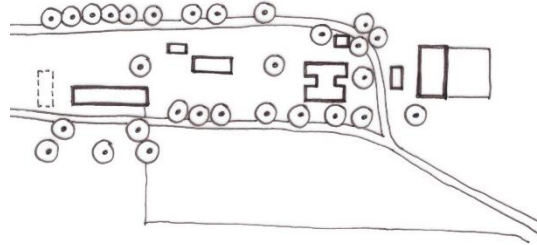


The Development of the Farm

FOURTH PHASE: THE ARCHITECTURAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE DE VILLIERS FAMILY



Pieter Barend Botha owned the farm from 1800 to 1809, whereafter Jan Stephanus de Villiers and his wife Susanna Martha de Villiers owned the farm from 1809 to 1853. Jan died in 1824, but Susanna carried on farming until 1853. Jan S De Villiers made some important stylistic changes to the H-plan manor house. The front gable which is dated 1821, refers to the date of the stylistic renovations and not to its original construction. The house is an excellent example of “Cape Georgian”/ Georgian Cape Dutch architecture. Existing homesteads in the Cape were often updated to the latest architectural styles, thereby creating historic and stylistic layering. An interesting feature of this house is that it has a narrow passage as entrance hall instead of the usual ‘*voorhuis*’ found in this plan type. This contributes to the grand scale of the two flanking front rooms. Hans Fransen, well-known Cape Dutch architectural historian, describes the gable of the house as having “four fluted pilasters (of which the inner two are precisely in line with those flanking the front door), a pediment, and inverted scrolls resting on the outer pilasters. On the gable appear two small trees as well as two stars like diamonds, illustrating the farm’s name” (Fransen 2004:289), referring to one of the two granite outcrops on Paarl Mountain, the one being a ‘pearl’ and the other a ‘diamond’. The two large granite outcrops reflect the sunlight when they are wet from rains and was therefore named after such gems, and they while the one is rounded in form, the other has a more pointed appearance. Ornate Neo-Classical gables were only built by the more affluent farmers. The front gable of the house is original, while the back gable is a 21st century reconstruction. The original back gable was removed around 1885 due to water leakage problems. Historian, Dicey du Toit, verified

this through personal interviews with the Malan family, who clearly remember the 'gable story' being told. (Malan: 21/01/20017). Such little anecdotes represent a form of oral tradition into the local/particular histories of these heritage places. They are usually only available when farms stay in ownership of a family line over a long period as with the Malans on Diamant, and are very useful for heritage conservation.

"The Venue" was built as a wine cellar around 1800, most likely by owner, Pieter Barend Botha and stylistic changes (the gables used to be ornate as per the Manor House) was likely done by De Villiers after 1809. Records indicate that De Villiers had 70 000 vines growing on his farm. This translates to about 25-30ha of land under vine. Today Diamant has 80ha of vineyards. "The Venue" building originally had Neo-Classical gables, but a fire in 1947 destroyed the roof and it was replaced by a sheeted roof and the gables were adjusted for the lower slope. (Du Toit 2007:24) The kraal walls at "The Barn" and the werf walls (of which very little remains) also date to this period when the De Villiers Family farmed here.