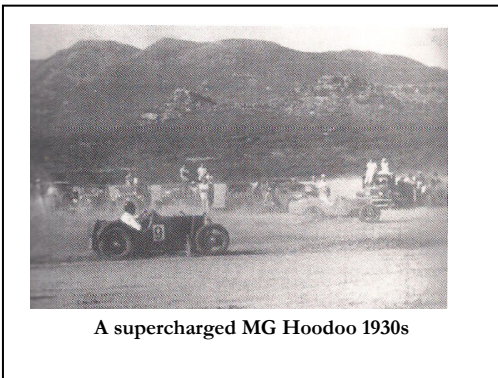


An Austin, a Terraplane, a Chrysler and a Stinger Le Mans line up in 1935

Motor racing can be split into two segments .... pre-war and post-war.

### Pre-war

In the 1920s the pan was used by enthusiasts for recreational racing of both cars and motorcycles on a very informal basis. In 1926 the Mets (Metropolitan Motorcycle and Car Club) and the MG Car Club started using the pan on a more formal basis for organised racing. During 1929 the Cape Provincial Motorcycle and Car Club (CPMCC) laid out a speedway at Rietvlei, Milnerton, also on a saltpan. Both clubs were then competing to attract top drivers and the venues became very popular with motor racing enthusiasts. The circuit at Noordhoek was usually laid out in the shape of a dumb-bell. You might ask why “usually”. The pan could only be used during the dry summer months, because it was flooded during the winter rainy season. Racing continued on the pan from about 1930 until about 1935. However, due to the limitation of racing only being able to take place during the dry summer months, a more suitable venue was sought. One was eventually found on the Pollsmoor Farm (owned then by the Kirsten family - Milton Kirsten, previously a resident in Lake Michelle, now moved to Evergreen, was a member of that family). In 1935 the Pollsmoor track became the official Cape Town circuit. The Noordhoek pan continued to be used on an informal basis until the war broke out, when racing stopped.

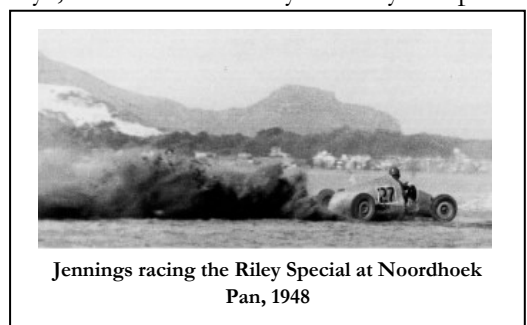


### Post-war

After the war the pan was once more used for motor racing, having to compete with other venues in Cape Town such as ... Paarden Eiland (1948/9) – Gunners Circle, Epping (1951) - Eerste Rivier, a disused airfield (1951) – Killarney (1951). Pollsmoor was not used after the war. There were many automobile clubs in Cape Town at the time, and, like before the war, they were competing to attract the top drivers. The Noordhoek salt pan, being a “dirt track” was very popular with locals and many exciting duels kept the fans entertained.

Motor racing was monopolised by two friends – Bill Jennings and Edgar Hoal. Both had served as engineers in the armed forces in Italy during the war. Racing cars were very much “home-made” jobs. They were built on whatever chassis could be found and then fitted with whatever suitable engine could also be found. Engines were small (1100cc – 1498cc, Riley being typical). However, the cars were supercharged and tweaked to get the optimum performance out of them. Drivers were also the builders of the cars.

Racing (both cars and bikes) was very popular and attracted large crowds to events. I imagine that it was both very noisy and dusty, particularly if the south-easter was pumping, so residents in the immediate area of the pan must have been very tolerant. Having said that there were very few houses around the pan in those days, so there was really nobody to upset. Imagine if there was, and if Facebook was going at the time.

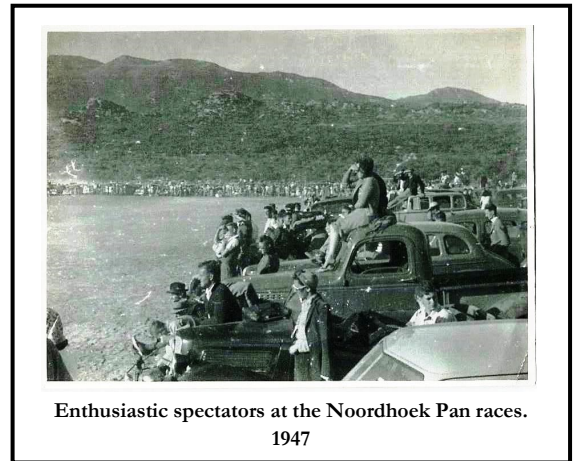


One can well imagine that racing was a real sport in those days with no sponsorships, TV etc. It was just done by passionate participants for the sheer fun of it and enjoyed by spectators for the same reason. It was just a “jol” on a Saturday afternoon (for non-cricket fans – it was after all only in summer on the pan)

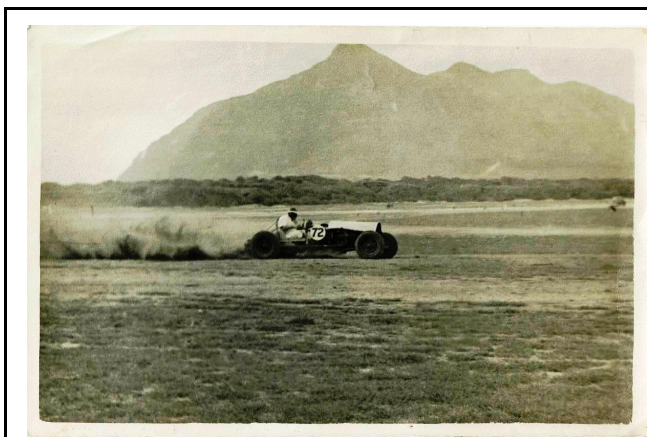
From all the people I’ve spoken to, it was a very popular venue for those that were looking for a good afternoon’s entertainment, with plenty of thrills and spills really up close to spectators.

With the popularity of the other tracks gaining momentum and the fact that the Noordhoek salt pan could only be used during the dry summer months, much of the traditional racing moved away, but the pan by no means lost its popularity.

The pics on this page were generously provided by Trish Wood. Trish is the owner of the beautifully restored Old Homestead, Sunnydale (originally Poespaskraal – one of the three farms given by Governor van Imhoff and mentioned in Part one of this series). Trish’s dad, John, owned an MG and used to race on the pan. Local residents will remember him of S.A. Snake Farm or “Snakeman” fame.



Enthusiastic spectators at the Noordhoek Pan races.  
1947



Dicing in the bend before the straight



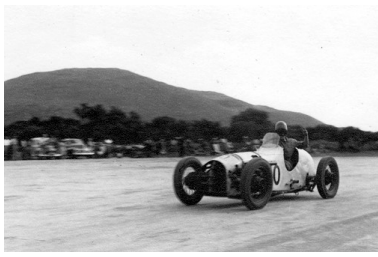
Thelma Wood (Trish’s Mom) in the MG

(PS – I have tried to choose pics that show landmarks – mountains, etc. that clearly show the location as being that of the old pan, and also with hordes of spectators in the background to show how popular it was)





Eric Lehman 1955 in his Riley Special  
(Thanks Mary Barson [nee vd Schyff ]  
from father Bill's album)



Eric Lehman 1955 in his Riley Special  
(Thanks Mary Barson [nee vd Schyff ]  
from father Bill's album)



Bill & Eric Lehman with one of their  
three specials on the pan in 1955

Motor racing was also a big crowd puller both pre and post war. Look at the number of spectators. You can well imagine that racing motorcycles on a hard sand surface must have been a lot like a speedway.

It now became a favourite venue for scrambling and gymkhanas. I have not been able to establish all the individual events that were held at gymkhanas...I think surfboard racing was one and the see-saw was another. Alex Stewart's favourite race was the one where motorcyclists pulled guys sitting on surfboards around the circuit. These were the old-type surfboards – thin wood and turned up in the front. The ropes were quite long and the most exciting bit was when they went round corners and centrifugal force increased the speed tremendously. I was, unfortunately not able to get a pic.

Port Jackson had taken over most areas of the Cape that were populated, and Noordhoek pan was no different. Organisers and helpers had to clear large areas to make a useable track. My grateful thanks to Graham Goetze for the following pics – that's him on the 350 Honda riding the see-saw at a gymkhana.



Pat O'Connor followed by Seamus Daly (LM  
Resident) and Tony Bown (right)



Gordon King followed by Roy Lindley



Tony Bown on a Greeves





Billy Cooper followed by Duncan Barson



Paul Tops followed by Duncan Barson

These pics were kindly provided by Lake Michelle resident Seamus Daly (appearing in one of the pics above). They were given to him by Duncan Barson (appearing in the pic on the left as well as the two kayaking pics lower down). They were all taken c1971. The series of pics on the previous page are all of motorcycle scrambling. These are of motorcycle “flat” racing, which was just as popular.

This was an organised club event.

It’s interesting to note that the scramblers and the bikes taking part in the “flat” race are virtually road motorcycles and are nothing like the off-road and racing machines that we know today. It is obvious that this was all done by passionate individuals just for the love of having a great time.

Trish Wood also very kindly provided a copy of the programme of a race meeting that took place on 27 December 1948. In the programme it mentions ... “Our thanks are extended to Mr E.C. Taylor, owner of the Pan for his kind co-operation”. So, Ernest Charles Taylor was the owner in 1947 and racing clearly took place with

his consent. No mention is made as to whether he was compensated or not.

# PROGRAMME

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L. R. Batchelor (M.M.C.C.)

P. Hart (M.M.C.C.)

CLERK OF COURSE: J. W. A. Warren.

It is of interest to note that this Club, which was formed in 1921, has been organising races on Noordhoek Pan since 1926. Our thanks are extended to Mr. E. C. Taylor, owner of the Pan, for his kind co-operation.

If you are interested in becoming a member of this Club, please write for a proposal form from the Metropolitan Motor Cycle & Car Club, P.O. Box 2926, Cape Town.

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Mr. W. B. Kay v. Mr. V. Sawyer.

1..... 2.....

Event No. 4

10 LAP HANDICAP RACE

1..... 2..... 3.....

Event No. 5

10 LAP HANDICAP RACE (Fastest Machines)

1..... 2..... 3.....

Event No. 6

3 LAP CHALLENGE RACES

1..... 2.....

1..... 2.....

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10 LAP ALLCOMERS' EVENT

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6

## Landfill & Refuse Dump

There was also a rather ignominious era in Lake Michelle's history. Part of Lake Michelle was used as a dump/landfill site. I was able to get a definitive date as to when dumping on the site ceased, but it was very difficult to get a definitive date on which it started (established later). Folk in Noordhoek have been so helpful and have responded to my various appeals via the Noordhoek Facebook group for info on the history to help me with this article, but - nobody was able to give me an exact date it started. So, by using available data - mainly aerial pics (official survey, as well as pics taken from top of Chapman's Peak and out of aeroplanes), I have narrowed it down.



The dump/landfill site was intended for building rubble and garden refuse/rubble, but, according to Yvonne Francis "we used to take household rubbish there for a short while in 1981 before proper refuse removal was instituted ... there was nowhere else and no collection! It was only a few months though".

This is an extract from an official 1968 aerial survey pic. I have marked where the current Lake Michelle admin offices and workshops are ... you will see them in a later pic.

The dump/landfill site straddled where Northshore is now, and the remains are still visible today.

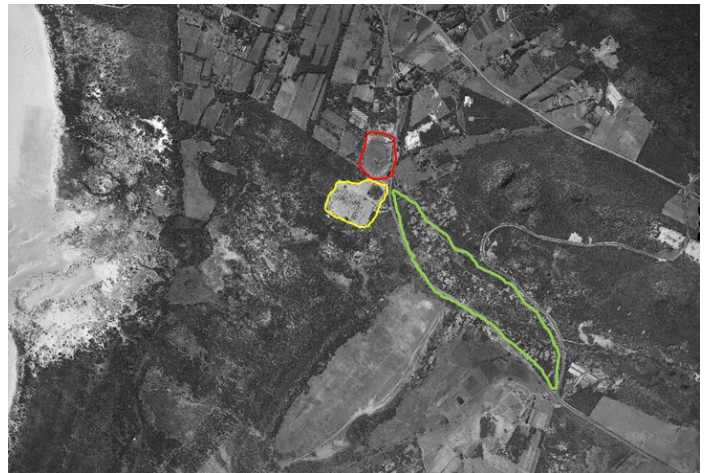
There is no evidence of any dump or landfill site in this pic, so it was not being used for that purpose in 1968.

This is an extract from the larger 1968 aerial survey pic and the pic above is in turn an extract from this one.

Information not specific to Lake Michelle, but will no doubt be of interest ...

The area highlighted in red was the Silversands Drive-in and is where Cape Dutch Nursery is today.

Across the road that would now be Katzenellenbogen is an area highlighted in yellow. That was the original Ocean View site. Roads were laid out and kerbstones installed, before it was moved to the current site near Imhoff's Gift, due to objections from local residents.



The area highlighted in green is where Crofter's Valley is today. While difficult to see in this pic (clearly visible on the very hi-res original aerial survey pic) there are possibly 60/80 shacks in that area. Those residents, as well as those in shacks on Lake Michelle (will cover that in the final chapter) eventually became the first residents in Site 5 – Masiphumelele.

Once again – there is no evidence of a dump/landfill site between Lake Michelle and what is now Katzenellenbogen Street.

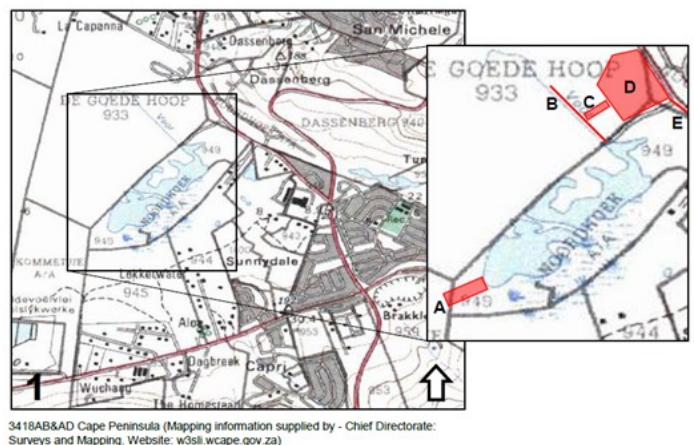
The pic (right) was taken in 1971. The Silversands Drive-in is in the foreground bottom left. Lake Michelle is the "white" area centre right to top right. (The pan was bought by the developer in 1970, so clearing of the site for the lake (dredged in 1974) could have started.) The area for the dump/landfill site has been cleared, but it is not clear if dumping has commenced. (Thanks to Trygve Hvidsen for this pic)





The pic above was taken in 1978. The dump/landfill site is visible and appears to be “in business”. The lake has been excavated (1974). In an interview with an early resident of Noordhoek and ardent horse-rider, she told me that they used to ride around the lake. There was a path across the lake that enabled them to cross from one side to the other. I was not aware of that from other pics I had seen, until I saw this pic. Note how empty the valley is of development and that the Glencairn Expressway is under construction – this ties in with other data I uncovered in my research. (Thanks to Margaret MacIver for this pic.)

So - it appears to have started operating in the early 1970s. From stories I've received it seems that just as much was taken from the dump as was dropped off. According to Ann Macfarlane. “Nostalgic – that was my dad's ‘swop shop’ – our driveway is paved with half bricks that he got from there, and we have a fan in our kitchen also from The Dump. One Christmas, I even got a couple of sheet music books tied up with a festive ribbon – in quite good condition. I think the name on one of them was Susan Engels?” My cousin in Hout Bay tells me that he used to come through with his bakkie to drop off garden refuse and went home with seven wooden railway sleepers on one occasion.



3418AB&AD Cape Peninsula (Mapping information supplied by - Chief Directorate: Surveys and Mapping. Website: w3sl.wcape.gov.za)

Janet Cannan told me that a whole lot of junk was unearthed when the trenches were dug for the fibre cables for the new security system... old bicycle parts and stuff.

A Heritage Impact Assessment was undertaken in 2004 to ascertain if there were any artefacts present that would indicate areas of historical value. This was required before the development of phases 4 to 8 could continue. A number of locations were identified on the Lake Michelle site for investigation...

For some reason, a location was chosen on the old dump. That is “D” on the layout above.

Here is an excerpt from the Heritage Impact Assessment report ...

## 1.4 Tip and fence line

The old rubble tip, which was closed in the 1980's, was used primarily for rubble and garden refuse, and as such, its entire area has no heritage value at all. The proposed fence line runs along the edge of the Noordhoek Main Road (M6). The verge of this road is artificially raised and runs down into the edge of the marshlands. No heritage or archaeological material can be expected along this verge.

They knew it was a tip – so why look there if “No heritage or archaeological material can be expected along this verge”. I suppose they could have come up with ... one of the Strandlopers had a Morris Minor. 😊



This pic is from the City of Cape Town Mapviewer – 2018 aerial view.

The extent of the landfill (which is about 1/1,5 m above the natural surrounding ground level is clearly visible. I'm sure we have all seen it on either side of Northshore just before the gate. It is covered in kikuyu grass. There is evidence that it might have extended a bit further to the northwest as it looks like there are possibly heaps of old rubble or waste there. The outlet overflow channel from the lake is clearly visible.

Note the bluegums along the dump adjacent to Noordhoek Main Road – I believe planted to hide the dump from the road and Crofters Valley

Western Cape Government  
Department of Environmental Affairs and Planning  
BETTER TOGETHER

Marius Venter  
Directorate: Waste Management  
5th floor Property Centre, 3 Dorp Street, Cape Town, 8001  
Tel: (021) 483 2639  
Fax: (021) 483 4425  
maris.venter@westerncape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 19/25/UAA/57/W6/0041/14

The Municipal Manager  
City of Cape Town  
P.O. Box 298  
CAPE TOWN  
8000  
Tel: (021) 400 2210  
Fax: (021) 400 4846

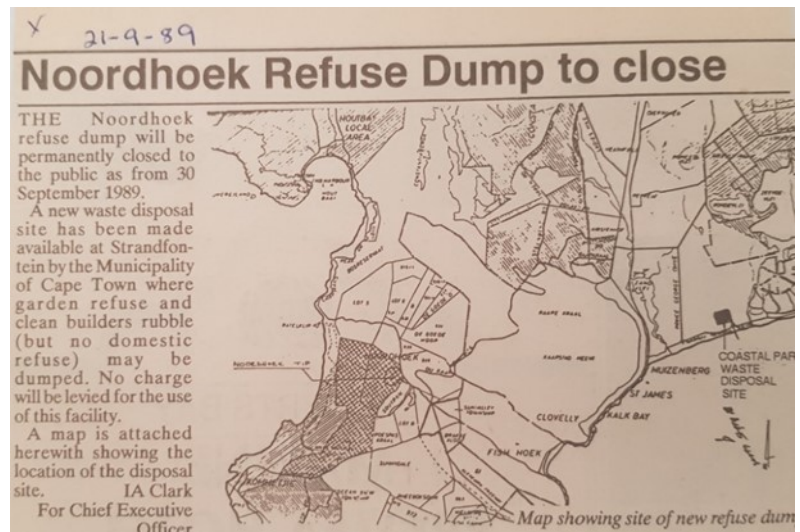
For attention: Mr Rustin Keran

**THE WASTE MANAGEMENT LICENCE ISSUED IN TERMS OF SECTION 49(1) (A) THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: WASTE ACT, 2008 (ACT NO. 59 OF 2008) FOR THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE NOORDHOEK HISTORIC DISPOSAL FACILITY ON THE REMAINDER OF CAPE FARM NO. 933 AND REF NO.3823 NOORDHOEK, CAPE TOWN**

- Your Application Form dated 21 January 2014, as received on 24 January 2014, and the final Basic Assessment Report and Environmental Management Programme, as received by this Department on 19 May 2014, refer.
- Attached please find the Waste Management Licence issued by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning in terms of the aforementioned legislation.
- Please note that the applicant must in writing, within 12 (twelve) calendar days of the date of the decision on the licence application:
  1. Notify all registered interested and affected parties of the outcome, reasons and date of the decision; and
  2. Inform all registered interested and affected parties of the appeal procedure provided for in Chapter 7 of Government Notice No. R. 543 of 18 June 2010.
- Kindly quote the above-mentioned reference number in any future correspondence in respect of the application.

Yours faithfully  
  
EDDIE HANEKOM  
DIRECTOR: WASTE MANAGEMENT  
DATE: 10/12/2014  
CC: (1) Double FourSix Consulting  
Fax: (021) 483 7193

Private Bag 99086, Cape Town, 8000  
www.westerncape.gov.za



We at least do know when it ceased operations from this newspaper cutting of 21 September 1989 announcing that it would be closed on 30 September 1989.

I have also been able to ascertain that there was a requirement that no building on the landfill would be permitted for a period of 30 years after activities ceased. This is substantiated in that the official deregistration of the dump/landfill site was only signed by City of Cape Town on 10 December 2014. The letter on the left is the first page of a 21-page document that also lays out certain conditions to the issuing of the certificate of de-registration.



In my research to try and establish when the dump/landfill site started and ended operations I received quite a few “suggestions” as to the extent of the site. From ... “it stretched from Main Road way into the area where Lake Michelle is now” ... to ... “it stretched right up along Main Road to where the sportsfields are”. In fact one newspaper clipping from November 1992 said that a sportsfield was to be established on the “old dump site” (which it isn’t). So, I tried to establish the actual area it covered.

I included the first page of a 21-page document from the City of Cape Town de-registering the site on 10 December 2014 (above). Included in that document were the co-ordinates of five points making up the boundary of the site but all five co-ordinates were the same and there was no way that I was going to try and correct the CoC in the error of it’s ways.

| Footprint of the Facility |               |              |
|---------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Number of corners         | Longitude (S) | Latitude (E) |
| 1                         | 18°22'50.19"  | 34°6'37.96"  |
| 2                         | 18°22'50.19"  | 34°6'37.96"  |
| 3                         | 18°22'50.19"  | 34°6'37.96"  |
| 4                         | 18°22'50.19"  | 34°6'37.96"  |
| 5                         | 18°22'50.19"  | 34°6'37.96"  |

However, I happened to be reading through another document and found the correct co-ordinates (not my spelling of ... “Label”) so I can now establish the extent of the site. Here it is overlaid on a City Maps Viewer map (2018). The extents of the site tie in with the “scar” of the footprint as we see it today – albeit that it does appear to encroach a bit on the western side. I must point out that at the time the site was operating it did not encroach onto Lake Michelle property. It was only located on Divisional Council property. Part of that ERF was subdivided in April 2005 and incorporated into ERF 3823 on which Lake Michelle is built.

| Lable | Longitude        | Latitude        |
|-------|------------------|-----------------|
| A     | 18° 22' 50.19" E | 34° 6' 37.96" S |
| B     | 18° 22' 46.11" E | 34° 6' 40.43" S |
| C     | 18° 22' 43.71" E | 34° 6' 45.93" S |
| D     | 18° 22' 48.34" E | 34° 6' 52.98" S |
| E     | 18° 22' 56.40" E | 34° 6' 50.56" S |



# ISLAND GLADES MARINA



# WATERFRONT LIVING..

Just dre... your perfect pattern for living. Sunshine and relaxa...  
tion in... loadings... yet handy for working an...  
shopp... Island Glades Marina, Noord...  
hoek... of the Peninsula with...  
quick... side living...  
at its...  
you...  
swir...  
are...  
Dr...  
cc...  
in...  
c...

## BOATING..



## SHOPPING..



## LEISURE..

## SPORT..



# ISLAND GLADES MARINA



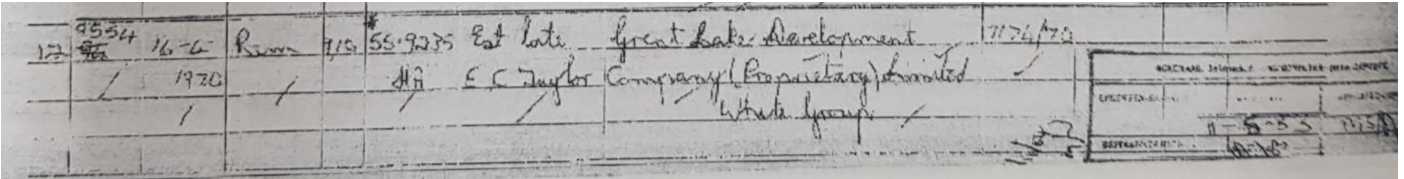
## CHAPTER THREE – The Development Itself

From the cover pic ... many of you will be asking ... “What has *Island Glades Marina* got to do with Lake Michelle?” The original vision of the developer was to build a very large deep-water yacht Marina 4,5 times larger than Lake Michelle is now, connected to the sea via a channel. Lake Michelle was to be part of that development.

The initial concept for the development of what was to become Lake Michelle started in all probability in the mid to late 1960s. The Great Lake Development Company (Pty) Ltd (GLDC) was registered on 17 February 1970 (according to CIPC records).

| Enterprise Details       |                                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Enterprise Number        | M1970001858                    |
| Enterprise Name          | GREAT LAKE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY |
| Enterprise Type          | Private Company                |
| Enterprise Status        | In Business                    |
| Compliance Notice Status | NONE                           |
| Registration Date        | 1970-02-17                     |

The site on which Lake Michelle is built (the old salt pan) was purchased by GLDC on 16 April 1970 (according to the transfer register).



The first two directors of GLDC (as far as I know) were John King (left) and Robert Page (apparently an American). Here they are, with an unknown third person. John is pointing to the proposed golf course.



The development would have covered about 296ha . It was to have a total of 3 500 residential sites. The first phase, Lake Michelle, was to have 660 residential plots and a “block of low-rise flats” (we have just over 350 plots and no flats at all). The total present area of Lake Michelle (excluding Phase 8) is 65,45ha, so Island Glades Marina would have been 4,5 times bigger than Lake Michelle is now.

Island Glades Marina would have included an 18-hole golf course, riding stables, tennis courts, swimming pool, lake-front shopping complex with restaurants, cinema, and ... it was to have had three lakes - called Lake Michelle, Lake Elizabeth and Loch Lynn. It would have stretched to where Masi is today. The raised portion top left of the model is where Crofters Valley is today. The area in blue is where Lake Michelle is.

While the pan was purchased in 1970 — there was virtually no activity until the lake was excavated in 1974.



1971



1978

4-1-75

# Come on home the water's lovely!

**(And you don't need a rich uncle to afford it!)**

It's the new marina — Island Glades, adjoining Noordhoek beach — a romantic three-lake cluster of coves, islands and causeways that's planned to give you leisured, holiday-style, living every day of the year.

Here, just 30 minutes from the city, you can sit in your garden (it could even be on an island) with a carpet of sparkling, blue water spread out before you. The pleasures of swimming, surfing, fishing, boating, bowls, tennis, golf and riding are yours for the taking... or you can simply laze on the beach.

The practical things will be at hand too: shops, schools, parks, floating restaurants, pub... everything you need for a rich rewarding life will be all around you.

And it costs less than you think.

So if fashionable marina living is just an impossible dream for you, contact us now. We'll show you how to make your dream come true!

**Choose your house or plot now!**

**ADJOINING NOORDHOEK BEACH**



TO: ISLAND GLADES MARINA (PTY) LTD  
P.O. BOX 1915, CAPE TOWN 8000

Send me free brochures and an invitation to view

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 45-2887, 70-8338, 8-9960


## ISLAND GLADES MARINA

When the lake was first dredged it was left with a causeway between the south and the north banks (seen in the 1978 pic). It was not clear why this was done but it in effect created two lakes. This causeway was confirmed by Maureen Mortimer when I met with her and her mom – Anneli Bell. She used to cross the lake on this pathway when she went riding. The causeway was eventually removed when development on Lake Michelle started.

Marketing of Island Glades Marina started in 1974/5 ... A newspaper ad (above) from 1975.

As you can see – it was promoted as a “three-lake cluster of coves, islands and causeways” recreational playground with “pleasures of swimming, surfing, fishing, boating, bowls, tennis, golf and riding ... Or simply laze on the beach”. The vision of the developers was of a recreational lifestyle with true marina-type, water’s-edge living... ”holiday-style living every day of the year”.

**ISLAND GLADES MARINA**  
NOORDHOEK



**MAKE YOUR HOME A PERMANENT HOLIDAY**

- \* Island Glades means waterfront living.
- \* Island Glades means waterfront living.
- \* Island Glades means horse-riding.
- \* Island Glades means golfing.
- \* Island Glades means tennis, bowls swimming.

**ABOVE ALL — ISLAND GLADES MEANS COMPLETE FAMILY ENVIRONMENTAL LIVING.**

You can play where you live on Island Glades Marina. (85832)

For further details on how you can make sure of being on our list when we begin selling these fabulous plots (priced from R4 000 to R18 000) or fill in and post the coupon below.

**PHONE 70-8338**

**TO: ISLAND GLADES DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, P.O. BOX 1915 CAPE TOWN 8000.**

Please send me full details of the Island Glades Marina Development Plan.

Name.....  
Address.....  
Phone No.....

ARGUS  
2/19/1974

This is another ad from the *Argus* of 21 September 1974... (note the plot prices)

The clipping below from the *Argus* of 16 November 1974 gives quite a bit of info on the proposed development. It mentions that there would be a total of 3 500 plots. And ... "The first phase, at Lake Michelle, consists of 660 residential plots and a block of low-rise flats" ... very different to what is here today.

The text in the clipping below indicates that the first plots would be available in January 1975 and that much of the infrastructure was being established at the time. That was not the case as the developers ran into financial problems and the entire project came to a halt. It lay idle until the mid-1980s, when the company was sold and the project was resuscitated.

Supplement to Weekend Argus — November 16 1974

## First Island Glades plots soon

THE first 100 residential plots out of a total of 3 500 being developed at the Island Glades Marina at Noordhoek will be available for purchase in January.

The new marina is believed to be the first inland lake complex of its type to be developed in Africa.

The developers say that more than R1-million has been spent to date since preparations to turn 296,3 hectares of wasteland into a complex of waterfront homes started in March this year.

The scheme consists of three lakes, Lake Michelle, Lake Elizabeth and Loch Lynn, which when complete, will account for 52 hectares of the area.

Lake Michelle is scheduled for completion in 1975, Lake Elizabeth in 1977 and Loch Lynn in 1979.

The first phase, at Lake Michelle, consists of 660 residential plots and a block of low-rise flats.

Work at this stage consists of excavations to form the lake, building up the surrounding shore-line, installation of access roads, sewage and water reticulation services, landscaping, and the planting of trees to establish windbreaks.

One of the directors of the developing company, Mr Robert Page, says that considerable emphasis will be given to the building of one and two bedroom waterfront homes.

Something we learned from the Marina da Gama project is that these smaller homes proved to be very popular, he said.

He says that all architectural plans for residential sites and commercial buildings will be strictly controlled by the company's resident architect to ensure uniformity of quality and style.

At least six wells will be sunk to ensure adequate supplies of water to give an overall lake depth of about two metres. The wells will be used to complement water run-off from the surrounding mountains.

Salinity will be controlled to allow aquatic life to live in the lakes.

The developers say that wind is not as serious a problem as at Mouzenberg, and trees, which are to be established, will be the only form of windbreak.

Plot sizes will vary from about 700 square metres to 900 square metres. Mr Page said details of plot costs have yet to be finalised.

It is estimated that the entire scheme will be completed within five years.



A question I have often heard ... “After whom was Lake Michelle named?” Answer: Michelle Thompson (nee King) daughter of John King – the original developer, and here is the lady...

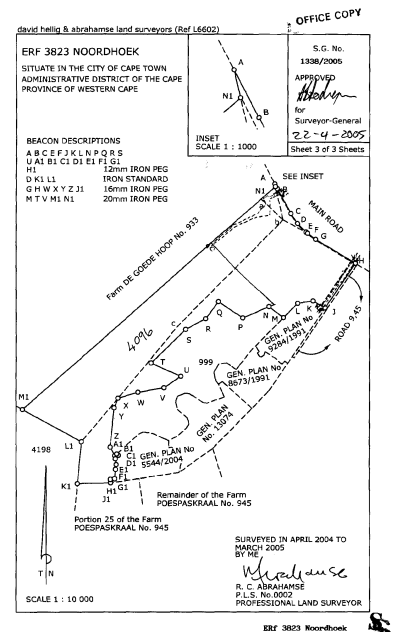


There is a possibility that some residents might recognise her. Michelle is a paramedic and worked at Cape Medical Response (CMR) for a long time. She responded to a call for help when I had a “turn” after we got here in 2014. She told me then that the lake was named after her, so I was able to follow up as part of the research for this article. Michelle is now at the Harmony Drug Rehabilitation Centre in Hout Bay. Her dad, John King, passed away 28 years ago after retiring to Knysna.

There were to be two more lakes on the Island Glades Marina development... Lake Elizabeth and Loch Lynn. The other director’s (Robert Page) daughter was Elizabeth. I was not able to establish who Lynn was or where the other two lakes were located.



The lake itself was dredged on the old salt pan in 1974 (4 years after it was bought by GLDC)... the pic above is 1978 (apology for picture quality). The pan was still used as a race track from 1970 when GLDC purchased it until 1974 when the lake was dredged. After that it was used by horse-riding enthusiasts, walkers and runners (plus some other inhabitants, which I will explain later).



The Surveyor General’s layout to the right from 2005 shows the current layout of Lake Michelle. The area to the left of the dotted line marked “4096” did not belong to the Great Lakes Development Company at the time that the lake was dredged. It was, however, a condition of the purchase of the salt pan (Farm 949) – 94,2ha that a portion of the adjoining farm 933 to the extent of 23ha be sold to the developer. This happened and the entire property was renamed ERF 3823. If you compare the pic above to the layout, you will see that the lake itself extends right to the dotted line. “4096” was purchased for the building of the homes that comprise part of Phase 5 as well as phases 6 & 7. Phase 4 is the area around Milkwood on the southern side of the lake. Phase 5 straddles the dotted line and phases 6 & 7 are in the “4096” area. Phase 8 is the large block (top right) of the erf that was sold to Amdec/ Evergreen between 2014 and 2018. Evergreen notes 2014 in their motivation for Phase 8 development and David Bridgman says 2018. I think there were some conditions to be met before the sale was finalized – hence the difference in interpretation of the dates.

There was no further development “activity” of the lake after it was dredged as the first residents only moved into their home in Phase 1 in 1990. There was, however a lot of other “activity” before subdivision and building actually started.

It appears that GLDC were cash strapped and were not able to find backers for their very grand plan and ended up very close to liquidating without doing anything, other than dredging the lake itself. The property was offered to David Bridgman – an apple farmer in Elgin, and he purchased it in 1984.

I was very fortunate to spend most of the day and have lunch with David and his wife – Janina in Grabouw, where he has retired. I use the word “retired” very loosely. David is 86, but is very far from being “retired”. He is very active and keeps very busy. He and Janina own a motorhome and spend as much free time as they can touring South Africa as well as the surrounding countries like Namibia and Botswana.

I mentioned that David was an apple farmer in Elgin. In fact he owned a few apple farms in Elgin as well as cattle and sheep farms in the Lady Grey district. For a while they also farmed Alpacas and he owned a winery, which his daughter now owns and runs.



David & Janina Bridgman

He started off studying engineering at UCT but didn’t like it, so he went to the US where he obtained a diploma in pomology (the science of fruit-growing). On his way home in 1957 he stopped off in Florida for a while and was fascinated by the amount of water-based recreation and waterfront living that existed there. This planted the seed, and he wanted to establish a water-based, marina-type development in the future.

After he had been farming for 20 years or so he started to investigate the water-based development he had in mind. Amongst other things, he chartered a small plane, with a lady pilot, and flew from Youngsfield (when it was still a private airfield) although it was also an SADF base for the 10AA Battery and a Signals Corp. Coincidentally I did my CF training there in 1964, and was a member of 10AA Battery as well as UCT Regiment. They flew around the peninsula and up the west coast as far as Saldanha looking for potential sites. He did not see anything suitable. It was soon after this that Island Glades Marina was offered to him.

Part of the original development intention was to dredge a deep-water yacht harbour and connect it to the ocean via a channel through the dunes and the beach between Kommetjie and Noordhoek. David did not believe that this was feasible and that silting of the opening into the sea would be an ongoing problem. The lake had been dredged and Lake Michelle was earmarked as the first stage of the development. The property also belonged to the GLDC, which he now owned, so he decided to concentrate on that alone. His own daughter’s name coincidentally was also Michelle, so he decided to keep the name. It was known as “The Lakes” up to then. Mr Google still knows it as that.

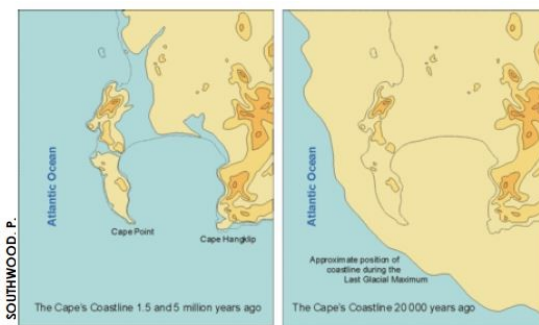
The work now started in having the subdivisions done. A requirement was placed on the developer that each phase had to be completely sold before proceeding to the next one. I only learned recently that Phase 1 is on the west closest to Erf 1000 – the playground, and Phase 3 is closest to Lakeshore Gate. In order to control the adherence of actual homes built to the architectural guidelines, the offer to purchase for first 30 plots sold included a clause requiring the owners to use the developer’s building team. These 30 deeds of sale, however, contained another clause that the squatters near the Lakeshore entrance were to be removed or else the offers would lapse. This was possibly towards the end of 1987. A court order for the eviction was granted five days before the sales condition was to expire when the offers to purchase would lapse. This, however, would not be the last run-in that David would have with squatters and he would run into a much larger issue before the development of phases 4 to 6 could start. But, building was able to commence on Phase 1 with road works, electrical reticulation as well as sewerage and water lines. The first house to be built was 1 Ibis End, which was the showhouse. The first resident was Bradshaw.

In the early days while phases 1 to 3 were being developed problems were experienced with the spread of Potamogeton water grass. David designed and built a machine to cut the grass using conventional reciprocating blade grass cutters. The cutting edge was fitted with hydraulic rams and motors so that it could be raised and lowered to achieve different depths of cutting. He operated the machine himself as there was nobody else that was “willing”. According to Alan Duff, David relocated one of his labourers - also David – from his farm in Elgin. David was a very good tractor driver and operator of farm machinery. The machine was mounted on two large pontoons and powered by a motor. Conveyors on the barge lifted the cut grass onto the barge. When it was fully loaded the barge backed onto the bank of the lake and the conveyors dumped the cut grass into bins or onto the bank. From there it was moved to a yard where it was converted to compost to be used on the common property gardens. When not in use it was stored at the jetty of Dave Burnham-King (of Deck King) who lived in Lake Michelle at the time. It was apparently later towed across the lake to somewhere near the admin offices and was subsequently sold to a scrap dealer.

No doubt many residents have uncovered sea shells and other items suggesting that, together with the sandy terrain, Lake Michelle was possibly part of the ocean bed at one stage. We do know that the sea came over the dunes adjacent to the beach during the stormy winter months. This is how salt water reached the salt pan (as well as Wildevoël Vlei near Imhoff's Gift), which then evaporated and left the salt residue in the summer months. This also accounted for the Springers/Mullet (smaller white fish in the pic – the others are carp) that were found in the lake prior to the fish wipe-out in 2016/17.



Residents with boats having outboard electric motors would have seen the Springers jump out of the water around the boat (even into the boat as my son experienced once). They seem to get agitated by the sound/vibration of the motors.



As you can see from the pic on the left, Lake Michelle was actually part of the ocean floor at one time. The ocean went through from Noordhoek beach right to Fish Hoek. (I wonder if the helmsman of the Kakapo mistakenly had this map on his chart table?). 😞 That explains the type of sand here, as well as the salinity and the ocean floor debris found from time to time. You must agree that it makes digging holes for gardening a lot easier.



Trenches for water pipes, sewerage lines and electric cables must have been a pleasure for the developer, and an absolute doddle for builders digging foundation trenches. When the lake was dredged in 1974, the sand was dumped all around the perimeter where homes are built today (see aerial pic of 1977 right). This sand, no doubt, also contained debris from the ocean floor as it came from a greater depth not disturbed by human activity that had taken place in the area from the early Strandlopers to the European settlers in the late 1600s.



Lake Michelle is blessed with an abundance of flora and fauna. What many residents don't know is that there were two South Americans living here in Lake Michelle. They were Capybaras. It is believed that they escaped from the zoo/animal farm at Imhoff's Gift and made their home here. From the stories I have heard they were very popular among some of the residents and, I am told, they played with dogs, mowed the lawns and were quite tame and enjoyed a tummy rub. They were, however, quite messy and their calling cards were very smelly. One died quite early on, but the other one was here for quite a while. It apparently just disappeared one day. I've heard it drowned in

a net. David told me that a net with floats on the top and heavy weights at the bottom was strung across the lake at the start of the development of phases 4 to 7. This was apparently to protect the water adjacent to phases 1 to 3 during building, so it is likely that Capybara no. 2 became entangled in this net.

Three companies were invited to tender for the building of the boardwalks and public jetties (built in 2005/2006). The work was awarded to Deck King. Mike Burnham-King, the owner, lived in Lake Michelle so it was convenient for him to undertake the work. Because of the sandy soil type and the construction of the ponds with plastic liners the work was challenging. Extensive piling was undertaken and new techniques had to be developed to pile in the sandy soil and in the plastic-lined ponds.

I have battled a bit to get the actual dates of the following issues, but I do know that it went on in the early stages of the development of phases 1 to 3 through to the start of the development of phases 4 to 7. I mentioned earlier that David Bridgman had to deal with the eviction of squatters from close to the Lakeshore entrance of Lake Michelle in the late 1980s. At about the same time a series of events was taking place that would create a far greater problem for him before he could commence on the development of phases 4 to 7.

Here are two aerial survey pics -1968 and 1988. Please refer to them while reading the sequence of events below ...



1968



1988

The area across the Noordhoek Main Road, that was to eventually become Crofter's Valley, was occupied by squatters. The shacks can clearly be seen amongst what was Port Jacksons on the 1968 aerial pic. The property belonged to a consortium that wanted to develop Crofter's Valley. The son of one of the developers lives in Noordhoek with quite a few thriving businesses in this neck of the woods, so I was able to ratify the information I had received from two other sources. An eviction order was obtained in 1987 to have them moved to Khayelitsha - by then there were about 1 000 on the site (pic above is 1968). The order required the consortium to lay concrete slabs in Khayelitsha on which the shacks could be erected, and they also had to move them there.

In early 1988 with the aid of the Black Sash and the Ford Foundation they obtained a Supreme Court order to be moved back again. But, as you will see from the 1988 aerial survey pic – the site had now been cleared of all the Port Jackson for development to commence. The squatters said that they did not want to go back there. Someone then conveniently decided to settle them across the road adjacent to the landfill site/municipal dump (part of which is on Lake Michelle today) on land that would eventually become phases 5 to 7 of Lake Michelle. Early residents of phases 1 to 3 in Lake Michelle confirm that they were there. They were settled on property that belonged to GLDC and was earmarked for the development of phases 4 to 8.

So, before development could commence David Bridgman had to obtain an eviction order from the Simon's Town Court amidst continual protests outside orchestrated, I am told, by the Ford Foundation. The order was granted with the proviso that the affected parties transport the squatters off the site. The area known as Site 5 had been earmarked to be developed for low-cost housing to accommodate the squatters, but nothing had been built there yet and there was no infrastructure. Permission, however, was given to move them there. The only "interested" parties that were willing to get stuck in were GLDC and City of Cape Town. Between them they managed to beg, borrow and steal trucks, tractors, trailers and whatever to undertake the move. Instead of travelling along Noordhoek Main Road through "town" and down Kommetjie Road to Site 5 a temporary track was made across the wetlands and they were transported via that route. By 1992 an informal settlement had grown there, known as Masiphumelele, that was adopted by the City of Cape Town and was no longer regarded as being informal - 2004 - 2020 below. My – how we've both grown !!





A joint venture was formalised between Great Lakes Development Company and Plan Trust Development (previously Buildcraft), also a property development company, on 29 August 2001. Plan Trust was represented by Colin Bird.

David had already decided that he did not wish Lake Michelle to be labelled as a “Cape Vernacular” development and that he wanted it to be unique and that the architectural theme should mirror that. So, it was decided to invite about seven architectural practices to take part in a “competition” and submit proposals for a new architectural theme for phases 4 to 7. Only two submitted proposals - Dennis Fabian and Michele Sandilands. The members of the joint venture liked certain aspects of both proposals and could not reach a decision as to which one they should accept. After discussions, both Dennis Fabian and Michele Sandilands agreed to handle the project as a joint venture. Simon McCullagh and Rowan Young were employed by each of the practices and were the architects primarily involved. They later left and formed their own practices.

As mentioned earlier, David had been fascinated by the waterfront developments he had seen in Florida in the USA, so the Lake Michelle joint venture insisted that representatives of the architectural joint venture visit Florida in order to study the latest trends there. They were accompanied by town planner Derek Chittenden, who requested to be included in the final architectural theme and layout of phases 4 to 7. Derek was with CNDV Landscape Architects.

After their return from Florida a final architectural design and layout plan was submitted and agreed on. A few of the aspects that were brought back from Florida we know today, e.g 40% of the exterior finish of the homes are in lapped louvre cladding. The avoidance of street views of continuous garage doors was created with “pan-handle” type entrances of shared driveways with garages set back from the roads. And, of course, the bituminous shingle roof cladding laid on wooden boards. All of these design parameters were written into the new design manual.

The entire development of Lake Michelle had already been approved with the Need and Desirability and Rezoning Approval in April 1986. The Development Plan for the entire scheme – phases 1 to 7 – was approved in September 1989 and included the portion of 949 already owned, as well as portion of 933 to be incorporated. It also included the Development Plan, Design Manual, Technical and Engineering and Landscape Design. Subdivision of the individual plots by the Surveyor General of all the phases was approved in December 1989

However, now that the designs and layout were to be changed the revised plans and layout would have to be resubmitted to the authorities for approval. This followed the usual route and obviously opened the door for Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs) to comment and have input.

So, in about 2003 the MEC Johan Gelderblom was petitioned by Noordhoek Environmental Group (NEAG), Noordhoek & District Civic Association (NDCA) and National Parks Board. They argued that the rights to proceed with the development given in the approvals from 1986 to 1989 did not follow adequate processes as they were environmentally deficient, non-inclusive and undemocratic. Concerns centred on handling of runoff water from the lake (National Parks Board) as well as visual impact of high-density development (NEAG & NDCA). Requirements were detailed for the handling of runoff water. They called for plot sizes to be no less than 650 sqm, no high-density town houses, no solid boundary fences such as vibracrete and solid brick walls, that building height be restricted to 6,5 metres and that the colour scheme be changed from white to natural colours of the landscape. Whilst I can find no specific mention of roofing materials, I have found two references to Ou Kaapse Weg being a scenic drive for tourists and that housing development should be sensitive to this and choice of colours and roofing materials (particularly being non-reflective) should take this into account when viewed from Ou Kaapse Weg.

I was also told that some residents of phases 1 to 3 raised objections at this time to the proposed “group housing units”

GLDC agreed to the modifications required and approval was granted in August 2003 with modifications to the original approvals listed above, which included a maximum of 268 residential units in phases 1 to 7. This meant that the original approved layout (left above) would have to be modified (group housing units were planned for large erven marked “X”). First approval



(1986/9)left above – final approved layout (2003) right.

You will see from the initial layout approved above that Phase 8 had also been approved. In fact at the time that approval was given for the revised the design and layout plan, excavation started on Phase 8. The plan was to develop Phase 8 first and then work backwards to Phase 4. Work was stopped however when the existence of Salt Marsh Vegetation was discovered. The developers then changed the plan and started on Phase 4 first.

The ponds as we know them today were planned to be inlets from the lake, but some issues had to be addressed. The ground level on the northern shore of the lake was quite a bit higher than on the southern side. That meant that the water's edges would be very high and steep, which would require expansive shoring. The intention had been to excavate the area where phases 6 to 7 are and move the overburden to Phase 8, which is a lot lower and consists mostly of wetlands. (sensitivity to Salt Marsh Vegetation and filling of wetlands was now becoming an issue, however). There was always a concern that, with the inlets being so narrow, there would not be adequate water circulation and water stagnation could be a problem, so pumping of water from the lake and feeding it to the top of the inlet to create the circulation was always on the cards. That was retained and water is circulated through the ponds today.

New Design and Landscape codes were drawn up specifically for phases 4 to 7 and the owners had to comply with these. They are different to those that applied to phases 1 to 3.

In these pics kindly provided by Pat Furno, and possibly taken from almost the same spot on Ou Kaapse Weg – the boat house can be seen at the top. The pics were taken some time apart (one on left a while before the one on the right) – one in winter when the lake was quite full and the other in summer when a lot lower.



The Boathouse (as well as the Gatehouses, Admin Block, Refuse Yard and Maintenance Workshop) were all built by Great Lakes Development Company and donated to LMHOA. Ownership was transferred to LMHOA after completion of the development.

The Boathouse was handed over to the LMHOA at an official celebration attended by some LM residents (Mike Burnham-King was one of them and confirmed this).

David Bridgman walked out onto the deck and poured a bottle of whisky into the lake as part of the celebration. Possibly not known by LM residents, David confessed to me that it was not whisky but strong tea.

Colin Bird confirmed this – he, together with project manager John Wilkinson, aided and abetted. So, those residents that swim in the lake with their mouths open to get a wee dram can stop. You are just drinking weak tea.

I'm sure you will appreciate that there is a lot of information in this chapter of our history. I mentioned at the start of this journey that I was not around when all of this happened and that I had to rely on the written word as well as what kind folk told me in my research. I have tried as much as possible to verify and ratify whatever was told to me. In quite a few instances I have been given conflicting versions of occurrences and have had to make a choice of which version was right – or what was closest to what I thought was right. I'm sure that I most likely got it wrong a few times. So, for those times I got it wrong – I ask for your understanding. I have had a lot of fun (and a little frustration) putting this together. I do hope that you have found some bits interesting and that you have enjoyed reading some of it. Whatever – Lake Michelle still remains an award-winning place in which to live.



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*Stories of the South Peninsula ...* by C. Postlethwayt, M. Attwell & K. Dugmore Ström June 2014

*Heritage Impact Assessment of Lake Michelle Site* by Jayson Orton of the Department of Archaeology, University of Cape Town on behalf of Andre van der Spuy Environmental Consultants.

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*Crankhandle Chronicle* December 2018 by Derek Stuart-Findlay

*Crankhandle Chronicle* May 2018 by Derek Stuart-Findlay

*Decommissioning of the Noordhoek Historic Waste Disposal Site: Final basic assessment report* - SRK Consulting

Western Cape Government – Waste Management Licence 19/2/5/1/A6/57/WL0041/14

*Initial Heritage Impact Assessment of Small Areas at Lake Michelle, Noordhoek* - by Jason Orton for Andre vd Spuy, Environmental Consultants CC.



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