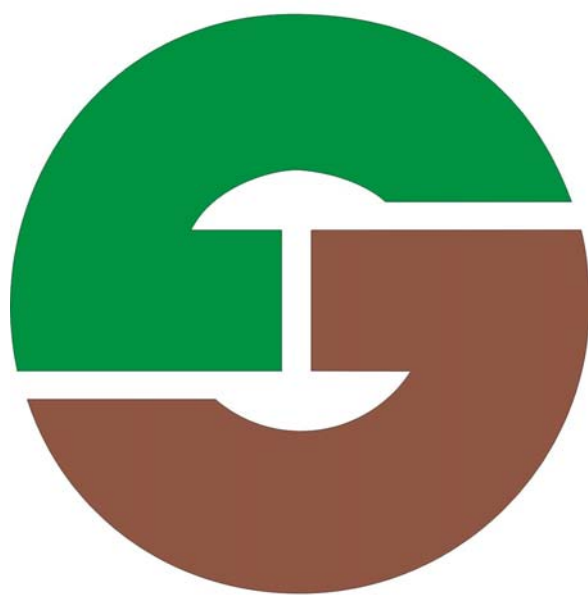


*SOIL SCIENCE
SOCIETY OF SOUTH
AFRICA*



NEWSLETTER
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SSSSA COUNCIL/GVSA RAAD: 2009-11

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	Dr R. van Antwerpen

ADDRESS/ADRES

**P O Box/Posbus 65217
Erasmusrand
0165**

TELEPHONE/TELEFOON

**President: (051) 401-9247
Sec./Skr.: (012) 310-2504**

Fax No./Faksnr.: 086 555 0149

E-MAIL

theo@soils.org.za

WEB PAGE/-TUISTE

<http://www.soils.org.za>

The SSSSA does not necessarily agree with opinions expressed in this newsletter.

Die GVSA onderskryf nie noodwendig die menings van bydraes tot sy nuusbrief nie.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/ BOODSKAP VAN DIE PRESIDENT

Greetings to you all! This is my last president's message. The year is drawing to a close and so is my term as president of the SSSSA. It was a quite hectic period in my life, but it was a privilege to serve you, the members of our society. At the upcoming general meeting I will be handing over the reins to the current president-elect, Dr Dave Turner, of the ARC-Institute for Soil, Climate and Water. The new council will be announced at our annual general meeting, which will be held on 19 January in Pretoria. I hope to see all of you there. At this time I also wish to thank the council members who will no longer be serving. Thank you very much for your inputs during the past years and enjoy the rest.

Goeie dag aan u almal! Hierdie is my laaste presidentsboodskap. Die jaar nader vinnig sy einde en so ook my termyn as president van die GVSA. Dit was 'n redelik besige tyd in my lewe, maar dit was my voorreg om u, die lede van ons vereniging te dien. By die eerskomende algemene jaarvergadering sal ek die leisels aan die huidige verkose president, Dr. Dave Turner, van die LNR-Instituut vir Grond, Klimaat en Water, oorhandig. Die nuwe raad sal by die algemene jaarvergadering, wat op 19 Januarie in Pretoria gehou word, aangekondig word. Ek wil ook van hierdie geleentheid gebruik maak om die lede van die raad te bedank wat nie langer gaan diens doen nie. Baie dankie vir julle insette oor die afgelope jare en geniet die ruskansie.

I would like to urge you to register (<http://www.combinedcongress.org.za>) for our up-coming Combined Congress that will be held from 17th to 21st January 2011 in Pretoria. This is the main annual event of our society and is the only place to meet colleagues and exchange ideas. I hope to see you there!

Ek wil u aanmoedig om vir die komende gesamentlike kongres, wat van 17 tot 21 Januarie 2011 in Pretoria gehou word, te registreer (<http://www.combinedcongress.org.za>). Hierdie is die belangrikste gebeurtenis op ons jaarlikse kalender en is die enigste plek om kollegas te ontmoet en idees uit te ruil. Ek hoop om u daar te sien!

Many people have voiced concern about the situation at the South African Journal for Plant and Soil. The main criticism is that the review process takes too long and this criticism is valid. It can take up to, and in some cases more than, a year to get a manuscript reviewed. You should, however, remember that it is you and I (the members of our society) that are responsible for the reviews and not the editor. The editor can merely request reviewers to do their jobs timeously. I therefore request that you review a paper quickly, when asked to do so, because next time you might be on the receiving end. In the mean time we are looking for a new editor. Dr Vick1 Tolmay has resigned,

with effect from December 2011. She therefore has next year (2011) to train the new editor. Please contact me if you are interested.

Baie mense kla oor die situasie by die Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Plant en Grond. Die hoof kritiek is dat die keur "review" proses te lank neem. Die kritiek is geldig. Dit kan soms tot 'n jaar en langer neem voordat die uitslag van 'n manuskrip bekend is. U moet egter onthou dat die u en ek (die lede van die vereniging) wat vir die keuring verantwoordelik is en nie die redakteur nie. Die redakteur kan slegs die nasieners versoek om die werk tydig af te handel. Ek versoek u dus om 'n manuskrip vinnig te keur, wanneer u daarom versoek word, omdat u volgende keer aan die ontvangkant mag wees. Intussen is ons op die uitkyk vir 'n nuwe redakteur. Dr. Vicky Tolmay (ons huidige redakteur) het met ingang Desember 2011 bedank. Sy het dus volgende jaar (2011) om die nuwe redakteur op te lei. Kontak my asseblief indien u belangstel.

Finally I want to wish you and your family a merry Christmas and a prosperous new year. Enjoy the holiday and drive safely.

Laastens wil ek u en u familie 'n geseënde Kersfees en voorspoedige Nuwejaar toewens. Geniet die vakansie en ry veilig.

Warmest regards/Beste wense

Cornie van Huyssteen

(051 401 9247; vhuystc.sci@ufs.ac.za)

EDITORIAL/REDAKSIONEEL

At one stage, it seemed as if this issue would be somewhat shorter than the previous Newsletters. The main reason (somewhat obviously!!) is that there was a shortage of news items received. This may be due to pressure of work, or it may be due to other people not supplying the regular correspondents with articles. However, absolutely any member is free to contact the editor with a contribution, whether it is about yourself (new appointment, interesting experience etc) or anyone else that you know or work with. Please make use of this opportunity and help to keep the Newsletter interesting and relevant. With the electronic version, it is very easy to send out, and can be as full as possible. On that note, please keep your e-mail address with the Secretary current, so you keep receiving the newsletter and other communications.

Secondly, I would like to echo Cornie van Huyssteen's call for the reviewing process at the Journal to be sharpened. If I am requested to review a paper, I always make an effort to return it within a week or so, as I know that the authors are always really anxious to have quick feedback, and that other actions (such as approval of a thesis or maybe even a promotion) might rest

on having articles accepted for publication. If you have not previously been involved in reviewing papers, and you think that you have the necessary insight and experience to help, feel free to contact the Journal Editor to offer your services. If the pool of potential reviewers can be broadened, it will help to streamline the whole process, and you will also be serving not only your Society, but Soil Science in South Africa as a whole.

Regards,

Garry Paterson

(012) 310-2601; 083 556 2458; garry@arc.agric.za

COUNCIL MATTERS/RAADSAANGELEENTHEDE

New Members: we welcome the following new SSSSA members:

Full Members:

FC Greef
FJ Mitchell
E Tesfamariam

Associate Members:

BB Mteki
LB Mngoyema
MP Mdaka

Student Members:

RE van Wyk
KP Bapela
BY Mabokela
CKA Mbetse
TRM Molebatjie
CN Mokgotho
P Jansen v Rensburg
E Mulibana
DJ Dondolo
LW Titshall

It's really great to see that our membership is still on the increase and now stands at an impressive 356, once again up significantly from the last Newsletter.

IN MEMORIAM

Leonid Korentajer, previously at ARC-ISCW, passed away on 27th September in Poland. Leo was 67 and arrived in South Africa in 1987 via Russia, Poland, Israel and USA, where he received his PhD from the University of Berkeley. After his early retirement, he and his wife moved to Gordon's Bay in the Western Cape.

Neil du Sautoy, who worked at the University of the North and the University of Pretoria among others, passed away in July, after a long battle with cancer. Neil was based in the Vaal Triangle and worked as a private consultant before his illness.

The Society expresses its deepest sympathy with the families of both Leo and Neil.

APPOINTMENTS/AANSTELLINGS

Petrus van Staden, who was employed by ARC-ISCW at Glen on a project-related contract, has been appointed on a full-time basis.

AWARDS/TOEKENNINGS

Eskom Expo

At the Eskom Expo for Young Scientists, held at UP Sports Centre on 1st and 2nd October, the SSSSA prize for the best soil science-related project was awarded to Grade 9 pupils Danielle de Vos and Vivienne Dames of Victoria Girls' High School in Grahamstown for their fascinating project called "Superglue Soil". The winners will be invited to attend the Combined Congress and to display their project there.

The judges (Theo Dohse, Garry Paterson and Corrie Swanepoel) also decided to make an award in the Junior Section, to brothers Johan and Teubes Brits (Grade 7) from Jacobsdal Primary School for their project "Swart Goud uit Erdwurms".

University of Stellenbosch Prize

Die GVSA prys vir die beste Grondkundestudent van 2009 by Universiteit Stellenbosch is aan **Anneline Burger** toegeken. Die prys word toegeken aan die Grondkundestudent aan die Universiteit van Stellenbosch wat in al hulle

finalejaar Grondkunde modules die hoogste gemiddeld behaal het. Studente kom slegs in aanmerking vir die prys mits hulle `n gemiddeld van hoër as 70% het. `n Kontant bedrag van R2000.00 word saam met die medalje toegeken.



In die foto word die prys deur Dr Eduard Hoffman aan Anneline oorhandig

NEW ARRIVALS

Two SSSSA members have been blessed with baby boys. **Ruth Rhodes** (soil scientist at SASRI, Mt Edgecombe) has given birth to a healthy baby boy on 25th October. Grant and Ruth named their son Oliver Eric Rhodes. Congratulations to Grant and Ruth on their new arrival!

Also, **Annari Venter** of ARC-ISCW, Pretoria had a baby boy on 11th November. Congratulations to Annari and her husband Das.

RETIREMENT/AFTREDE

Well, not quite a “full” retirement! **Theo Dohse** and **Jan Schoeman**, both of the Pedology Division at ARC-ISCW, retired at the end of May and June respectively after a combined length of Service of 70-odd years. However, the good news is that both Theo and Jan have been re-appointed on to short-term contracts, under which Jan will be responsible for certain specific projects and will be involved in mentoring of young pedologists, while Theo will be helping to maintain and improve the soil profile database at ISCW. In the well-known cartoon below, Theo is working some magic with soil, while (*from left to right*) Freddie Ellis, Jan Schoeman, Dave Turner and Chris MacVicar wait for the result!



MEMBERS OVERSEAS/LEDE OORSEE

Dr **Piet Nell**, of ARC-ISCW, visited the land of the World Cup Soccer champions when he attended an irrigation Congress in Valencia, Spain in October.

SSSSA President Prof. **Cornie van Huyssteen**, of UFS, attended the 19th World Congress of Soil Science in Brisbane, Australia in August.

CONGRESSES/KONGRESSE

COMBINED CONGRESS

The next Congress will be in Pretoria from 17th to 21st January 2011. The Congress is now closed for presenting papers, but if you want to attend you can still register on the congress website www.combinedcongress.org.za or contact Charmaine Sullivan at sullivanc@mweb.co.za.

We expect over 300 delegates, and arrangements are in full swing to make it a memorable Congress.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING/JAARVERGADERING

The AGM of the SSSSA will be held at the Combined Congress in Pretoria on Wednesday 19th January 2011. All Society members are encouraged to attend. *Die GVSA Algemene Jaarvergadering sal op 19 Januarie 2011 by die Gesamentlike Kongress in Pretoria gehou word. Alle GVSA-lede word aangemoedig om by te woon.*

9th International Conference, Humic Substances in Ecosystems (HSE9), connected with 15th anniversary of Polish Chapter of the IHSS (International Humic Substances Society), is to be held May 26-29 2011 in Karpacz, West Sudety Mts., Poland. The main hosts of the conference are Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Science, Institute of Soil Science and Environment Protection and the Polish Humic Substances Society. Main topics of the conference are: instrumental methods in humic substances analysis; structure and properties of humic substances; transformation and role of NOM in terrestrial and water ecosystems; carbon sequestration and role of humic substances in components transfer among

ecosystems; organic wastes and their utilization; humic substances in strategy for soil protection. Invited speakers with lectures as well as poster and field sessions will provide a good opportunity to discuss the role of organic matter in environment. For details of the conference, important dates, fees - visit the website (www.org.up.wroc.pl/ptsh/HSE9.htm)

MISCELLANEOUS/ALGEMEEN

CHRIS MACVICAR'S REMINISCENCES (PART 3)

LOOKING BACK (5): IN THE SUGAR INDUSTRY (1967 – 72)

Dr B.E. (Ted) Beater was the originator of soils information in the sugar industry, later assisted by Rodney Maud. Frank Rosenstrauch of the Division of Chemical Services assisted Dr Beater early on in identifying the kinds of soil. Remarkably, it was found that, apart from alluvium, there is very little soil drift so that the nature of a soil is directly related to the geological formation beneath it. Thus each geological formation has its own suite of soils, and the geological formation can be identified by the overlying soil. The soil suite can be identified by viewing and feeling a sample of the topsoil. For example: grey-brown fine sand or red fine sand to fine sandy clay loam (Recent Sands); grey-brown loamy coarse sand with opaque pink- and cream-coloured feldspars (granite); grey-brown loamy medium sand without feldspars (Table Mountain Sandstone); grey-brown fine sandy clay loam (Dwyka tillite); red or black clay (dolerite).

The geology of the coast lowlands east of the Natal Monocline is highly fractured, so that several geological formations are often found on one farm. Nevertheless, using information such as that already provided, it is easy to accurately map the geological formations. Excellent geological (i.e. soil association) maps have been made for every farm in the industry. Soils with lime are found in some dry river valleys (Nkwalini) and north of Mtubatuba. Highly weathered acid soils are found in older Midlands landscapes, while most of South Africa's thick humic topsoils occur at Eshowe, inland of Stanger (Thring's Post), inland of Shaka's Kraal, upper Tongaat, Inanda, Kloof-Hillcrest, upper Key Ridge, Bruyn's Hill, Umbumbulu, Paddock and the Magwa plateau near Lusikisiki.

During the 1960's sugar cane was expanding into the Midlands where the problem was short cane. Prof. John Phillips referred to it as "icing sugar cane" (i.e. too cold). The answer came when wattle farmers cut their plantations, stacked the wood in rows, burnt it and planted cane. Very tall, high yielding cane grew where the rows had been burnt, while the inter-row cane was still short.

SASEX has an excellent fertilizer advisory service and great emphasis is placed on improving plant material. However, each branch of agricultural science that is

required for improving sugar cane production is represented in an institution renowned in the sugar-producing world.

LOOKING BACK (6): LAND TYPE SURVEY AND SOIL CLASSIFICATION

About early 1972 a fortunate set of circumstances had placed a talented group of soil and related scientists on the staff of the Soil and Irrigation Research Institute. John de Villiers was Deputy Director and together with Eben Verster and Gert Kruger, initiated a pedosystem survey of South Africa at 1: 250 000 scale using 1:50 000 maps for field work. A pedosystem was to display a marked uniformity of terrain form (parameters by Gert) and soil pattern (parameters by Eben). To this was added a uniformity of climate by CNM and the resultant land class was termed a land type.

Jan Schoeman and Robert Bruce were at Potchefstroom (Jan later at Pretoria), Alan Bennie, Koos Eloff and Theo Dohse at Bloemfontein, Dave Turner and Rob Fitzpatrick at Pietermaritzburg, At Dietrichsen at Döhne, Freddie Ellis and Bennie Schloms at Stellenbosch and, later, Martin Fey in the Southern Cape. Mira Sobczyk, Keith Taylor, Rob Fitzpatrick, Lorraine Hawker and Herman Hahne were the analytical stalwarts. Over time many others made sterling contributions to the land type survey, among whom (my apologies to those omitted): Ben Geers, Scot Smith-Baillie, Keith Snyman, Hendrik Grundlingh, Bernard Plath, John Hutson, Lyndon Hall, Max Hartmann, André Oosthuizen, Basie Robertson and Mark Fullstone.

John de Villiers had by then convened the first Soil Classification Working Group (red book authors). It was decided to adopt the Form-Series system used for the Tugela Basin as the most suitable method of enabling pedology to make its contribution to improved land use in a country with few soil scientists, let alone pedologists. John then left to become Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture in Harare.

Working with the precursor of the red book, a legend for the land type map was drawn up and map unit colours chosen from the Government Printer colour set. Each of the final 1: 250 000 map sheets was drafted with colour separations by Roy Allnutt of AOC Technical Services for printing by the Government Printer. The detail of one or more maps was then published in the form of a memoir.

Starting with the Tugela Basin book, the work of Dr Beater, and the considerable experience brought by the SCWG members, progress with the red book benefited a very great deal from information collected during many surveys, for example: Lichtenburg, Grootvlei (Willie van der Bank); Rustenberg, Makwassie, Transvaal (Eben Verster); Bethlehem (Vic Roberts); Kroonstad (Reg Loxton); Plooyburg (Theo van Rooyen); Overhex-Nuy (Hendrik ten Cate); Wellington-Malmesbury (Frank Merryweather); Duiwenhoks (Freddie Ellis); Piketberg-Porterville (Jan Bester); Darling (Spine van Niekerk); Langkloof (Theo van Rooyen, Frank Merryweather, Hendrik ten Cate, Reg Loxton, CNM *et al*); Fouriesburg (Jan Schoeman); surveys by AOC Technical Services (eastern Pondoland, Hoedspruit, Highveld etc.). The

valuable work on the Southern Cape podzolic soils (Gavin Schafer, Denham Grey), which caused work to begin on the 2nd edition, and continuing work on the land type survey (eg arid soils and bleached topsoils by Freddie Ellis and cohorts), amongst other contributions, also benefited the blue book.

A draft of the classification would be prepared for a SCWG meeting where improvements were agreed. Between the infrequent meetings, drafts were prepared and distributed (though no e-mails!). All suggestions that could be contentious were distributed to members until consensus was reached. Fortunately the computer (IBM-compatible!) had arrived in time to prepare the blue book. The excellent soil form photos in the red and blue books, to which several authors contributed, played an important role in the success of those books. Four-colour printing was done on 4 machines in sequence and for each run of photos CNM or the late Simon Idema was present to make alterations and to give the go-ahead to print. Simon did an excellent job in helping to ensure that every detail of the publication was correct.

Jan Lambrechts wrote the sections on analytical procedures, the USDA and FAO classifications, and the Afrikaans translation. Without fail, he gave careful, thorough and valuable comment towards improving every draft that was distributed. Enjoyable too were the not infrequent productive discussions over many mugs of coffee in his Stellenbosch office, usually with Freddie and Bennie, and often with a cheery look-in by Prof. Attie Theron.

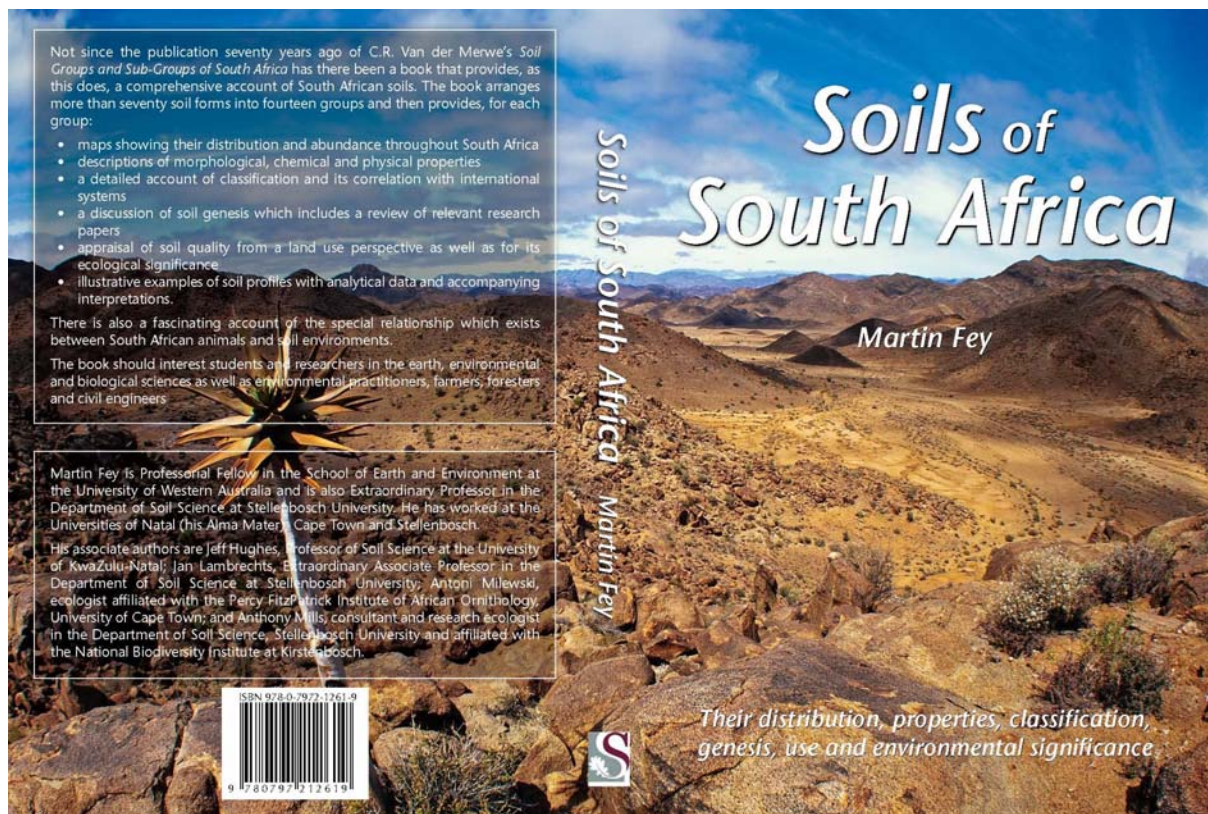
Looking back, it has been a great pleasure and privilege to be a colleague of all these people, and many others, and to have experienced at first-hand most of this fascinating country. Hopefully in future, planners will, as far as possible, make more use of soil maps to prevent precious high potential agricultural land from being taken over by other users.

(This is the final installment of Dr MacVicar's look back at Pedology and soil science over the last 50-odd years. I would like to thank him for his efforts and I hope this series provided our younger members with an impression of what it was like in the formative days of our Society as well as an appreciation for the rich tradition of soil science in South Africa – Ed.)

NEW BOOKS

1. *Soils of South Africa*

It has been a momentous year in soil science in South Africa with the publication of the book by Martin Fey “Soils of South Africa” (see “*Nuus uit die Wes-Kaap*” below). This book strikes the perfect balance between supplying the vital facts and explanations of the soils of South Africa as well as being both easy and fascinating to read. The excellent photographs enhance the book tremendously.



If you have not already got your copy, I would encourage each and every SSSSA member (and in fact anyone who is interested in the soil mantle of South Africa) to go out and order one from Cambridge University Press in Cape Town.

2. *Handbook of Soil Science*

ARC-ISCW was invited by Prof Malcolm Sumner (ex Natal, now in Georgia, USA) to contribute a chapter on soil databases in Africa to the up-coming second edition of “Handbook of Soil Science” of which he is the editor. Despite struggling somewhat to obtain up-to date information from elsewhere in Africa, Garry Paterson, Nicky Mushia and Dave Turner completed a

document which was submitted to Malcolm in the USA. The book should hopefully appear sometime in 2011. Look out for it.

MESSAGE FROM UFS

Dear Colleagues,

I am not sure if the Newsletter is a place for personal stuff but if it is not against policy I would like to thank those who supported the sick.

Thanks to the numerous individuals of the Soil Science community for the moral support during my recovery from the accident. I recovered well and enjoy a second chance to live. In spite of a near-death experience I am operating normally. Between the nurses, doctors and physiotherapists they fixed me and I started work on 15 Oct.

Today is a gift, that is why it is called the present! Thanks for your prayers and good wishes.

Regards

Piet le Roux

SASSO/SAGO

Three gatherings of the South African Soil Surveyors Association were held this year.



The first meeting had the conservation of wetlands as theme and took place in Midrand in Gauteng, where Dr. Johan van der Waals organized the occasion. Various sites were visited where wetlands had been disrupted by building construction and inappropriate engineering structures. The second meeting was held at Leeudoringstad (Free State), and sponsored by Suidwes Landbou. Mrs. Annemarie van der Merwe arranged the event and soil profiles and characteristics of the landscapes around the Vaal River were classified, discussed and interpreted for agricultural production.

The final meeting took place in the Aliwal North District of the Eastern Cape, where Stefani Forbes (E. Cape Department of Agriculture) organized an excursion that looked at erodible soils in the Sterkspruit area, sandstone mining at Herschel and soils used for walnut production at Rotondo.

From the above, it is obvious that SASSO is a thriving organization with fascinating excursions (for 2011, it is hoped that one of the trips will look at the

rehabilitation of mine soils on the Highveld). For more details, contact Dave Turner (012 310 2597; dturner@arc.agric.za).

Nuus uit die Wes-Kaap

Martin Fey se boek "Soils of South Africa" is op 31 Augustus 2010 by 'n funksie wat deur die uitgewers, Cambridge University Press (CUP), in die Katjeeperingrestaurant, Botaniesetuin, Universiteit Stellenbosch, gereël is, bekend gestel. Die bekendstelling is bygewoon deur 'n groot aantal belangstellendes wat o.a. personeel en nagraadse studente van die Departement Grondkunde US, ander wetenskaplikes in omgewingswetenskappe en die mede-outeurs (behalwe Antoni Milewski wat in Australië was) ingesluit het. Laaste maar nie die minste was Eileen, Martin se eggenote, ook daar.

Die verrigtinge is met 'n kort bekenstelling deur Ashley Parsraman van CUP begin. Daarna het Dawid MacDonald van die Lombardi Trust (wat fondse aan die Departement Grondkunde geskenk het vir die saamstel van die boek), sy dank en waardering teenoor Martin en US uitgespreek vir die uitmuntende eindproduk. Vervolgens het Prof. Leopold van Huyssteen, tans Uitvoerende Direkteur: Bedryf en Finansies, US, maar voorheen hoof Departement Grondkunde en daarna Dekaan Fakulteit AgiWetenskappe, ook sy opregte waardering vir dit wat Martin staangemaak het, uitgespreek. Met vele kwinkslae oor sy interpretasie van seker terme wat in die boek gebruik word, het Prof. Leopold 'n ligte trant aan die formele toesprake gegee.

Daarna het Martin op 'n baie insiggewende wyse die uiteensetting van die boek bespeek. Hy het sy motivering vir die groepering van die huidige 73 grondvorme in 14 grondgroepe en die logika agter die volgorde waarin die groepe in die boek bespreek word, uiteengesit. 'n Ander belangrike aspek waaraan hy aandag gegee het, was sy motivering vir die gebruik van terme wat in die Suid-Afrikaanse grondkunde gemeenskap vreemd is, maar internasionaal meer verstaanbaar en ook aanvaarbaar is. Die hoofstuk met verduidelikende voorbeelde van grondprofiel met analitiese data en bygaande interpretasies is ook 'n belangrike bydrae wat met vrug deur nie-grondkundiges gebruik kan word. Daar is ook 'n fasinerende hoofstuk wat die spesiale verwantskappe wat tussen Suid-Afrikaanse diere en grondomgewings bestaan, mooi verduidelik.

Die funksie was 'n groot sukses met lekker gesels, 'n uitstekende seekos ete en gebottelde voggies van die wynstok.

Developments in the sugar industry

As part of its annual conference in Long Beach, California, in October/November 2010, the Soil Science Society of America organized a symposium to honour the remarkable contribution of Prof Malcolm Sumner to Soil Science. Prof Sumner was Head of the Department of Soil Science and Agrometeorology at the University of Natal, and subsequently Regent's Professor of Environmental Soil Science at the University of Georgia, Athens. The Symposium was titled, "*Applying Soil Chemistry to Solve Soil Problems in the "Milky Way": Honouring the Impact of Malcolm Edward Sumner*". Seven former colleagues and students of Prof Sumner from various parts of the world were invited to present at this Symposium, including Neil Miles of the South African Sugarcane Research Institute, who presented an overview of advances in soil fertility management and crop nutrition in KwaZulu-Natal.

Alan Paton on soil

(Supplied by Prof. Giel Laker): In his keynote address at the 1990 conference of the National Veld Trust Prof. Roelf Botha, then Chairman of the Council for the Environment, included the following quote from Alan Paton:

"The grass is rich and matted, you cannot see the soil. It holds the rain and the mist, and they seep into the ground, feeding the streams in every kloof. It is well-tended, and not too many cattle feed upon it; not too many fires burn it, laying bare the soil. Stand unshod upon it, for the ground is holy, being even as it came from the Creator. Keep it, guard it, care for it, for it keeps men, guards men, cares for men. Destroy it and man is destroyed."

HUMOUR

Jack and the Beanstalk (A Pedological Tale)

Once there was a boy named Jack who lived on an irrigation scheme in time of drought. However, his father hadn't heard of farm planning or irrigation scheduling so all they had on the farm were a few thin chickens and scrawny cows. When things got tight, Jack was sent to the co-operative to sell a cow. One day, on his way there, he met a researcher who offered him a bag of magic beans (*cv Magimix*) if he would give the man his cow. When he heard the researcher had a PhD, Jack readily agreed and went off home. However, his father was very angry and gave Jack a hiding before throwing the beans out the window. Jack had faith, though, and knew the benefits of proper soil preparation, so later that night, he crept out and ploughed the soil, added fertilizer and water before calculating sowing density and planting the beans at the correct depth.

Next morning, the family were astonished to see a huge bean plant full of fat pods stretching way up into the clouds. Jack wanted to do some research on the bean quality at altitude so he began to climb. As he climbed higher through the clouds, he came upon a path leading to a big house. Jack crept up to the house and peered in, only to see a giant asleep. On the table was a bag full of drought aid cheques, farm subsidies and producers refunds which Jack decided to take. However, just as he was making his escape, he tripped over a broken soil auger and woke the giant, who cried " Fee, fi, fo, fum, I smell the blood of a farmer's son!", and came storming after Jack.

Jack shinned down the beanstalk as fast as he could and grabbed an axe with which he sliced through the stem. The plant brought the giant crashing down with such a crash that the clouds let loose a tremendous thunderstorm, which broke the drought! The beanstalk shook loose lots of seeds which enabled them to turn a healthy profit in the next growing season, and they all lived happily ever after (Jack even went to University to get **his** PhD and to develop his own magic beans!).

SOIL SCIENCE SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA: MISSION

The SSSSA is a scientific society, which, in the interest of its members, promotes the advancement of soil science and soil technology as well as the responsible practicing thereof by its members with the view to the long-term sustainable utilization of the environment in the interest of the community.

Aims

1. Promotion and protection of the professional status and prestige of soil science as a science and career.
2. Promotion and extension of the society.
3. Promotion of the standard of training of soil scientists and technologists.
4. Creation of opportunities for the free exchange of ideas on soil science and technology.
5. The obtaining and dissemination of knowledge, information and ideas having relevance to soil science by means of discussion and publication.
6. Promotion of contact between the society and other bodies with common or similar interests, both within South Africa and overseas.

GRONDKUNDEVERENIGING VAN SUID-AFRIKA: MISSIE

Die GVSA is 'n wetenskaplike vereniging wat in belang van sy lede verbind is tot die bevordering van grondkundige wetenskap en tegnologie, en die verantwoordelike beoefening daarvan deur sy lede met die oog op die lang termyn volhoubare benutting van die omgewing in belang van die gemeenskap.

Doelstellings

1. Bevordering en beskerming van die professionele status en aansien van grondkunde as 'n wetenskaplike beroep.
2. Bevordering en uitbouing van die vereniging.
3. Bevordering van die standaard van opleiding van grondkundige wetenskaplikes en -tegnoloë.
4. Skepping van geleenthede vir vrye gedagtewisseling oor grondkundige wetenskap en tegnologie.
5. Die verkryging en verspreiding van kennis, inligting en idees wat op grondkunde betrekking het by wyse van samesprekings en publikasies.
6. Bevordering van skakeling tussen die vereniging en ander liggame met gemeenskaplike of soortgelyke belange, beide in Suid-Afrika en in die buiteland.