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Chronicles of the Kaapse Klopse

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▶ To cite this version:

Denis-Constant Martin. Chronicles of the Kaapse Klopse. 2020. halshs-03414415

HAL Id: halshs-03414415
https://shs.hal.science/halshs-03414415v1

Preprint submitted on 4 Nov 2021

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DENIS-CONSTANT MARTIN

CHRONICLES

OF

THE KAAPSE KLOPSE

Followed by

THEMES IN KLOPSE NAMES

I

CHRONICLES

OF

THE KAAPSE KLOPSE

with some documents on the sources of their music

compiled by

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part of a research project on

THE NEW YEAR FESTIVALS IN CAPE TOWN

funded by:

The National Foundation for Political Sciences (France), the French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA), the French Institute for Southern Africa (IFAS), and supported by the University of the Western Cape and the Stellenbosch Institute of Advanced Studies

1998
(revised, but not updated, in 2020)

Avertissement

Les documents ci-dessous ont été, à l'origine, conçus en vue d'une diffusion auprès d'un public sud-africain pour l'essentiel ; les extraits de textes qu'ils reprennent ont été publiés en anglais, à l'exception d'un tout petit nombre d'entre eux traduits de l'afrikaans en anglais ; je n'ai donc pas pensé nécessaire de traduire en français les quelques éléments qui ne sont pas des citations. Je pense que, malgré cela, les lecteurs qui ne sont pas anglophones de naissance pourront tout de même les utiliser.

Foreword

These chronicles consist in excerpts from articles or books that dealt with or alluded to the *Kaapse klopse*, and various aspects of Cape Town's New Year festivals. The texts have been reproduced as originally printed and no effort has been made to correct faulty information, or language that can today seem unacceptable. When absolutely necessary, additional information has been provided between crotchets. The material proposed here should therefore be treated as "raw material" and should be read with a critical eye.

The reader must be aware that these texts provide only a small, and biased, part of the story of the *klopse* and the New Year festivals. Most of them have been written by outsiders to the universe of the *klopse*, very often journalists writing for a white readership; many of them rely on clichés, stereotypes, not without a pinch of sensationalism, although one can also find here quotations from interesting stories written by talented journalists, such as Jackie Heyns and George Manuel, or more analytical contributions by Gerald S. Stone or R.E. Van Der Ross. These texts must therefore be read as an invitation to do more research: to collect interviews, songs, artefacts that may have been preserved by members of the *klopse*, the *sangkore* (Malay Choirs) and the Christmas Choirs; such research, using among others the techniques of oral history, must be undertaken without any delay as people who can still remember what happened in the 40s and 50s will very soon no longer be with us.

The present chronicles nevertheless give a sense of the chronology, contribute to a better understanding the dynamics that underlay the development of the *klopse* carnival, they allow to catch a glimpse of some of the major trends that affected them — in particular the disappearance of the "Privates" and the prevalence of the "Coons", the shift from string bands to brass bands, changes in the organisation of festivals. They also bear witness to evolutions in the attitudes towards the "Coons" and show how they became, in the times of apartheid, the symbol of a rift between the working class and an intellectual petty-bourgeoisie abiding with the canons of Victorian morality, rift surfacing in polemics often loaded with political undertones, which started in the 1940s and lasted more or less until the end of apartheid. Finally, they record the multiplication of unruly behaviours at carnival time, as the constraints and violence of apartheid increased.

The ambition to shed more light on the transformations the New Year Festivals in Cape Town underwent led me to adopt a strictly chronological approach: the excerpts are organised according to the date or period of the event or practice they describe, whatever the time when they were written or published. The historical breakdown adopted is based on historical turning points which bore heavy consequences on the

New Year festivals, the only exception being 1906, because this year marked a major transition from informal festivities toward organised festivals.

The sources of these excerpts are diverse: articles printed in newspapers or magazines, or in scholarly publications; books written by academics or journalists and essayists. A list of the sources is provided at the end of this "foreword" and each will be identified in the *Chronicles* by a code (see below). Every effort has been made to provide the most detailed reference for each of the clippings; however, several remain incomplete because some information (page numbers, for instance) was missing in the press files of the South African Library I perused.

Today's political correctness favours the use of the Afrikaans *Kaapse klopse* when talking about the carnival troupes and their members. *Klopse* refer to the origins of the troupes, when they were emanations from social and sports clubs; it seems therefore perfectly legitimate to recycle this word in the 21th Century. Many revellers, however, when speaking in English about themselves and the troupes they affiliate with, still use the word "Coons", and some talk about "Minstrels". Outside observers may object to the use of such words because of the meanings they have been given in the United States. While it is true that "coon", an abbreviation of racoon, became, in the 19th Century, associated with blackface minstrelsy and was given a racist meaning, one should not forget that words may have a life of their own and that, when they travel, their meanings change. The signification a word has in the United States cannot and should not be considered as the only signification a word can have in English. In Cape Town, the understanding of "coon" was totally transformed and came to signify the main character and the main mask in the New Year festivals; the great majority of those who use it — and would jubilantly claim "I am a coon" — do so without knowing the history of the word and its acceptation in the United States; to them it just connotes "sports", fun, New Year enjoyment, satin, dancing and singing. As for "Minstrels", those who object even to this word should be reminded that there were minstrels in Europe long before Europeans set foot in North America, and that they were jesters, jugglers, story tellers, singers and dancers whose "acts" were tightly intertwined with carnivalesque traditions… "Minstrel" does not at all appear unfitted to Cape Town's New Year festivals[1].

This compilation was prepared in the course of writing: *Coon Carnival, New Year in Cape Town, Past and Present*, Cape Town, David Philip, 1999. These *Chronicles* should be treated as a working paper circulated for academic purposes in order to stimulate more research on Cape Town's New Year festivals. They can be freely used on the condition that the work done by Denis-Constant Martin in selecting and compiling these excerpts is acknowledged. Most of the material reproduced here has been

[1] See : "Prologue, A word about words" in GAULIER (Armelle) & MARTIN (Denis-Constant), *Cape Town Harmonies, Memory, Humour and Resilience*, Somerset West, African Minds, 2017: xvii-xxvii.

published a long time ago and is therefore no longer covered by copyrights. It remains, however, the responsibility of those who would want to use it in new publications to make sure that there are no rights attached to the texts they intend to reproduce.

These *Chronicles* and the following *Themes in Klopse's Names* have been revised in 2020 in order to correct misprints and other form errors (which does not preclude the possibility that I may still have overlooked a few; my apologies if this is the case), but they have not been updated and still close with the 1996 festivals, when President Nelson Mandela appeared at the *klopse* Carnival.

Since the time the following clips were compiled, Denis-Constant Martin has authored two more books on Cape Town musics and festivals:

- *Sounding the Cape, Music, Identity and Politics in South Africa*, Somerset West, African Minds, 2013;
- *Cape Town Harmonies, Memory, Humour and Resilience*, Somerset West, African Minds, 2017 (with Armelle Gaulier).

Both can be bought as printed books but are also available free of charge in PDF from the publisher's website:

- https://www.africanminds.co.za/sounding-the-cape-music-identity-and-politics-in-south-africa/ ;
- https://www.africanminds.co.za/cape-town-harmonies/ .

Finally, a large part of Denis-Constant Martin's research material collected during more than 20 years of fieldwork has been deposited in the archives of DOMUS, the Documentation Centre for Music located in the Music Library of the Music Department, University of Stellenbosch, where they can be consulted on site (Denis-Constant Martin Versameling / Collection:
(http://www.domus.ac.za/component/option,com_frontpage/Itemid,1/)

References cited in the *Chronicles*

Books, chapters in books, and articles in academic journals

AA = academic articles or chapters in a book
AB = academic book
AD = academic dissertation
HW = historical works
NAE = non-academic essays
AP = unpublished academic study

Vivian BICKFORD-SMITH 1994, "Meanings of freedom, social position and identity among ex-slaves and their descendants in Cape Town, 1875-1910" in: Nigel Worden and C. Crais, eds., *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its Legacy in the Nineteenth Cape Colony*, Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press. [AA]

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Daily newspapers and periodicals

DN = Daily newspaper

- *The Cape Argus or Argus*
- *Cape Times*
- *Die Burger*
- *New York Times International*

WEE = Daily newspaper week-end edition

- *The Cape Argus Weekly Edition*
- *Week End Argus*

GM = General interest magazine

- *A.D.A.*
- *Argus Magazine*
- *Die Banier*
- *Natural History* (published in the United States)
- *South*
- *Spotlight*
- *The Torch*

WM = Weekly magazine

- *A.P.O.*
- *Cape Herald*
- *Cape Mercantile Advertiser*
- *Drum*
- *Muslim News*
- *Sunday Times Extra*
- *Sunday Times Magazine Section*
- *The Cape Chronicle*
- *The Cape Standard*
- *The Cape Weekly Chronicle*
- *The Outspan*
- *The Post*

Table of contents

CHRONICLES OF THE KAAPSE KLOPSE

I. Origins and beginnings of the New Year festivals, till the abolition of slavery

II. From the abolition of slavery to the first formal "Coon Carnival", 1840–1906

III. The multiplication of competitive carnivals, 1907–1939

IV. Facing apartheid, 1940–1968

V. Group Areas and forced removals hit the Klopse, 1968–1989

Epilogue: Klopse in a non-racial South Africa, 1990–1996

THEMES IN KLOPSE NAMES

I. Klopse names

II. Main themes

I.
Origins and beginnings of the New Year festivals till the abolition of slavery

Origins

1.

The Coons, black-faced and hilarious, prancing through the streets of Cape Town, are taking part in one of South Africa's oldest, most authentic, indigenous New year customs. It is a celebration which is a good deal older than most people realize — the remnant, in fact, of primitive ritual which has its root deep in prehistory. [...]

The black-face coon disguise has come a long way from the forests of West Africa. The old belief has died, but the outward form, hardly recognizable after hundreds of years of changes occasionally thrusts through.

Thousands of slaves from West Africa took their magic and their witch-cults with them when they were transported to the New World. Those old memories still survive in the Voodoo of Haiti. Among the Negroes of North America the black-faced coon survived as a carnival figure, to be taken up by Whites, changed into the Christie Minstrel and, at long last, to be brought back to the shores of Africa in an American ship.

Here the descendants of slaves — some from the East, others perhaps, originally from some of the same forests of West Africa — took him up again, changed him and gave him their own peculiar form, dressed him in striped silk pants and topper, outrageous bow tie and coat of many colours, bedecked with ribbons and rosettes.

Look at the coon — black face and staring white eyes, white lips and flashing white teeth. It is a mask. It is not the same mask, but it is cousin to the carved wooden mask of the Congo, of Switzerland, Germany, Italy, England. It is an echo from forgotten times of devil-worship and of dancing at the witches' sabbat. It has its links with the devil masks of the East [...]

"Coon Celebrations Go Back to Days of Slavery — and Beyond", by David Marais, *Cape Times*, January 1, 1958. [DN]

2.

[At the end of the 18th Century and at the beginning of the 19th Century]:

[...] The ordinary sailors could find entertainment in more than one sailor bar [...] where they danced to the wind and string music of one or more slave musicians, at times the men with each other*.

* Not all musicians that played in bars were slaves.

Bouws 1966: 138 [AB]

3.

[...] When the slaves were brought here, there was an obvious element of melancholy among them. So on Sunday afternoons they'd go down to the beach to discord themselves — and beat on the goema drum [...] The mish-mash of "coon" dance steps has also been drawn from and influenced by slaves imitating dances of their British rulers — the lances, the squares, the quadrilles. The klopse *passies* is in itself a derivative and variant of the French "pas" as in "pas de deux", explains Mr. Kolbe. [...]

[based on an interview with Mr. Vincent Kolbe; the ghoema or goema is the emblematic Cape Town drum, made from the structure of a barrel]

"Renewed Interest in Goema Music in Cape" by Yazeed Fakier, *Cape Times*, December 17, 1988. [DN]

4.

[...] The Carnival has a long history. According to Cape Town based cultural historian, Mr. Achmat Davids, it emerged out of another kind of celebration — the emancipation of the slaves in 1838.

"At midnight on December 1, the people took to the streets of Cape Town to sing. It was a time for the enjoyment of all. They were invited into the houses, they were entertained, invited to eat. It became a tradition.

At a later point they shifted the day to New Year which was the original slave holiday," says Davids.

"Coon Carnivals at the End of the Road?" by Shannon Neil, *South*, January 21, 1994, p. 8. [GM]

5.

[...] South Africa's double celebration traditionally comes from the junketing of the slaves in the time of the East India Company.

Travellers as far back as Burchell, and even further, bear witness to the fact that the first day of the year was given to slaves as a general holiday, and merrymaking was encouraged by gifts of wine and the like.

The second day became necessary as the first became more cheerfully celebrated — as a day to sober up upon! [...]

"The World Goes By [...] Second New Year", *Cape Times*, January 1, 1934: 8. [DN]

6.

[...] the veteran Coon captain, Mr. Davey Petersen, has an interesting sidelight on their origin here. He says he has heard it from older Coon leaders that the idea was planted here by American Negro seamen, who, while their ships were in port, would gather and sing their songs to the accompaniment of a guitar or banjo. The local lads would gather round and join in, and so the Coons were founded. [...]

"Origins of the coons, Anyone Can Join" by R.E. Van Der Ross, *Cape Times*, January 8, 1959. [DN]

7.

[...] Older members of our community will tell you that carnival troupes were not the first to go parading through the streets of Cape Town. In the last century, 1st December was looked upon as a significant day — the anniversary of the granting of freedom to the slaves. On that day those who had gained such freedom and their descendants marched through the streets from all parts if the Peninsula to Platklip, near the now vanished Mellish's farm, on the slopes of Table Mountain to sing and dance away the hours — "ramkie en hoog skop" and feasting being the order of the day.

It was also the fashion for Coloured dance bands to advertise their playing ability by parading through the streets of Bokaap (Jordaan and Wale Street area) and Kanaldorp (District Six) on moonlit nights — especially during the festive season when frequent dances were held. Incidentally there were no White dance bands until the coming of Swalby's round 1910. The bands were made up entirely of stringed-instruments — the piano and other instruments only began creeping in during the early part of the present century.

The most famous musician was one Adam Bull (violinist). His band was in great demand at the houses and dances of the City's well-to-do and was the first choice of our lodges (fraternities) and sports club.

Dances were an all-night affair then, as there was no public transport available to take dancers home at a late hour, so they danced until dawn. No dance band was at his best before the bewitching hour of midnight. After that, the bandsmen having been well plied with the stuff that is good to look upon when it is red, the music would take on a new lease of rhythmic fluency and the dancers twirl and pace with greater abandon in the Postillions, Cotillions' Waltz D'Alberts, Tweede Set, Schottoche, Polka, Muzurka and a host of others. Yet, both the band and dancers had to know their stuff, not just Blues, Jive and Be-Bop of to-day. [...]

"Coons and Minstrels, Dances until Dawn and the Japanese New-Whites", by Pertinax, *Die Banier*, December 1961, p. 12. [GM]

8.

[...] In South Africa, the song [*Thomas Rice's "Jim Crow", introduced in Pittsburgh in 1836*] was soon circulated and in *De Verzamelaar*, the weekly paper of J. Suasso de Lima, Capetonians could read about the origins of the popular tune. In 1846, Sam Sly, in a satirical ballad to a famous singer, advised her to sing "Jim Crow" before she departed from the stage, "for", he wrote, "it is a song which we can recommend if circulation is your only aim."

In the same year, Boniface regarded this song as being so widely known that he used it with new lyrics. And two years later, W.F.H. Parker, at his puppet theatre in Long St., presented a doll in the role of Jim Crow who would dance a jig and sing a comic song.

"Serenaders" were originally spoken of in South Africa, as at the first performance in September 1848 of a group announced as the "Celebrated Ethiopian Serenaders", or as the "American" or "Darkie Serenaders", and even in Burgersdorp as the "Ethiopische Club".

The originality of the name "Serenaders" is clear from the evening music which groups of enthusiasts performed on Old Christmas Eve beneath the windows of their friends. The Capetonian John Rose, himself a serenader, noted, for example, in his diary in 1861 how they sang "Christy Minstrel" songs.

Then, in the following year came the first overseas group who called themselves "Christy Minstrels", and because of their success this was the name by which similar musicians were afterwards known. [...]

The songwriters were particularly productive during the American Civil War from 1861 until 1865, and although South Africa was far removed from the battlegrounds, songs like "Just Before the Battle", "Mother", "Ellie Rhee", and "Old Folks at Home" stirred the heart. They were sung again and again, and then not only in Cape Town.

All kinds of groups came to be formed by enthusiasts, some with rather odd kinds of names, like Roman Catholic Christies, that of the Psychological Association, the Afrikander Musicale.

In 1874 a concertina competition for a gold wristwatch was held in the garden of the Good Hope Lodge, and there is mention of a competition in which a duet "a la nigger minstrel" with the accompaniment by a banjo and "bones" was performed. We also hear at this time of amateur Coloured groups. [...]

How this recreation became part of the general delight can perhaps be best shown by a photograph in the first number of *De Goede Hoop*. In this picture, which was taken at Green Point, appear prisoners of war of the Second War of Independence, as the

"Green Point Starlings", complete with string instruments. And the faces are smeared like those of a Christy's Minstrel group. [...]

"Ook Minstrel Skyn die Ewige Lewe te Hê" deur Dr. Jan Bouws, *Die Burger*, November 12, 1966. [DN]

["Minstrel, Too, Seem to Go On Forever", by Dr. Jan Bouws; translated from the Afrikaans by Gerald Stone]

9.

It all started about 90 years ago with the Malay choirs who were based in what is commonly known as "Bo Kaap". They were singing groups who called themselves The Americans, the Canadians, the Good Hopes and the Arabian College group.

They were the people who introduced the moppies and gomma liedjies — the real pioneers. Take the song *Bobbejaan Klim Die Berg*. That was written and put to music by members of Roslyns rugby club. They were from District Six and their arch rivals were a team from Bo Kaap called Arabian College.

Roslyns had a stuffed monkey with a patch over the eye and after beating College they would march into District Six singing *Bobbejaan Klim Die Berg*.

Now of course the Afrikaner claim that they were the composers of the famous song.

What a lot of people don't realise is that the actual coons with the black faces were started by whites in Cape Town.

The original troupe was called the Periods and they performed outside hotels and bars in Cape Town. They blackened their faces and that is how the whole thing started.

Just before them were the minstrels. They were mainly tailors from Schotsche Kloof but they didn't blacken their faces. They wore outfits like the jockeys of today and their main aim was to entertain.

But the names that really stand out when you talk about coons were Runny Boxer who started a club called the Navy, Ted Adams whose stomping ground was Stalplein, and Mogamat Longfield.

They took over the Cinnamon Minstrels and turned them into one of the biggest names in Cape Town.

Then came the Tipperary coons which was started by the Tipperary family.

Following on their heels was the Ganzal family who went in for something different.

They used stilts. The most famous of them was James op Stokke'. Everybody knew him for his fantastic voice and his ability to manoeuvre on stilts.

The negro influence on the coons, as we know them today, was introduced by the O'Brien family who lived in Cowley Street. Together with the York family they introduced the Apaches with their distinctive American flavour.

Between 1915 and 1930 clubs were formed with well known names like Pine, Sign and Ali taking up the reins. They dressed like cavaliers and Jan van Riebeeck, and were a big hit in the city. [...]

The Dantu family of Cape Town showed their hand when they introduced the pompkolmpie — a musical feast with a Malay flavour. They used to perform on Greenmarket square and were eventually joined by a man known only as Kasatjie.

They had nothing to do with the coons but they were a big hit whenever they performed [...]

[Heirs to the 19th century "Dantu" family were still active in the *klopse* and Malay Choirs in the 2010s but then carried the name "Dante"; see: 1990.2]

"Why Aren't Coons Like This Today ?" by Solly Levy, *Cape Herald*, January 21, 1978. [WM]

1707

10.

One of the earliest references to a *ghoemaliedjie* concerns a certain "Biron" who was punished in 1707 for singing dubious ditties "half in Malay, half in Dutch" in the streets of Cape Town [...]

Winberg ca.1992: 78 [AA]

[refers to Du Plessis 1935: 41]

1772

11.

[In 1772 Charles Thunberg attended a Muslim ceremony in Cape Town:]

On the 28th June, the Javanese here celebrated their new year. For this purpose they had decorated an apartment in a house with carpets, that covered the cieling [sic], walls, and floor. At some distance from the farthest wall, an altar was raised... The women, who were all standing or sitting near the door were neatly dressed, and the men wore nightgowns of silk or cotton. Frankincense was burned. The men sat cross-legged on the floor, dispersed all over the room. Several yellow wax candles were lighted up. Many of the assembly had fans... Two priests were distinguished by a small conical cap from the rest, who wore handkerchiefs tied round their heads in the form of a turban. About eight in the evening the service commenced, when they began to sing loud and soft alternately, sometimes the priests alone, at other time the whole congregation. After this a priest read out of the great book that lay on the cusion [sic] before the altar, the congregation at times reading aloud after him. I observed them reading after the oriental manner, from right to left, and imagined it to be the Alcoran that they were reading, the Javanese being mostly Mahometans. Between the singing

and reciting, coffee was served up in cups, and the principal man of the congregation at intervals accompanied their singing on the violin. I understood afterwards that this was a prince from Java, who had opposed the interests of the Dutch East India Company, and for that reason had been brought from his native country to the Cape, where he lives at the Company's expense."

Thunberg 1795: 132-134, quoted in Elphick and Shell 1992: 192-193. [AA]

1797

12.

[...] Lady Anne Barnard had most success among female society when she invited all "who wish to be merry without cards or dice but who can talk or 'hop' to half a dozen black fiddlers, to come and see me on my public day, which shall be once a fortnight, when the Dutch ladies (all of whom love dancing, and flirting still more) shall be kindly welcomed, and the poor ensigns and cornets shall have an opportunity of stretching their legs as well as the generals."

Bouws 1966: 139. [AB]

1800s

13.

Another tradition from the Dutch era was the dance music "which the slaves learnt to make in a lovely manner from all kinds of instruments" [Vincent Kolbe]. In the descriptions of ca. 1800 there is almost always mention of groups that made light music — mostly dance music. In each home there were a number of slaves who outside of their daily duties loved to play some or other musical instruments, in the city itself and its immediate surroundings as well as on the large farms away from the city. Augusta Uitenhage de Mist writes in her diary that she met families in the Cape whose servants could all play music. She was most surprised that nature — as she put it — was their only teacher in playing music. Lichtenstein, at the Cape at the same time, had the same experience and writes that neither teacher nor pupil knew a single note, and that everything was played "by ear". According to him the Malays had great talent in music. He further tells that he knew large households in which each slave could play some instrument so that a little dance orchestra could be formed immediately when young people visited each other in the afternoons to dance for a few hours. "Only one hint is necessary before the cook immediately grabs the flute instead of the tongs, the stable boy changes the curry-comb for the violin and the gardener puts the spade aside to play the violoncello."

A nice example of a home orchestra during the last years of Dutch government is that of Pieter van Breda, owner of Oranjezicht. A music tent stood in one of the gardens

of his estate. When Mr. van Breda was to have his slaves play music there, he raised the flag so that music lovers in the city knew that they were welcome at Oranjezicht. The orchestra consisted of 30 slaves who sometimes wore uniforms. Most of them played flute or violin. Even after the lifting of slavery the house orchestra of the van Breda family still existed. Thus Mr. Michiel van Breda let his musicians play in the freemason lodge "The Good Hope" during the festival on St. John's Day, 1839. What they played at this and other occasions is unknown.

We have more information about another slave orchestra. In one of his letters (2 July 1825) the Dutch visitor M.D. Teenstra tells of his experiences and his visit to the widow Colyn of Klein Constantia. He writes about how surprised he was by the music of 16 musicians who "belong to Miss Colyn as slaves": "they perform perfect fieldmusic [*veldmuzijk*], with all wind and other instruments needed, clarinets, flutes, trumpets, bassoon, snake, cymbals and two large drums, and play them as well as the best English corps in Cape Town dare to think." At the beginning of 1830 this famous home orchestra came to an end. Miss Colyn sold 31 slaves and a complete set of instruments belonging to "a band, completely new" on 20 January [...]

Bouws 1966: 140-141. [AB]

14.

New Year's Day was celebrated by all classes but, with the gayest abandon by slaves who, allowed special privileges for the occasion, were "as independent as their masters and without passport or lanthorn" [...] Children of every colour would assemble at the upper end of Strand Street, their eyes on the clock of the Lutheran Church, as the hands approached the hour when fireworks would signal the advent of a new year.

Hattersley 1973: 154. [AB]

15.

[...] there had always been street music in the larger towns. "Promenade concerts" by Malay minstrels in Cape Town were not confined to holiday seasons.

Hattersley 1973: 251. [AB]

1803

16.

[The activities of Cape Town's musicians did not please everyone and "Malays" were most probably the target of the following government regulation:]

[...] no private bands of music shall play in the streets after sunset or before sunrise nor any other musical assemblage, held in the streets, unless the military bands of his Majesty or of the Batavian Republic, who of course will have the previous permission from their respective commanding officers.

Bouws 1966: 150. [AB]

17.

On the ground that they were "disturbing the tranquillity of the town" street bands in 1803 had been prohibited from playing after sunset. But they could be hired out to accompany indoor dancing. Made up of Malay slaves, they were the private property of well-to-do burghers.

Hattersley 1973: 148. [AB]

1820s

18.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Lichtenstein* noted that every slave group had its own musical style and in the 1820s W.W. Bird ** observed:

> "The grand display is in the outskirts of the town, to which the black population rush, on a Sunday, and go through their various awkward movements in quick or slow time, according to the taste of the dancers. The Sunday dance is accompanied by native music of every description. The slave boys from Madagascar and Mosambique bring the stringed instruments of their respective tribes and nation, from which they force sounds, which they regard as melodious. The love of dancing is a ruling passion throughout the Cape population in every rank; but music, though a pursuit favoured by a small part of the society, is here a passion with the negro alone."

It stands to reason that the tradition embodied in such events would not have been extinguished by emancipation, although no doubt it was substantially altered. Perhaps the "Coon Carnival" as it was organised from the 1890s on, was in some ways a transformation of it [...] This supposition, moreover, is strengthened by the accounts we do have of slave celebrations of emancipation which describe parades through the streets of Cape Town with banners flying ***.

* Lichtenstein 1928-1930: 425.[HW]

** Bird 1823: 165. [HW]

*** see e.g. J.G. Steytler, "Remembrances from 1832-1900", *Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library* 25, *Kronos* 9: 83-115. [AA]

Ross 1989: 45. [AA]

1823

19.

A Cape chronicler of 1823 writes of bands parading the streets at the New Year, and it was apparently the slave owner's custom to allow their slaves a holiday at New Year, perhaps on the lines of the Roman *Saturnalia*.

Patterson 1953: 156. [AB]

20.
The first record of annual New Year celebrations was in 1823, when bands paraded in the street to welcome the New Year.

Stone 1971: 2. [AP]

21.
Historians seem to agree that the first mention of merrymaking bands of musicians parading in the streets of Cape Town at New Year, is that of such processions in 1823. At this time, New Year, slave-owners gave their slaves a holiday and "the authorities permit much greater licence to Coloured performers and audiences than at any other time."

Van Der Ross 1973: 598. [AP]

22.
In pre-Emancipation days, those in bondage at the Cape were given a large measure of freedom at the New Year and an old chronicler of the Cape records seeing in 1823 bands of slaves parading through the streets at dawn on January 1. It was a time when the slaves could sing, drink and caper with wild abandon [...]

"Coon Custom's Roots in Slavery" by George Manuel, *Cape Times*, December 30, 1979. [DN]

23.
In pre-Emancipation days, those in bondage at the Cape were given a measure of freedom at the New Year and a chronicler tells of bands parading the streets "dancing, laughing, drinking and beating the earth with sportive feet." [...]

"Coon Carnival, Its Roots Are in Slavery" by George Manuel, *Cape Times*, December 18, 1954. [DN]

1825

24.
In 1825 a group of slaves belonging to a well-known Cape resident, Mr. Colign, musically entertained his guests".

Stone 1971: 2 [AP]

1834

25.
[...] Not a single act of extravagance, as far as we have heard or can learn, occurred

throughout the day or night. Not a misled simpleton was there at the Police Office on the following day, charged even with inebriety, or the breaking of a pane of glass. — Large bodies of the "Apprentices", of all ages and both sexes, promenaded the streets during the day and night, many of them attended by a band of amateur musicians; but their amusements were simple and interesting; their demeanour orderly and respectful.

"Abolition of Slavery, The First of December", *The South African Commercial Advertiser*, December 6, 1834

[reproduced in: "Emancipation day and the press, 1834-1984", *Kronos* 9, 1984: 97]

[AA]

26.

[November 30, 1834, a religious service is held in a Barrack Street shop used as a meeting place by Methodists:]

As the midnight hour draws near they are asked to kneel. "Take your freedom from the hands of God". All fall on their knees and a great hush rests upon the assembly while the seconds tick away. A sob breaks the stillness. The minister's voice, trembling with emotion, is heard: "Midnight has passed; slavery is dead; you are all free".

"Celebrations of Slave Emancipation, Midnight Services in City Churches, Scenes of 100 Years Ago Recalled", *The Cape Argus*, December 2, 1834

[reproduced in: "Emancipation day and the press, 1834-1984", *Kronos* 9, 1984: 104]

[AA]

1838

27.

In 1838, a witness to the celebrations ending apprenticeship said he saw processions of coloured people "singing a Dutch song, in which every verse ended 'Victoria! Victoria! Daar waai de Engelschen Vlaag.'"

Steytler 1970: 25, quoted in Bickford-Smith 1994: 298. [AA]

II.
From the abolition of slavery to the first formal “coon carnival”, 1840–1906

1840s

1.
On various occasions Van der Schyff’s popular “native” band — which consisted of Cape Malayans — took turns with their military colleagues; both groups were then praised for their playing. In the description of the ball in honour of Sir George Napier and his wife the quadrilles of the Malayan performers were called lively and spirited, but the manner in which the musicians of the 45th Regiment played the waltzes are described by the writer as “superlatively excellent”. At the beginning of this evening these two groups of musicians cooperated in the opening of the festivity. The important guests were welcomed outside by a guard of honour formed by members of the 45th Regiment. The latter was then taken over by the Malayan band when the governor entered the hall.

[the ball took probably place in 1849]

Bouws 1966: 92 [AB]

1845

2.
[...] Sammons was sensitive to the musicality of the Cape Malays who “on moonlight nights, and in warm weather, will whistle and sing in concert about the streets, linked in brotherly affection, with arms around each other’s necks, and a small fry in the rear, endeavouring to mimic harmony” [...]

Bouws 1966: 141 [AB]

3.
De Versamelaar * reports “that on New Year’s Eve any music company displayed their talents by marching through the city.”

*January 7,1845

Bouws 1966: 150 [AB]

1848

4.

[...] the first Christy Minstrels who visited South Africa were Joe Brown's Band of Brothers. Joe was the champion jig-dancer of the world when he came to South Africa [...] Joe's party were the first band of vocalists who gave South Africa a taste for nigger part singing. They were the first to sing "Come Where My Love Dies Dreaming*" in this country.

* Song by Stephen Foster, published in New York in 1855.

Murray 1894: 207 [HW]

5.

A touring group of negro minstrels first appeared at the Cape in 1848 (Bouws, 1966).

Stone 1971: 3 [AP]

[from an article by Jan Bouws published in *Die Burger*, November 2, 1966]

1849

6.

On his first New Year's Day in the Colony (1849), Archdeacon Merriman noted that observance of the anniversary of freedom "seems gradually dying out", whereas peninsular landlords never neglected to "have the coloured people on their estate assembled at their door on New Year's morning and make them a small present in money or clothing."

Hattersley 1973: 154 [AB]

1850s

7.

Small parties of Malays, about eight or ten in number, slowly strolled up and down the streets singing the most sentimental Dutch songs in perfect time and harmony.

[A "White observer" quoted in:] Bickford-Smith 1996: 20 [AP]

1855

8.

Already since the previous century dance music was played by small Coloured orchestras, who played this music completely by ear, since they could read no music. Similar little orchestras were also active in 1855. The newspaper announced that the "well-known Malay Band" played admirably at the performance by Parry's Theatre Company. Hamelberg writes in his diary of 2 January 1855 that the "Mammoth

Quadrille Band", who played dance music on occasion of the fall of Sebastopol, consisted of "6 violins, 2 violoncellos, 1 trumpet, 1 clarinet, 1 Turkish and 1 ordinary drum, instruments played in part by Negroes."

Bouws 1946: 104 [AA]

1857

9.

The 89th Regiment band being unable to play at a ball, Malay musicians, although already hired for another function, are brought over for the "moderate sum of fifteen pounds."

Bouws 1966: 93 [AB]

1859

10.

At Bloemfontein, a person named De Vos has been tried before the Landdrost, accused of being guilty of perpetrating a public nuisance, by beating during the night a drum, which was generally accompanied by a violin and singing — and fined in the sum of £ 1.

"Music charms the savage breast. Vice Versa", *The Cape Weekly Chronicle*, May, 27, 1859: 5 [WM]

1860

11.

[...] The Serenaders comprise a select company of Vocalists, who will entertain the Public with CHOICE NEGRO BALLADS; and the OPERA TROUPE from New Orleans will, it is guaranteed, soothe with their Musical Charms the savage Breast of any Beast that may escape from the Caravan [...]

There will also be a GRAND LINGHO and KALIFA DANCE by some two hundred Malays, got up in a style of Oriental magnificence. To those who have never visited the East, this will form a charming opportunity of judging of Oriental Manners, Agility, Strength, and Gorgeous Costumes [...]

"Grand fete and fair in honour of H.R.H. Prince Alfred", *The Cape Chronicle*, September 7, 1860: 1 [WM]

12.

[...] Arrived at the Malay stage, the Royal party took the seats provided for them and

the Kalifa commenced. We need not enter into the details of this semi-barbaric ceremony, but suffice it to say that his Royal Highness appeared highly interested [...]

"The Prince", *The Cape Chronicle*, Friday, September 21, 1860. [WM]

1861

13.

THEATRE ROYAL, GRAND ENTERTAINMENT, Monday Evening, March 11th, 1961, MR. ST. GEORGE IN 15 CHARACTERS. ETHIOPIAN MINSTRELS !! SPANISH DANCERS ! The performance will commence with a variety of Comic and Sentimental Singing by DURBAN'S ETHIOPIAN MINSTRELS !! [...]

[advertisement for a show given by "Mr. St. George and his local troupe of talented amateurs"]

The Cape Chronicle, Friday, March 8, 1861: 1. [WM]

14.

[...] The performance which was of a very varied character commenced with a selection of negro melodies by the "Ethiopian Minstrels", alias the "Fête Serenaders". I am sorry to say that I cannot speak favourably of this portion of the entertainment, inasmuch as the songs were badly chosen, the choruses badly sung and the solos, with one or two exceptions, given without the least regard to time or tune. The pieces most worthy of mention were the duet "The Gipsy Countess" and the song and chorus "Ring, Ring the banjo", the rest I prefer leaving for oblivion [...]

The Cape Chronicle, Friday, March 15, 1861. [WM]

15.

NOTICE, J. Jacobs, Professor of music (lately from Germany) and P. Van Der Schyff, having succeeded in forming a superior QUADRILLE BAND of sixteen performers are now prepared to attend Balls, Picnics or any other Assembly where their services may be required, on the shortest notice.

Any number of the members can be engaged from four up to the full band. TERMS LIBERAL.

Applications to be made either to P. Van der Schyff, 96, Rose Street or to J. Jacobs, 1, Lelie Street.

The Cape Chronicle, September 13, 1861. [WM]

1862

16.

Among the Cape Malays there were good dance musicians "with a precision and feeling quite unequalled, except by Strauss' band, and a variety which seemed endless" as Lady

Duff Gordon wrote in 1862 about a Malay harmonica player, who played all dance music by ear at New Year's ball together with a halfblood Negro. On asking whether he could read music, the answer was "music came into the ears, not the eyes".

Bouws 1946: 104-105. [AA]

17.

[...] our ears are suddenly startled by series of the most demonic yells and shrieks from the recess sacred to the performers, and out bounds a most frightful looking figure be-daubed with yellow ochre and burnt sienna. An application to my programme informs me that this is Mr. Leon impersonating an Indian [...] this one must belong to the tribe of *Circus-sien* Indians, I resolved to observe markedly the characteristics of the race. These apparently consisted of a decided predilection for war and whiskey, and a passionate devotion to field sports. In the latter he especially excelled, bringing down with an arrow an improbable animal from an improbable quarter. I endeavoured to get a glimpse of that popular American problem, a real "coon", but from the slight view I obtained, I am only in a position to state that it very much resembled a bloated tom cat [...]

[the presence among the audience of "Malays" and "dark skinned" persons is mentioned in the article]

"My visit to the circus" by O. Fogey Esq., *The Cape Chronicle*, Friday, March 14, 1862. [WM]

18.

...this clever band of vocal and instrumental artistes [...] coming to this colony en route to Australia...

[first notice of the coming of Christy's Minstrels to Cape Town]

The Cape Chronicle, July 7, 1862. [WM]

19.

THEATRE ROYAL, Lesee: Mrs. C. Tellett, **CHRISTY'S MINSTRELS.** PATRONIZED BY Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, the late Prince Consort, the Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family, their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of the French, and the most distinguished members of the Nobility and Gentry. **Under the Patronage of His Excellency the Governor and Mrs. Wodehouse**, THE CELEBRATED AND ORIGINAL CHRISTY'S MINSTRELS, ORGANIZED 1842, From 472, Broadway, New York, and from Her Majesty's Theatre and Polygraphic Hall, London, where concerts in America and England exceeded over 6,000, will give their FIRST ENTERTAINMENT IN CAPE TOWN

On Wednesday Evening next, Aug. 2O, at the THEATRE ROYAL, HARRINGTON STREET [...]

The Cape Chronicle, Friday, August 15, 1862. [WM]

20.

[...] for the fame of the distinguished party who have earned so wide a celebrity as pourtrayers of Negro character had preceded their arrival in Africa. Besides, the character of the entertainment is eminently suited to the tastes of the people here. Broad caricature, with a recognizable basis of fact and simple melodies, dependent for effect upon the amount of feeling the interpreter can manage to infuse into his rendering of them, are appreciated much more thoroughly than the higher conceptions of dramatists, or the more pretentious efforts of modern operatic musicians. Moreover, so essentially true to life — especially to African life — in many of its phrases, are the "sketches" of these clever impersonators of Negro character, that they could scarcely fail to please [...]

"Christy's Minstrels", *Supplement to the Cape Argus*, Thursday, August 21, 1862, p. 5 [DN]

21.

[...] Further hearing has convinced us that there is really no scope for criticism, everything being perfect of its kind and deserving of the highest praise. Perfection, in fact, seems the characteristic of all that the Minstrels undertake, whether it be pathos, humour, or true musical effect [...]

The band consists of seven performers who all sing and accompany themselves at the same time with two violins, violoncello, bones and tambourines. The selection of music ranges from grave to gay, from lively to serene [...]

''The Christy Minstrels", *The Cape Argus*, Tuesday, August 26, 1862: 2. [DN]

22.

[...] the curtain rose to the first portion of the entertainment. This was composed of pieces all pretty familiar to Cape Town, from their wide popularity [...]

The pieces which were most successful on Wednesday evening were those which have been frequently sung in public here, and to a great extent their success may be attributed to the talents of the Christy's as instrumentalists [...]

[...] The two grotesques, the ''bones'' and the tambourine are respectively impersonated by Messrs. Brown and Norton, who most agreeably diversify the entertainment by their comicalities. The former gentleman is also the dancer of the company, and his silver belt jig is one of the most intricate and difficult specimens of step-dancing that we ever remember witnessing [...]

‘‘The Christy’s Minstrels”, *The Cape Chronicle*, Friday, August 22, 1862. [WM]

23.

[...] The Christy’s Minstrels have gone [...] well, they cannot go away and say we didn’t patronize them properly, for there never has been a company here that reaped such a harvest in so short a time as did those self-same Minstrels [...]

“The Week” by Quiz, *The Cape Chronicle*, Friday, September 26, 1862. [WM]

24.

CHRISTY’S MINSTRELS. **JOE BROWN’S BENEFIT !!!** TO-NIGHT, AT THE CIRCUS, Joe Brown will take his benefit. **THAT’S WHAT’S THE MATTER ! New Songs, Dances, and other Novelties !** NOTICE, Joe Brown will receive visitors This Evening (Friday), at the commodious Mansion in Rogge Bay, where a Feast (of fun) may be anticipated [...]

The Cape Chronicle, Friday, October 24, 1862. [WM]

25.

CHRISTY’S. the grand **BURLESQUE ON SOMNAMBULA**, and the, **FLYING DUTCHMAN**, With a select Programme, will be repeated (by special desire) at the circus THIS EVENING, FRIDAY [...] N.B. — novelties, eccentricities, &c.

CHRISTY’S MINSTRELS. SOMNAMBULA. **A Grand Morning Performance** at the circus, TO-MORROW, SATURDAY [...]

The Cape Chronicle, Friday, November 7, 1862. [WM]

26.

[...] The Christy’s Minstrels have set everybody mad, and nothing now goes down but burnt cork, and Pompey’s jokes. At Graham’s Town they have been arranging some entertainments in aid of the distressed Lancashire Operatives, and of course, nothing could do but the young men must blacken their faces and don exaggerated shirt-collars. They must further be termed the “Graham’s Town Minstrels” in imitation of their recent illustrious visitors, and are tossing, of course, the airs the “originals” have rendered famous. We must, I suppose, pardon this presumption in consideration of the good object for which it is assumed [...]

“The Week” by Quiz, *The Cape Chronicle*, Friday, November 7, 1862. [WM]

27.

The most successful entertainments ever given were those of the Harvey-Leslie Christy Minstrels. They remained in South Africa for over two years, playing all the time, and attracting full houses wherever they went. They were the best band of Christys I ever heard; preferable to my thinking, to Burgess’s at St. James’ Hall, for every member of

the band was a performer in the first rank of his own line. Dougherty alone was worth the whole cost of the ticket; he was always running over with humour when at his corner and the bones in his hands, and his was humour which came at the instant, fresh and sparkling from his lips. He manufactured jokes, and never repeated. His humour came as fast as he could give expression to it. And he was not only a corner man. He could dance splendidly and in comic opera he was first rate. Then there was Leslie, who had an enchanting voice. Braham, who sang modern English songs with much taste. His voice was clear, and with plenty of ring in it. Cox, as a violinist, was as good as was ever heard on the St. James' stage, and Truro, as a basso, was a tremendous fellow. Turner's violoncello performances were far above the average, and, best of all, Mr. H. Harvey was a first-rate manager and kept his team well in hand.

Murray 1894: 207. [HW]

1863

28.

[...] The origin of the carnival dates from the visit of the famous Confederate raider, "Alabama", to Cape Town in July, 1863. As the vessel approached the harbor, a Union barque, the "Sea Bird", which had desperately sought to avoid the Confederate ship for some time, made its appearance from the opposite direction. It was soon evident to the hundreds of local inhabitants, who had by this time lined the waterfront, that the raider was intent on seizing the hapless Union ship. The "Alabama" fired a blank charge at the fugitive, bringing it immediately to bay, and steamed triumphantly into Cape Town with the surrendered ship in tow. Visitors streamed on board the captor, and her captain was the hero of the day. The happy ending to this story came when the local Prize Court awarded the "Sea Bride" as a legal capture. For years this exciting event was discussed at every bar in the Cape and eventually found its way into song.

The curious American influence on this musical festival may have come from some members of the "Alabama's" crew who were inadvertently left behind when she sailed. Other sources are undoubtedly the many American movies shown in the theaters of Cape Town [...]

"Dixie in reverse" by Quentin Keynes, *Natural History* 59 (8), October 1950: 368. [GM (US)]

29.

[...] the confederate ship Alabama [...] called into the Bay between 29th July and 5th August 1863 to replenish her coal bunkers, whilst hunting for Northern ship during the American Civil War. [...] The incident is still remembered in South Africa because of the very popular song "Daar Kom die Alabama" (Here comes the Alabama).

Knox-Johnson 1989: 124. [NAE]

30.

Another scoop for the newspapers in 1863 was the appearance of the Alabama in Table Bay on the 6th of August [...]

The amazing story of this American Confederated vessel and its bold captain Semmes can be reconstructed from many contemporary sources. [...] Mrs. Dale (wife of Dr. Langham Dale) [...] just briefly remarks that "the *Alabama* created great excitement. She captured a Federal ship just outside the Bay, and in full view of many people who went up to the Kloof and out to Green Point to witness the fight. However, there was no fighting" [...]

Sir John Kotze [...] forgot the correct year when he afterwards recorded his experience.

"In the middle of 1864", Sir John writes, "the *Alabama* — Confederate Commerce raider under captain Semmes — put in at the Cape [...] Nearing Table Bay she fell in with the American vessel *Sea Bride* who tried to get within the three-mile limit from the shore between Robben Island and Bantry Bay [...]"

When the *Alabama* was signalled from Lion's rump, Cape Town turned out in a body. Early in the afternoon it was further signalled that the *Alabama* was in chase of the American barque *Sea Bride*. That made editor [R.W.] Murray jump from his desk, throw himself in the saddle and gallop to "the turn in the Kloof Road where you command a complete view of the entrance of Table Bay. And there sure enough was the *Alabama* pouncing down upon the *Sea Bride* like a hawk on a sparrow or rather like a shark after a herring [...] The rakish little steamer overhauled the barque, steamed round her, fired a gun across her bows, put off a boat and took her in tow [...]"

The *Sea Bride* was sold to auctioneer Marcus for £ 1,400 [...]

Picard 1969: 37. [NAE]

31.

A group of Boers, busy with their herds and native servants in the vicinity of Saldanha Bay, fifty miles north of Capetown, caught the first sight of the immortal *Alabama* in July 1863 [...]

[the crew was mostly non-American, recruited at Liverpool; Raphael Semmes, captain of the Alabama was invited by the Governor, Sir Philip Wodehouse, to visit Cape Town]

His arrival was more spectacular than had been foreseen. Colonists and natives swarmed in hundreds up Signal Hill, which overlooks Table Bay. Black men, half-castes, Malays, Hottentots mingled with leading white citizens.

Miss Matty Knox, an old lady who died at Johannesburg ten years ago, was among that crowd and described to me how, as a girl, she watched the *Sea-Bride* stealing into the roads, trying to avoid unnecessary exposure of her Northern colours.

[on Wednesday, August 5th, 1863 after noon, the *Alabama* fires at the Sea Bride]

Through telescopes the shots were seen passing the *Sea-Bride*'s bows. Next moment the darkies were chanting "Daar kom die *Alabama*, die *Alabama*, die *Alabama*". [...] By four o' clock that afternoon the *Alabama*, with her prize in tow, neared the wharf in the newly-begun dock [...]

During his various raids round the Cape of Good Hope Semmes captured no fewer than fourteen Northern vessels, thereby providing busy times for the local shipbrokers [...]

[Captain Semmes and his crew are given the warmest of welcomes in Cape Town; then the *Alabama* sails to Simonstown for a refit; she continues raiding the seas around the Cape and playing hide and seek with the U.S.S. Vanderbilt; she leaves Simon's Bay in February or March 1864 and sails to the East Indies]

She had become a legend by this time [...] Then she returned to the Cape a second time, in the middle of 1864 [...]

Rosenthal 1938: 133-139. [NAE]

32.

[...] As a very young boy he [Hadji Johnson, who was 100 in 1952] had been a member of an excited crowd of spectators of the slopes of Signal Hill who saw the American Confederate raider, the Alabama, capture a Federal barque, the Sea Bride, off Sea Point. The famous song "Daar Kom Die Alabama" is said to have been inspired by the visit to the Cape of the Alabama.

According to Hadji Johnson the local inhabitants associated the name Alabama with the boy's name Ali, and they even thought that the raider hailed from the East. After the ship's visit it was customary for the Malay children to refer teasingly to those whose first name was Allie as "Allie Bama". This explanation is strengthened by the fact that earlier versions of the song's chorus were "Daar Kom Alibama" and not "Daar Kom Die Alabama".

Another interesting fact about the song is that more than 100 years ago coloured dance musicians adopted "Daar Kom Die Alabama" for the fourth figure of a set of quadrilles. The tune fitted the quadrille's rhythm so well that it was customary for the dancers to sing the words [...]

[According to David Hollett (1993: 71-72 and 92, NAE), in the latter part of July, the *Alabama* proceeded to the anchorage of Saldanha Bay. After repairs she sailed to Cape Town where the ship and his crew were given a very cordial reception. 20 crew members left the *Alabama* and remained in Cape Town. The *Alabama* eventually departed from Simon's Town heading towards the Far East. The *Alabama* found herself back at the Cape in March 1864 but remained there for three days only. Hollett does not mention the capture of the *Sea Bride*.]

"He recalled the Alabama's visit", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1981, p. 6 [DN]

1865

33.

But the most successful entertainment of this kind [American Minstrelsy] was provided by the Harvey-Leslie Christy Minstrels in 1862 and 1865. They performed their "nigger" part-songs, jigs and mocking caricature of American slaves in a variety of venues to all classes, and according to an *Argus* reporter: "even at the Cape, where the nigger character is so well understood, the caricature created a furore". In closing the Agricultural show in the Gardens Mr. Leslie, in the character of "Broder Bones", chose to make direct parallels between the Cape and America with his impressions of "life among Dutch farmers" and imitations of "Cape Dutch".

Bickford-Smith 1996: 24. [AP]

1869

34.

Old-Fellow's Hall, Plein Street, Amateur Coloured Troupe, Grand Entertainment, Under The Patronage of His Honour J.H. Brand, Esq., President of The Free State

[Advertisement for a show given by the Amateur Coloured Troupe; the programme includes: "Overture, Lucretia Borgia", "When you and I were young, Maggie", "De Darkie's Jubilee", "Malingo Hoy, the Cape Town Coolie (Dutch-Mozambique Lingo)", and an Ethiopian scene entitled the "Young Scamp"]

Cape Mercantile Advertiser, September 20, 1869. [WM]

35.

From at least 1869 the Amateur Coloured Troupe under Joe Lyal presented almost weekly full-scale minstrel shows to Cape Town audiences, nearly two decades earlier than the first "coon" carnivalists marched in the streets of Cape Town on New Year's Day of 1888. By the late 1870s minstrel tunes had become so popular that the well-known Afrikaans folk song "Wanneer kom ons troudag, Gertjie" was sung to the tune of George Frederick Root's "Just before the battle, Mother", a minstrel tune composed during the American Civil War in 1864.

Erlmann 1991: 31-32 [AA]

[see also: Bouws 1946: 104-105]

1870s

36.

By the end of the 19th century [...] December 1 had become an unofficial holiday and

day of celebration by many descendants of the slaves. Meetings were held in District Six and festivities held throughout the night.

It was only with the growing popularity of Tweede Nuwejaar and the Coon Carnival that the traditional holiday of slave emancipation was eclipsed.

[*Tweede Nuwejaar*, literally the second New Year means January 2. During slavery times, it was the day when slaves did not have to work. After emancipation, it became a day of festivities when coloured musicians and singers, members of sports and social clubs paraded in the streets. When New Year festivals were formally organised in the 20th century, it became the day of the "road march": the *klopse* parade in the streets of Cape Town. For various reasons *Tweede Nuwejaar* and the road march are sometimes rescheduled a few days later.]

Nigel WORDEN, "When the slaves were freed", *Cape Times*, December 1, 1984

[reproduced in: "Emancipation day and the press, 1834-1984," *Kronos* 9, 1984: 119. AA]

37.

Coloured muslims have maintained a tradition of music in aesthetic and religious activities. They heavily influenced Dutch music at the Cape, and during the eighteen-seventies formed the nucleus of singing and sports clubs which were popular at the time. The Afrikaans term for Coons, "Klopse", derives from "Klubbe" (clubs), and originally referred to these organizations. Club members held festive street gatherings to greet the New Year, and would march ceremonially from adjacent suburbs to a yew tree in Church Square in the city, where a symbol of the Old Year would be buried.

Stone 1971: 2. [AP]

38.

[...] Singing organizations were popular in Victorian times when Cape Town was a military station and thousands of red-coated soldiers marched with bands along the highways. [...]

Coloured sporting clubs, such as the Wanderers turned out on New Year's morning wearing a motley array of outlandish costumes to "make sport", they said [...]

"Coon Carnival, Its roots are in Slavery" by George Manuel, *Cape Times*, December 12, 1954. [DN]

39.

[...] During the last quarter of the 19th century singing clubs were very popular in the Cape and so were sports clubs. Often the membership of the two consisted of the same men. They used to gather in halls attached to the taverns or in their clubrooms to harmonize a score of popular melodies.

A fresh impetus was given to the carnival spirit by an American Christy Minstrel troupe, the Jubilee singers who arrived in South Africa to give performances in the Old Castle Town Opera House and various other venues.

The Jubilee Singers returned to America after their tour. Three of their members, however, remained behind. They were Marshall, Taylor and Allen. They linked up with the famous family of singers, the Dantu brothers, who ran the Cape Of Good Hope Sports Club.

Together they formed the first Cape Coon troupe, the Original Jubilee Singers who were dressed in blue tailcoats and wore miniature top hats. Each had an eye circled in red. Their theme song was "Cherokee Maid".

The following year Mr. Mitchell — who was then the Cape Town fire chief — a prominent Cape judge, and a Mr. Crawford, became interested in the movement and the troupe changed their name to "The Darktown Fire Brigade" — a burlesque version of the real fire brigade whose uniform was used as a model for the coon costumes. The helmets were lent to them by the fire brigade and the local police. A big feature of this troupe was its parading with a real fire engine of those days — a "pomperlompie" — complete with pipes and canvas buckets. The following year another troupe, The Plantation Darkies came into being. It was also organized by the Dantu Brothers.

Other sporting clubs such as the Wanderers followed suit and turned out on New Year's morning in a motley arrey of colourful costumes "to make sport", they said. These clubs or "klopse", were out on the razzle-dazzle and today the coons are still referred to by the local population as the "klopse".

At first they performed on Woodstock beach, on the Rhodes Estate and later on the old pier and Green Point cycle track. In 1906 they were first formed into boards and competitions began to be held at the track in addition to the street performances. There were two kinds of these organized revellers — the American minstrel types and the "privates".

The privates were "of all nations" and included "The Cherry Pickers", "Cape Town Hawkers", "Lords of London", "Barcelona Bullfighters", "Beau Brummels", "Spanish Noblemen", "Highwaymen", "Desert Arabs" and "Mexican Cattle Thieves".

Then towards the end of the 1920s, it was decided to abolish the "privates" and the minstrels carried on the coon tradition. Two troupes of privates, however, remain till today.

"Coon custom's roots in slavery" by George Manuel, *Cape Times*, December 30, 1979: 6. [DN]

1875

40.

[The Cape Town municipality passed regulations enabling police to arrest citizens for making:]

[...] any loud and unseemly noise, in any street, square, alley, or public thoroughfare

either by shouting, screaming, or yelling, by blowing upon any instrument which may disturb or interfere with the rest, peace, comfort or tranquillity of the inhabitants.

Bickford-Smith 1996: 21. [AP]

1878

41.

January 4, 1878: Grand Minstrel Night. Mr. E.H. Harvey and the Ethiopian Opera Troupe of "Black Diamonds" [...] Brother Bones and the Sable Brilliants [...] The Old Banjo

Cape Times, January 3, 1878 [DN]

1879

42.

"[...] Scottish singer David Kennedy, perhaps because of his own profession, had noticed Malay street singers on his visit in March 1879:

"In the beautiful starry evenings your hear their part-songs, some of the fellows singing at their open windows; and now and again a string of them extending across the broad street and shouting ballads to the accompaniment of guitar and concertina... the latest success of the concert-room is reproduced immediately in the streets of the Malay quarter" [...]

Bickford-Smith 1995: 188. [AB]

1880s

43.

"Emancipation Day" now means nothing at the Cape, but in the 1880's the liberation of the slaves only fifty years earlier was still celebrated. Outside the house of some dignified Malays in the Oriental quarter stands a group of Coloured people, who have brought along two "guys", one male and one female, in whose honour they play on a variety of quaint instruments [...]

[caption for an etching by Heinrich Egersdörfer; the musical instruments are concertina, violin and drum; the kids wear firemen's helmets]

Rosenthal 1960. [NAE]

44.
It is Guy Fawkes, and we all know this coloured orchestra, which is going from door to door, collecting pennies. With drum, fiddle and squashbox, their main purpose is to make a noise, and who will doubt that they have succeeded?

[caption for an etching by Heinrich Egersdörfer originally titled "Coloured Orchestra".]

Rosenthal 1960. [NAE]

1884

45.
Boom! Boom! Boom! Here comes the Salvation Army with the traditional tambourines, bugles and other instruments, they march along a Cape Town Street, their red and gold banners flying proudly. The scene belongs to the time when citizens still regard the "Army" as a strange innovation, but both its white and coloured members are thoroughly enjoying themselves and the attitude of the onlookers is not unfriendly.

[Caption for an etching by Heinrich Egersdörfer published in the *South African Illustrated News*, October 11, 1884: 316, and originally titled: "Salvation Army, Street Scene, Cape Town".]

Rosenthal 1960. [NAE]

1885

46.
Yesterday was the anniversary of the emancipation of the slaves in this colony in 1834. Some of their descendants expressed their appreciations of the blessings of freedom by all that was exasperating in the way of processions, accompanied with hideous noises.

Cape Times, December 2, 1885

[quoted in Bickford-Smith 1994: 298, AA]

47.
Round and round they whirl — these vigorous dancers taking their pleasure on the platteland. The men in uniform are members of the Barkly Rangers, lately returned from the 1885 expedition to occupy Bechuanaland. The coloured orchestra is one of Egersdörfer's masterpieces, particularly the man with the concertina on the left.

[Caption for an etching by Heinrich Egersdörfer published in: *The South African Illustrated News* 2 (39), September 26, 1885: 461, and originally titled: "The Orchestra, Last Days of the Bechuanaland Expedition"]

Rosenthal 1960. [NAE]

1886

48.

The frivolous coloured inhabitants of Cape Town, who take a holiday on the slightest pretext, indulged their peculiar notions in regard thereto by going about in large bodies dressed most fantastically, carrying "guys", and headed by blowers of wind and players of stringed instruments, who evoked from their horrible monsters the most discordant and blatant noises that ever deafened human ears. At night time these people added further inflictions upon the suffering citizens of Cape Town in the shape of vocalisation, singing selections from their weird music with variations taken from "Rule Britannia" and the "Old Hundredth". They also carried Chinese lanterns and banners as they proceeded through the streets playing their discords, beating the drum, singing and shouting, and the strange glinting of the combined light from the street lamps and the Chinese lanterns fell upon their dark faces, they seemed like so many uncanny spirits broken loose from — say the adamantine chains of the Nether World. But it was their mode of enjoyment and strange as it is that such noises should be regarded as pleasant, it showed at least the desire on their part to celebrate the birth of a new year.

On New Year's Day itself, beyond what has been already described, there were few organisations of pleasure trips or parties, the outing to Maitland of the Irish Volunteer Corps being the only one worthy of mention. Except for the displays of our coloured brethren, the town was very quiet [...]

Cape Times, Monday, January 4, 1886 [DN]

49.

[...] Occasionally songs were overtly political. One variation of *Rule, Britannia!* that we know of, and that may not have been understood by English-speaking journalists included the lines:

"Kom Brittanje, jy beskaaf
Maak die nasies tot jou slaaf...
Jou dwinglandy sal gou verneer
Die wat hulle land eige noem."
(Come Britannia, the civilising one,
Make the nations into slaves...
You tyranny will soon humble
Those that call this land their own)

Bickford-Smith 1995: 188 [AB]

[song and translation quoted from: Christine Winberg, *The 'Ghoemaliedjies' of the Cape Muslims: Remnants of a slave culture*, unpublished paper presented to the English Department Seminar, University of Cape Town, 1991; see also Winberg ca. 1992: 93]

50.

[...] In 1886 there were very active street parades of the Muslim street choirs and the Coons. In the same year there was a move to close the Muslim cemeteries in the Bo-Kap.

The people were able to organise resistance to this because of their tradition of organisation with the Carnival,'' says Davids. [...]

"Coon carnivals at the end of the road?" by Shannon Neill [interview with Achmat Davids], *South*, January 21, 1994: 8. [GM]

51.

[...] The riots [following the closure of the Muslim cemeteries on Signal Hill in January 1886] took place in the depths of depression, when discontent born of poverty was at its most intense. The disturbances came shortly after an occasion which twentieth-century participants were to call the "Coon Carnival": the parading of lower-class Black Capetonians through the city at New Year, the traditional slave holiday, in elaborate dress and to the accompaniment of musical instruments and popular songs [...]

We may suspect that the anti-authoritarianism and communal solidarity displayed in the weeks leading up to and beyond New Year's Day, as well as anger stemming from particular hardship caused by the depression, fed into the subsequent incidents during the "illegal" burial of a Muslim child on 17 January. Three thousand people took part in the burial, an act of defiance in itself. After the funeral part of the crowd attacked fifteen policemen who had followed the procession. Stones were thrown and several policemen were injured, one quite seriously. Two White onlookers were also hurt. The fighting stopped only when the Commissioner of Police assured the crowd that his men had not intended to prevent the burial [...]

Bickford-Smith 1995: 112-113. [AB]

52.

[...] madame Pearmain shows that she is an enthusiast in her devotion to her art when she condescends to appear as a negress and blacks her face in proper minstrel style [...]

[review of "a new and entirely original melo-dramatic farcical comedy in 3 acts by Mark Melford entitled TURNED UP!", Theater Royal. One of the characters in the play is named Mr. Caraway Bones]

The Cape Argus, Thursday December 2, 1886: 2. [DN]

1887

53.
In 1887, a writer noted that "bands of musicians paraded the streets and played the young year into existence in a manner that would baffle description."

Franck, Hatfield and Manuel 1967: 111. [NAE]

54.
Cassiem Dantu remembered how he and his brothers formed the Cape of Good Hope Sports Club after a band of Negro minstrels had visited the Cape during Queen Victoria's Jubilee celebrations in 1887. A carnival troupe was formed, called The Darktown Fire Brigade, which paraded outside the old Town House in Greenmarket Square, to sing the ancient firemen's jingle "Pomperlompie", while swinging canvas bucket to and fro.

Franck, Hatfield and Manuel 1967: 110. [NAE]

55.
During 1887, the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's coronation, Cape Town saw a variety of Coronation Jubilee Celebrations. Among these were the touring Negro minstrel "American Jubilee Singers". Several of their members won great popularity among the Coloureds and settled at the Cape, staying with the five Dantu brothers, who were prominent musicians and recorders of traditional Dutch songs (now Danti; the last brother died about 1965). These people started the Cape of Good Hope Sports Club, which paraded at New Year dressed as firemen. Green (1951: 193) states that the Dantus' descendants claim that "the first troupes appeared on January 1st, 1888, wearing the American minstrel costumes and with the blackened faces seen to this day.

Stone 1971: 3. [AP]

56.
The origin which appears to be authentic is based on the visit of an American negro minstrel troupe to Cape Town during 1887, the year of queen Victoria's Jubilee. Their bright costumes and coon songs made an irresistible appeal to the music loving coloured people. Among those who heard the minstrels and memorized their songs were some Malay singers, members of the Dantu family. Their descendants claim that the Dantus started the coons, and that the first troupes appeared on January 1, 1888, wearing the American minstrel costumes and with the blackened faces seen to this day.

Green 1951: 193. [NAE]

57.

Dr. du Plessis has traced public appearances of these choirs [*Malay Choirs*] back to New Year's Eve 1887, when the Star of Independance Malay Club held a torchlight procession.

Green 1951: 195 [NAE]

[See 1888]

58.

The Army was very much in evidence on New Year's Day. Preceded by a band, consisting of a couple of cornets, two or three drums and the inevitable trombone, the Army marched round the streets from the afternoon till late in the evening, gathering forces as they progressed. At half past seven, after a final short circuit, the band and its followers, whose complexions were of almost as many different shades as their raiment and the score or two of flags and banners they carried assembled at the Drill Hall in Loop street, where they spent a couple of hours in very vigorous vocal and instrumental music [...]

"New Year's doing", *The Cape Argus Mail Edition*, January 5, 1887: 4. [DN]

59.

H.A. DEVERE's Novelty Company, Mutual Hall, direct from London

[Advertisements for a show by Devere's Novelty Company; Mr. H.A. Devere is a "celebrated banjoist and comedian"; the troupe probably included several Americans]

The Cape Argus, Saturday, June 11, 1887: 2, and Tuesday, June 14, 1887: 2. [DN]

60.

Suburban Choral Union, A Grand Jubilee Concert, Claremont Hall, Monday, June 20th, Miss Gertrude Wynne will sing "Home, Sweet Home" and "The Minstrel Boy".

The Cape Argus, Saturday, June 18, 1887: 2. [DN]

61.

Grand Jubilee Concert by The Cape Town Amateur Band, 22nd June, Exhibition Building, to conclude with the C.T. Amateur Band Minstrel Troupe of 20 Performers (including Bones and Tambo).

The Cape Argus, Tuesday, June 21, 1887: 2. [DN]

62.
Grand Jubilee Performance, Mutual Hall, Christy Minstrel Troupe of H.M.S. Raleigh, full band of 30 performers; the proceeds will be devoted to the Sailors' Home at Simon's Bay.

[Most probably composed of members of the ship's crew]

The Cape Argus, Tuesday, June 21, 1887: 2. [DN]

63.
The Royal Scots Variety Company: Part II, Minstrel Troupe, songs, jokes and ballads; Part III, side-splitting Negro farce entitled: "Waxination Gratis".

The Cape Argus, Tuesday, July 5, 1887: 2. [DN]

64.
''Sir, — Will you allow me a small place in your valuable journal to draw the attention of our City Fathers to their decision in not allowing a band to perform in our public market? I speak as a respectable working man, who after a whole week's hard toil has now been robbed of his only few hours' amusement and pastime of a Saturday night, provided for us by these Malay stall-holders. Why should hundreds of my fellow workmen be denied a few hours sociable amusement for the sake of a few rowdies, as reported to the Public Works Committee by one Black and a Malay ? [...]

British Workman

"Musical marketing, To the Editor of the 'Cape Argus'", *The Cape Argus*, Thursday, August 18, 1887: 2. [DN]

65.
[...] The programme was divided into two parts, the first consisting of serious and comic songs, interspersed with witty dialogues and racy jokes, and the second part consisting of a Nigger farce entitled "Rum' Uns from Rome" [...] a song by Mr. Tambo, "Duck Foot Sue" and "Dinah Said Yah" by Mr. Bones being re-demanded [...] As said before, the songs were interspersed with the invariable dialogues between Mr. Bones, Mr. Tambo and Mr. Johnson, which caused frequent roars of laughter [...] A comic song, a banjo song, and a piano-forte duet preceded the farce, and these three items alone were enough to make one's side ache, by the farce — well, the audience literally roared again [...]

[The troupe includes the names of several well-known local amateurs: Meessrs. D. Boonzaier, E.S. Steytler, G.H. Smith, etc. The performances were repeated in January 1888; see: *Argus*, January 9 & 13, 1888]

"Rover Minstrels", *The Cape Argus*, Friday, December 16, 1887: 2. [DN]

1888

66.

The forerunners of Cape Town's revellers who traditionally brighten the New Year with hearty festivals of laughter, song and dance, once wore powdered wigs, satin breeches and feathered hats [...]

These men were unlike their present-day counterparts. They did not caper and dance with gay abandon to music that was full of vivacity and all the irrational valour of the poor. Instead they marched in serried ranks, like disciplined soldiers on parade. The emphasis was on their motley regalia, for they were masqueraders — dignified members of sporting clubs who once a year cut loose and, having thrown decorum to the winds, disported themselves in silks, satins and brocades, and doffed the gaily-plumed caps as they marched through the city streets.

The term "coon" was not a popular one then. The troupes who passed through the Mother City in broad, scintillating groups were known as "clubs" or "klopse". They were "making sports", they said, and dignity at the New Year was considered a dull virtue. It was a time when otherwise staid characters were prepared to cut a caper. The reason why they were so distinct in dress and demeanour from the glittering, lively coons processions of today was because they were more or less spontaneously-formed bands of revellers who were football players or cricketers during the year [...]

Side by side with these New Year Clubs evolved gradually the minstrel troupes [...]

The minstrels, who were constantly growing in number and in popularity, had modelled themselves on the dress and antics of the American Jubilee Singers. In 1888 such a concert party visited South Africa and after performing at the old Opera House, left an impression on the musically inclined Coloured people of the old Cape. It is believed the minstrel pattern of the present-day coons was copied originally from these Negro concert performers.

The club performers, who were also known as "privates", disappeared for good from the New Year carnivals in the late 1920's.

Manuel 1977: 72-73. [NAE]

67.

[...] Among many who heard the Negro minstrels [from America] perform, and who memorized their songs were a Malay family named Dantu. It is believed that the Dantu family were the originators of the Coon carnival, and that the first troupe appeared on January 1, 1888, wearing American minstrel costume with blackened faces [...]

"Coon Carnival" by Arthur Sidney East, *The Cape Argus*, January 26, 1956. [DN]

68.
The five Dantu brothers had founded one of the singing and sporting clubs, the Cape of Good Hope Sports Club. On 1 January 1888, members of this club appeared in American minstrel costume and with blackened faces.

Bickford-Smith 1994: 300. [AA]

69.
Mr. C.J. Cole, a well-known baker of the early days, has been singled out as the originator of the coons — though he certainly had no intention of holding carnival in the city. It was simply his custom to give his employees an annual picnic on New Year's Day at Protea, near Kirstenbosch. He used twelve-horse drawn bread-vans to convey the men, and brought up the rear in his own trap — thus making up the baker's dozen. The men were dressed in white and the leading van conveyed musicians. A newspaper report of the procession said, in 1888: "It was several times mistaken for Fillis's Circus".

Franck, Hatfield and Manuel 1967: 111. [NAE]

70.
A quaint custom was observed in the Cape in the old days by the less inhibited citizens. They used to "bury the old year" a few minutes before midnight and immediately afterwards they greeted the New Year with shouts of: "The year is dead — long live the year!"

That was in the days when New Year revellers of Cape Town belonged mainly to sporting clubs, and the Afrikaans name for them was *klopse* (clubs). The ceremony was preceded by festive marches to the yew tree that used to stand on Church Square. There they gave the old year, with all its disappointments, its fears and its sorrows, a symbolical burial, and one old writer describing the event in 1888 said that their torchlight processions with "impromptu bands innumerable" added "to the grandeur of the funeral rites of the dead year." [...]

"Coons 'buried' the old year" by George Manuel, *Cape Times*, December 29, 1979 [DN]

[see also: Franck, Hatfield and Manuell 1967: 111]

71.
A Malay torchlight procession paraded the streets during the evening; but it was a sorry turn out, consisting of about thirty torch bearers and individuals with chinese lanterns, the *cortege* being escorted by a couple of policemen in order to preserve order.

The Cape Argus Weekly Edition, January 6, 1888: 17. [WEE]

72.

Many of our readers have no doubt witnessed this strange spectacle, but generally in some dingy back-street tenement, surrounded by squads of odoriferous natives. They will this evening, however, have an opportunity of seeing it under more comfortable circumstances, as arrangements have been made for its production at the Exhibition building [...]

"Malay Kalifa", *The Cape Argus*, Friday, April 20, 1888: 3. [DN]

73.

A melodramatic novelty, in the form of a Malay Kalifa, was enacted last evening in the Exhibition Building, in the presence of over a thousand visitors. Although of frequent occurrence in Cape Town amongst the Malay Residents, this is only the second occasion on which this singular celebration has been performed in public, the previous production taking place in honour of the visit to Cape Town of the Duke of Edinburgh some twenty five years ago. The curiosity evinced by the Cape Town people in the event was not unnatural, for the disclosures fully warranted it. A Kalifa, probably so called from the Indian Goddess Kali, after whom Calcutta was named, is a feast among the Malays, very similar in its import to that of a tournament in the days of Norman England. It is simply an exhibition of sleight of hand and activity in presence of dangerous weapons, and not a religious feast as many suppose. It has, in addition, a more interesting and gallant association, for, from amongst the more athletic young actors in the Kalifa, the Malay maiden actually accept her beau. The whole celebration as performed last evening, abounded with Eastern romance and mystery. The stage of the large hall had been nicely fitted up for the occasion. Palm trees stood on either side of the proscenium, and the stage was filled with Mahometan symbols and a miniature mosque like structure, behind which were seated a number of Malays, whose vocal efforts added considerably to the mystic nature of the revels. Seated round the stage were the drummers, who, with the indispensable tom-tom, kept up a continual boom from which actors evidently took their time. All the participants in the Kalifa were dressed in white, with green sashes across the chest. The whole of the production was under the charge of Hadje Saydien, who also presided at the Celebration of twenty five years ago. The proceedings opened with exhibition of agility with knives. The Malays, about twelve in number, ranged them in two rows up the stage, and facing each other. In each hand was a dagger, and, at a given signal, the tom-toms beat. The choir sang a monotonous lay, and the acrobats commenced a most eccentric dance at given intervals, and quite in unison, carrying the knives as close to their bodies, with rapid motion, as they might without actually stabbing themselves. A loud round of applause greeted this effort. The next item was a similar exhibition but with curved swords and to six eight time. The gambols were most erratic, but all thoroughly in unison; and the

men seemed to be attempting to hack off their hands. One or two were actually wounded, and they dropped out, being disqualified from taking any further part in the Kalifa. The number gradually diminished and only seven were left when two swords each were served out. Then the most extraordinary feats were performed. The actors slashed away seemingly in a most reckless manner, and dancing all the time. The swords points were placed into their eyes and ears, and the edges round their throats, but such was their ability that not a scratch was sustained. This performance gained the loudest plaudits from the audience. After further and similar feasts had been performed, some very pretty Eastern dances were given by fair votaries of Terpsichore and the men went through the wonderful [...] dance, of which much has been written and said. The intervals were very pleasurably enlivened by the presence of the band of the Royal Inniskilling Fusilliers, who under Mr. Wallace played some very choice and enjoyable selections.

"Malay Kalifa", *The Cape Argus*, Saturday, April 21, 1888: 3. [DN]

1889

74.

[...] The fact that specimens of many a nationality are to be met during such a stroll is not, perhaps, one calling for any boast; but the motley gatherings are by no means an unmixed evil. They are happy, good-humoured crowds which hold high carnival in the streets of Cape Town at holiday season. Compared with the English "high ripper" or the Continental cut-throat or garrotter, the Cape boy is a veritable treasure. All he desires is to amuse and to be amused, and if, in achieving his object, he makes a greater noise than nervous people relish, there is the satisfaction of knowing that his love of funs ends there, and that he has not to resort to more violent measures to gratify his holiday humour. Given a violin or a banjo, and the Malay is a king for hours, and has no soul for breaking down trees, up-rooting shrubs, and generally maliciously injuring everybody and everything that comes in his way [...] Plein street was of course the centre of attractions on New Year's Eve [...] as the evening wore on many of the people wended their way towards various places of worship to take part in Watch Night Services, whilst the groups of Malays paraded the streets chanting a favourite lay. There was little other minstrelsey [...]

"New year's eve in Cape Town", *The Cape Argus Weekly Edition*, January 2, 1889: 4. [WEE]

75.

Negroic minstrelsy, as a popular amusement, has been known throughout the world for the last half-century. When E.P. Christy (the founder and originator of this class of entertainment) first started in New York City in 1842, the *quid nuncs* said it would have

an ephemeral existence. But at St. James' Hall, London, the Christy's have warbled their sweetest strains to large audiences for twenty two consecutive years, and without any apparent diminution in popular favour. On the first appearance at the Mutual Hall, some years ago, of the Harvey, Dougherty, Braham and Leslie Minstrels, they crowded the place for weeks together, and subsequently played a six months' season in Kimberley at prices ranging from five shillings to half-a-guinea. Mr. Braham, in introducing his new troupe of Empire Minstrels to the play going citizens of Cape Town, may rely upon every encouragement to his enterprise; provided the lines he so successfully carried out on his previous visit are followed. The new troupe is reported to be very strong, both vocally and in instrumental music, and doubtless a full house will witness the opening performances at the Mutual Hall on Monday next.

"The Empire Minstrels", *The Cape Argus*, Wednesday, December 4, 1889: 3. [DN]

76.

[...] The curtain rose on the semi-circle of minstrels on the stage, of whom W. Boyce and W.B. Moseley, who supplied the nigger element, had blackened faces [...] the minstrel part of the programme was brought to an end with an amusing phantom chorus, entitled "Somnambula" in which the Niggers were alarmed by the appearance of a ghost. The second part was of the music hall order, but it was entirely free from vulgarity [...] the entertainment concluded with a burlesque of "Il Trovatore", which proved to be very laughable, while the music was first class.

"Braham's Empire Minstrels", *The Cape Argus*, Tuesday, December 10, 1889: 3. [DN]

1890

77.

The Malays of Cape Town have not made such a show for several years as they have presented for us at the Cricket Tournament at Newlands this week. However we may have lamented the spread of Asiatic influence in Cape Town, we have always had a saving clause for the Malays. They have not come here to try for their own fortunes against the European, but their fathers were brought here against their own will as slaves for the convenience and comfort of our predecessors, and they have the same rights as Europeans have to regard this country as their home. Of all the people benefited by emancipation day, they have proved themselves most worthy. We have had no Hayti in Cape Town by reason of the presence of Malays in our midst. As far as men of alien race can amalgamate with a European community, they have become an integral part of the population of Cape Town. We fancy that old inhabitants of Cape Town, although they may occasionally say unpleasant things of the Malays and regret that Cape Town should be exposed to the reproach of being a '"Malay Town", would feel a little sorry if they saw no more of the familiar figures in the street — the

trustworthy Malay mason who knows exactly what kind of work we require, the Malay laundress whose preparation of our shirt fronts is a fine wit, the steady Malay driver who can complacently skirt a precipice, or the invaluable "old Malay man" who knows as much as an old English factotum, and perhaps a thing or two besides.

The Malays have been subject to some changes during the last few years, but such changes are not noted in our concern for the still more remarkable changes going on amongst the European community, owing to the race for gold. Old observers of local life in Cape Town saw how the Malay community was thrown completely out of gear by the small-pox epidemic to which they were the principal victims. The epidemic was followed by some exceedingly distressful years which told upon all classes, and not least upon the once gay and happy Moslems. The picnic party and the smart Monday turn out, were under a cloud for some time, and Malay costumes, always a picturesque local feature, suffered a sad sea-change. With the return of general prosperity, however, the Malays have pulled themselves together again. The Kalifa and the weddings have again drawn European spectators, and the great demand for masons and other handicraftsmen have put money in the Malay pocket, and restored something of the old buoyancy to the community. Anyone watching the departure of the main line night trains will have seen how largely the Malays have availed themselves of the opportunity of going to Johannesburg to make their fortunes. Just a few years ago they went to Kimberley. At Johannesburg, as at Kimberley, the Malays have established themselves as a distinct branch of the population; and if they are as useful as they are in Cape Town, Johannesburg will have no reason to regret their migration. A strong corps of Malay laundresses will certainly be a godsend to the much tired Johannesburgers. That the Malays of Johannesburg intend to hold up their heads in the world is evidenced by their sending down a team of cricketers to try conclusions with their old compatriots of the Cape Peninsula. The gaudy appearance of the Newlands field during the matches seem to point to a complete revival of Malay prosperity, and it says something for the tolerance and the good feeling of the European population in Cape Town that the fortune of the olive-complexioned cricketers should have been followed with no small degree of interest.

Will the Malays of Cape Town ever make anything of themselves in the sense that a European attaches to the words? They have the ball at their feet, for if they choose to educate their young people, nothing can stand in their way. We no more understand them than we can understand any of the races of mysterious Asia; but that they are capable of a higher degree of civilisation than the simpler African races there cannot be a shadow of doubt. Whatever they are with their dark tendency to arts of magic and their Asiatic fatalism, we shall always have them with us in this country; so their future cannot be a matter of indifference to us. Their talent, as in music, runs at present into grooves, more peculiar than pleasant; but that they are capable of great advancements

none who knows them can deny. The mere fact of the younger generations of Malays having taken to the English game of cricket as they have during the last few years points to an awakening amongst them, the results of which will be of the highest interest. Only the other day a young Malay who had distinguished himself at the South African College School was sent to Europe to complete his education as a medical man. If the Malays are really turning the corner and mean to enter the race of European civilisation, there may be a little outburst of old fashioned jealousy here and there; but on the whole the people of Cape Town will bid them God-speed.

"The Malays", *The Cape Argus*, Wednesday, January 15, 1890: 2. [DN]

78.

Vaudeville Hall, The Jubilee Singers And Virginia Concert Company, Ten Coloured Vocalists From U.S. America, Will Give Six Of Their Inimitable Concerts Commencing Monday Evening, 30th June, Under the Distinguished Patronage and in the presence of His Excellency the Governor Sir HENRY B. LOCH and Lady LOCH. They sing their Weird Plaintive Melodies of the former Slaves of America, Solos, Glees, Quartettes, &c., by Modern Composers [...]

The Cape Argus, Thursday, June 26, 1890. [DN]

79.

The Virginia Concert Party made their first appearance in South Africa at the Vaudeville Hall last night. The house was packed in every part, among those present being His Excellency the Governor, Lady Loch and suite. Singing such as is given by the Virginia Concert Company has never before been heard in this country. Their selection consists of a peculiar kind of part song, the different voices joining in almost unexpected moments with a wild kind of symphony. At one moment one has the full force of all the voices, and the next is straining the ears listening to a melody which seems to be fading away. It would be useless for others to attempt to sing music of this description, it is without doubt one of the attributes of the race to which they belong, and in their most sacred songs they seem at times inspired as if they were lifting up their voices in praise of God with hopes of liberty. The solo vocalists were Mr. O.F. McAdoo, Mr. M.H. Hodges, Miss Belle F. Gibbons and Miss Mattie E. Allen. After each selection the audience were loud in their applause, and encores were frequent. Mr. O.F. McAdoo sang "A Hundred Fathoms Deep": a song which is well suited to his voice, and for which he earned a well-merited encore. Miss Gibbons sang "Who Will Buy My Roses Red" [...] and quite captivated the audience by her excellent rendition. She has a sweet soprano voice and what is more, knows how to use it. Mr. Hodges sang "Afloat" and Miss Allan, "We Met Too Late". In a short speech before the second part of the programme, Mr. McAdoo gave the audience particulars of the concert company and

explained that although not posing entirely as philanthropists, a certain amount of the money earned by his company was devoted to the foundation of scholarships and for the education of the coloured race at Hampton, Va. The Virginia Concert Company appear every evening this week.

[The Virginia Concert Party or Virginia Jubilee Singers was a troupe of African American minstrels organised by Orpheus M. McAdoo who played an important part in transforming the aesthetics of the minstrels; they had a very strong impact on South African performers, musicians and New Year revellers. See also: *Imvo Zabantsundu*, Thursday, October 16, 1890 and Thursday, October 30, 1890, and ERLMANN 1991]

"Jubilee Singers At The Vaudeville", *The Cape Argus*, Tuesday, July 1st, 1890. [DN]

1892

80.

None of these [Netherlands songs] was written down in the early years, but about seventy-five years ago [ie. 1892] a Malay choir leader named Rasdien Cornelius, helped by a retired Dutch sailor, Frans de Jongh, began to record what was rapidly being lost. When Rasdien began, a mere twenty songs were all that could be recalled by the younger singers. Other songs were imported from Holland and the oldest Malays were persuaded to recall snatches of ditties sung in their youth [...]

Franck, Hatfield, Manuel 1967: 108. [NAE]

81.

The Jubilee Singers' first tour of South Africa closed with a performance in Cape Town on January 25, 1892. After a three-year tour of Australia, the troupe returned to Cape Town on June 29, 1895.

Erlmann 1991: 35. [AA]

82.

METROPOLITAN HALL, Burg Street, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, December 28th, 29th, and 30th, Grand concerts by the AFRICAN NATIVE QUINTET (Previous to their Departure for America). These Singers have had the honour of appearing before Queen Victoria (by special command) And have sung with great success throughout the United Kingdom.

The Cape Argus, Thursday, December 22, 1892: 4. [DN]

1893

83.

[The Muslim Mara Soeker condemns:] [...] "the going about the streets singing and the jollification. It is all against our belief and religion, and I feel ashamed that these young people should be knocking about the streets in the way they do."

quoted in: Bickford-smith 1996: 27. [AP]

1894

84.

Mr. C.J. Cole, a Cape Town baker, has been credited with bringing the coons to life. With an eye on publicity, Mr. Cole provided his bakery boys with top hats and costumes and followed the troupe in his trap. But that, I find, was six years after the first appearance of the coons. [ie. 1888]

Green 1951: 193. [NAE]

ca. 1900

85.

Early this century there settled in the Malay Quarter a sailor from Holland who was to have a profound influence on the choirs. He was Frans de Jong, he wore the fez and took a leading part in the singing [...] De Jong sent to Amsterdam for the song pamphlets used by street singers. In this way the Malays acquired many of the foreign songs which often puzzle the listener — the old Russian national anthem, for example and the "Marseillaise". Student songs in Latin came from the same source.

Among the pupils of De Jong was Rasdien Cornelius, greatest Malay singer of this century.

Green 1951: 196. [NAE]

1904

86.

[Mr. Bert H. Hart (71 at the time of publication), life member of the Green Point Cricket Club, recalls how the first Coon Carnival competitions were organized at the Green Point Track "55 years ago", that is in 1904; see 1907]

[...] The whole thing was the result of a gamble by a live-wire Australian. He was Harry Coggins, whom some old-timers will remember as a Western Province cricketer. Harry, a member of the Green Point club, knew that the club's finances were at rock bottom.

Yet he persuaded club officials to spend about £ 100 — mostly on tick — on trophies for the Cape Coons. In those days they performed only sporadically. He suggested that a Coon Carnival should be held at the club's headquarters, the Green Point Track, and that the club should take any profits from that venture.

You will appreciate that £ 100 was a great deal of money in those days and there were some people who felt the gamble might prove costly. However, Harry was right. The Track was crowded and the carnival such a success that it became a regular feature ever after.

The Green Point Cricket Club was put back on its feet and all the trophies were paid for. I know that because I was the man who sold them to Harry. I used in those days to work for a Cape Town firm of silversmiths [...]

"Carnival n°1 was gamble to aid cricket", *Cape Times*, January 10, 1959. [DN]

1906

87.

Those early coons sang and danced without thought of reward. In 1906, however, *The Cape Argus* offered a trophy and organized the first Green Point Track carnival. That event has now become a coon tradition.

Green 1951: 193. [NAE]

88.

[...] Mr. Tobin, again raising, said a document had just been placed in his hands which redounded infinitely to the credit of District Six. During the whole of Christmas and New Year's Holidays there was absolutely no "lock-up" for drunkenness [...] and in fact the only charge in that period was one of smashing a window pane.

Mr. Petersen was rejoiced to hear this of much maligned n° 6. He was sorry to say, though, that, as a rule, they — the coloured people — did not behave themselves properly. He contrasted Sea Point and Green Point with Caledon and Hanover streets. In the former, all was quiet, in the latter, all was noise.

"Yesterday's 'Stone'", *Argus*, January 8, 1906. [DN]

III.
The multiplication of competitive carnivals, 1907–1939

1907

1.

[...] The most popular features of the afternoon competitions were the troupe events such as the grand march past, and marching and singing competitions [...]

Their [the troupes'] clever performance was the result of months of conscientious practice.

It is very certain that the brilliant success will result in the carnival being an annual affair, and with the experience gained at this initial venture, the future competition will be national in character. The lessees of the Track were breaking new ground but they know that their efforts will be seconded by the coloured community and Europeans alike.

"Coloured Minstrel Carnival, Magnificent Spectacle", *Argus*, January 2, 1907. [DN]

2.

Residents in the Peninsula were on Tuesday afternoon afforded an opportunity of viewing a gathering on the Green Point Track of two or three hundred of those coloured mummers without whom New Year's Day in Cape Town is not complete. The occasion was a coloured carnival, and apparently the event must have been considered one of the main events of the holiday, for close on 7000 people found the road which led to the Track, packed the grand stands, and bordered the railings for a considerable distance. Naturally the coloured community was in force to cheer their compatriots engaged in the competitions, but there were also upwards of two thousand Europeans on the ground.

[...] There were seven bands of mummers, decked out in the brightest colours, and accompanied by string bands. These formed the procession from the Parade. They created something of a stir on their passage through the streets, and were followed by a huge crowd of all colours, classes, and creeds [...]

The marching competition was the first item. The troupes paraded on the cinder path, every member of each troupe, with coat tails flying, prancing fantastically along the rattling of the bones, the tum-tum of the drums, the banging of tambourines, and the strumming of banjo and guitar [...] Each corps had its marching song. Sung in that half chart, half mumble of the Cape mummer, and almost drowned in the strumming

of the string instruments and the cheers of the spectators, it was difficult to ascertain what these were. They were typical coon ditties, and the guitar and banjo formed an effective accompaniment [...]

Despite the fact that the function was the initial one of its kind, the committee did excellently [...] No awards were made on Tuesday, it being understood that the list would be communicated to the press within the next day or so [...]

In the evening the grounds were illuminated and various competitions were carried out, in the presence of a large crowd. The revels concluded at a late hour [...]

"Coloured Carnival Revels at Green Point Track", *Cape Times*, Thursday, January 3, 1907: 7. [DN]

3.

[When the first competitions were held] There were two kinds of these organized revellers: the coons, who blackened their faces and danced and the "privates" who consisted of sporting bodies whose members wore fancy dress and were led by brass and string bands. They marched in ranks like soldiers.

More and more troupes grew out of the existing ones. There were the "Cherry Pickers", "The Lords of London", "Bullfighters", "Beau Brummels", "Spanish Noblemen", "Highwaymen", "Desert Arabs" and "The Mexican Cattle Thieves".

Since then the "Privates" have disappeared and the coons with blackened faces hold sway [...]

"Coon Carnival, Its Roots are in Slavery" by George Manuel, *Cape Times*, December 18, 1954. [DN]

4.

FINEST OUTDOOR SHOW EVER HELD IN SOUTH AFRICA, Second Annual Grand *Coloured Minstrel Carnival* [...] 2000 Competitors [...]

Argus, December 12, 1907: 4. [DN]

5.

A general meeting of representatives and other interested in the second annual coloured carnival will be held this evening in the Workmen's Hall, Aspelling street, Cape Town, at eight o' clock. Captains of troupes are kindly requested to hand in their entry forms with list of members so that the committee can arrange the programme as soon as possible. Entries close definitely to-night.

"Coloured Carnival", *Argus*, December 13, 1907. [DN]

1908

6.

Many years ago the Cape boys used to delight in marching round the streets of Cape Town and suburbs in bands, armed with guitars, banjos, and mouth organs, etc., with which they discoursed music dear to their hearts. As there was no system of training, the music which emanated from these instruments was often of an exceedingly crude and weird nature, but a few of the bands were really good. On a calm still evening the melodious twang of the banjo accompaniment to some popular cooon [sic] love song would have a soothing effect, and the song of "Lu-Lu's" love-sick swain would be greeted with great applause. Among these bands were also some fine singers, who although they clipped their words somewhat, put a depth of feeling into their songs, which seems to come naturally to them.

On some bank holidays also none were more indefatigable dancers than the dusky beau and his belle, and at Plumstead on the greensward such a scene of animation would be presented as wood [sic] be extremely hard to surpass, even in the Southern States of America. In fancy dress the Cape boy delighted. Give him an old uniform and a faded stove-pipe hat and he would emerge from his house in the most fantastic and gaudy outfit it would be possible to construct. However, in later years, these customs gradually fell into disuse, and almost disappeared entirely, until last year, when a committee was formed and, after many difficulties were overcome a most successful coloured carnival was held on the Green Point Track [...]

"Coloured Carnival, A Great Success, Coonland at the Cape This Afternoon", *Argus*, January 1, 1908: 5. [DN]

7.

[...] The object of this carnival is a good one. It is to concentrate the energies, to improve the efforts, and to educate the musical tastes of the numerous bands of coloured minstrels, which before the inauguration of the carnival used to perambulate the streets of Cape Town and suburbs on New Year's Day. These bands used to be a regular feature of the thoroughfares of the metropolis on the first day of the year, adding not a little life and colour to the otherwise deserted streets, through which they walked and danced for hours together. Their wanderings were generally of an aimless description, and so too were their musical efforts, but now that a healthy spirit of rivalry has been aroused an improvement is in many respects already noticeable [...]

With regards to the songs, it was a pity that nearly all of these were of THE AMERICAN COON variety; and that hardly a single Afrikander song was heard throughout the afternoon or evening. A little originality in this and some other directions should be attempted next year, for this slavish adherence to American coon

methods as portrayed in the pages of half-penny comic papers becomes monotonous [...]

"Feast of Lanterns". All the troupes marched around the track carrying lanterns and headed by their bands. Much ingenuity had been shown in devising lanterns of quaint shapes, such as stars which were made to revolve, and as the troupes filed past the grand stands they were vociferously applauded. The scene was most picturesque [...]

The prizes will be distributed on "Competitors' Night", January 13, at the Green Point Track, when a special programme will be presented [...]

A condition of the carnival is that no troupe can take more than one first prize [...]

"Coloured Carnival at Green Point Track, Another Success", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1908: 3. [DN]

8.

Third Annual Coloured Carnival on the Track on January 1st [...] Admission - 1/-. Grand Stand - 1/-. Owing to the **Enormous Crowds** that the carnival has attracted in the past, **1,000 Seats will be reserved at 2/6,** including admission to Ground.

Cape Times, December 12, 1908: 6; *Argus*, December 22, 1908: 4. [DN]

9.

[...] Several novelties have been introduced into this year's programme that will enhance the reputation of the coloured carnival. The Kafir dance is being looked forward eagerly. The natives have been engaged, but owing to the fact that the natives of one tribe are not familiar with the dances of other tribes, representatives from several tribes will give their own dances. The natives will be dressed in their own savage costumes, and will be armed with assegais, knobkerries, and shields. In addition to the war dance they will give several other dances, such as the Amakweeta and the Abouta, illustrative of their customs. Another great attraction will undoubtedly be the Goomah dance, which, we are assured, will create a sensation without having anything objectionable about it. The dance will be performed by a number of Malays of both sexes, and they will be accompanied by music on their own peculiar instruments [...]

"The Coloured Carnival", *Cape Times*, December 19, 1908: 9. [DN]

10.

The various troupes of coloured minstrels taking part will assemble at the Parade at 1 p.m. on Friday, and will thence march in gay procession to the Track, escorted by the five brass bands playing merry and inspiring airs [...]

The evening performance will comprise an entire change of programme and there will be a dance by the Moslems. It is not often that the Moslem community can be persuaded to perform in public, but the carnival authorities have been fortunate enough

to secure a number of Moslems of both sexes to give an exhibition of the Goomah dance. This is said by those who have had the privilege of seeing it to be one of the most weird dances possible to imagine, while it contains nothing of an objectionable nature.

Then the raw native is lending a hand to the coming carnival. It was hoped at first to have been able to show a Kafir War Dance, which would certainly have created a record sensation, as such a thing has never been shown in the Cape, at least within the memory of most of us. The coloured missionaries, however, took alarm, fearing perhaps that the savage instincts of their flocks will be aroused too much. Still, there is no objection to the tribal dances being given, and the members of the following tribes will perform: Fingoes, Bechuanas, Zulus, Gaikas and Cape Kafirs. The dances will illustrate native customs, and the principal ones will be the Amak weeta and the Abouta. In both the participants will be in savage array. The former commemorates the rites performed on the Kafir Youth attaining manhood, and the latter borders closely on war dance, inasmuch as the natives are armed with knobkerries. [...]

"The Coloured Carnival [...]", *Argus*, December 29, 1908: 6. [DN]

1909

11.

[...] Unfortunately, the displays that were to be given by the Kafirs have had to be abandoned on account of the opposition of the coloured missionaries [...]

"The Coloured Carnival, To-Day's Programme", *Cape Times*, January 1, 1909: 8. [DN]

12.

[...] The first carnival, owing to its novelty, was decidedly successful [...] The second carnival, held last year, was also a great success, but did not differ much from that held the previous year. But this year there seems to be some falling off — there seemed to be something lacking — although it was not easy exactly to say wherein the fault lay. There was, for one thing, not that enthusiasm of the two former years, nor were the costumes, generally speaking, quite so effective. It may be that the novelty of the thing has by this time worn off, or that the competitors are resting on their laurels, instead of having progressed a step further. Some of the costumes were better than last year, but on the whole they were not. It may be that the gloomy financial year has had its effect on the merry coons, or reduced their spending power [...]

"Coloured Carnival, Coons at the Track", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1909: 8. [DN]

[In 1909, the *Argus* did not publish any account of the carnival; there will be no more mention of an organised carnival in the *Cape Times* and the *Argus* until 1920]

13.
A "troupe of minstrels" were reported as singing "Marsa's in de cold, cold ground" and "De old banjo" in the Good Hope Theatre in 1909.

Bickford-Smith 1994: 300 [AA]

[see: *Cape Times*, 2 Oct. 1909]

1910

14.
[...] The "Diamond Eyes" formed the first Cape carnival club in 1910, and from that club all the others have sprung. When any single member of a club becomes sufficiently proficient, he starts a club on his own and "keeps the ball rolling". The number of clubs, therefore, increases annually [...]

"Coons Carnival Approaching", *Cape Times*, December 4, 1935. [DN]

1911

15.
[...] One feature of interest yesterday was the marching about of coloured coons — New Year's Holiday being, by common consent, dedicated to them. There was no carnival at Green Point this year, so the coloured folk contented themselves with tramping the streets, to the sound of coon music, and followed by large numbers of boys. Many of the costumes were in gorgeous colours, and showed no little ingenuity of design.

"A Wet Holiday, June in January", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1911. [DN]

1914

16.
[...] A conspicuous feature of the holiday was, as in former years, the parading of the streets by bands of gaily dressed coloured youths. These light-hearted and merry groups were many of them arrayed in most elaborate costumes, and went the rounds of their particular neighbourhoods dancing and singing to the accompaniment of guitars and banjos [...]

"The Holiday in the Peninsula", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1914. [DN]

1915

17.

[...] As usual on New Year's Day, the streets were paraded by processions of coloured carnival-makers, some of whose apparel could hardly have been eclipsed even by Joseph's coat of many colours [...]

"New Year's Day in the Cape Peninsula", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1915. [DN]

1917

18.

[...] New Year's Day and the day after are, by common consent, dedicated to the coloured serenaders. Many of these gentry, gaily bedecked with vari-coloured uniforms and strange disguises, paraded the streets to the thrum of a guitar or other musical accompaniment.

Several of the costumes displayed a great deal of ingenuity, and were noticeable for their striking effect. When it is remembered that all these troupes are purely amateurs — it is all done for the love of fine colours, music and display — a great deal of credit must be given to the originators of the more novel effects. Some years ago there used to be a great coon carnival at Green Point Track on New Year's Day, but that belongs to the past.

"Cape Town's Unofficial Holiday", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1917. [DN]

1918

19.

OUR DAY COLOURED COMMUNITY'S EFFORTS, Under Distinguished Patronage, A Grand Vocal and Orchestral Concert in the City Hall (Grand Hall) on Monday 23rd, December at 8 pm.: By the Spes Bona Orchestral and Choral Society

Argus, December 20, 1918. [DN]

1920

20.

One feature, which is unique in the Peninsula, is the procession of merry coloured coons to inaugurate the New Year. Many troupes, bedecked in brilliant colours, paraded the streets to musical accompaniment, under the direction of a marshall or arch coon, whatever his proper title may be.

Some of the costumes had been cleverly designed; and the effect was most striking. When commanded by an able chief, there were bands which performed their evolutions exceptionally neatly and smartly, and the apparently spontaneous, but often carefully

rehearsed, antics of the comic elements caused great amusement among the sightseers [...]

"Coloured Coon's Carnival", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1920: 9. [DN]

21.

It was intended to close the Coloured people's effort with the Water Carnival and Regatta at Kalk Bay; but it is now decided to finish off with a Grand Carnival on Green Point Track on Monday, 26th January, at eight o'clock. The troupes will leave the Parade at seven o'clock sharp, headed by a brass band, and the grand march past the Stand will take place at eight o'clock. Among the items for competition are Combined Choruses, Cake Walks, Banjo Solos, Comic Songs, etc.; Buck and Wing Dances. The following troupes will take part: American Sporting Club, Dusky Dina Coons, Mexican Raiders, Dahomeys, Prince of Malabars, Young American Navals, Spanish Burglars, Mexican Outlaws, Ruby Lips Coons, Wild West Indians.

"The Coloured Carnival on Green Point Track, 26th January", *A.P.O.*, January 17, 1920: 3. [WM]

22.

It may truly be said that on Monday evening all roads led to the Green Point Track, Cape Town, and that the close of the final effort of the Coloured people on behalf of the Governor-General Fund was an unqualified success, both financially and spectacularly.

Monday morning a steady downpour damped the spirits — to put it mildly — of the promoters, and must have been disappointing to thousands of people who had prepared themselves if not to pay for admission, at any rate to line the route to the Track.

At 1 o'clock the promoters decided to take "a sporting chance and carry on." Fortunately the weather cleared and one of the most enjoyable evenings was spent on Green Point Track.

The march past the Grand Stand drew rounds and rounds of applause from the spectators. Each troupe came up to the platform and sang a chorus. So well were these appreciated that troupe after troupe left the stage amidst thundering applause and showers of coppers. A long list of solos including dances, songs, and Cake Walks carried the programme to 11 p.m., every item being well rendered. Thus closed the final efforts of the Coloured people with a fitting and grand finale on the Green Point Track [...]

The whole arrangement were by choice of the troupes left in the hands of Dr. Abdurahman and Messrs. S. Reagon and Hoedmaker. Mr. Birch acted as Master of the Ceremonies. He and Messrs. Ball and Hendricks (representatives of the Troupes) were

responsible for the programme, which was carried out without a hitch. Mr. Diedericks operated the megaphone.

Mesdames Willoughby and Hoedmaker were assisted by a number of young ladies at the refreshment room.

The takings amounted to near £ 150.

[Dr Abdullah Abdurahman was born in Wellington and after studying in Glasgow became a medical doctor; in 1904, he became the first black person to be elected to the Cape Town City Council and retained his seat until his death in 1940. In 1905, he was elected president of the African Political Organisation (APO), the first influent coloured political organisation, dedicated to defending coloured peoples' political and social rights.]

"The Coloured Carnival, Green Point Track", *A.P.O.*, January 31, 1920: 8. [WM]

23.

The coloured troupes are holding a great carnival on Green, Point Track on Monday, 3rd January, in aid of the Cape Peninsula Board of Aid.

We trust the Coloured people will not fail to turn up in their hundreds.

The carnival has been organised by Dr. A. Abdurahman and Mr. S. Reagon.

Chairman: Mr. D. Diederick. Secretary: Mr. J. Bull.

Don't forget! Green Point Track,

Monday, January 3rd, at 2 p.m.

Admission 1s. Stand 6s. extra

"Great Coloured Carnival", *A.P.O.*, December 23, 1920: 7. [WM]

1921

24.

In 1921, we read of a Troupes Carnival held on 3rd January on the Green Point Track, organised by Dr. A. Abdurahman and Mr. S. Reagon. The event was reported in complimentary terms in the *A.P.O.*, and a cheque for £ 101 sh. 1 4d (R 202.15) was handed over to the Cape Town and Wynberg Board of Aid.

Van Der Ross 1973: 599. [AP]

25.

"Grand Coloured Carnival", in aid of the Board of Aid, Monday, January 3rd, 1921 Green Point Track. Chairman: D. Diederick; secretary: J. Bull; organisers: Dr. A. Abdurahman, S. Reagon. Admission: 1s; stand: 6d. Troupes: American Sporting Club; Dahomey Coons; Dusky Dinah Coons; Mexican Outlaws; Matabele Warriors; Egyptian Burglars; Spanish Burglars; American Yanks; Travelling Star Coons. Programme:

Grand March by troupes, Combined Choruses, Cake Walks, Comic Songs, Coon Songs, Sentimental Songs, etc. etc.

Argus, December 30, 1920. [DN]

26.

"Monster Minstrel Carnival", at the W.P. Rugby Ground, Newlands. "The Real Thing", 400 performers. Under the direction of the Cape Town Cricket Club. Admission: 1/-; stands 1/- extra; special reserved area 3/- (including tax).

Argus, December 30, 1920; *Cape Times*, January 1, 1921. [DN]

27.

One of the unique feature of life in the Cape Peninsula is the procession along the principal thoroughfares of coloured minstrels during the New Year holiday. A good many years ago the different troupes were got to combine at the Green Point Track, and a highly novel entertainment was given. This annual event was repeated for a few years, and then interest seemed to fade, although individual bands still obtained permission to parade the streets.

Yesterday, in addition to the carnival at Green Point, eight of the troupes marched to the Newlands Football ground [...] One of the best of the troupes was the "Queen of Tar Tars" [...] The Queen was Mazepa (not Mazeppa). She was quite a young girl; rode in what looked like a grandiose or metamorphose peanut barrow, and had her guard of honour, which fired a salute from a solitary cannon. The Queen was attired mainly in couleur de rose and wore a paper crown. Her gallant henchmen wore yellow costumes with green stripes, white stockings with green ribbons, white feather hats, and black shoes [...]

"Coloured Minstrels' Carnivals at Cycle Track and Newlands", *Argus*, January 4, 1921: 8. [AP]

28.

Seats were almost unprocurable at any price at Green Point [...] Few if any of our ragtime and coon artistes of the stage could have put more jovial abandon and more variety of action into their work than did the members of these half-dozen coon bands [...]

"Coloured Carnivals Attract Large Crowds [...]", *Argus*, January 4, 1921: 8. [DN]

29.

The Troupes Carnival, held on the 3rd January at Green Point Track was a great financial success. From a spectacular point of view it has never been equalled, and both Coloured and White people who assembled there certainly showed their appreciation

by rounds of applause that greeted every troupe, both in its march-past and in the performance of the various other items.

After paying all expenses a cheque of £ 101 1s 4d. was handed over to the Cape Town and Wynberg Board of Aid. The organisers of the function, Dr. Abdurahman, M.P.C., and Mr. Reagon, Treasurer of the A.P.O., as well as Messrs. Diedericks and Bull and the rest of the committeemen, are to be complimented on the success which crowned their efforts.

"The Coloured Carnival, £ 101 1s 4d. Handed Over to Board of Aid", *A.P.O.*, January 23, 1921: 5. [WM]

1922

30.

For the past two years a number of Coloured troupes held a Carnival on Green Point Track and handed the takings over to Charity. Last year the Cape Town and Wynberg Board of Aid benefited to the extent of over one hundred pounds. The Cape Town Cricket Club — a white club — ran a Coloured Carnival for its own benefit at Newlands. Whether that venture was a financial success or not, is not known. But, apparently, the Club saw more profits going into its pockets if it held the Carnival on Green Point Track that at Newlands, so it forestalled the Coloured Committee and booked the Track months ahead and held two Carnivals, one in the afternoon of 3rd January, and the other on the evening of the 23rd January.

How much money the white Cricket Club made out of these Coloured troupes is a secret. The profits will probably be devoted to improving the stands on the cricket ground on which no Coloured person will be permitted to sit.

We trust the City Council of Cape Town will note for what purpose the Track is being used by the Y.M.C.A., who have leased the ground to promote healthy recreation.

"Exploiting the Coloured Troupes", *A.P.O.*, January 28, 1922: 7. [WM]

31.

[...] Soon Christmas will be upon us, and Adderley Street will be filled to its utmost capacity with a great mass of people — Europeans and non-Europeans, Christian and Moslem, Jew and Gentile, all jostling each other with smiles and good humour, all animated by the spirit of the season. Up and down the mass will surge, making the most awe-inspiring noises from all sorts of instruments invented to torture and deafen the human ear. Sirens, hooters, trumpets and klaxons, are all brought into action with the triumphant result of a fearful cacophony.

Our Coloured people have their own way of enjoying this seasonal respite. The usual sporting clubs in fancy dress will be out on New Year's Day. Spanish Vaqueros, Burglars, Cow Boys, Red Indians and Mexicans will be parading Hanover and Wale

Streets, the "Voorloopers" indulging in the most weird and mirth producing antics. The pavements of these streets will be co-opted by sightseers with their chairs and soap boxes. The whole atmosphere will be full of good humour and happiness. For the moment the drudgery of homes and children, and the struggles of the past year to make things meet, will be forgotten at the sight of these animated scenes. How one wishes these happy and care free days could be prolonged; but all things, good and bad, must come to an end, and so is also this article.

[Voorloopers = drum majors]

"Christmas in Cape Town", *A.P.O.*, December 23, 1922: 7. [WM]

1923

32.

Just as the white population of Cape Town make Christmas the occasion for joy and festivity, so the coloured community make the New Year season a time for celebration, revelling, and banqueting.[...]

Saturday night in the public thoroughfares of Cape Town was in a general sense not different from the Saturday night previous. The streets were thronged with young white and coloured people and there was the same spirit of carnival in the air — frivolity, gaiety and abandon.

The actual eve of the New Year, Sunday night, passed off very quietly, the only difference, from a public point of view, being that the crowds of coloured people in Adderley street were considerably larger than usual.

This Sabbath evening parade is something which the white population regard with rather mixed feelings, and there were fears that the spirit of the season might be responsible on New Year's Eve for some little disorder. The fears were unfounded, however... Nothing untoward occurred and the crowds conducted themselves with commendable restraint — until midnight.

The chiming of clocks, ringing of bells and screaming of ships' sirens which heralded the incoming of 1923 and the outgoing of 1922 were the signal for a complete change in the attitude and conduct of the crowds in the streets. Then all restraint was thrown to the winds and merry-making was the order of the day — or night.

In the native quarters of the town the streets were filled with people of all ages singing and dancing and, apparently, tireless in their activities [...]

"New Year Revelry in Cape Town [...]", *Argus*, January 2, 1923: 9. [WM]

33.

[...] A final word about the wee mascot darkie who accompanies each troupe and stands in the foreground during the choruses. A typical young "Sambo" — all mouth and teeth

— with head and eyes turned upwards, reminding one of the coon whose mouth could not be made any bigger without putting his ears back!

"Coon Day at the Cape", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1923: 10. [DN]

1924

34.

[...] Leading the Dahomey Coons are special little boys, black faces and white suits complete and thoroughly enjoying themselves. One of them apes Charlie Chaplin. Here is a coloured Jackie Coogan if ever there was one [...]

Suddenly some kind person showered a handful of coppers on to the asphalt in front of the stand. Seeing this rain of coppers, the little boy's eyes bulged, they stood for a moment astounded by this careless flinging away of wealth and then flung themselves madly on to the coppers. In less than a minute the whole of the cattle stampers had stampeded among a shower of falling coppers and little boys punched each other heartily, fell over each other, and grovelled in the cinders for the pennies that came to them.

This kind of fun could not be resisted. As each troupe came up to sing the shower of coppers would begin [...] towards the evening, the troupes set off to march to Camp's Bay, and continue the carnival spirit well into the night [...]

"High Jinks at Green Point — Happy Coloured Carnival", *Argus*, January 3, 1924: 8. [DN]

1925

35.

[A musical production by Frances H. Gow, titled "Up from Slavery" is staged in 1925 at Cape Town's West Theatre. F.H. Gow was born in South Africa from Jamaican parents; he studied in the United States at the Tuskegee Institute. Back in South Africa, he became headmaster of the Wilberforce Institute (founded by the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1905 at Evaton, south of Johannesburg) and, later, the African Methodist Episcopal Church's first South African born bishop. He was probably Cape Town's most prominent churchman and a leader of the Coloured elite. He was also President of the African People's Organisation and was appointed President of the Coloured Advisory Council]

[...] Labeled a "venture of the Cape Town coloured community", the show was an attempt to put into dramatic form some of the ideas contained in Booker T. Washington's celebrated work of the same title. Accordingly, among the musical fare offered in *Up from Slavery*, in addition to violin playing by Gow's wife, Louise, were a variety of African-American genres including, of course, "Negro Spirituals." [...]

Erlmann 1999: 162. [AB]

1926

36.

The Pier Today 2-5 pm., Tonight 7.30-10.30 pm. Great Festival of Fun, Grand Carnival of the Coloured Community. SPECIAL AREA RESERVED FOR EUROPEANS WHO YEARLY WITNESS IN THEIR THOUSANDS this annual event of the Cape Coloured population and marvel at the surprising ingenuity and novelties displayed by the various troupes in competing for THE HANDSOME SILVER CUPS GIVEN TO THE BEST DRESSED TROUPE, BEST COMBINED CHORUS, BEST ALL ROUND TROUPE. Admission 1/6 inclusive.

Cape Times, January 1, 1926. [DN]

37.

Literally the enjoyment was carried from one year to the next. There were neither caste nor colour distinction in the riot of merriment. All night long grotesque figures parade on the road swirling their paper steamers [sic: i.e. streamers] in the faces of all and sundry with complete abandon. Theatrical make-ups seemed to be the order of the evening and wherever these happy spirits wandered there was the crowd [...]

"City's Welcome to 1926 [...]", *Cape Times*, January 1, 1926: 11. [DN]

38.

The arrivals from other parts of the Peninsula [...] were heavy on New Year's day, big contingents of non-Europeans coming [...] to take part in the Carnival of the coloured community to be held on the Pier [...]

The troupes assembled on the Grand Parade and they made an interesting spectacle. They rejoiced in the usual fantastic names and variety of costumes and created no end of amusement. Jazz-stepping, tango dancing and cutting the most agile capers, they eventually left the Parade and proceeded down Adderley street to the Pier, where they competed for cups offered for the best dressed troupes, best combined chorus, and best all-around troupe.

The carnival was continued at night, when another very-large attendance of spectators, European and non-European, were attracted, and with the brilliant lighting of the Pier the general effect was very fine. [...]

There were also a number of the coloured troupes parading on the streets, mostly Wale, Adderley, Caledon and Hanover streets, and these were attended each by its crowd of friends [...]

"New Year's Day, How and Where it Was Spent [...]", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1926:10. [DN]

1927

39.

An up-country visitor was heard to remark on Saturday that Cape Town on New Year's Day could be appropriately called "Coon Town".

Capetonians can appreciate the reference. The New Year carnival gambols of coloured coons are nothing new to them [...]

All day long they parade the city, and even yesterday they were still to be seen jazzing and cake-walking through the streets [...]

The rivalry which exists between the many competing troupes is kept at fever heat, and throughout the year, the strictest secrecy is maintained regarding the title and distinctive dress of each party [...]

It may be well to explain that these coloured performers do not all class themselves as "coons". Some are known as "privates" — these being troupes which set out to represent something more dignified in the way of fancy dress and ceremonial pageantry with less of the accompanying element of acrobatic dancing so noticeable among the "coons". This marks a gradual change from the custom of a few years ago — and a change for the better, one may safely add [...]

"Coloured Carnival, Predominating Spirit of Pageantry, 'Coons' in the Background", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1927: 11. [DN]

40.

[...] The Prince of Lilies whose troupe were dressed in red silk received the first prize for the "Privates" and the Alabama Coons dressed in dazzling jazz costumes, the first prize for coons.

It was a charleston carnival this year. The dances in the march past were definitely charlestonic, though at the same time strongly reminiscent of last year. Charleston critics from Johannesburg would have found plenty of proof that the coloured people dance the charleston as though it belonged to them. Some 3 000 people watched the long programme without being bored [...]

"Coloured Carnival", *Argus*, January 3, 1927: 12. [DN]

41.

Grand Coloured Carnival, The Pier Cape Town, 2nd January 1928. Monster Programme, Massed Dancing Troupes [...] Special area reserved for Europeans . Admission: Europeans 1/8; Non Europeans 1/-

[participating troupes: Mexican Mash Riders, Desert Outlaws, Happy High-Born Coons, American Darkies, Happy Bar Boys, Red Eye Coons, Flush Glee Party, Smiling Coons, S.A. Independent Darkies, Coming Stars Moffees Troupe]

Argus, December 31, 1927: 10. [DN]

1928

42.

[...] Yesterday in a long procession, one detachment after another, they came marching through the city on the way to the Pier, singing, dancing and playing a variety of instruments, their costumes making a blaze of colour in the city streets. There were "Smiling" coons and "Red Eye" Alabama coons and representatives of the "California" cotton fields; there were Mexican Riders and Red Indians, complete with a canoe and bloodthirsty chiefs on horses, and there was a contingent which described itself as "the Desert Outlaws" and there were ladies of quality, dressed in crowns and gorgeous raiment and borne superbly on chariots that on ordinary days are harnessed to baser uses.

"A New Year of 'Jazz', Saturday Night's Celebrations in the City Streets, Bedlam of Hideous Noises", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1928: 10. [DN]

1929

43.

[...] The greatest crowds congregated between Strand Street and the Pier, where there was little vehicular traffic. All nationalities in the Peninsula were represented, but the merrymakers consisted mainly of young people of both sexes who were out to have a "jolly good time". Rowdyism and "free fights" however, were almost entirely absent.

Years ago Europeans used to take the lead in these street rejoicings, but last night the Coloured community seemed to be in the majority [...]

"Seing the Old Year Out", *Cape Times*, January 1, 1929. [DN]

44.

Cape Town's coons can compare with the best in the United States. I learnt this yesterday when talking to one of the judges at the Coloured Carnival at Green Point.

The judge was captain Douglas Butler who has watched and judged similar pageants in various parts of the world.

"These chaps are artistic" he told me. "What we have to learn in the way of music and rhythm comes natural to them. They show very good taste in their dress, and are about as smart as any coons I have seen.

The only thing they lack is a touch of discipline. If I had them on the square an hour every day for a month, I would turn them out so smart that they should be definitely the finest coons in the world."

"Talk at the Tavern [...] Our Excellent Coons", *Argus*, January 2, 1929: 15. [DN]

1930

45.

[...] The coloured people's revelry last night passed off without any serious incident or accident in any part of the Peninsula [...]

[a sergeant at Hanover Street Police Station declared that there has been no serious incident]

"But there is no knowing what might happen before day break" he added.

"The coons begin their dances when the New Year starts, and then we may be busy."

"Quiet New Year's Eve", *Cape Times*, January 1, 1930. [DN]

46.

[...] The Weeping Darkies arrange themselves in close formation in front of the little wooden open air stage facing the grand stand, making a brave display of Royal blue and orange yellow, and begin to sing the chorus of "Carolina Moon".

As the song ends, the banjos strum again and at once begins the click-clack of the bones; and the whole troupe is set in motion. Everywhere legs and arms shoot out in rhythmic eccentricities, as they move off.

The next item is a comic song by one of the Diamond Eyed Coons, with a chorus of banjoists. He is dressed in burlesque female attire, and carries a tiny parasol. His voice is carried away by the wind but his antics draw periodical bursts of delight from the spectators as he rolls his white eyeballs or prances up and down the wooden stage [...]

"Coloured Coons' Gay Carnival", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1930: 12. [DN]

1931

47.

[...] The weirder the contortions of the dancers, the greater the applause; and the more cacophonous the music, the more it was appreciated! The stilt-walkers provided an agreeable element of thrills [...]

"Coloured 'Coons' Carnival", *Argus* January 2, 1931: 12. [DN]

48.

[...] A police official at the courts said this year had been much quieter than last year. The coloured "coons" carnival at the Green Point Track he thought had something to do with it. Men who usually spent their time in the bars kept out of trouble by spending their day shouting themselves hoarse at the Track. Four "coons" however were found the worse for wear, in Hout street, in the evening.

"Well Behaved Cape Town [...] Carnival Attractions", *Argus*, January 3, 1931: 8. [DN]

49.
"Spanish Cavaliers" serenading on the stage at the Green Point Track on New Year's day, when more than 800 coloured "coons" paraded, in weird costumes that cost in all over £ 100. This annual event, as usual, scored a great success.

[caption of a picture showing revellers wearing sombreros, one of them mounted on a horse, playing guitars, banjos and violin.]

"At the Coon Carnival", *Cape Times Supplement*, January 6, 1931. [DN]

1933

50.
[...] Grouped on the pavement edge, on the broken stone stoeps of the old upper Wale street houses, and under the shop verandahs of the main roads to the suburbs, whole families took up their posts for the day to watch the fun.

They gathered there long before the procession assembled, and when it had gone they waited on through the day for its return march [...]

"Coloured People's Festival", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1933: 11. [DN]

51.
Between sunset on Saturday and noon yesterday, no fewer than seven coloured people were admitted to the Somerset Hospital suffering from stab wounds and cuts which had been inflicted by knives, razors and other sharp instruments, during brawls on New Year's Eve and early morning. [...]

In addition to this number, many others were treated for minor injuries received in common assaults.

During the Christmas week end, no fewer than four coloured people died as a result of stab wounds.

"Seven Coloured Men Stabbed", *Cape Times*, January 2, 1933. [DN]

1934

52.
[...] But there is more than mere entertainment in these coon carnivals; there is a cultural value that can hardly be overestimated. The costumes may be crude affairs which would be derided by any musical comedy impresario; the music may be simple, the singing may be shrill, the dancing untrained; but counterbalancing all this is the fact that the festivals are a direct and spontaneous expression of the soul of the people.

We Europeans are such a blasé lot those days that we can scarcely understand what spontaneity is [...]

It is this sincerity that annually triumphs over obvious shortcomings and draws large crowds of Europeans to applaud the show at the Track on New Year's Day and, on the following day, on the Pier [...]

There are two dangers to be guarded against: one is the pot-hunting spirit and the other is sophistication. Once the prizes increase out of proportion, competition will grow out of its present friendliness into a business; and business never goes hand in hand with the real folk spirit. Sophistication will do to the "klops" what it did to folk dancing and other festivals in England. They will die out, only to be revived in later generations by well-meaning people who don't realise that such things can't be revived. Unless they come straight from the hearts of the people they are merely "arty" and heaven save us from "arty" coon festivals!

"Coons in Carnival", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1934:10 [DN] [editorial]

53.

[Rasdien Cornelius] lived to lead the Malay Choir which sang, for the first time in Cape history, in 1934 at Government House.

Green: 1951: 196. [NAE]

54.

Grand Floodlit Pageant, A Century of Progress 1834-1934. The Greatest Performance in Non-European History. Emancipation Centenary. Green Point Track, Cape Town. Thursday and Friday, January 10th and 11th, At 8 o'clock each evening. 500 performers, period costumes, authentic history, genuine settings, massed choirs, negro spirituals, tribal songs and dances, orchestra and brass band.

Reserved seats: 5/-. / unreserved seats: 2/6 and 1/6 [...]

Under the Patronage of H. H. The Governor General, His Hon. The Administrator, The Right Hon. The Prime Minister, Count and Countess Labis, The Right Hon. General Smuts, The Mayor and Mayoress of Cape Town.

Argus, December 29, 1934: 10. [DN]

1935

55.

[...] The carnival — and the preparations for it — is one of the finest outlets for the letting off of superfluous enthusiasm that could possibly be devised. It is one of those

entertainments at which it is genuinely impossible to say whether the performers or the spectators get the greatest enjoyment.

Long may it flourish.

It is the lighter side to coloured activities over the holiday season. There is a more serious side and that is in the Conference of the African People's Organisation which begins as usual, on the second day of the New Year.

"The World Goes By, Coloured Activities, Coon Carnival", *Cape Times*, January 1, 1935. [DN]

56.

Dr. H.F. Gow, on behalf of the Emancipation Centenary Pageant to be held to-night, appeals particularly to the Europeans in to-night's audience to bear in mind that:

The pageant is entirely a Non-European effort, conceived, organised and produced by Non-Europeans who are members of coloured races working together for the first time in such a venture.

The pageant seeks less to show individual historical happening than to show what those happenings meant to the spirit of the Non-Europeans and what they mean to-day in his awakening consciousness of nationhood.

That only music can convey this meaning and that the meaning of music can only be clear to those who listen with sympathy.

That it would be fairest to the coloured people if the audience provided itself with the souvenir programmes which try to explain what acting — especially outdoor acting — cannot; and finally:

That the night sea-air on Green Point Track may be a little cool for those who are not accustomed to it so that it would be as well if the audience brought warm coats.

"To-Night's Centenary Pageant, Dr. Gow's Reminder", *Argus*, January 10, 1935: 15. [DN]

57.

[...] the natural miming abilities of the coloured people [...] This pageant is the first big public demonstration of the histrionic and artistic capabilities of our coloured population [...]

"Some Pages from Cape History, Coloured Pageant at the Track", *Cape Times*, January 11, 1935. [DN]

58.
A split in the ranks of the "Coon Cabinet" has resulted in the formation of the Jubilee Coloured Carnival Board in opposition to the Western Province Coloured Carnival.

"Coon Carnivals in the Cape, Two to Be Held this YearDue to 'Split in the Cabinet'", *Cape Times*, December 28, 1935. [DN]

1936

59.
Wednesday's performance, which was staged by the Western Province Coloured Carnival Board, was an excellent show, but was disgracefully managed.

Fully 6000 people were present, mostly non-Europeans. Hundreds climbed the fences and gained access without paying.

As soon as the Grand March Past of Coons had begun there was a general stampede of spectators from every quarter. Hundreds left their seats and invaded the arena itself. Hundreds more followed, and the 11 policemen and one police officer present were powerless in their efforts to keep the crowds back.

At 3 o'clock the entire grand stand, the lower half of which had been reserved for Europeans, was occupied by coloured people [...]

This state of affair [the spectators' unruly behaviour] continued throughout the afternoon, and the majority of Europeans present left early in disgust [...]

At times the police used sticks with which they beat the legs of those standing in the front line, but that made matters worse, and several times sharp words and much rough handling seemed to be on the point of leading to an ugly situation [...]

Six hours after the last Coons had left the Track the whole Grand Stand [at the Green Point Track] went up in flames [...]

"Coloured Carnival Fiasco, An Excellent Show Badly Managed", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1936. [DN]

60.
A visit to the Track on Wednesday afternoon, when eight coloured troupes held their annual singing and dancing competitions under the auspices of the Western Province Carnival Board must have left the average European convinced that Cape Town has an asset in the Coloured Carnival, the value of which is not fully realised. The carnival spirit, which was strongly evident in the abandon, the good spirits and joyous dancing of the competitors, was marred by faulty organisation; and yet one realised that here was a material for a carnival which, if properly organised, would be one of Cape Town biggest attractions during the festive season. The spectators were considerably

inconvenienced by the lack of adequate booking and seating arrangements and the inability of the police to control the unruly crowd; but the main drawback was the lack of vision on the part of the organisers, which forced the respective troupes to advance to the grand stand in splendid isolation, where they had to check the ardour of the dance in order to clamber on to a small platform and resolve into a concert party, with the carnival spirit in abeyance until they retired to make way for the next troupe. The spirit of carnival is movement [...]

"The Coons' Carnival, An Asset which is not Fully Appreciated" from Dr. I.D. Du Plessis (University of Cape Town), *Cape Times*, January 6, 1936. [DN]

61.

[...] Although Cape Town's Coon Carnivals are confined mainly to the New Year holidays, the activities of the 30 or more Carnival Clubs that take part in them continue throughout the whole of January.

Motorists in Cape Town or the suburbs are almost certain to meet on any night in January at least one of these brightly dressed bands who dance along for miles with apparently tireless energy. For after the Carnivals are over the Clubs have a busy time visiting the homes of different members each night and giving concerts to friends and neighbours.

Sometimes a member who can afford to do so will provide refreshments for the whole troupe and the party will continue far into the night with songs and dances.

The climax of all this activity comes toward the end of January when the Carnival Boards to which the Clubs are affiliated hold a final concert [...]

Every effort is made to keep the uniforms a secret, and although the colour scheme chosen by a particular club may become an open secret, the captain of each club keeps the actual design to himself until the last possible moment.

Then, a week or two before the New Year, the secret is revealed to members and there begins a furious fitting and cutting and stitching to get anything between 30 and 50 elaborate costumes ready for the Carnival. Tailor members of the club take charge of the work which is done at night behind locked doors, lest some chance intruder might get a glimpse of the costume [...]

Recently several writers to the *Cape Times* have expressed regret that the troupes should be divided under three different Carnival Boards [...]

Members of the coloured community say, however, that there is an unfortunate and strong division, which could only be overcome if the Carnival were to be organised by Europeans. The Carnivals are, however, so essentially an institution of the coloured people that they are naturally reluctant to let them out of their hands. They are hoping that before long the rival groups will see the advantage of co-operation and find some

compromise whereby they can work in harmony and stage a [...] spectacular New Year Carnival.

"Coon Carnival Gaiety", *Cape Times*, January 14, 1936. [DN]

62.

[On the opening of the Lion's Head Club by a Mr. Gibbs] [...] It was formed and exists for the convenience of coloured citizens whose tastes lie on a higher cultural plane than most of their contemporaries [...] I say in all seriousness that I have never been in any night club anywhere where everybody was so scrupulous of their neighbours' comfort and enjoyment [...]

Membership is confined to coloured people who are obviously of the school teacher, clerk and student class. [...]

I must hand out a small bouquet to the Pierce Brothers who gave a variety turn on the Mill's Brothers lines plus some excellent grotesque buck and wing dancing [...]

...the undeniable good it [*the club*] is doing in providing recreation for worthy people who otherwise might be tricked through sheer boredom into attending half-baked political meetings and listening to seditious clap-trap that such gatherings engender [...]

Cape Times, September 11, 1936. [DN]

63.

[...] it [the carnival] represents for many of them [the revellers] an escape from a life in the poorer areas of the city which is the very antithesis of the gaiety, colour and abandon of the carnival. In place of their drab, everyday clothes, they wear brightly coloured costumes; they have many happy hours of music and laughter.

"We don't know what we'd do without the carnival" one of them told a representative of the Cape Times.

"Carnival Time is Here Again", *Cape Times*, December 17, 1936. [DN]

1937

64.

Cape Town's coons — it occurred to me when I saw them on the Track on Saturday — are internationally minded.

For instance, there were the Broadway Gentlemen Singing Coons (I know Broadway — but I'd hate to try to define a "Broadway Gentleman"!). Then the Warriors of Mahratta, with bright yellow robes and fierce-looking, curved, scimitars, bringing a breath of the East to Green Point. They, in turn, were followed by the London Hawker Jubilee Coons. None of them has probably ever seen a London hawker, but that didn't

prevent them from very creditably impersonating the "pearlies", complete with "moke" and barrow.

From London to the Blue Danube — the Blue Danube Troubadours, singing plaintively, "Rose of No Man's Land". The troubadours gave way to the blood-thirsty Kikuyu Warriors with knives between teeth, and long, menacing spears.

Finally, from Africa to America's Southern State — The Millionaire Darkies, the Alabama Coons, the Dawn Darkies, and the Young Louisiana Coons, all with one common characteristic — dynamic energy.

As they marched past the grand-stand in a kaleidoscope of yellow, green and white satin, they resembled a cavalcade of contortionists, and their singing, guitar-strumming and dancing drew rounds of applause from the rows of closely packed spectators, of whom the European element provided at least 50 per cent.

If they did not have the polished technique and the mastery of all the intricate steps which belong to the "hoofers" I have seen down in Haarlem [sic], these coons showed no less energy, no less "pep and punch", as they gyrated gaily and pranced prodigiously in front of the admiring crowd.

"Coons Make Merry at the Track, Internationally-Minded Troops, Broadway, London, and Alabama, Spectacular Singing and Dancing", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1937. [DN]

65.

Bright parasols bobbing like poppies in the sunshine, gaudy colours flashing, coat tails fluttering in the wind, nimble feet dancing to the accompaniment of banjos, guitars and other instruments, dark bodies swaying in rhythm, swarms of black folks — such was the Coon Carnival on New Year's Day [...]

At the Green Point Track amused white visitors sat in one end of the grandstand, a vociferous coon audience in the other. Little coons scrambled like squirrels over the roof. Mounted police chased coons off forbidden territory and kept the crowds off the field [...]

Eight groups competed for honours in appearance and entertainment. Vanity was gratified by vivid colours and dashing designs. Loud stripes were most popular, with top hats the favourite headgear [...] The White Eye Coons distinguished themselves by green and pink checked ginghams with caps and a smear of paint over one eye. [...]

Some coons wore splashes of red on their cheeks and some had blackened their faces to a darker tinge. Appurtenances included floor mops, parasols, canes, banners, floats, horses, wooden swords and musical instruments [...]

It was coons' day, and all through the night the haunting melody of their monotonous dance music their gaiety and their doleful songs danced into the dreams of those outsiders who were given glimpse of the Cape coloured festivities.

"The Coloured People's Day', Visitor's Impressions of Coon Carnival", (by Henrietta McKaughan, an American visitor to Cape Town), *Cape Times*, January 5, 1937. [DN]

1938

66.

[...] A feature was the presence of many young coons — some of them seemed scarcely more than babies — and hundreds of Europeans were keen to take snapshots of them. Many, however, were so timid that it was difficult to get them to face the camera [...]

In the march past often the leader of a troupe would advance with a broom for a baton, but it was manipulated with such dexterity that it ceased to be incongruous [...]

One comic singer brought with him his own stage properties, a pair of steps and a window and with these illustrated his song "When I'm Cleaning Windows".

The special item competition was a great success [...]

"Coon's Day in Cape Town [...]", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1938. [DN]

67.

[...] the "Malay" choirs were mobilised into a Cape Malay Choir Board in 1938 by Afrikaans cultural brokers Dr. I.D. du Plessis and Benny Osler.

"Coon Carnival" by Shamiel Jeppie, *A.D.A.* 8, 1st and 2nd quarter 1990: 23. [GM]

68.

[...] Last night a representative of the Cape Times made a tour through Cape Town's coloured quarters to see and hear the coon clubs at practice. Each of the dozen clubs visited consisted of about 60 members, who were packed like sardines in a tin in small attics, cellars and backrooms, which had been stripped of all furniture.

Nowhere were there electric lights. One or two candles stuck in the neck of a bottle, flickering in a corner, illuminated the stuffy and smelly rooms.

Each club must practice in relays, because of the lack of room. There was a variety of musical instruments including drums, banjos, guitars, mandolins, violins and violas.

Each "troupe captain'" has been chosen for his musical qualities, and his experience in directing choirs of this kind. He indicates what song is to be sung, when the orchestra must play at its loudest and so forth.

If some coloured people dislike orderliness, they are not to be found among these coons. The discipline is very strict, the captain snaps his orders in real drill-sergeant style, the members of the club jump to it without a murmur and the rehearsal runs smoothly.

The majority of the songs have English words, but some clubs have several Dutch songs on their repertoire. Many of these are nearly a hundred years old and an attempt is being made to preserve them for future generations.

"Next Week's Coon Carnivals", *Cape Times*, December 29, 1938. [DN]

1939

69.

[...] A midnight film show attracted hundreds of people and long before 12 o'clock on Sunday, January 1st, the bioscope was crowded out. Hundreds gathered outside determined to see the first of the New Year Coons, since they could not see the bioscope show.

Scenes were witnessed in Hanover Street that were reminiscent of a busy Friday night. Long past midnight young people paraded the street, and scores of children scampered about, while innumerable cars sped their hooting way up this principal highway of District Six. At odd corners groups of boys with improvised bands played snappy tunes, while others performed "shimmy shakes" and other coon dances to the amusement of the onlookers.

Lantern Coons

The first coons appeared about 1 a.m. They carried lanterns and ensigns, which informed the world that they belonged to some sporting club. Dressed in white flannels, they marched up and down.

Meanwhile, the merry bones of the boys continued. "*Januarie, Februarie, Mei*" they sang while the gyrations of the small dancers became all the more intricate and amusing.

Benches and chairs already lined the streets. Towards dawn the first carnival coons appeared, shining in their purple, green, gold, and crimson costumes, and fresh for the day's prancing, dancing, and singing. Hanover street was as crowded as ever.

The Revelry Begins

The new Year revelry had begun in full force now. All day long hundreds of people lined four deep in places along the streets where the coons were to pass. Both the onlookers and their entertainers never seemed to tire of it all.

Brilliant costumes, flashy silk hats, emblazoned ensigns were the order of the day. Gaiety and sprightliness were the air. To the non-Europeans of the District "Coon Time" is a very merry dancing, laughing, and unthinking time.

Coronation Carnival Board

[...] The Coloured Coronation Carnival Board which has under its jurisdiction twelve troupes, held their carnival at Green Point Track on January 3rd. The troupes were led by the Moravian Brass Band.

During the morning the members of the Coming Stars M. Concert Troupe entertained the early comers on the Track. The Malay Boys Brigade of Port Elizabeth smartly turned out were also present, and marched to town with the coons.

Trophies Presented

Mrs. Councillor Z. Gool and Advocate Harry Snitcher presented the prizes and trophies. Addressing the troupes, Mrs. Gool said that their dancing, rhythmic movements and singing were of a very high standard. She expressed the hope that at next New Year festivities there would be a United Carnival Board, for she felt that only by unity could the troupes acquire strength and attain a higher standard of performance.

Two special awards were made to the Moravian Brass Band and the Moslem Boys Brigade of Port Elizabeth.

[Zainunnisa "Cissie" Gool was the daughter of Dr Abdullah Abdurahman; in 1935, she co-founded the National Liberation League (NLL), of which she was the first president; then the NLL melted into the Non-Europe United Front, and Cissie Gool was again elected as its president; both organisations were at the forefront of the struggle against segregation. In 1938, she was elected to the Cape Town City Council, and kept her seat until her death in 1963]

"Brilliant Coon Carnivals Greet the New Year, Gay Troupes Parade City Highways, Hanover Street Thronged at Midnight", *The Cape Standard*, Tuesday, January 10, 1939: 2. [WM]

70.

The fact that the Coloured coons sang imported songs was lamented both by Dr. I.-D. du Plessis of "Die Moleier en die Afrikaans Volkslied" fame, and Professor Kirby, who wrote "The Musical Instruments of the Native Races of South Africa."

At one of the coon concerts last week Dr. du Plessis and Professor Kirby suggested that the coons should combine, and get back to the melodies of the country and its people. The *Cape Argus*, strangely enough, in a sub-leader applauds the suggestion, and expresses its regret that the indigenous song and music as preserved by the Malay choirs should be overwhelmed by foreign importations.

One of Cape Town's foremost Coloured authorities on Coloured and Malay music in an interview with the *Cape Standard*, thinks the suggestion both ridiculous and impracticable.

"The Coloured Coons", he said, "are out to enjoy themselves. The American songs and music have a swing that suit the New Year revelry admirably. If the learned professors wish to remedy it, why do not the Afrikaner people write snappy little ditties suitable for the coons. The club members themselves have the originality and initiative to compose their own march or 'jol' to meet the immediate need and then drop it.

Anyway, why should the poor despised Coloured coons, who are looked down upon at other times of the year as disreputable and despicable people by most Europeans, be called upon to preserve the old Afrikaans culture for the Europeans. Why do the Afrikaners not follow the Malay Choir's example, and preserve the old songs and dances for their 'na gening' themselves."

"Coons and Afrikaans Culture, 'Ridiculous Suggestion'", *The Cape Standard*, Tuesday, January 10, 1939: 2. [WM]

IV.
Facing Apartheid, 1940–1968

1940

1.

[...] Here is an article written by a young Coloured man of Wynberg, who signs himself as "Coloured Student" [...]

"Don't I like Coons?" you ask. No. Positively and emphatically not. I dislike them. If the term is not too strong, I detest them. How any body of persons can spend weeks, perhaps months, preparing costumes, rehearsing songs, organising on a large scale in order to appear at a certain date and, for the benefit (or otherwise) of the general public, perform a series of gyrations and other writhing and threshing movements more suited to a snake when its head is firmly held, I should imagine, or a fowl when its head has been chopped off, than to human beings, is beyond me. And, after all, that is practically all that Coons do [...]

A few days ago I saw an advertisement in a local paper: "Great Coon and 'M' Concert", or words to that effect. What could "M" stand for, I wondered. Misery? No. Madcap? Hardly. Minute Brain Capacity? Improbable. Then it dawned upon me. Moffie. I almost turned sick with disgust. A Moffie concert. To think that people (that they are my people makes me more disgusted) could sink so low as to organise these people, who should be in a hospital or some similar place, away from the public, into a source of entertainment is terrible. They are sexually abnormal — hermaphroditic — in a pitiable condition, physically and mentally; the very thought of them should be repulsive to all but the scientists. I ask you, what type of mind has the person who organises these people — who uses this abnormality to furnish amusement for the public? And what type of mind has the person who patronizes these concerts? If these "Moffies" are not really sexually abnormal, then they as imitators are worse than the genuine hermaphrodites.

Throughout the last few years intensive agitation has been carried on for the Coloured people. We think back on headlines and mottoes: "Better facilities for Coloured people"; "Away with slums"; "Equality with the European", etc., and every year all those who hope to see the Coloured people economically, socially and culturally improved receive the disappointing and disillusioning reply FROM THE COLOURED PEOPLE THEMSELVES in the form of Coon and Moffie festivals.

Why do the Europeans not have Coon Carnivals and Moffie Concerts? Is it because they do not feel happy and gay at this time of the year? Have they not also sexually

abnormal people? Yes? Why, then, do not they give expression to their happiness as we do, i.e. by means of Coon Festivals? Why do they not display their sexually abnormal people as we do? You may have many answers but mine is this — they have more race pride than we have! They think more of themselves than we do of ourselves. Why do they then patronise Coloured Coon Carnivals? Because it amuses and pleases them to think of the Coloured people doing what they themselves are too proud to do. It gives them a satisfying feeling of superiority over us. And can we blame them in this respect? Are they wrong? No!

If you do not participate in the shows you probably patronise them — you encourage them; you laugh at and with them; you spur them on to "better" and more degrading forms of amusement. Not more degrading to the Coons but to the coloured people — to YOU!

Do you not see what you are doing? Your children also see and follow the Coons. Hundreds of children participate in the shows — in the minds of these children are sown the seeds of vulgarity and hooliganism — the seeds that grow and eventually develop into the finished article — the skolly boy! [...]

Perhaps because the displays are attended by one or two local notables and perhaps opened by an important gentleman (all Europeans) you think that the Coons are "all right". Consider these men are public men, they are practically obliged to attend these shows and say fine things; inwardly I am sure they feel disgusted at the Coloured people's primitiveness — and those who don't feel disgusted at it feel pleased with it. In the same way that the master does not wish his slave to become educated and improve economically, socially, and culturally, so many Europeans do not wish the Coloured people to grow out of the Coon stage of primitiveness.

[*Moffies* are men parading as women, most of them homosexuals; many troupes include moffies who march ahead of the rest; some of them also sing. *Skollies* may be just ill-mannered children, but most often rowdy young men, members of the gangs which haunt coloured townships.]

"Slashing Attack on Coloured Coons, I Don't Like Them And I Give My Reasons, 'Disgusting and Degrading Festivals'", *The Cape Standard*, January 9, 1940: 3.

2.

An Extract From a Letter Written Home by a Visitor From England

[...] The eve of New Year is used by the Choirs for parades through the streets to the music of their own bands. Bunting, waving across certain streets, indicated that here a Choir must pass. A group would form round the house of one of their number and songs would be sung. Sometimes, from one house would appear the elaborately designed "symbol" of the Choir... the Eiffel Tower or a football field or some other effigy, picked out in small electric lights. The streets were crowded and from numerous doorways one heard the beat of improvised drums and snatches of song [...]

[At the Green Point Track] We could not sit with our friends because there were SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR EUROPEANS. Why on earth this should be done at a carnival which is entirely produced by Coloured people passes my understanding. It might bring along a few white people to the shows, but it certainly keeps away quite a lot of thinking non-Europeans who naturally resent a Colour-Bar at such a time. Reserved seats are quite permissible, I think, and, in any case, white people who are interested will come along. And if some of the "pigmentocracy" stay away... well, the Carnival will not be the less gay on that account [...]

"Thank Goodness for Coons", *The Sun*, January 12, 1940: 3. [DN]

3.

ABOLISH COON FESTIVALS! [...] It may be fun to a certain section of the Coloured community but to others who are the proud possessors of a minimum amount of common sense these festivals make them vividly picture all the funny and nasty remarks that are bound to be passed by Europeans, especially at such moment as this when the Coloured community are trying to uplift themselves culturally [...] Why do these troupes [...] still persist in making some of the Coloured community look foolish? [...] "NOT AMUSED"

"Our Readers' Views on Coons", *The Cape Standard*, January 16, 1940: 3. [WM]

4.

CARNIVAL COONS DEFENDED [...] It is difficult to imagine a New Year's day without the Coons. It is the only time that a very large section of our people can enjoy themselves either as Coons or as onlookers. The carnivals definitely light up the dull existence of the labouring class [...] The Carnival, above all, keeps them out of the drunken brawls and other outrages which are more disreputable to the Coloured race than the so-called foolishness of the Coons. Perhaps it is perhaps [sic] the Coloured Carnival is typically Coloured and has no European counterpart here in South Africa that some of our educated people decry them [...] Perhaps Coloured Student has not studied sufficiently about the manners and customs of mankind to know that Europeans elsewhere are humans just as the Coloureds, and their revelry is not considered foolish and degrading [...] E.E.R. ABRAHAMSE

"Our Readers' Views on Coons", *The Cape Standard*, January 16, 1940: 3. [WM]

5.

Coons Reduce Holiday Crime [...] Sir,— I, for one of thousands cannot understand in which way the Coons could be detrimental to the upliftment of our race. Be it the case, the Varsity Rag Day must be more so to the European citizens.

During the Coon Carnival season the police have very little crime to deal with, both serious and petty. The majority of these said Coons come from respectable homes, but owing to unfortunate circumstances are shunned by their brothers and sisters who are more blassed [sic] with this world's goods. Why should they be grudged the only free enjoyment they are allowed?

Hoping that "Student" will suggest ways and means for the upliftment of the Coons and thereby the edification of the Coloureds. KING COONS SON

"Our Readers' Views on Coons", *The Cape Standard*, January 16, 1940: 3. [WM]

6.

Moffies Are Harmless [...] He ["Coloured Student" see: 1] asks : "Why do the Europeans not have Coon Carnivals?"

He would no doubt be surprised to hear that carnivals and festivals are held every year all over the world. Let him think but of the carnivals at Venice. That our Coon Carnivals are different shows originality. For "Coloured Student" to vent his disgust on the "Moffie", who is a harmless creature, is to reveal the pettiness of his spite.

"Our Readers' Views on Coons", *The Cape Standard*, January 16, 1940: 3. [WM]

7.

A Coon Carnival Organiser Replies [...] The Coon Carnival is no idle and vulgar sort of sport or amusement, nor is it degrading and disgusting, as it appears to our learned friend ["Coloured Student" see: 1].

The Coons or, to be more correct, those who partake in the Coon Carnivals are not all skollies. The Coon Carnivals do not nourish hooliganism, nor do they encourage vulgarity, but they tend to act quite the other way about, for during the time they occur a very serious attempt is made to compel the skollies to submit to some sort of order and discipline [...] First of all, the Coon Carnivals help to keep at least some of the skollies off the street corners during the New Year holidays and thereby assist in diminishing the number of crimes which they annually commit [...] Secondly, I can state that in the past my Board has provided valuable assistance to various charities by organising concerts and displays for the purpose of raising funds in their aid [...]

The Board is under the impression that the Moffies are just members of a Concert Party and is quite ignorant of their sex. The information that Coloured Student gives about their sex is indeed enlightening to the Board and it is apparent that he must have

taken a lot of trouble to obtain information [...] F. ROBERTSON [organiser of the *Coloured Carnival Coronation Board*]

"Our Readers' Views on Coons", *The Cape Standard*, January 16, 1940: 4. [WM]

8.

A EUROPEAN'S VIEW ON THE COONS. Sir, — With reference to the criticism levelled at the Coons, permit me to quote expressions of the people themselves.

Doctor: "The Coons are a great source of entertainment for the people. As for the 'Moffies', well, there are as many 'Pansies' among the Whites as 'Moffies' among the Coloureds. Whilst we laugh and joke about our sexual misfits the Europeans are more secretive on such a delicate question. As for skolly boys, it is a matter of skin or condition, or both."

Vegetable Hawker: "All the year I work and no one is going to stop me enjoying the 'Kloops' [sic]."

European Resident for 40 Years in District Six: "The clubs are not what they used to be. The art, songs, and general appearance seemed better years ago. Of course the non-European people used to be skilled workers in those days and wages were good. There was not that poverty and division between the Coloured people themselves. To-day it seems that the so-called better class Coloured look down upon their poor relatives. I am convinced, however, that the people themselves, with their love for music and laughter, will eventually come out tops. And we need a little less criticism and a little more work."

Municipal Worker: "I agree with the views expressed by the writer in the Standard ["Coloured Student" see: 1]. The Coons are degrading." [...]

The Cape Standard, January 16, 1940. [WM]

9.

When I first saw the coons some years ago, I was impressed by the way they took possession of the town. They were vivacious, jolly and yet considerate. Some Europeans regarded them with a benevolent indifference, others were interested and many crowded the concert space at the Pier where I watched their performance this year.

There has been, however, a decided dropping off in the number of spectators, and the level of entertainment is noticeably lower than it has been in former years. It is monotonous, and as an entertainment it is in danger of losing its erstwhile power of attraction, nothing new, except costume, distinguishing it from what we saw last year and the year before.

This is indeed a pity because there are great possibilities for the coons. Cape Town, like other big cities in the Union needs a festival time. The well wishers of the coloured

people ought to take this opportunity, and build on the structure on which the poorer section of our population has already spent so much time and energy [...]

The coons, for a few weeks of every year, are trying to show us a quick way out of the slums. They are victorious rebels against drabness, and they are rightly proud of their achievement. They introduce colour, movement, music and laughter which is so healthy in an unprivileged community.

"Coons and Coloured Ambitions" by Pathfinder, Cape *Times*, January 26, 1940. [DN]

10.

If the coon carnivals are losing their vitality as "pathfinder" [9] suggests, it is a fact of some interest, and I think it deserves a rather closer analysis [...]

The limitations of "pathfinder's" analysis are shown when he refers to the music and laughter of the carnivals as "so healthy in an underprivileged community." Is anything healthy in an underprivileged community except a conscious intention to become reasonably privileged?

It may be that the supposed decay of the carnivals is a sign of a growing consciousness of this sort, in fact of approaching maturity, and perhaps the artificial stimulus of the carnivals would inhibit, not cultivate, the embryo culture discernible in the coons' acute sense of colour and rhythm.

Certainly I do not see how a true culture can be based on escapism. Rather is a true culture based on knowledge and conscious control of one's environment.

"Carnivals and Frustration" from Mr. H. Stoeffels (Gardens), *Cape Times*, February 1, 1940. [DN]

11.

In the annual Coons' Carnival Cape Town has an asset of which the value is not fully realised either by the general public or by the troupes concerned; here we have material for a carnival which, if properly organised, would be one of the city's chief attractions during the festive season.

The spirit of carnival is movement. That is why the street parades of the coon troupes, in which their abandon, good spirits and joyous antics are much in evidence, are important: and for the same reason the competitive singing at the Track and Rosebank should be replaced by a combined parade which would culminate in a grand march past the centre pavilion.

It would be much better to regard the competitive singing as a separate event, to be held in the City Hall, after which a prize-winners' concert might be arranged [...]

To do this, the various boards which control their respective troupes would have to join forces [...]

"Co-ordinate the Coons" from Dr. I.D. Du Plessis, *Cape Times*, November 8, 1940. [DN]

12.

"Many members of the Western Province Jubilee Coloured Carnival Board have rallied to the call, and this has meant that the depleted ranks of the Coon Troupes had to be filled with younger men. This applies particularly to the older clubs", said Mr. J.W.G. Allen, the director and secretary of the W.P.J.C. Board in an interview with the "Cape Standard".

"Many Coons Have Become Soldiers", *The Cape Standard*, December 7, 1940. [WM]

13.

For the first time in Cape Town's history a combined coon and Malay carnival will be held to-morrow and Thursday at the Green Point Track.

Mr. A. Lotz, municipal manager of beach entertainments, is responsible for the organisation. On the first day local charities will benefit, on the second day 75 per cent of the gross takings will be handed over to the Governor General's War Fund [...]

All the regular and best troupes of coons will take part as usual he [Mr. Lotz] said. Most of them have been previously associated with the Coronation Coloured Carnival Board [...].

Dr. I.D. du Plessis, who has always taken a keen interest in the Malay Choirs, has been instrumental in arranging that the choirs will amalgamate with the coons at carnival [...]

Both he and Mr. Lotz expected that this would be the first of a series of centralised carnivals [...]

The Mayor of Cape Town, Mr. W. Brinton, has expressed his interest in the carnival and both Mrs. Brinton and he have given their patronage [...]

"Feature of Coons' Carnival, Malay Choirs To Sing At The Track", *Cape Times*, December 31, 1940. [DN]

1941

14.

[...] Will there be coons next year? This is what people said last time, when the war somehow seemed to say "stop" to this New Year gaiety. But Coons there were and Coons there'll be again [...]

First, let us have more coons in the streets. WHY SHUT THEM AWAY for two days at the track and at Rosebank where only a limited number can see and enjoy them? Why not organise MORE PROCESSIONS among the people who know and love them?

[...] For, though some may deny it, the competitions seem to restrain and reduce the spontaneity and verve of the people. Songs are sung in a much slower tempo; the leaders become somehow a little hesitant; the audience is too far away and the cold science of the microphone does not bring them nearer.

Next year, then, let the coons get nearer their audience in the streets. Give those crowds who cannot afford the prices at the grounds or who perhaps cannot leave their homes for so long, the chance of joining in the fun. Don't over-organise [...]

Those who remember Cape Town in the New Years past and gone, will have sighed this year for those dashing cavaliers and gay Spanish courtiers who made the coons so varied and exciting. Some of the costumes this year were brilliant and well designed but there was a sameness about most of them which need not be [...]"

"Coons For Everybody", *The Sun*, January 10, 1941: 3 & 10. [DN]

15.

"Well, the war has done at least this: the age-old rivalry between the coloured coons of Cape Town has been ironed out after 12 years of effort, and the two most important organisations have amalgamated [...] Half of the proceeds are to go to war funds [...]

Cape Times, December 31, 1941. [DN]

1942

16.

There was a strong patriotic note in the carnival this year, both in the designs of the costumes, and the decorations. Union Jacks, the Union flag and the American Stars and Stripes had all been worked into decorative motifs. One troupe paraded large cardboard figures of John Bull and Uncle Sam — both painted in bright colours [...]

Before the coons' parade and contests, a section of the Cape Corps marched round the field, led by the band of the Indian and Malay Corps from Ladysmith, Natal.

Major C. Stubbs, chief recruiting officer for coloured recruiting, appealed for more recruits. Besides receiving military training, he said, the men of the coloured units were trained in many trades and occupations to fit them for their return to civilian life [...]

"8,000 See Coon Carnival Finalists [...]", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1942. [DN]

17.

[...] There was a distinct patriotic air about the whole carnival — the Union Jack and the V-sign were much in evidence [...]

In his address at the conclusion, Dr. Du Plessis expressed the hope that when the next competitions took place there would be at least 30 choirs instead of 16. He spoke of the old folk songs that had been heard during the afternoon, and said that these had

been preserved by the Cape Malays, and handed down from generation to generation. Many of these songs were original Dutch ones of past centuries. One of the songs sung was at least 400 years of age.

This song about a 17th century Prince of Orange, was brought by Dutch settlers to the Cape, and the Malay slaves learnt it and kept it alive during the intervening centuries. The words include:

> "Al is ons prinsje nog so klein
> Alrevel zal hij stadhouter zijn."

Translated roughly, it means:

> "Though our prince is so small, he shall still be our first citizen" [...]

The Cape Standard, January 13, 1942: 1. [WM]

1943

18.

[...] The costumes were as colourful as ever, although many of the troupes had converted costumes from previous years into new designs and colour combinations.

The number of performers was about the same as last year, although not so large as at pre-war carnivals, owing to the number of men in active service [...]

Because of the blackout restrictions only a few troupes were out dancing and singing along the streets on New Year's Eve and New Year's Night.

"Colourful Coon Carnival", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1943. [DN]

19.

Our city is probably the only place in the world where carnival hold sway this year; further evidence surely of our remoteness from the actual scene of war.

True, the costumes of the coons were less varied this year than in previous years. Those vivid silks and sateens are hard to get these days. And there are fewer troops — many a quondam coon is serving his country in the Cape Corps.

But last week the famous Checkers sang as well as ever, the coons of the Spes Bonas danced as lithely as of old, and the patient crowds on New Year's Day sat for hours in Wale, Rose and Hanover Streets waiting for the track to give them back their dancers to amuse them before the sun went down.

The Americans, those two finely barbaric and befeathered tribes, were not on the Track ("too rough", I was told) but as they stamped and pranced in their own streets, with their brave feathers fluttering in the wind, I felt that here in truth is Cape Town's indigenous Ballet.

"Coons Dance Again", *Cape Times*, January 6, 1943. [DN]

1945

20.

Not the smallest in number in the stream of applicants for Government grants for clothing for ex-soldiers a fortnight or so ago, I heard yesterday, were non-Europeans asking for grants to buy materials to be made up into costumes for the coon carnival [...]

This year's coon carnival had few teams dressed in the traditional striped satin suits with top hats, gay sunshades and painted faces, but those that had this Pied Piper touch about them drew crowds as they danced through the streets.

One of the mysteries of the carnival was the skill in procurement shown by the participants. Many of those who watched and applauded must have wondered how the men secured the tweeds and flannel for their sports jackets and trousers, and where they found the white spats, and must have longed to ask the coons, "Where did you get that brand-new hat?"

"For the Carnival", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1945. [DN]

21.

[...] CARNIVAL SEGREGATION. Each Year we find advertisements in the daily press telling us that the Coon Carnivals that are given "with the blessing and cooperation of the Bathing and Seaside Attractions Department of the Cape Town Municipality" have a "special reserved stand for Europeans" and "booking at Darters for Europeans only." Perhaps some of our city Councillors might be able to explain these segregation arrangements, especially since the Coon Carnival of W.P. Jubilee (Col.) Carnival Board has one admission price "for all" and no segregation!

"From my tower" [a regular column signed by the "Watchman" a.k.a. G.C. Gibbs], *The Cape Standard*, January 9, 1945. [WM]

22.

[...] Many men who have returned from active service will be back in their old troupes. One troupe, in fact, consists, for the most part of men who have served in the Cape Corps [...]

"Coon Carnivals Next Week", *Cape Times*, December 19, 1945. [DN]

1948

23.

"The gaiety and carefree abandon of the Cape Coloured people will be given free rein on New Year's Day, when thousands of coons will take temporary possession of the city for the annual Coon Carnivals at Green Point Track and Rosebank Showground"

(*Cape Times* 27/12/47). *And the pale, "base"* [baas ?] *will delight in the wild gyrations and inane cacophonies of the quaint Coloured folk. The annual throes of the death of a people's spirit in the form of this volcano of primitive ritual-dance are a welcome sight to slave-drivers.*

"X-Ray of the News by Dr. Pangloss [...] Dance of Death", *The Torch*, Monday, January 5, 1948: 2. [GM]

24.

[...] the undoubted talent that is innate in the Coloured and Malay communities.

Much of this talent is untrained [...] but what they lack in virtuosity they make up by their wonderful sense of rhythm, their verve, their overflowing enthusiasm and their good humour.[...]

There are regrettably at New Year too many songs from Tin Pan Alley and too few from Schottsche Kloof. The individual troupes, particularly the juveniles among them, love the slow crooning songs which Bing Crosby can put over so well but which the Cape Town Gentlemen Jazz Singers or the Young Dahomey Crooning Minstrels, try as they wish, simply turn into something like a melting chocolate mould at a kids' party.

Fortunately, in recent years, largely through the influence of Dr. I.D. du Plessis, both the Malay Choirs and the troupes of Coons have been paying more attention to the songs of the Cape. Thus they are giving the New Year Carnivals a more truly Cape flavour than they had before [...]

"Cape's Unique New Year Carnival of Music", by George Aschman, *Argus*, December 29, 1948. [DN]

1949

25.

[...] A feature of the coon song competitions at the Green Point Track yesterday were the Afrikaans "moppies" or "liedjies". The troupes were congratulated by Dr. I.D. Du Plessis, one of the judges, on bringing this innovation into their carnivals [...]

Mr. Gearing [mayor of Cape Town], thanking the Cape Town Publicity Association for presenting a special cup for Afrikaans "moppies", said: "When the Cape Town Publicity Association takes notice of you they evidently think that you are a very important feature of Cape Town's life at this time of the year" [...]

"Thousands See Coon Carnivals. 'Moppies' a new Feature", *Argus*, January 4, 1949. [DN]

26.

Mr. Enrique Jorda, Musical Director of the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra found

himself in the unexpected role of a judge at the last day of the Coon Carnival at Rosebank Show Grounds on Saturday.

[...] Dr. I.D. du Plessis, who helped adjudicate the Afrikaans *liedjies*, appealed to the troupes not to neglect the songs of South Africa and of the Cape. He hoped that the Cape "moppies" or comic songs and the *liedjies* would become a regular feature of future carnivals [...]

"Jorda Judges Coon Bands, Was Seeing His First Carnival", *Argus*, January 10, 1949. [DN]

27.

[...] the traditional costumes worn by the Cape Coons [...] are invariably made of satin, either with billowing jackets or tail-coats. But great variety is achieved by (a) different combinations of colours in one costume, (b) the choice of waistcoat material, (c) startling lapel facings, (d) the ties or cravats worn and (e) the stripes introduced into the trousers. No costume is ever carried over from one year to another. Every New Year the Coons appear in brand-new apparel [...]

The captains take their duties seriously, even to providing a feast for their troupes after the carnivals, when the winning cups are filled and the troupe's triumphs celebrated. The parties are usually slap-up affairs, but would they not come up to standards, the captain may lose members to other groups giving better parties. These parties go on until the end of March [...] These parties usually start about 3 p.m. and go on with singing and dancing until the tables are cleared of their dishes of curry and rice, of cakes and jellies, custards and fruits.

Coon-time is a recognised institution at the Cape and every year attracts greater public interest among all sections of the community. Each troupe is granted a permit by the City Traffic Department to parade through the streets during the months of November, December and January, but none of these troupes appear in costume until New Year's Eve. For weeks beforehand, however, the city streets are enlivened by young Coloured men and boys marching from one part of the town to another beating their *ghommas* and singing popular *Kaapse liedjies* or "*moppies*", such as "Kyk in die Pot Daar's Vleis", "Rooi Tamatie", "Grietjie, Ek Wil Huistoe Gaan", "Beste Pote" and others [...]

A "Christmas Band" of four, six, eight or more Coloured musicians, accompanies every troupe on its journeys which frequently, on New Year's Day alone total up to 30 miles — all done on foot and in tennis shoes! These bands are paid as much as £ 60 for their services to the different troupes and Malay choirs at New Year time, and they earn every bit of their money.

Lining the streets leading through the centre of the town to Green Point and Rosebank are tens of thousands of people. Many a Coloured family camps out for the

whole day on rugs spread on the pavements in order to watch the Coons go by, the little girls wearing their *Nuwejaar* frocks and new shoes with satin ribbons in their hair. It is essentially a children's festival [...]

First is the marshalling of the troupes from all parts of the Cape Peninsula, then their march in a body to the carnival grounds, then their dizzy and delirious return with their honours held high aloft for all to see. Finally there are the comings and goings of the troupes at night when they move from one part of the town to another paying calls at friends' houses.

At night many of the Coons' banners are illuminated. These banners may take the form of a model battleship, or a giant silver star or a Dutch windmill [...]

A particularly picturesque troupe leader at this year's Rosebank carnival was Doeltjie, a Malay, who appeared dressed as Carmen Miranda with a headdress of fruit and flowers [...]

Many of these drum-majors carry brooms with which they say *ons vee alles veg*, referring to their intention to knock out all competition from other troupes. Every now and then they sweep the streets vigorously to show that they mean business [...]

There is one particular troupe of Coons which holds a special fascination for the children of Cape Town. They are known as the Wild Americans or Red Indians, or, in the language of the Cape *skinners* (from Red Skins) and *atchas* (derivation unknown, though believed to be from *Utcha Amerikaner*, or real American). Every year they appear in the same type of outfit — ostrich-feathered head-dress, fearsome-looking masks, brightly coloured satin tunics falling over pantalettes, with each carrying either a tomahawk or a sunshade in his gloved hand [...]

The organisers are gradually trying to get the troupes to sing more Cape *liedjies* and "moppies" [...] But the Coons dearly love the American sentimental songs, which they sing in a painfully mournful manner so unlike their gay delivery of a "moppie" [...]

At Rosebank, this year a young Coon from the United Broadway Serenaders wrung our hearts with a melancholy ditty which opened up something like this:

"There's a home without a mother,
She was laid away in a raid (?)
And her spirit has gone to heaven;
I am lonely since my mother she died.
My father was married once again,
And my stepmother she treats me so unkind;
She hits me, she locks me out of doors.
I am lonely since my mother she died." [...]

"New Year Is Coon Time At The Cape", by George Aschman, *The Outspan*, November 25, 1949: 27-29 &123. [WM]

1950

28.

[At a Teachers' League of South Africa Conference, Miss J. Gool declared:] As a race, the Coloured People are not contributing to the culture of the world. [She added that] the main occupation of Coloured Youths was "crooning and playing the banjo on street corners" and the "Herrenvolk" encouraged this attitude of the Coloureds to make fool of themselves because it meant safety to them."

[Jainub Jane Gool was no relative of Zainunnisa "Cissie" Gool]

Argus, June 29, 1950. [DN]

29.

[J.W.G. Allen, secretary and director of the Western Province Coloured Jubilee Carnival Board declares that a feature of the 1951 carnival will be the large number of afrikaans songs:] [...] While sentimental ditties have always been the favourite of the coons, this season, we hope to make a change and include more of the Afrikaans songs.

It is generally agreed that there is gayness and swing in the many Afrikaans songs that harmonize admirably with the New Year Carnival spirit of the Cape.

Cape Times, October 30, 1950. [DN]

1951

30.

A Scotman's word is law with at least one coon troupe in Cape Town. He is Mr. David Stevens, a building contractor of Albert Road, Woodstock, who is believed to be the only White coon captain.

Mr. Stevens who is 60, has been associated with the coons for more than 40 years and for more than 35 years he has been a captain of various troupes and has always worn the same costume as the men.

He, with Mr. Davie Petersen, controls the 250 members of the Spes Bona Troupe, which will be celebrating their silver jubilee next year. [...]

He recalled that, in the early days, the New Year was welcomed chiefly by members of private clubs who were unlike the coons of to-day.

These clubs were not necessarily confined to the Coloured people. The Afrikaans name for the coons was still "klops", the Coons' phonetic way of spelling clubs [...]

The captain of a coon troupe, said Mr. Stevens, had a responsible position. To ensure a success of the club, he had to be prepared to advance the money for the coon costumes months before the carnivals, for the men often paid their instalments at "zero hour". There were risks, because often the captain lost money. He himself had been out of pocket as much as £ 50.

Mr. Stevens remembers when the coons wore costumes of the past. At times they were Spanish noblemen, complete with hose and doublet, or Englishmen with powdered wigs and buckled shoes.

Then again they pranced in costumes of the Nelson period, or cut stately figures as dashing Arab sheiks. They never wore kilts.

Mr. Stevens said that the number attached to various coons clubs had more than doubled in recent times.

The troupe which he and Mr. Davie Petersen controlled had about 400 members. The Traffic Control Authorities, however, would permit only about half that number to parade the streets.

"Scotsman Leads Cape Dancing Troupe, Believed to Be Only White Coon Captain", *Cape Times*, January 8, 1951. [DN]

31.

David Petersen, founder and captain of the Spes Bona Coons, familiarly known among the Coloured people as the "Beene" (from "bona", hence "bones"!) or the "Spesies", started life as a Coon at the age of 12. Now, at 40, practically a full-time professional Coon and club captain, he is a veteran of the New Year carnivals which every year enliven life both of Capetonians and also for thousands of visitors [...]

The Coon clubs generally get together on Sunday afternoons for rehearsals but Petersen says they always stop practising as soon as they hear the church bells ringing. Many of the members then go to church. The discipline imposed upon members at these club meetings includes fines for using bad language and some members are expelled for excesses in this direction. They must be properly dressed when they attend get-togethers and they are fined sixpence for non-attendance.

They know, too, that when the great New Year's Day dawns they must behave themselves in the streets. Otherwise their club is liable to have its permit withdrawn by the Traffic Department which every year reviews the different Coon club's right to march through the streets.

Petersen himself very much appreciates what the authorities do for the Coons. "The police do give us a lot of privileges at New Year," he told me. "It is the only sport we can indulge in to our hearts' delight and we look forward to it" [...]

Very few of us have a perception of the tremendous activity and excitement that lies behind this annual parade of the joyful, prancing, completely carefree Coons of Cape Town. Preparation for the street parades and carnivals on New Year's Day and *Tweedenuwejaar* begins right back in August, when the clubs start enrolling members and accepting first payments of the many instalments for his costume which every Coon makes. This year each member of the *Spesies* paid £2 10s. 6d. for his outfit

consisting of hat, coat, trousers and bow tie (members supply their own shirts, shoes and socks).

When a member has paid a certain amount as a "lay-bye" his measurements are taken and the coat and hat are given out to a tailor to make. Petersen himself buys the material and selects the annual colour combination [...]

With the aid of his wife, Petersen himself makes the trousers [...]

The costumes are gradually assembled at the captain's house. None are given out until dawn breaks on New Year's Day [...]

On the morning of the last Sunday of the year, the captain addresses his members. It is a straight talk — behave yourselves or else... He also gets down to financial brass-tacks [...] no squaring up of you instalments, no costumes. Some of them, who are a bit behind hand, plead with tears in their eyes for their costumes. They are rarely turned away [...]

At 6 a.m. on New Year's Day [...] the Coons [...] set to, with the aid of a special committee of helpers, to make up their faces.

First they put on a Coon blacking compound of the ashes of burnt cork and petroleum jelly (Petersen's own preparation) which does not burn their faces. Then they apply tubes of white "nigger paste" (their own description) to their lips, making each one happy in the illusion that he, too, is Al Jolson, the Coon's beloved hero, oracle and model. (The night Al died a few months ago there was hardly a street in District Six in which his favourite songs were not sung as a tribute to the creator of the Coon favourites "Sonny Boy" and "California Here I Come".)

Their make-up ready, the Coons slip into their satin costumes and then muster for a song outside their club room, after which tradition demands that they troop off to give a rousing song to the tailors who have made their costumes. By noon they must be at their place of assembly, generally Sir Lowry Road Market.

From here the Coon troupes move on by established routes to their carnival ground singing as they march the popular ditty:

"*Haak, Skolly, haak*

Hier kom die 'Spesies' aan"

— or the "Globies" or "Dixies" or whatever the name the club bears [...]

So keen is he to do the best for his troupe, that throughout the year he goes either to the Star or Avalon cinema in Hanover street every Friday and Saturday to pick up catchy tunes for carnival time or ideas for brightening up costumes or the dance and solo numbers his club will present at New Year [...]

He chooses the songs to be sung and, he insists, his troupe wants to sing popular tunes of the day and not only Afrikaans *liedjies* and *moppies*, something which we spectators, who are inclined to criticize Tin Pan Alley dirges at the carnival, should

remember. Mournful and sentimental songs appeal to something deep down in the hearts of the Coloured people [...]

"Portrait of a Coon Captain", by George Aschman, *Cape Times*, January 20, 1951. [DN]

32.

A bitter controversy over the influence of the coon carnival on Cape Coloured Children came to a head this week, when the principal of a large Coloured Primary School in Cape Town announced that he was strongly opposed to his pupils being members of coon teams during the holidays. He has decided to discourage such children from joining his school.

Disagreeing with this view, Mr. J.W.G. Allen, Director of the Western Province (Coloured) Jubilee Carnival Board, told the Cape Times yesterday that, as a former school teacher, and secretary of the Trafalgar Junior School Committee, he challenged the assertion that juvenile coons necessarily made bad pupils.

"We have found that the educated coons had a good influence on the rest and often the only way their talents could be brought to light was through the carnivals" he said.

"The coons also have a strict code of discipline. We give them regular lectures on good behaviour and many only come under such disciplinary influence as a result of being coons."

Mr. Allen said the schoolwork of the children who were coons was not affected. The carnivals took place in the holidays and the children were actually kept out of mischief.

The teachers, he said, did little to discipline the children in the holidays [...]

The principal disagreed with the coons as an institution. The Coloured people had advanced far beyond that stage, he said. The coons gave the impression that the Coloured people were still primitive.

He was however concerned only with the children as coons. His staff agreed. The children were easily influenced and there was a great deal of licence and lack of discipline at coon-time.

The children got into bad company and bad habits and he had several instances of boys becoming delinquents after they had joined the coons [...]

"School Opposition to Coon Carnival, Principal's Move to Keep Pupils Out, Alleges Malignant Influence", *Cape Times*, February 2, 1951. [DN]

33.

The controversy on the effects of coon carnivals on Coloured school children, reported in the *Cape Times* on Friday, has led other school principals to express their opinions on the matter.

The principal of a school in the crowded part of District Six said that participation by children in the coon carnivals kept them busy during the holidays and out of mischief [...] The children lived in overcrowded areas and had very little outlet for their energies. The coons gave them an opportunity to let off steam and so prevented delinquent tendencies.

The principal of another large Coloured School said that the coon movement showed the Coloured person up in a bad light. Visitors to the Cape at New Year were given an entirely wrong impression.

He did not discriminate against children who belonged to the coons, but discouraged them from singing and dancing in the playgrounds after the fashion of the coons.

They sang questionable type of songs and contorted their bodies in a way that had a bad psychological effect on the rest of the school children [...]

The principal of a third school said he had never noticed any bad effects on his pupils as a result of the coons, with the possible exception of the loud way they sang in the singing classes.

"School Principals On Coons", *Cape Times*, February 5, 1951. [DN]

34.

[*A "coon show", Jack Goodwin's "Coon Carnival", after being well received in Port Elizabeth and East London, is boycotted in Kimberley*] Two reasons were given for the boycott.

The show was said to be "degrading and disgusting and not representative of the Coloured people"; and exception was taken to the fact that there were separate performances for European and non-European audiences [...]

Yesterday Mr. Goodwin said: "When we arrived on Tuesday we found notices in shop windows, and pamphlets were being given away. The notices stated that there was something sinister behind the carnival, inasmuch as it was thought to be Government-sponsored.

Our reason for taking the show oversea — we are at present on a farewell tour — was supposed to be for the purpose of ridiculing and belittling the Coloured people in order to justify the Government's attitude towards them".

Mr. Goodwin said that his only reason for segregating audiences was to give Coloured people the chance of getting the best seats at cheaper rates.

Although the pamphlets were anonymous, he knew who was behind the boycott. The police were now investigating the matter to see if communist influences were at work [...]

"Coon Carnival Boycotted", *Cape Times*, February 5, 1951. [DN]

35.

As school manager of a large Coloured primary school in Cape Town, I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my views and also of clearing up a misapprehension.

In my opinion, the influence of membership in coon teams is, by and large, deplorable [...]

Whilst I will do all I can legitimately to protect our children from what I believe to be a bad influence, I cannot, as school manager, lend any support to coercion under threat of dismissal [...]

"From the Rev. P. Clark (Cape Town)", *Cape Times*, February 8, 1951. [DN]

1952

36.

From Bo-Kaap — the Malay Quarter on the slopes of Signal Hill — to the uppermost reaches of Kanaladorp (which is District Six) there were sounds and sights of revelry and gaiety.

A particularly colourful scene was to be seen in Caledon street in the early afternoon of yesterday — *tweedenuwejaar* — when scores of troupes pranced down in a kaleidoscopic blaze of yellow, emerald, white, brown, and pink satin uniform [...]

All along the official route, which begins in the upper part of Wale street — the Coons' traditional stamping ground — and continues through Spin and Mostert streets into Caledon and Hanover streets, people congregated in thousands.

There were picnics on the pavements everywhere and Cape Town's Coloured community enjoyed the gaiety until a late hour.

"Infectious Gaiety of Coons", *Cape Times*, January 7, 1952. [DN]

37.

In 1952, a popular "coon" and malay choir song was "*Van Riebeeck se ding is Vim*" (Van Riebeeck's thing is finished) in response to the Van Riebeeck Tercentenary celebrations.

Jeppie 1990: 61. [AD]

38.

A section of the non-Europeans has decided to boycott the Van Riebeeck Festival on the grounds that:

(a) It symbolizes "300 years of oppression of the non-Europeans by the Europeans";

(b) the principle of *apartheid* is being applied; and

(c) it is a "Boer" festival.

Assuming for the moment that these are valid reasons, would a boycott be the best answer to the situation? Boycott or not, the Festival will not only take place but will take place on the broad lines originally planned. The only result of the boycott will be that the dissenting non-Europeans will deprive themselves of the chance to show South Africa and our oversea visitors what they can do, and thousands of Coloured school-children, who would otherwise have taken a happy and impressive part in this great national demonstration are to be deprived of this privilege by a group of reactionaries who are not yet mature enough to distinguish between political action and constructive propaganda in the non-political sphere.

[...] it would be disastrous to the non-European to dissociate himself from the European [...]

I am convinced that a great many Coloured people, to name but one section of the non-European community, do not agree with the violent views expressed by the reactionaries. They foresee danger to themselves in the non-European Unity Movement, and are strongly opposed to the communist drive which is being launched with more skill and energy than most Europeans realize [...]

"From: "NON-PREJUDICED" (Caledon)", *Cape Times*, January 23, 1952. [DN]

39.

The Coloured Coons are to stage their carnivals at the Van Riebeeck Stadium on Saturday and again on Monday, March 10, in spite of the wide-spread agitation among the Coloured people to boycott the Festival.

Mr. J.W.G. Allen, secretary and director of the Western Province Jubilee Coloured Carnival Board, which will present the coon carnivals, told the *Cape Times* yesterday that efforts had been made by political groups to get the Board to abandon the stadium show and to fall in line with the general boycott of the Festival.

But the coons would give the visitors to Cape Town an opportunity to see how the Coloured people traditionally interpreted the Festival spirit [...]

"No Festival Boycott by Coons", *Cape Times*, February 27, 1952. [DN]

40.

[...] I intend taking my children to as many of the exhibits and functions connected

with the Festival so that they can at least improve their general knowledge in a way they can never hope to at their schools.

[...] The fact remains that after the freeing of the slaves the Coloured people have made considerable progress, in spite of the many obstacles placed in their path. In their struggle many a White person stretched forward a helping hand [...]

As a "mixed race" we can lay claim to being the descendants of both Whites and non-Whites, and so the great heritage of Western civilisation is just as much ours as it is the Whites' [...]

The Coloured man's struggle is essentially an upward one, and if he follows the lead given by the frustrated he will never develop that initiative and courage that are so essential in his fight for political and economic justice.

"Coloured Boycott Opposed, From: "Coloured South African" (Cape Town)", *Cape Times*, March 14, 1952. [DN]

41.

[...] Printed pamphlets calling on non-Europeans to boycott the "anti-non-European Festival of race hatred" are being circulated in many non-European schools and townships in the Peninsula.

According to Mr. G.J. Golding, Principal of a Coloured school in Cape Town, many teachers are supporting the sentiments expressed in the pamphlets and a few have actually threatened to punish those of their pupils who attend the Festival [...]

The pamphlet now being circulated states that the purpose of the Festival is to "glorify and give thanks for 300 years of land piracy, racial oppression and economic exploitation. The people who are running the Festival are the same people who forced you into racially inferior schools, where you have inferior equipment" [...]

Mr. Golding said: "I do not think the non-Europeans have been dominated to such an extent that they could be called oppressed. My school will go to the Festival, and I have encouraged my pupils to attend it" [...]

"Festival Boycott Pamphlet", *Cape Times*, March 14, 1952. [DN]

42.

[...] To the visitors and spectators I say don't be misled (to quote Mr. J.W.G. Allen's words) "by the Coloured people's traditional interpretation of the festival spirit". I feel sure that a very large number of Coloured people will agree with me that, judged by the Coons, visitors will be made to think that the Coloured people are a happy and contented race.

Actually what have the Coloured people to be happy about? After 300 years of "contact with the Europeans" their position has improved very little. They are still

regarded as insolent, rude and ill-mannered and are expected to walk in the street when a European is on the pavement.

The Coloured people have nothing to celebrate and it is unfortunate that a few coons will create an entirely false impression of the Coloured people's innermost feelings [...]

"Festival Coons, From: Mr. R.E. DAVADOSS (19, 8th Avenue, Hazendale, Athlone)", *Cape Times*, March 15, 1952. [DN]

43.

Mr. G.J. Golding, president of the Coloured People's National Union, called on the Coloured people of Cape Town yesterday to support the Festival and not to use it as an instrument to "vent our political grievances."

His appeal is a sequel to the publication of a pamphlet urging non-Europeans to boycott the Festival [...]

He said the organizers of the campaign had claimed that the Festival was designed to perpetuate the rule of the White oppressors who had held down the Coloured people for 300 years [...]

"In any case, the past 300 years have not been the period of oppression that people are asked to believe.

True, there have been periods of oppression, but the past 120 years have seen the march of a steady progress.

This period has been virtually free from political interference and people who wanted to get somewhere have been allowed the freedom to choose their professions and to select their place of abode [...]

In their anger over the *apartheid* legislation, the organizers of the boycott have permitted political grievances to cloud the real issue. In their opposition to these political matters, I share their anger and suggest that we share a common platform and organize a campaign to obliterate the undesirable Acts from the Statute Book"[...]

The Coloured people will look on the Festival in the same light as they do the Rosebank Show and the Liberty Cavalcade. They have already shown that they will not miss seeing the present wonderful exhibition [...]

"Do not Use Festival for Grievances — Golding", *Cape Times*, March 18, 1952. [DN]

44.

[...] the only "prominent" Cape Town Non-Europeans supporting the Festival are two political "coons". The vast majority of choir-members and "coons" are boycotting. They have, in so doing, ceased to be "coons" [...]

What is a "Coon"?

It would be well for members of "coon" troupes to understand and discard the name of "coon". For one thing, it puts them in the same boat as Golding and Allen — and this boat sprang a leak as long ago as 1943.

For another, the word "coon" is a term of insult used by the *Herrenvolk*, here and in the Southern States of America. We read in the dictionary that "coon" means a "negro" or "a queer, sly fellow" or "a foxy, sly, crafty or cute fellow". This holds good politically for a Quisling, but is an insult to ordinary "coon" members.

The "sly, cute, foxy" side of what a "coon" is in the eyes and language of the White racialist seems to have something to do with an American animal called a "raccoon" or "coon" for short. The American Whites transferred this name to their slaves. The racialism of this transfer is obvious when we look at the dictionary description of this animal: "*an animal that scratches with his hands, found in America... (it) awakes at night, climbs trees... It is chiefly grey, with black and white facial markings*". The definition ends with an insult to members of "coon" clubs, but an accurate description of a political "coon". "*Its amusing ways cause it to be often kept as a pet*" (by the *Herrenvolk*, of course!)

How "Coons" Began

Basically, the "coon" songs started from folk songs in the days of slavery. At first they were *songs of lament*, mourning the Batavian and African homeland from which the slaves were taken and which they would never see again. Likewise the dispossessed Khoi-Khoin would play folk music on the gora to mourn the loss of their land, herds and freedom. Only later did the gora become a "gay" instrument. These melancholy, nostalgic folk-tunes, dances and songs underwent profound changes as the slaves sank down into acceptance of slavery.

Then the music changed from lament to thanksgiving submission and acknowledgement of the authority of the slave owner. The old words would often remain but had lost their meaning. The old tunes were "jazzed up" to express joy, not sadness. This diverted the minds of the people from the past, from the longing for their lost freedom. It also made them forget and accept their present sufferings. It made them imagine that they felt happy. And it brought joy to the fatty heart of the pirates, loafers, criminals, sea-sick sailors and disgraced officials who were the slave-owning masters at the Cape.

The songs of submission now became songs for the amusement and entertainment of the slave-holding scum who laughed coarsely at the "amusing ways" of their slaves. The slaves became poorer and thinner but sang louder the praises of slavery, of the masters, of slaves-hips and of slave-states. *They were celebrating their enslavement for the amusement of the Herrenvolk.*

The Masters call the Tune

From a popular, spontaneous art, the music, songs and dances became gross affairs organised by "boss-boys" and "good slaves". The slave owner cracked his whip and the slaves worked; he called the tune and they sang. The people were expropriated musically. They lost control of their music. This was part of the enslavement of the mind. Body, mind and music now belonged to the masters.

With control of slave music in the hands of the masters they began to call the tune. In the 18th century American Whites began to go about dressed as "Negro minstrels", imitated the slaves, painted their faces black and their mouths white, mocked the voices and songs of slave impersonated them, cheapened their jokes, in short *made "coons" of the Negro slaves.*

This farce became a tragedy. For now the slaves began to imitate their imitators: "Coon" clubs arose taking their songs from the minstrels. The Du Plessis' wrote moppies, uncultured nonsense, to humble the people. The people mocked themselves with the music of their masters. As with their ideas so now their music came from the rulers.

Times are Changing

But things are changing. The du Plessis of two centuries became laughing stocks in the eyes of the "coons" themselves as they join the boycott of the Festival.

A tiny handful of "coon" and choir members support du Plessis and his butlers, Golding and Allen. The vast majority of "coons" are joining the rest of the people. And this will make them take the decision themselves to cease calling themselves "coons". And they will sing not of the past, not to the present, but for the future, their future, our future, as free people. They are taking the first steps to sing no longer for the *Herrenvolk* but for the people.

"Behind the festival of hate, The Cape Coloureful Coons", by "Boycott", *The Torch*, March 25, 1952: 2. [GM]

45.

Mr. M.A. Segal, one of the chief organizers of to-day's Malay Pageant in the Festival Stadium, told me last night that, in spite of the wide-spread boycott campaign of the past few weeks, all the events would be staged as planned and none of the performers had resigned.

Dr. I.D. du Plessis, Commissioner for Coloured Affairs, said yesterday that there had been a great deal of agitation to get the Malay people to boycott the Festival, but the collaboration of the groups concerned had been splendid. Those taking part in the Pageant to-day would, he felt sure, look back on the occasion with pride.

The Malay Pageant will consist of about 30 floats showing the highlights in Malay history and will give a survey of their development as a people and their identification with life in South Africa.

About 200 Malay men and women will perform in the Pageant, which will begin with the arrival of Sheik Joseph as a political exile at the Cape.

He will be on a float with the ship Voetboeg, which was built by a Malay craftsman, Mr. A.S. Gool. The artistic touches were added by Mr. E. Gasant, a Malay schoolteacher.

Other floats will show the Malays as soldiers, fishermen, craftsmen, firemen, sportsmen and professional men. Glimpses will also be given of their ceremonial life, including a colourful Malay Wedding.

Dr. Du Plessis told me that rumours had been spread that certain items would be presented at the Pageant that might offend the religious scruples of the Malays. This was incorrect. The whole Pageant programme has received the official sanction of the Moslem Judicial Council [...]

"Coloured People's Pageants To-Day, Boycott Plan Finds No Support, Close Identity with S.A. Life", *Cape Times*, April 2, 1952. [DN]

46.

Eleven Coloured men of the Coon Carnival troupe and their European manager, Mr. Redvers Arthur Richardson, of Cape Town, have been refused passports by the Government to visit England with their show at the end of the year [...]

Yesterday, Mr. Sonny Lloyd, who had trained them for the tour, told me that negotiations to obtain passports had been broken off last week when the Government refused to give the men permission to leave the country.

No reason has been given for the refusal [...]

He [Mr. Lloyd] did not think that the members of the troupe had been refused passports because they had not been prepared to take part in the Van Riebeeck Festival.

They had been approached by Dr. I.D. du Plessis, the Commissioner of Coloured Affairs, who was also the chairman of the non-European Committee of the Festival.

They had found the conditions governing their participation unacceptable but, in particular, they took into consideration the attitude of the Coloured people generally towards the Festival and had, therefore, declined the offer.

He said that the Coon Carnival had no connection with the coons that put on shows at the Stadium during the Van Riebeeck Festival.

Dr. Du Plessis told me that he could neither confirm nor deny the report that the Coon Carnival members had been refused passports [...]

"No Passports for Coon Troupe", *Cape Times*, July 15, 1952. [DN]

47.
It is to be hoped that Dr. I.D. du Plessis was not suggesting a reason for the refusal of passports to the 11 Coloured "Coons" when he said "I think the troupe would give an erroneous impression of the Coloured people's achievements" [...]

"Protecting Culture" [editorial], *Cape Times*, July 22, 1952. [DN]

48.
Mr. Sonny Lloyd, European director of the Cape Western Coon Carnival, which will be presenting its carnivals at the Rosebank Showgrounds at the New Year, told the *Cape Times* yesterday that there would be nothing degrading in the performance that the "moffies", or female impersonators, would be giving in association with the coons.

Mr Lloyd was replying to criticisms that the introduction of the female impersonators into the Coon Carnival at Rosebank was out of keeping with the spirit of the carnival [...]

Mr. J.W.G. Allen, director of the Western Province Jubilee Coloured Carnival Board, told the *Cape Times* that "moffies" or female impersonators never did form part of the traditional coon carnivals. The coons themselves did not approve of them and the advanced Coloured people maintained that the "moffies" were not an uplifting feature of any show [...]

"No 'Moffie' Emphasis in Coon Shows", *Cape Times*, December 30, 1952. [DN]

1953

49.
[...] The troupes were spread among five rival coon boards of control that held their singing and dancing competitions at Rosebank, Mowbray, Goodwood, Green Point and in the Cape Town City Hall.

One coon portrayed the Coelecanth, several welcomed the new Queen and one troupe mourned the late King George VI [...]

At Rosebank Show Grounds the coon competitions were preceded by a troupe of Moffies or female impersonators [...]

"Pavement Picnics to See Coons", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1953. [DN]

50.
[...] The Gangs work as business organisations, and have a finger in every pie [...] a profitable side-line was established during the war years. In July and August "traveller" went round to the various coon carnival teams, and took orders for the cloth — then almost unobtainable in retail stores — from which the costumes for the Carnival were to be made. Careful note was made as to quantities and colours required. During

September and October a wave of warehouse robberies took place. Early in November the orders were fulfilled [...]

The modern Coon Carnival is highly commercialised... and some of the money received without doubt and directly or indirectly sticks to the fingers of the various gang leaders. But this is an unimportant facet of an event which serves a great social purpose. On Coon Carnival Day the Coloured performer is a king, throwing aside all social barriers. The Carnival itself, apart from its glamour and fun, is a sociological safety valve [...]

"District Six, Crime and Carnival", Written by Peter Godfrey, Illustrated by William Pappas, *Spotlight*, July 1953: 15. [GM]

51.

More than 7,000 performers will combine to make the Peninsula's traditional coon carnival one of the biggest and most colourful ever held.

As in previous years, the key men are the tailors, for much will depend on the speed with which they complete their orders before the coons begin their marches on Friday [...]

The carnivals will be the culmination of weeks of intensive training by these traditional New Year revellers.

They have been practicing their songs and band numbers in strict secrecy and no troupe knows what the colours and costume designs of the others will be.

Practice marches have been made through the streets. With twanging mandolines and strumming banjos, bands of men have been singing, dancing and laughing in the side streets and highways of the city. None wore his coon costume.

Then on New Year's Day and on the ever-popular *Tweedenuwejaar* (Second New Year) they will all toss aside their everyday clothes and emerge like butterflies from the drab and poor areas of the city in all their sartorial elegance [...]

Already the streets of Bo-Kaap — on the slopes of Signal Hill — and those in District Six — on the lower reaches of Devil's Peak — have been festooned with brightly assorted offcuts of coon costume material to signify that the Coloured people of the city are in festive mood and a merry, eating, drinking, singing time is at hand.

"7,000 Coons' Great Day this Week, City Revellers' Secret Preparations", *Cape Times*, December 30, 1953. [DN]

1954

52.

It was a good idea — while it lasted — to bring the spirit of carnival to a work-a-day Cape Town.

They planned to march — 1,000 coons in bright silks and satins, their colours flying in the sunlight to the music of 31 bands — in a grand parade through the heart of the city.

It was something that had never been done before. The idea was put to Mr. A.S.A. East (a City Councillor), by Mr. "Sonny" Lloyd, organizer of the Cape Western Coon Carnival Board. Mr. East put it to the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk "agreed in principle", but referred it to the Traffic Department.

And they said: "No".

"The dislocation of traffic would be as bad as it was during the royal visit", was the firm reply.

And so on Saturday [January 9] there will be no rainbow parade through the streets of Cape Town.

"1,000 Wanted to March, Carnival Parade is Banned", *Argus*, January 7, 1954. [DN]

53.

Many in Cape Town are disappointed at the Traffic Department's refusal to allow the Coons to hold a mass parade through the City.

Nearly everyone wants to see the Coons march.

Since yesterday's report of the Traffic Department's decision the Argus telephone exchange has been humming with indignant calls [...]

Continental agreement comes from a Hollander, Mr. B. Tenkate of Wynberg, and his French wife.

"In Europe we have festivals all the time and everyone is happy. Why not here? It would be something to write home about for us."

Mr. A.S.A. East, a City Councillor, to whom the idea was first suggested by the Coons' organizer said: "I have been inundated with telephone calls all day. I had 54 before lunch."

Housewives, businessmen, doctors, office workers — they all say yes.

But Mr. E.E. Turner, Traffic Superintendant, has the last word. And that word is "no".

"They Want To See the Coons March", *Argus*, January 8, 1954. [DN]

1955

54.

Crowds blocked the streets and dislocated the city's first coon carnival parade to-day.

Afterwards the Chairman of the Traffic Control Committee (Mr. W.L. Young) said: "I feel the public has been badly let down by the traffic control arrangements. I intend to investigate the whole matter."

"There appeared to be fewer traffic policemen on duty than on an ordinary Saturday morning."

"Speaking personally, I am disgusted at the arrangements which were made."

Mr. S. Lloyd (organizer of the Cape Western Coon Carnival Board) said: "Although many streets were supposed to have been closed to traffic, I found cars at the forming up area trying to drive through the middle of my troupes."

"Hold Up in Coon Parade to Be Investigated", *The Cape Argus*, January 3, 1955: 1. [DN]

55.

Nearly 2,000 brilliantly-costumed coons scrambled and elbowed their way through a vast crowd in the centre of Cape Town to-day.

The Coons were taking part in the first Coon Carnival parade to be held in the City Centre and the crowds mobbed them before they reached Adderley street.

The few traffic policemen who were on duty found it impossible to cope with the surging spectators.

The Deputy Mayor (Mr. P.J. Wolmarans) who took the salute from the City Hall steps said: "It is obvious to me that the traffic police were quite unprepared for this huge crowd and were unable to control it" [...]

Mr. Wolmarans added: "The crowds to-day prove that this show had the support of 90 per cent of Cape Town.

As an annual event, it would draw thousands of visitors to Cape Town."

"Coon Parade Upset by Huge Crowds in City", *The Cape Argus*, January 3, 1955: 2. [DN]

56.

What had promised to be the most spectacular parade of coons ever to be held through the streets of Cape Town ended in a fiasco yesterday, as apparently uncontrolled

crowds in Darling Street and Adderley Street brought the marchers to a halt in chaotic confusion.

The crowd was estimated to be bigger than that for the Royal visit in 1947 and it obstructed the route to be taken by the 10 troupes in the parade utterly disrupting the flow of traffic [...]

"This enormous seething mass of humanity — it was the biggest crowd I had ever seen in Cape Town — was completely uncontrolled", Mr. W.L. Young, chairman of the Traffic Committee of the Cape Town City Council, told the *Cape Times* last night.

"Something should have been done by the Traffic Department who were conspicuous by their absence. My committee will go into the matter this week" [...]

A traffic constable who was on duty at the "parade" said: "The mess-up was the coons' fault, and I do not see why we should take the blame.

There ought to have been more organization among the troupes. They wanted to go just where they liked and refused to follow instructions" [...]

"Record Crowd Could Not See Coons, Uncontrolled Mob Make Parade a Fiasco", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1955. [DN]

57.

The chairman of the [Cape Town City Council's Traffic Control] committee (Mr. W.L. Young) said to-day: "The popularity of the procession was grossly underestimated.

This was the first organized procession through the streets and we had no precedent to indicate how many spectators would attend. The crowds were much larger than expected.

But now we know. I see no reason why there should not be a similar procession next year" [...]

"Now we know says traffic chairman", *Argus*, January 7, 1955. [DN]

58.

After that incident the local state disallowed the use of the city centre for the purposes of festival.

Jeppie 1990: 59. [AD]

59.

It is now clear that the crowd who gathered in Cape Town on Monday to see the procession of coon troupes far exceeded any official estimate of what could be expected. The fiasco, however, can be regarded as the price that has been paid for the assurance that should there be a similar parade next year it will be properly organized.

The large turn-out of people of all races was an unmistakable indication of the strength of public interest in Cape Town's annual Coon Carnival. On the ground of

that demonstration alone there should be no hesitation about giving permission for a procession next year, especially as the Traffic Control Committee of the City Council has decided that if there is a parade adequate control arrangements will be made.

The Coon Carnival has become a feature of the New Year celebration in Cape Town. It is deservedly popular, especially with holiday visitors, and as an indigenous and distinctive festival of colour and gaiety it has acquired almost a world-wide renown. If the coon troupes are willing to display the fruits of their ingenuity to the wider witness of a public procession they should be encouraged to do so. Experience with street pageants in Cape Town should ensure that the maximum of pleasure is given to both coons and spectators.

"Profiting from a mistake", *Argus*, January 7, 1955. [DN]

60.

Whatever else may be said about the Coons, one fact cannot be denied, and that is their popularity. That they could attract a crowd bigger than that which welcomed the Royal Family is proof of their fame; that the crowds disorganized the city to an unprecedented extent at the New Year is proof of their infection spirit.

One point must be made right at the outset in considering this subject. While all Coons are Coloured people, all the Coloured people are not Coons! There is a sharp division of opinion among the Coloured people about whether the Coons are a blessing or a curse; whether they should be encouraged or condemned [...]

Those who support the Coon idea say that it keeps the Coons out of trouble, keeps the crime rate down, give these people a harmless outlet for their emotions and entertains the rest of us.

This, combined with the fact that certain charities benefit from the carnivals and concerts, and that there is held to be an element of leadership, initiative and organization called forth and strengthened, appear to be the main points in support of the Coons.

The anti-Coons will probably not dispute these, or most of these contentions. But their opposition is based on the attitude of the Europeans.

The reader is reminded that this is South Africa, where everything is seen through tinted spectacles, the tint depending on the skin-colour of the viewer. The objection to the Coons is then no to the Coons as such, to their gaiety, their dress, their songs, their dances or their "tricks". But to the identification of the Coons with the Coloured people.

These people feel that the Coons are a colossal caricature of the Coloured people as a whole. They feel that the city is put at the disposal of the Coons because they show up the Coloured people in an undesirable light [...]

A large proportion of the visitors to the processions, this year, as always, was composed of Europeans, mostly visitors from the platteland. They will hear about

Coloured people in their cultural, educational and political discussions, and when they do so the picture which will come up in their minds will be the picture of gaudily attired, crazily cavorting Coons.

Can these people be given political rights? Can they live next to us? Must we be taxed to pay for their education? Must our sons and daughters go to university with them? These are some of the questions which they will ask.

Then, too, we are asked by the anti-Coons why there is always separate provision made for Europeans at the carnivals and concerts. Why cannot they sit with the Coloured people seeing that they are being entertained by the Coloured people? Is it because they can pay more and are thus being compelled to do so, or is it to perpetuate the idea of separation and increase the Europeans' feeling of superiority? [...]

"Coon carnival — is it a curse or a blessing?", by Dr. R.E. Van Der Ross, *Cape Times*, January 29, 1955. [DN]

61.

Mr. F.M. Adams [General Secretary, Gleemoor and District Minstrel Board] told the *Cape Times* that an attempt would be made to revive the picturesque type of carnival of 50 years ago when there was a greater variety in the type of carnival dress.

At that time the revellers at New Year wore the dress of the nations of the world.

There were Spanish noblemen, Lords of London, desert Arabs and highwaymen. Doublets and hose, three-cornered hats and cloaks were part of the coon regalia.

The men who took part in these old carnivals were not called "coons" — their organizations were called "clubs". The Afrikaans word for the present-day "coons" still preserves this idea as they are called *klopse* (clubs) [...]

"Coons Will Don Period Costumes", *Cape Times*, December 6, 1955. [DN]

1956

62.

So far as the White people are concerned, South Africa is a singularly joyless country. Outside the sports fields there is almost no pure fun and less gaiety. Our so-called festivals are dull, and our people spend too much of their lives disapproving of enjoyment and trying to reform one another.

A brighter note in this generally sombre picture is struck once a year by the Coon Carnival. This, too, has its critics, not least among the Cape Coloured people themselves, who are deeply divided over it. Some regard it as an undignified spectacle, in which their people make an exhibition of themselves and expose their community to the patronizing amusement of the Whites. For others it is the natural expression of that love of life and that gift of living it with gaiety and zest, in spite of poverty and

hardship, that are among the most notable characteristics of the Coloured section of our people.

Let us hope the killjoys will not prevail. The annual festival with fancy costumes and music and song, is not something that belongs of right to the Coloured people, and not only a valued part of the traditions of Cape Town, it also adds a vivid touch to the rather pedestrian holidays of South Africa. It is no more undignified than the similar carnivals in which the Southern Europeans give expression to the love of life and the joy of living [...]

That dismal kind of pleasure which consists of disapproving of others in order to convince oneself of one's own moral superiority is not a virtue, and if it has become the besetting sin of the White people, that is no reason why others should imitate it. The very fact that the inhibited Whites form such a large audience shows that they are conscious of a gap in their own lives which is filled by the carnival [...]

"The carnival spirit", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1956 [DN] [editorial]

63.

Cape Town's coons will not march through the city on New Year's Day.

The City Council decided to-day to refuse a request by the organizer of the Cape Western Carnival Board (Mr. S.L. Lloyd) for permission to stage a mass parade of coons in Cape Town on January 1.

Last New Year, on January 3, the coons marched from the Grand Parade up Darling and Adderley Streets, which were roped off and policed by the council at a cost of about £ 100.

The council to-day accepted without discussion its Traffic Control Committee's recommendations that the coons' application be rejected.

"Council Will Not Allow Coon March", *Cape Times*, November 29, 1956. [DN]

64.

Mr. Sonny Lloyd, organizer of the Cape Western Carnival Board, whose Coons will not be allowed to hold a mass parade through the Centre of Cape Town at the New Year, yesterday told the *Cape Times*: "I feel that if the City Council considers that the great enjoyment my parade gives to thousands of visitors is not worth a measly £ 100, the finances of the City Council must be in a sorry state" [...]

"I believe", he said, "that all this arises out of my refusal to co-operate with the Community Chest in their Mardi Gras to be held on January 12" [...]

"Protest by Coon Board Organizer", *Cape Times*, November 30, 1956. [DN]

65.
A Cape Town industrialist, Mr. Cecil Marks, offered to-day to pay the City Council £ 100 for the expense of staging a New Year's Day coon parade through the centre of the city [...]

Mr. Marks said: "[...] The coon parade may cost the council £ 100, but it means infinitely more than that to the city in terms of a tourist and holiday attraction."

The chairman of the council's Traffic Control Committee (which recommended that the council refuse permission for the parade), Mr. C. Barnett, said: "The decision had nothing to do with the £ 100 expense.

The committee's feeling was that in the past the parade had caused confusion and chaos in the city. This was why permission was refused."

"£100 Offered City for Coon March", *Cape Times*, November 30, 1956. [DN]

1957

66.
In December 1957, Alex La Guma spotted a trouper, "with a picture of Herr Strijdom sewed to the seat of his pants."

Jeppie 1990: 61. [AD]

67.
[...] A section of the Coloured community disapproves of the coon shows, they feel that coons are a caricature of the Coloured people and that the carnival presents the Coloured person to the European spectator in an undesirable light.

These anti-coons do not deny the attractiveness of the coon performances. But they fear that people may think that the coons typify the Coloured people.

It would be a pity if this viewpoint prevailed. The coons appear to be an unhibited expression of the Coloured people's zest for living in the face of hardship and poverty.

"That Fantastic, Colourful Character, the Coon, Steps Out", *Argus*, January 2, 1957. [DN]

1958

68.
Because of the coon carnival, there was a scarcity of caddies at Green Point where the Metropolitan Golf Club played its second round in the Atkinson Cup Competition. However, by shortening their sets, many of the players carried their own clubs with fair comfort and performed as well as though they had 14 clubs in the bag.

"Caddies Went to the Coon Carnival", *Cape Times*, January 10, 1958. [DN]

69.

[...] There is a clash of interests here. The Europeans come to see the coons dance, clown, sing and play as they trip lightly to their string music.

To the Coloured folk, the big draw is the choir and solo contest between four carnival boards that is being staged. The best vocal talents the Coloureds can produce is on the platform, work has been in progress for four months to stage this show, but the European do not know if the Golden Crooning Minstrels are scoring points for the Cape of Good Hope Coons, for the Cape Peninsula Coons, for the Carnival Coronation or for the Jubilee Carnival [...]

"Will Stage Contests Kill Newlands Coon Parade?", *Argus*, January 13, 1958. [DN]

1959

70.

[...] Anyone can join, the coons are essentially democratic, and they have Coloured, Malay, African and even White members. Yes, there are some White coons who blacken their faces and don costume with the others. One wonders whether Job Reservation won't have something to say about this! But Mr. Allen emphasizes that earlier coon organizers were people of good social standing, like the late Mr. Barron and Mr. Willie Cupido. To-day there are still several teachers and school principals who help with the organization, which shows that they see some good in the whole idea.

Organizers are extremely jealous of their reputation, and of that of their men. Perhaps this is because they know that many people look down on coons, and so they try to show that their members can behave well. All speak of careful schooling of their members, and, what is more important, of the men's self-discipline, in order that their troupes may not fall into disgrace. Drunkenness is frowned upon, and can lead to loss of points. Orderliness in procession, in spite of what may seem to be a disorderly march, is important, and close attention to the instructions of the organizers is demanded during the performance.

Although many of the coons have not had the benefit of much (or any) schooling, it is surprising how they respond to the educational influences present in the whole organization. For instance Mr. Sonny Lloyd visits his troupes during training and sees that their musicians get some training in the basic chords and harmonics from none other than Mr. Joseph Manca. They have, he says, to be shown the essential continuity of the music, and how to eliminate the pauses which lead to "dragging".

Mr. Allen reports that his captains make use of the better educated youths for registration, recording payments, writing songs. This adds to their prestige and causes the illiterate ones to desire to go to school and to write as well. Thus many youngsters see the value of education and literacy for the first time through their association with the coons! This is surely a poor commentary on our social system [...]

So often am I asked what my personal opinions are of the coons, that I feel I must give them here. One may as well ask: What do you think of breathing? For to the troupe members, this is like life and breathing at this time of the year. As long as it continues to give fun and good, clean entertainment to thousands of people, most of whom have less than their fair share of happiness anyway, let it continue. If, as claimed, it serves to uplift many, keep them out of trouble, teach them orderliness and respect for the right conduct of affairs, so much the better. I do not like the reserving of special seats and the paying of special prices for Europeans. I think the happy atmosphere would do better if it could work through a mixed crowd and if Black and White could mix and laugh freely. And if any should think that coons are degrading simply because they caper in public, what of the jive and bebop?

"Origins of the Coons; Anyone Can Join", by R.E. Van Der Ross, *Cape Times*, January 8, 1959. [DN]

1961

71.

[...] One coloured man appeared in [Cape Town Magistrate's Court] dressed in his Coon trousers. He was charged with making a noise in the street. The prosecutor, Mr. P. May, withdrew the case against him, saying:

"After all, what is a Coon Carnival for if not to make a noise?"

After the court adjourned, Mr. May said the number of cases of drunkenness this New Year was not high. People were probably too busy with their carnivals to drink.

"Coon Carnival Must Be Noisy Says Official", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1961. [DN]

72.

[...] As the big day draws closer, practice sessions become more and more like the tuning of an instrument, devotedly being tuned, searching for and pursuing the proper key which would win it the applause and admiration of thousands [...]

During the smoke break I was allowed to see one of the closest guarded secrets of the year, the "gear" (costume) — white panama hat, white gloves and colourful pants and coat tails of a special design. (I have promised to keep the colours a secret). In the inner sanctity of the house where such plots are hatched, the bedroom, only the captain and myself were allowed to see the full "gear". The ordinary members of the troupe see it for the first time on New Year's morning when they put it on.

"Voetsek, off with you!" Another little curious, but definitely uninvited guest has found his way through an opening in the fence, desperately trying to get a look at the coons. The little boy, backside hanging out of his pants flees hurriedly, scattering a few dogs and two small children.

The Coons are his heroes. So are they the heroes of most little boys in Athlone, Claremont, District Six of wherever Coon troupes exist. One and all are dreaming about the day that they, too, can join the Coons — join in the frolicking, merriment song and dance down the streets of Cape Town towards Green Point Common or strutting and prancing through suburban streets to Hartleyvale.

Almost all Coons are Coloured. (I say almost, because there are many Whites who join the fun down Cape Town's streets on New Year's Day. There is even one who leads his own troupe every year). Not all Coloureds are Coons, however. Many Coloured people disapprove of the Coons.

A Malay friend of mine goes as far as to speak of the *Skandaal Klopse* (Scandal Coons), meaning those who paint their faces and prance and gambol in the streets on January 1. Those people feel that the Coons are caricatures of the real Coloured people and that the Carnival represents the Coloured to the European spectator in an improper way.

However, the detractors do not deny the attractiveness of the spectacle. Their only fear is that others may think the Coons typify the Coloured people. But surely the Coons are just an unrestrained expression of the Coloured people's zest for living in the face of poverty and hardships?

"And Jan Badenhorst Visits Some Troupes in Secret Practice, They Prepare for Cape Town's Gayest Days of the Year", *Cape Times*, December 30, 1961. [DN]

73.

Soon Cape Town's streets will once more echo to the rhythmic twang of the banjo and guitar [...] in their traditional manner the Coons will usher in another new year. Again this will be the signal for the renewal of the never-ending controversy as to whether or not the activities of the Coons have a detrimental effect on the progress of the Coloured community.

Again it will be said that these exhibitions are ape-like and tend to degrade the community in the eyes of all other race groups; that all efforts towards educational and social uplift undertaken during the year are nullified in this "debasing" welter of inanities at the end of the year.

Again the answer will come that any section is entitled to seek recreation and outlet for innocent exuberance in the manner of their own choosing without their so-called more educationally and culturally advanced brothers and sisters looking down their noses at them.

These arguments we have all heard, but I recently listened to a new point of view in favour of the Dixie-minded boys. An elderly member of our community wanted to know why when the well-fed more-privileged university students dresses up in an absurd costume and dances round the streets at "Rag" time, we are all tolerantly

amused and say what an extremely funny fellow he is, but the moment the poor semi-illiterate barrow boy does precisely the same thing, we turn sour?

Can it be, he wants to know, that those of us who so freely condemn the Coons are actually socially immature — education and university "geskrik" — in that we will countenance anything provided it emanates from a seat of learning? [...]

"Coons and Minstrels, Dances until Dawn and the Japanese New-Whites", by Pertinax, *Die Banier*, Desember 1961: 12. [GM]

1962

74.

One Sonny Lloyd, veteran organiser of coon carnivals and veteran collaborator and organiser of segregated shows where the oppressed caper for their basies, wants to carry his activities to their logical conclusion by handing the coons over to the C.A.D [Coloured Affairs Department].

He doesn't like the idea of the coons being organised under five different boards in the Peninsula. This looks far too much like independence where people can do as they please among themselves. He would like to see them all firmly owned and controlled by the City Council or the C.A.D. with himself as the head organiser, of course. It is no accident that he would like to see a job at present being done by five different people converted into a king-sized one for himself alone, with the C.A.D. as employer.

The clubs should see to it that collaborators like Lloyd be put firmly in their place and that the clubs be maintained independently of the C.A.D.

"Coons and the C.A.D.", *The Torch*, January 17, 1962: 7. [GM]

1963

75.

[...] The tightened tax law on entertainments in the Cape has prevented the Community Chest from sponsoring its annual Coon Carnival at Newlands, and directors of other minstrel boards fear they may have to cancel their carnivals or raise admission prices if they do not get a tax exemption [...]

A coon carnival had been sponsored for many years by the Community Chest and had been a big source of revenue for the 37 charities it supported. The carnival held last New Year's Day attracted 12 000 people.

Mr. Sonny Lloyd, director of the Cape Western Minstrel Board, said yesterday that he would sponsor the carnival himself and would apply for a full tax exemption. He had ordered expensive silks from Japan and tailors were already busy making the costumes [...]

Mr. J.W.G. Allen, director of the Western Province Coloured Jubilee Board, said his carnival has been arranged to take place at the Goodwood Showgrounds and he was negotiating with the Provincial Administration for a tax exemption.

"With the new tax ruling we will have to increase the admission price which is already heavy for Coloured people. We used to contribute to charities till we were forced to pay tax two years ago. Now there is nothing left to contribute — in fact tax people have told us we still owe them money for the past two years."

The amendment to the entertainment tax ordinance which came into force this year provides for a tax exemption — if no less than 60 per cent of the receipts from the charges of admission to the entertainment are given to charity [...]

"Coon Shows Hit by Tax Ruling", *Cape Times*, December 10, 1963. [DN]

76.

Mr. [Sonny] Lloyd said that the film [on the coon carnival planned by Charles Berman, a Johannesburg film maker] would help to offset rumours overseas about the so-called suppression of the Coloured people. It would just show how much was being done for them.

Argus, December 23, 1963. [DN]

77.

[...] Four years ago [i.e. 1963] there was a return to the name "minstrels". The prime mover behind this was Mr. Sonny Lloyd, a tailor who has organised carnivals for the past 17 years. He felt there was a stigma attached to the name "coons" and that, anyway, the original name was "minstrels".

"Colourful Coons Dance New Year In", Pictures and Report by Jan Badenhorst, *Sunday Times Magazine Section*, January 1, 1967. [WM]

1964

78.

[...] Thousands of people lined the main streets in District Six and the route through the city up Wale street to the Malay Quarter on Signal Hill yesterday and on New Year's Day to watch the coon troupes resplendent in their carnival dress, dancing and singing.

Popular, too, were the Malay Choirs, who, led by bands, marched through the city throughout the day. They all wore smart blazers, and tapped the ground with their walking-sticks as they marched along.

"Colourful Coons Liven the City", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1964. [DN]

79.

Three policemen were slightly injured at the Green Point Track on Saturday when a coon carnival, attended by about 12 000 people, broke up in a hail of bottles, warning shots from the police and the growling of police dogs at troublemakers' heels [...]

The trouble broke out among non-Whites after a disagreement over the award of trophies at the carnival organized by the Cape Original Coon Carnival Board [...]

Mr. Abdullah J. Janoodien, chairman of the Cape Original Coon Carnival Board, which organized the carnival at the Track, blamed the crowd for starting trouble by throwing bottles.

He said there was disagreement between the Hollywood Minstrels and the Star Spangles. The Star Spangles had won nearly all the first prizes.

Some Hollywood coons, disheartened, snatched their own trophies and threw them on the ground. The police told them to pick them up and resume their places. At this stage the crowd started throwing bottles [...]

A *Cape Times* photographer, Mr. Harry Tyler, [...] describing the incident [said:] "A personal fight broke out between two coons over the award of trophies. At this stage, the police and reservists were posted between the stands and the crowd of coons and they were strenuously trying to hold back the coons as they pressed forward.

Suddenly, mineral and other bottles rained from the stand on the police, and they were quickly picked up and flung back by coons and some spectators standing behind them [...]

A group of policemen sheltering in the grandstand entrance tunnel were peppered with missiles — stones, sticks, and bottles — and some drew revolvers and fired in the air [...]

One policeman, spat upon by a coon, calmly wiped his jacket and walked off".

"Bottle Brawl, Shots at Coon Show, Missiles Rained on Police: Arrests", *Cape Times*, January 6, 1964. [DN]

80.

[...] One Sea Point motorist, whose car was caught in a traffic jam in Somerset Road, Green Point, said afterwards that the coons streaming across the road were not content with threading their way through the stationary traffic but climbed over the stopped cars.

Two of the coons assaulted him and then snatched off his spectacles valued at R 25.

When he got out of his car to chase the culprits, other coons hit him with their walking sticks and advised him "not to be foolish" [...]

"Three of the Four Police Hurt in Brawl Back on Duty", *Argus*, January 6, 1964. [DN]

81.

To the Editor, The Argus

Sir. — On Saturday at 7.40 p.m. my husband drove his car through Rose Street, Cape Town. He had my young daughter and her friend in the car.

There were hundreds of Coons milling around and my husband stopped his car to let the Coons pass.

Without any warning, without provocation on his part some of the Coons attacked the car. Two of them began to hit my husband through the window.

Others rained blows with sticks and tried to open the doors and threw bricks at the windows which luckily were closed [...]

"Night Incident", *Argus*, January 6, 1964. [DN]

82.

To the Editor, The Argus

Sir. — I am justified in saying that certain coons are a lot of hooligans and that no self respecting Coloured person will sing and dance in the streets, even though it is supposed to be traditional.

[...] I, as a respectable Coloured man, feel most disgusted and ashamed (and do so many others of my race) at the behaviour of certain coons. BAN THEM, Retreat.

Argus, January 10, 1964. [DN]

83.

To the Editor, The Argus

Sir. — Cape Town can do well without the coons. Whatever gaiety or colour they may provide is entirely cancelled by an aftermath of ugly incidents — not to mention filthy streets, especially in the Coloured areas, when the crowds have gone.

Let those up country Whites, who apparently are so keen on the coons get together for a change; let them paint their faces, don some ridiculous garbs and parade the city streets! COLOURED, Sir Lowry's Pass

Argus, January 17, 1964. [DN]

1965

84.

The virtual absence of carnival troupes in the fast-growing townships on the Cape Flats is a prime cause of the incidence of hooliganism in those areas, states Mr. J.W.G. Allen, veteran carnival organiser [...]

"It is not generally realized how the exodus of the townsfolk to the Flats has disrupted their community life and also the carnival troupes' unity" he said.

"Men who once lived close together and belonged to the same singing clubs find that they are spread over half a dozen townships. They arrive home from work much later and few can travel distances to the club captains.

It is to be regretted that the formation of coon bands is being discouraged in certain parts of the Flats, notably in Bellville South. The coons are a greater asset to the community than is generally realized. They should be encouraged rather than banned by the more sophisticated sections [...]

The late Bishop Lavis, who was our board's patron since its inception in 1935, realised the value of the coon movement among the poorer sections of the Cape's people. It was the coons, in turn, who began to help their own people many years ago by contributing to charities".

"Blamed for Hooliganism", *Argus*, December 18, 1965. [DN]

1966

85.

[J.W.G. Allen, director, Western Province Jubilee Coloured Carnival Board, in his carnival opening address at the Cape Showgrounds, Goodwood] said he wished to convey a word of cheer to his people not to lose hope. The carnival spirit was an indication of the fact that the Coloured people were making the best of things no matter what problems faced them.

"I hope tolerance will prevail and that those in authority who have our future in their hands will deal with us with understanding and moderation."

Argus, January 1, 1966. [DN]

86.

The Coloured people of Cape Town are divided on the value of the traditional Coon Carnival as an attractive holiday-time feature. While many think that the Ramadan fast was only a temporary blow to the carnival and that it will be revived to full gaiety again next year or the year after, others say that the Coon Carnival has lost its attraction and is on the way out [...]

Mr. H. Gelderbloem, secretary of the Greenhaven Ratepayers' Association and founder of the Greenhaven Young People's Organization, said: "The Coon Carnival is a fading tradition because it has over recent years become a completely commercialized festival.

A few years back one could take the children to almost any main road and wait for carnival troupes to pass on New Year's Day or the traditional Tweede Nuwe Jaar.

These days you hardly ever see the Coons if you are not on their way to their respective performing grounds or on their way from them.

I and many people I know have lost interest in the traditional New Year attraction. We do not see the Coon Carnival as an attraction any more." [...]

The Rev. John Hess, of the Church of the Resurrection, Bonteheuwel, said he thought the carnival had become too commercialized. He did not hope the carnival would revive because it gave a "backward" impression of the Coloured people to the visiting Whites.

"If the carnival is fading as it appears to be, I don't think anybody, except the organizers, would really be affected."

"Coloured People Differ on Fate of Coon Carnival", *Cape Times*, January 6, 1966. [DN]

87.

[...] Singing pop American tunes instead of the traditional "Nuwejaar liedjies" hundreds of coons thrilled thousands of spectators and tourists at Hartleyvale on New Years' Day [...]

One of the two White coons, believed to be the only ones in the Republic told Herald, "It gives us great pleasure to enjoy ourselves like this. It is my fifth year with the coons and of course I make the most of it because it is only once a year that I get this opportunity to enjoy myself this way". The second White coon said: "This is my first year and I can say that it will certainly not be my last" [...]

Hundreds of people lined Hanover Street to wait for the arrival of the coons from Green Point track. They sat on boxes, cars and balconies. The Moslem Ramadan fast did not effect the New Year coon celebration as badly as it was thought.

"Coons in Brilliant Display", *Cape Herald*, January 8, 1966. [WM]

88.

[...] Take the songs they sing:

It is the happy liedjie that rings through the narrow back streets as they quickly wind their way through, but once they reach their destination, it is the sad laments that they really cling to for hours on end.

Songs that cry out to lost love and regret, sorrow and pain.

They are handled gently with respect and tenderness.

Can it be that the whole Coon Carnival is one big mass display of emotion-packed people finding relief in a gigantic explosion of pent-up desires and frustrations?

If this is so, the comic Coons still have the last laugh. While the critics of the Coon parades worry and develop new sets of ulcers each year, the Coons themselves remain healthy and sane with this annual spectacular show of the year.

"How to Cheat Fate — Be a Coon, Undercurrent Affairs", by Jackie Heyns, *Post*, January 9, 1966. [WM]

89.

[...] What do the people of Cape Town think of the coons? Are they for the coons or are they against them? *Herald* this week took it on itself to ascertain what the public thought of the coons and found that in most cases the answer was: It should be accepted as part of Cape Town.

It is not a thing that a person can be for or against, a Coloured leader in Cape Town said. It should be accepted as part of Cape Town. Through the Coon Carnival, the life, feeling tradedy [sic] and success of the people are expressed.

It is also unique to Cape Town, the leader added. Nowhere in the world can any carnival or Mardi Gras be compared with the Cape Town Coon Carnival in its colour, splendour and gaiety and that is one reason why it should be accepted.

The Coon Carnival also sets off the Cape Coloured Community from the Whites. The White community will never be able to put up a carnival as bright as the Cape Coon Carnival. The reason for this, the Coloured leader said, is because the basis of the Coons is giving vent to feelings which for 51 weeks of the year have been repressed. The Whites have not been repressed, so that there can be no wild burst of feeling.

Secondly, the Coloured people, unlike the Whites, have the ability to drop their inhibitions and be what they want to be. The Whites could not do this even if they wanted to. They are too tied up in convention, and are compelled to wear the mask of respectability [...]

An adjudicator of the Coon Carnival, Dr. Joseph Manca, told Herald that he had nothing personally against the Coon Carnival. What he was against was the bad behaviour which a few coons displayed.

Besides being a tourist attraction, Dr. Manca said, he also regarded it as a means of discovering new musical talent. He said that if only the Coons allowed themselves to be channelled in the right direction then a lot of latent talent which is in the coons will be discovered. [...]

When asked whether he thought that the coon troops were a breeding place for crime, Mr. Babs Essop, president for the Cape Town Hawkers Association and three-time contender for the Cape Town City Council, said No [...]

A lot is being done to keep the coon troops as clean as possible. The captains of the troops are very strict and selection is done on a very strict basis Mr. Essop said [...]

It also acted as a crime buffer, Mr. Essop said. The coons take up about 12,000 men of Cape Town and give them something to do. What will happen if there is no Coon Carnival? There will be 12 000 pairs of idle hands ready to rob, steal and assault.

As for only the bad type joining the Coons, Mr. Essop added, what about the famed Eoan Group tenor Joey Gabriel? He was also in the coons. Dollar Brand, famed jazz pianist, now in New York, and Yusuf Williams, a tenor now resident in Sweden, were also in the coons.

Then, there were Dullie Davis who impersonated Al Jolson so well that he adopted his name and Jerry Lewis (Christopher Green) and singer Fatima Barnes. All these people were in the coons, Mr. Essop said, and they were people of good standing [...]

A leading figure in the Non-White sporting world of Cape Town said the sooner the Coon Carnival is done away with, the better it will be for the Coloured Community. Not only is it disgusting the way our people act during the Coon Carnival, but it is also very irritating.

As for being a great tourist attraction, this sporting figure said, the tourists go home with the idea that all Coloured people are like Coons. The Whites also hold up the Coloured Community to ridicule because of the coons and this is very degrading [...]

He added that not only is the dancing and parading of the coons degrading to the Coloured Community, they also cause choas [sic] and traffic jams in the city. The sooner it is done away with the better he said.

"'Like Snoek en Patats', The Coons Belong To Cape Town", by Herman Arendse, *Cape Herald*, December 31, 1966. [WM]

1967

90.

Cape Town's internationally famous annual coon carnival was a big, gigantic flop. In fact, it was a disgrace to the coons. This is the only new thing that can really be said of this year's carnival.

Never before in the history of the carnival has there been such a pathetic display of the so-called "vitality, rythm [sic] and gaiety" of the Coloured people. And if there is anything to be said that would help future carnivals to regain its much-lauded "uniqueness" then I believe there is only one alternative. Either the carnival organisers start an immediate shake-up of their organisation and introduce, primarily, some originality into the songs, dances and music beside the costume designs, or they might as well close shop, call it a day, and leave the people to enjoy their memories of what the coons used to be like "in the old days".

The fact that this year's carnival co-incided with the annual fast of Ramadaan and this excluded the participation of many Muslims had very little to do with this year's flop [...]

The excitement was gone because the music was stale — cheap, third grade version of the current tunes one hears on Springbok Radio or Lourenço Marques. Where are

the moppies, those vital little tunes that characterise the originality of "kleurling taal" and humour [...]

Every year the troupes get smaller. Before you could stand in Caledon Street, Tenant Street and Hanover Street all day and there would always be a troupe marching. This year you had to wait for hours to get a glimpse of one troupe and half an hour before you saw the next one [...]

What is the problem? Is it merely bad organisation, lack of originality on the part of troupe leaders, too much emphasis on costumes and not enough effort on original music and lyrics? Or is it that there is behind-the-scene thuggery in the world of the coons just before New Year? [...]

Many coons to whom I spoke said that too much power is put into the hands of captains. They felt that committees, made of coons in each troupe should be set up by the coons and given the task of running the show. [...] in this way much of the graft now evident in regard to tailoring contracts and accessory bulk buying, payment to certain individuals and "mahala" money to some captains, will be eliminated. [...]

Mr. "Doelie" Richards, [...] of District Six, who was a coon at the age of ten and who is now nearly 80 years old, told me that there was too much repetition in the competitions and that too many trophies were involved in the contests [...] He felt that sponsorship will result in all kinds of unpleasantness, especially the intrusion of organised gangsterism because sponsorship would mean easy money somewhere [...]

But this is all advice for the future. Of the present, the most that can be said is "If it had not been for the lack of anything else to do, even fewer Coloured people would have wasted their time on the Mother City's tragedy of the year, Coon Carnival 1966."

"Coon Carnival Needs Big Shake-Up", by Howard Lawrence, *Cape Herald*, January 7, 1967. [WM]

91.

The Spes Bona Minstrels, Cape Town's oldest coon troupe, led by veteran captain and organiser Davie Petersen, is to disband after the 1968 carnivals.

"The decision to disband the troupe is purely a financial one", Mr. Petersen said today [...]

He recalled the good old days when it was possible to rig out a coon in satins for as little as R. 1.80 to R. 2. Today R.7 was hardly enough. Many of the men were not able to get together half that amount.

"I can remember when we bought rolls of satin at four yards for 19c. The dealer came along in a push-cart and offloaded the satin at the captain's door. He was quite prepared to wait for his money. Today the same material costs as much as 33c. a yard and we must have the ready cash to buy.

The tailors, too, have put up their prices. They used to charge us 60c. or at the most 70c. for making a coon suit. Today we are lucky to get a suit for R. 1.50 or R. 2.

For several years I have been running my club at a financial loss largely because I love the New Year carnivals and wanted to continue to keep my club going. Now I realise that this no longer possible", he said.

Mr. Petersen (60), who has been in the coon movement in the city for 44 years is not severing all ties with the carnivals. He has for several years been secretary and stage manager for the Cape Western Minstrel Carnival under the chairmanship of Mr. Sonny Lloyd. He plans to continue in that capacity.

"City's Oldest Coon Troupe to Break Up", *Argus*, December 16, 1967. [DN]

92.

[...] The Green Point Track, which is in a White group area, was last used as a venue for a coon carnival in 1967. It ceased to be used after the Department of Community Development refused to grant permits for multi-racial audiences to attend carnivals.

"City Coons Want to March through the Streets Again", *Argus*, January 5, 1971. [DN]

1968

93.

While the centre of Cape Town was, for the first time in many years, almost devoid of coons on New Year's Day and today, and thousands of sight-seers waited in vain for the revellers in their satin tunics and gay music, organisers of the carnival at Hartleyvale and Goodwood both say that they had record attendance.

The absence of coon troupes marching through the main city streets was largely due to the fact that [for] the first time since 1906, no carnival was held at the Green Point Track. Troupes went by bus, train and lorry to Hartleyvale and Goodwood [...]

"Big Crowds at Coon Carnivals", *Argus*, January 2, 1968. [DN]

94.

New Year, 1968, was sad, quiet and dull. It was a time for mourning. It wasn't like other years when the streets were filled with men, women and children of all shapes and sizes, colours, creeds and social conditions. I walked about looking in vain for the throngs of thousands, the families who lugged boxes and tables and chairs, pots of food and cans of wine, cool drinks, biscuits and sweets and new born babies out of their houses, and who camped on the pavements of the city all the way from District Six to Green Point Track, and Hartleyvale and Goodwood.

This year there was no music and laughter and joy in the streets, no portable gramophones balanced precariously on old apple boxes, no sweating people or lovers patrolling the streets.

And you can blame it on business [...] When businessmen moved into the coon scene so that they could make money, it not only robbed some charities of much needed money, but it also took the spontaneity out of the coon carnival. In the beginning it

wasn't so noticeable, but then the coons stopped composing their own "moppies" and took to singing the pop tunes on the hit parade [...]

One coon carnival businessman told the Press that he would not let the coons march and dance and sing and jump and make merry in the streets anymore because he isn't prepared to give the public what he called "a free show". He said it costs money to stage a carnival and that the Cape Town City Council would not subsidise him [...]

And that question now arises, who pays for the coon carnival?

The answer is simple and obvious. The coons themselves pay for the cost of the carnival. And that solicits the question: "Should the Coloured people who take part in the coons be expected to pay to be able to take part in the carnival when it is a profit-making business? And if they do, should not the profit of the carnival be then split up between all the coons in that particular carnival?" [...]

Perhaps the Cape Town City Council should take over all Carnivals and use the profit from the carnival grounds to swell the Community Chest. If nothing is done then we might as well all mourn the passing of the coons.

"...But What's Happened to the Coons?", *Cape Herald*, January 6, 1968. [WM]

95.

To the Editor, The Argus

Sir, — The coloured people often say "Coons are embarrassing and thousands of respectable Coloured people feel ashamed of their race because they parade in the streets in such an uncultured manner."

As ex-president of the original Cape Coon Carnival Board, and as a European, I wish to defend all those who take part in such wonderful displays.

The coons are part of Cape Town history and they fill a genuine need of the Coloured people. The New Year is a time for enjoyment and an occasion to forget one's troubles and the coons naturally help to keep conservative Cape Town alive. The town belongs to them at the New Year [...]

The coons are cultured people, too. It is a sign of high culture to mimic one's troubles and portray the past with humour and frivolity [...]

ISAAC SHRAND, Oranjezicht

"Coon Town at the New Year", *Argus*, January 10, 1968. [DN]

96.

To the Editor, the Argus

Sir, — I refer to Mr. Isaacs Shrand's letter about the coons (January 10). The sooner we see the end of this "representation of the Coloured people", the better for everyone. How these jumping jelly beans can fill "a genuine need of the Coloured people" as Mr. Shrand puts it, I fail to see [...]

Members of the coons are confined to a certain section of the community only.

Overseas, people who see pictures of the coons firmly believe that this is how South African Coloured people behave to "keep Cape Town alive".

I have the greatest admiration for the organisers of the non-White Scout movements, the C.L.B., Christmas Choirs, the Habibiyah Moslem Bagpipe Brigade and also the Eoan Group.

These are organisations to which the children of cultured Coloured people belong [...]

European people are not all classed in the same group as long-haired pop-singers, flower people, mods and rockers and what-not.

Similarly the rest of the Coloured community should not be accepted as coon-loving people [...]

A.T. DU PLESSIS, Cape Town

"We Can do Without the Coons at Nuwejaar", *Argus*, January 17, 1968. [DN]

97.

To the Editor, the Argus

Sir, — I would like to reply to Mr. Isaac Shrand's comments on the coons (Letters, January 10). The statements that he made typify the erroneous thinking that exists among many Whites.

While I agree that it is a noble thing to be able to laugh in the face of difficulty, I hardly think one could assume that laughter could be misconstrued as acceptance of the short end of the stick.

Nor can it be safely assumed that the people who take part in these antics epitomize the Coloured person.

It is a cruel fact that only the less literate of the Coloured people are party to this type of thing.

Indeed those who are more enlightened would rather be seen dead that be a party to this affected frivolity that brings gold to the coffers of the City of Cape Town by virtue of its value for the tourist trade.

And isn't it a fact that this self-same city is guilty of a lack of charity toward these unfortunate children, for on the same page that Mr. Shrand's letter appeared, there was an attack on the presence of the Coloured person in the parks of Sea Point?

Let us face the facts. The Coloured man has much to complain about and his silence or his uninhibited prancing on New Year's Day cannot be regarded as his willingness to tolerate injustice.

If this is to be the yardstick whereby his feelings are going to be measured, then Mr. Shrand is doing the Whites and the Coloured people a grave injustice by nurturing and propagating a cruel misconception [...].

ALEXANDER CARL TABISHER (Secretary, Bonteheuwel Welfare Organisation, Bonteheuwel)

"Cruel Facts", *Argus*, January 17, 1968. [DN]

98.

[...] The fighting started on Saturday when the coon troupes were returning. On the corner of Hanover street and Tennant street a petrol bomb was thrown at members of the Young Students of Broadway troupe [...]

Several coons in the Young Student Minstrels, including their captain, Tashard "Arazaad" Arendse belong to the D.K. gang.

After the petrol bomb attack, the D.K.'s and the Stalag 17 gangs clashed [...]

"Bloody Clashes after Carnival, Bomb War as District 6 Explodes", *Post*, January 14, 1968. [WM]

V.
Group areas and forced removals hit the klopse, 1968–1989

1968

1.

Group areas zonings, resulting in thousands of Coloured families moving to new homes on the Flats, have dealt a death blow to the once-spectacular New year coon troupes parades through the city.

Mr. "Sonny" Lloyd, chairman and organizer of the Cape Western Minstrel Carnival at Hartleyvale [...] says:

"[...] We carnival organizers are not to be blamed for this. Because the performers now live mainly in such places as Grassy Park, Bonteheuwel, Windermere and Lavistown, they march to Hartleyvale direct and do not come anywhere the centre of the city.

Even the three troupes from District Six will head north to Hartleyvale on New Year's Day. We shall not see them in their rainbow coloured tunics along the old Hanover Street, Caledon Street and Wale Street route."

Another factor which has ended these carnival parades in the city streets is the dropping of Green Point Track as a coon carnival centre [...]

Mr. Lloyd said [...] "A solution would be to subsidize the carnivals so that the troupes could spend some time dancing and singing in the city streets. It will cost the organizers money to transport hundreds of performers from the Flats to central Cape Town" [...]

"Group Areas Hit Coon Parades", *Argus*, November 12, 1968. [DN]

2.

[...] For several years now the fast has coincided with New Year — this meant that most Muslims were unable to take part.

This year the fast will be over by Christmas.

The antics of the coons have been the subject of many arguments.

On the one side of the fence is the anti-coon group. This section of the community feels that, not only are the coon performances uncultured, but also that their very existence — in principle — is degrading to the Coloured people.

This is because most coons come from the lower income group.

Therefore they have fewer inhibitions and consider the whole show a great fun [...]

One of the carnival organizers, well known Mr. Achmat Levy, of Hanover Street, had some pretty emphatic opinions about the good which lies in the existence of the coons.

"People say we teach our men to drink wine and smoke dagga", he said, "but those are all lies. We have the coons for only three days of the year — what of the other 365 days? If a man wants to smoke dagga he will do so regardless of the rest..." [...]

Mr. Levy felt that the coons were basically "good" people.

"Some of them may come from what is commonly known as the "rougher" element, but the moment they step into the coon uniform, they are like little children with the greatest loyalty towards their troupe and their captain and, because they realize that awards and prizes are important, they are at their best behaviour."

Mr. Levy added that the good behaviour was a direct result of the coon members' philosophy — nobody wants to spend Christmas and New Year in jail. After all, those are the "big days" [...]

Each troupe member pays about R. 6.50 for his uniform [...]

So, dignified or not, cultured or not, the coons will be parading this year as in the years gone by... but a problem facing the organizers this year is the unwillingness of the authorities to allow the coons to parade through White areas [...]

"The Coons Are Coming, For the First Time in Years the Muslim Fast of Ramadan Won't Clash with the Coons, It Should Be a Bumper Show this Year", by Neville Fransman, *Cape Herald*, November 23, 1968. [WM]

3.

There will, after all, be at least one Coon Carnival in Cape Town at New Year.

The permit to stage a carnival at Hartleyvale arrived today from the Department of Community Development [in Pretoria] [...]

"It is going to be something of a scramble to get all the arrangements completed" a spokesman for the [Cape Western Minstrel] board said today. "Because we had been waiting for the permit we could not do anything until now. We have five weeks to get 2,000 minstrel suits and costumes made" [...]

The Chairman of the Cape Western Minstrel Board, Mr. "Sonny" Lloyd had said earlier that if the permit was delayed much longer there would be no time to make arrangements for the carnival [...]

This year the Goodwood carnival has fallen away.

Mr. J.W.G. Allen, director and secretary of the Western Province Jubilee Coloured Carnival Board, said that, because of rising costs, the spreading of the coons over a number of Coloured townships away from District Six and the death of the board's chairman, Mr. Adam Erentzen, it has been decided not to hold a carnival [...]

"City Will See Coons After All", *Argus*, November 27, 1968. [DN]

4.

A local weekly newspaper, "Cape Herald", published a feature article on the coons [see 2]. The article stated that with the end of Ramadaan in December there would be an increase in the number of the coons at the end of the year. The article infers that the Fast was responsible for last year's small number of coon troupes.

We agree with the report but the small number of coons is not only directly linked with the Fast but the realisation on the part of Muslims that it is altogether contrary to their belief to be a member of a coon troupe.

No Muslim who holds his belief dear will associate himself with anything that robs him of his dignity as a man. A true Muslim can never be a coon.

We appeal to all Muslims and non-Muslims to desist from taking part in this annual act of debasement.

"Muslims Are Not Coons", *Muslim News*, November 29, 1968. [WM]

5.

January 2, the Cape's distinctive Second New Year's Day, will see at least one Coon Carnival, to be held at Hartleyvale by the Cape Western Minstrel Board. This will be by virtue of a permit issued by the Department of Community Development. How sadly different this is from the gaiety of a few years ago, when the troupes of coons, in bright uniforms and led by their banners and their bands, paraded along the streets which led to the city's centre, down Adderley Street and then to Green Point, Newlands and other traditional places for their competitions.

Their permits became necessary, as people were dispersed and the former sense of community was eliminated. What had been one great carnival dispersing from central Cape Town was transformed into local carnivals, this year seeing carnivals only at Hartleyvale and Goodwood, and next year to see one only, at Hartleyvale.

The coon carnival in its former shape did many things. It gave pleasure to those taking part in it, with dressing up, parading and competition among troupes. It drew tourists and gave them pleasure. It recalled the history of the Cape Coloured people in the late nineteenth century. It brought home to many, to the coons thronging the streets, to the rest of Cape Town as it turned out to watch and cheer, that this section of the Coloured people was a part of the greater community and, in the true spirit of carnival, for one day, the centre of the city was theirs.

Now, it is said, it would cost too much to bring the troupes into town for the traditional parade; perhaps it would, if the cost were to come from the subscriptions paid by the members of the troupes. And if there is only a carnival run at one centre by a single board, the effect in the central streets that used to be created by numbers as much as bright colours will be lacking. Cape Town is going to be poorer for the passing of the Coon Carnival.

"Let's Keep the Coon Carnival" [editorial], *Argus*, November 30, 1968. [DN]

6.

[...] Moslem religious leaders in Cape Town say it is debasing for a Moslem to be a Coon [see 4].

Hadjee Levy strongly disagreed with this.

He said: "The reasons these leaders give is that Coons get drunk on liquor and dagga and then cause havoc. This is true for a very small percentage of the Coons.

There are fights week after week at soccer matches, rugby fields, hops and dances. Do these leaders say that these sports are also debasing.

The Coon Carnival is not only a tourist attraction but a sport to those who partake in it. The whole year the members of the troupes look forward to the three days of the Carnival. Why should it be labelled "debasing"?"

Hadjee Levy said the carnivals do more good than harm.

"They curb crime over the festive season and add colour to our mother city [...]"

"Last minute Rush for Carnivals", *Post*, December 29, 1968. [WM]

1969

7.

The Coon Carnival have been a New Year attraction in Cape Town for longer than anyone can remember. But interest is dwindling and the Coons themselves are under criticism from their own people. Jackie Heyns asks whether they're doomed [...]

During the past 10 years membership and public interest has shown a steady rate of decline, indicating that this one-time centre-city attraction will soon fade away into the side-streets of District Six, and die [...]

Changing times are against the Coons. Modern Cape Town, especially the Coloured group, is no longer amused by their antics in the street. What used to be fun to watch is now described as vulgar and cheap exhibitionism. The majority of the Coons are Moslem and the most outspoken criticisms come from the religious leaders of that group.

There was a time when non-White derision could be ignored. The Coon Carnival did not need the support of the Coloureds who lined the streets to enjoy the free show. It was the grand finale at the organised competition grounds watched by high-paying Whites that mattered.

But White support is no longer guaranteed. With one stroke of the pen, racial separation machinery could seal their doom. This, plus Non-White disfavour and condemnation is the road sign facing the marching Coons of today [...]

Ten years ago Coon Carnival parades in Cape Town reached their peak in popularity and size. They were organised by four boards of control, each operating separately in

widely distributed points (Green Point Track, Goodwood Showgrounds, Hartleyvale and Athlone). Each board represented from 10 to 20 "troupes" that consisted of anything from 25 to 200 members, filling the streets of Cape Town on New Year's Day with 5,000 satin-suited, strutting Coons.

In 1962 the number of boards had dwindled to three. By 1968 only one board was on show [...]

Ninety per cent of the Coons come from the lowest income group. For 50 weeks of each year they merely exist. On their meagre earnings they cannot afford frequent pleasures, and with little or no education the sum total of their life is humdrum.

Then comes Coontime and those who have walked in the shadows for 50 weeks come out into the sun, into the centre of the street, into the centre of the town, into the centre of excitement and music to become the centre of attraction for two whole weeks. For those two glorious weeks they live [...]

Now must this be taken away? Must the Coons be denied this fleeting privilege? It would be a heartless Cape Town that said yes...

"Do the Coons Have to Die?", by Jackie Heyns, *Drum* (Cape Edition), January 1969. [WM]

8.

Cape Town has lost something — perhaps even part of her soul [...]

For a variety of reasons — traffic problems, population movements and a tendency towards over-organisation — such Coon Carnival as there is has moved away from the metropolitan area. And for a family of five, grandstand seats at the sportsgrounds where the Coon contests are now held — the next best thing to the view from the pavement of Adderley Street — the cost may be as much as R. 6.

Is our loss irretrievable? Is it not possible to return the carnival atmosphere to Cape Town on New Year's Day and Tweede Nuwejaar when commerce has no need of the metropolis?

There should be no objection from the City Council which allows the University of Cape Town Rag to disrupt the city on a business day every year [...]

The Coons belong to Cape Town and Cape Town should belong to the Coons on the first two days of the year. And it should be possible to overcome all the difficulties which are said to preclude the tradition from continuing.

"Loss of a Carnival", *Argus*, January 4, 1969. [DN] [editorial]

9.

New Orleans has Mardi Gras, Hong Kong has the Dragon Festival, Munich has Faschung and Glasgow has Hogmanay. Cape Town has the Coon Carnival [...]

Here what should be one of the world's most colourful spectacles has been forced to degenerate into a glimmering of its former brilliance, confined to the functional precincts of a football stadium when once the whole city was at its disposal [...]

With the sixties came the beginning of the decline which few seek to arrest, precipitated by the stream of Group Areas removals to the Cape Flats.

Many of the old troupes based in District Six and Schotsche Kloof, had to break up as half their members lived 20 miles away and could not join the others for practice.

Then again in the early sixties came a severe blow when the Moslem fast Ramadan coincided with the Carnival. Thirty per cent of the coons were devout Moslems who could not take part and several carnival organisers fell by the wayside as they were unable to recruit troupes to take part in their competitions.

At the same time, Moslem leaders discouraged their followers from having anything to do with the Coon Carnival as it was "undignified". The number of coons has been dropping each year as a result.

The next blow was the demise of the carnival at the Green Point Track, the one to which the street parade from District Six, which made the carnival internationally famous, was directed.

Now, Cape Town's Traffic Department has forbidden the coons to parade in the central city area, though in all fairness they can obtain permits to parade elsewhere.

But Mr. Sonny Lloyd, organiser of the Hartleyvale Stadium carnival which is the only one left in the city area has since discouraged his coons from parading through the streets as he is "sick and tired of giving Cape Town a free show."

The troupes now travel to Hartleyvale, deep in Observatory, by train — travelling free through a thoughtful gesture of the South African Railways [...]

It is not until after the final day of the carnival that they can begin to parade in the streets in terms of the Traffic Department's permit, showing their share of the 180 cups provided for the various competitions by Mr. Lloyd [...] a European who has been organising Coon Carnivals for 19 years [...]

Mr. Lloyd is optimistic about the carnival's future. He feels the pruning of the event has been beneficial as standards are higher every year.

But many of the individual coons seem to think otherwise. One, whose troupe broke up two years ago as people moved from District Six to the Cape Flats complained bitterly that the coons were being stifled out of existence.

"What's the fun in practising for months just to parade in a stadium?" he asked. "What the coons want is to be allowed to parade in the streets as they always have. That's the whole point of being a coon.

But I don't think they'll ever let us do that again. And I suppose the coons will just die."

"The Coon Carnival — Is It Fading Away?", by Tony Hoskins, *Argus*, December 27, 1969. [DN]

10.

[...] In spite of his rigid discipline, Sonny Lloyd [66] makes no secret of his affection for the Coloured and Malay people. A musician himself — he is a tailor by profession — he has always been impressed by the natural musicality of the Coloured people. He has also been associated for years with the Eoan Group.

"But the real reason why I, as a White man, have devoted all these years to non-White Coons, variety and other musical promotions is that I sympathise with the underdog. They lack opportunities for expressing their inherent musicality; I try to give it to them, and some of my proteges have made big names for themselves abroad."

Sonny Lloyd's army career ended abruptly when he was involved in a troop carrier crash with a train. When he recovered two and half years later he began his career as an impresario.

Some of the non-White variety shows he managed, usually with the co-operation of a partner, became household names — there were the Hi Notes and Zonk, to name just two that are still remembered well.

But it is as an organiser and friend of the Coons that he is known widely today [...]

"Coons — Sonny has the answer", *Argus*, December 31, 1969. [DN]

1970

11.

From Dr. I.D. Du Plessis (22, Montreux, Queen Victoria Street, Cape Town).

Every New Year brings letters and articles on the Coons, mostly in praise of the annual carnival.

Emphasis this year has been on the loss to the City of the annual parades though the streets, a major holiday attraction for visitors. Coons' supporters and old Capetonians, for whom the New Year and *Tweede Nuwe Jaar* can never be the same without the troupes streaming down Wale Street on their way to District Six [...]

I do know that the middle and professional classes have strongly resented the carnivals in the past, as giving a misleading impression of the cultural development of the Coloured people.

But there are signs that this attitude is changing. A cultural level has been reached which enables them to see these carnivals as a celebration of the masses at the level of simple folk ditties and popular entertainment. Provided the Coons behave themselves

(and most of them do) they are tolerated rather than resented. The time may come when they will be accepted as making, at their own level, a unique contribution to the world's carnivals [...]

Cape Town has the material for a really worthwhile carnival procession on these lines. Are we going to be content with a spate of letters and articles every New Year, bewailing the loss to the City that could, with a little imagination, drive and co-operation, be a major holiday amenity as well as a healthy outlet for many of our less-privileged citizens?

"City Could Have Fine Coon Procession", *Cape Times*, January 8, 1970. [DN]

12.

Those members of the Coloured community who wanted to be Coons and those who watched them performing had every right to do so, Mr. T.R. ("Tom") Swartz, chairman of the Executive of the Coloured Persons' Representative Council said yesterday [...]

Mr. Swartz said:

"My candid opinion about the Coons is: Why interfere with them? They are providing a form of entertainment which evidently gives them a great deal of pleasure. If the public wishes to share that pleasure and pay for it, what's wrong with that? Why try to prevent a group of people from the free right of providing a form of entertainment of their own liking and others of their free right to enjoy that entertainment [...]

I would like to see the Coons being allowed to parade through the main streets of Cape Town under the strict control of traffic officers in the same manner as those in the university rag are permitted to do" [...]

The *Muslim News* said in an editorial that the annual Coon carnivals were "degrading" and Moslems should not take part in them [...]

"If you felt that you could not take your place in the ranks of the coon troupes last year because of Ramadan and the respect you have for Islam, then we fervently urge you to retain that respect even though Ramadan has passed," the editorial says.

The carnivals were degrading spectacles "in which man goes out to prove that he is prepared to make a monkey of himself.

No man who is a Muslim and who cherishes his faith will allow himself to be turned into a spectacle for the amusement of others. This appeal is also made to our Christian brethren. Condemn coons and coonery," the *Muslim News* says.

"Swartz Defends Coon Carnivals", *Cape Times*, January 8, 1970. [DN]

13.

From A. Sadulla (77, Upper Leeuwen Street, Cape Town):

It is reported (*Cape Times*, January 8) that exception has been taken in some quarters to the participation of Moslems in the annual carnivals and street parades that are as characteristic of the Mother City as the gusty south-easter.

I would point out to people who malign the coons and Malay choirs that the conclusions they draw are based on ignorance and prejudice, rather than on thorough study of the issue [...]

As a Moslem, I consider the holier-than-thou attitude prevailing against the coons and choirs as unwarranted and extremely unfortunate.

"Don't Condemn the Coons", *Cape Times*, January 13, 1970. [DN]

14.

From Mr. Gerald L. Stone (P.O. Box 85, Sea Point): [...]

Critics claim that the coons present a degrading image of Coloured people, and mislead unthinking Whites into assuming that the Coloured people, as a carnival organizer recently claimed are "happy under White rule".

Carnival supporters, usually Whites or unselfconscious Coloured people are unfortunately insensitive to the meaning of the minstrel image [...]

Blackface minstrelsy arose among Southern States negroes during slavery early in the last century [...] Then or now such ritual buffoonery functions as the Black man's denial of a deeper hostility and despair, in order to reaffirm his precarious social position.

It is not surprising that the minstrel image is now abhorred by United States negroes. Equally predictable is the continuing insensitivity of many poorer Coloured people who are in fact denied opportunities to learn any self-image other than that of underdog. But many White people might profitably wonder why they take the coon image for granted and pay it so little attention.

We do both participants and spectators an injustice by encouraging people to represent themselves as brown buffoons. If we wish to support New Year revelry, it would surely be more desirable to encourage communal and not just sectional participations, and then in a form affirming the humanity of all.

"'Minstrel Image' of Underdog", *Cape Times*, January 14, 1970. [DN]

15.
An attempt to revive the coon carnival at Green Point Track — traditional home of the carnival since 1906 — has been unsuccessful.

The Amenities Committee of the Cape Town City Council has turned down an application by the Cape Original Minstrel and Choir Board — a new organization — for the hire of the track on January 1, 2 and 9, 1971 [...]

"No to Coon Carnival at Green Point", *Cape Times*, March 7, 1970. [DN]

1971

16.
An application to the Department of Community Development for a permit for Whites to attend the coon carnival at Athlone stadium to-day has been refused [...]

The carnival, due to start to-day, will be opened by Pearl Jansen, and will include a variety show in which Dollar Brand, the jazz pianist, and other top recording artists, will take part. Ten coon troupes will take part in the carnival.

"Permit for Whites Is Refused", *Cape Times*, January 1, 1971. [DN]

17.
Cape Town's Coon Carnival, sad to say, shows distressing signs of dying on its feet — as a real carnival that is. [...]

The trouble, of course, is that the carnival has been systematically dismembered — cut off in the main from spontaneous public participation by restrictions imposed by various authorities. In short, the Coons are gagged by red-tape [...]

For a start, the Coons' procession should be allowed back into the heart of the Mother City to share the same opportunity as the university Rag or the more solemn ceremonial marking the opening of Parliament. In each case it is simply a matter of effective control within the bounds of public responsibility.

"Spirit of the Coons" [editorial], *Argus*, January 4, 1971. [DN]

18.
Cape Town coon carnival organisers are hoping that the Traffic Department will lift a ban imposed 15 years ago on organised processions marching through the centre of the city.

They blame the absence of the coons from the city's main streets on a decision taken in 1956 by the Traffic Control Department of Cape Town City Council.

Individual coon troupes were granted permits to march through the centre of the city on their way from District Six up through Wale Street to Rose and Chiappini Streets in the Malay Quarter to the Green Point Track.

The Green Point Track which was in a White group area, was last used as a venue for a coon carnival in 1967. It ceased to be used after the Department of Community Development refused to grand permit for multi-racial audiences to attend the carnivals [...]

Mr. Sonny Lloyd, organiser of the Hartleyvale coon carnival [....] pointed out that a permit issued to him by the traffic Department confined his troupe to restricted routes on the outskirts of the city where there would be little interference with traffic.

Mr. Lloyd criticised a regulation laid down by the traffic department which allowed coons to walk without music along the traditional route from District Six to the top of Wale Street.

He was referring to a rule prohibiting coons from playing their banjos and guitars between Buitenkant Street and Adderley Street [...]

Hadji A. Levy, organiser of the [Cape Peninsula Coon] carnival, said coon troupes in his carnival lived on the Cape Flats with the exception of one troupe, "The Playboys" which came from District Six.

He said the displacement of District Six residents under the group areas proclamation sounded the death-knell to coons parading through the centre of the city [...]

Footnote: A Cape Town's Traffic Department spokesman said individual troupes were granted permits to march through central Cape Town, playing instruments, but organised processions were barred. Another source noted that the main argument against allowing organised processions was the City Council's lack of toilet facilities for crowds.

"City 'Coons' Want to March through the Streets Again", *Argus*, January 5, 1971. [DN]

19.

The Cape Town City Council had never stopped the coons marching through the city on their way to and from the New Year carnivals, the Town Clerk (Mr. H.G. Heugh) told the Argus. [...]

"I want to make it quite clear that the council has never had any objection either to the coons marching through Cape Town or to their using their traditional carnival venue — the Green Point Track."

He said that in 1956 the council received an application from carnival organisers for permission to stage a procession of between 8 000 and 10 000 coons up and down Adderley Street.

After careful consideration the Traffic Manager turned it down as it would have disrupted the city's transport system completely [...]

In all the years that the coons had paraded on their way to the carnivals at Green Point they had never marched through Adderley Street.

They followed a traditional route from the old market site in Sir Lowry Road, along Tennant, Caledon, Spin and Wale streets, into Rose street then down to the Green Point Track.

Each individual troupe had to obtain permission to march, but they always followed one another so the march was in effect a procession of all the coons taking part in the carnival Mr. Heugh said.

The council had never refused permission for the coons to march along this route.

He said if carnival organisers applied to march along another route or for a permit to organise a mass procession, permission would probably be granted — provided it did not interfere with the bus service or seriously disrupt traffic.

He said that the council had often been blamed for banning coon carnivals on the Green Point Track but the decision in fact had nothing to do with the council.

When Green Point was declared a White Group Area the council had to apply to the Department of Community Development for a permit to allow Coloured People to use the Green Point Track.

Mr. Heugh showed me the permit which stated that Coloured people could use the track for sporting activities but stipulated that no coon carnivals were to take place there.

He said he believed the ban was the result of repeated complaints from Somerset Hospital authorities about rowdiness and unruly behaviour at coon carnivals.

The march of the coons along their traditional route on New Year's Day and on January 2 each year was a major festive season attraction in Cape Town until 1967 when carnival promoter, Mr. Sonny Lloyd, called off the march because he "was sick and tired of giving Cape Town a free show".

Since then individual troupes have obtained permits from the council and small groups have marched from Woodstock to the Malay Quarter. This year the council issued permits to all eight troupes which applied.

"Coon March Not Stopped by Council — Town Clerk", *Argus*, January 16, 1971. [DN]

20.

The Department of Community Development has granted permits for White and non White spectators to attend the carnivals at Hartleyvale and Goodwood. The Athlone carnival will be confined to non White patrons. A permit has however been granted to the organizers at Athlone to have White adjudicators.

Cape Times, December 30, 1971. [DN]

1972

21.

It's my life [...] Without the coons I would have been dead years ago. This keeps me alive.

I remember the old days when there were no restrictions. Those were the real coon days when we paraded through the streets of Cape Town and everybody turned out to see us. Now the coons have been turned into a commercial business but I love it all the same.

The thrill of dressing up in our mad outfits and performing for people is right up my alley. We wait a whole year just for that moment. I can never describe what it feels like.

"Edries Dinnie alias Boeta Pielie, In the Coons for the Last 50 Years", *Cape Herald*, January 8, 1972. [WM]

22.

Tommy Jewels, the King of the Coons, is dead.

The dark-skinned clown with the toughest jaw in South African show business died in a hit-and-run car accident last Friday night.

Jewels — his real name was Mogamat Toya Allenberg — was running for a bus in Jan Smuts Drive, Athlone, when he was knocked down and killed.

He lived in Roger Street, District Six, for many years, and got the title as Cape Town's King of the Coons for his funny antics [...]

He became known as the "Prince of Heideveld" and was one of the most popular people in the area.

Jewels also became known as the "man with the toughest jaw" because he could balance almost anything on the edge of his chin.

He died almost penniless. Two days before the accident, he was working as a part-time gardener for a White family in Epping.

"King of the Coons Dies — Penniless", *Cape Herald*, May 20, 1972. [WM]

23.

You won't see Mr. Sonny Lloyd's Coons parading through Cape Town this year. "Why should I give Cape Town a free show?" he says. It is a familiar war cry.

This New Year holiday period has given more cause to the 69-year-old impresario of non-White acts to repeat his war cry. There has been more pressure on him to parade his Coons, such as:

. an invitation from the City Council to do so;

. an offer by a opposition Coon organiser to send his own performers on a street march;

. and growing public nostalgia for the days when the laughing, singing, musical Coons brought international television crews and tourists galore coursing into the Mother City.

The crux of Mr. Lloyd reluctance to release his 2 500 proteges from the confines of the Hartleyvale football stadium where they compete musically is that no-one is prepared to subsidise his annual R. 6 000 investment in the carnival [...]

[Sonny Lloyd declared in an interview:] "If the Group Areas did not kill the Coons, nothing will. When the Coloured communities in the city were split up they found it difficult and expensive to reach rehearsal points. The fact that the troupes are still going strong is convincing enough to me that the Coon Carnival will never die."

"Should the Coons Give Cape Town a Free Show?", *Argus Magazine*, December 30, 1972. [GM]

1973

24.

For the first time after a lapse of several years, the New Year Coons will march through the centre of Cape Town on Saturday and restore some of the traditional carnival atmosphere to the City.

Mr. J.W.G. Allen, director and secretary of the Western Province Jubilee Carnival Board which has its venue at the Cape Showgrounds, Goodwood, announced yesterday that the Coon march would start from the Grand Parade to-morrow at 2.45 p.m. [...]

"Coons Will March Again through City Centre", *Cape Times*, January 5, 1973. [DN]

25.

The 1973 Coon Carnival parade was "a tremendous success", the Mayor of Cape Town, Mr. R.F. Friedlander, said today. He hoped it would be repeated again next New Year [...]

"Mayor Wants Coon Parade Every Year", *Argus*, January 6, 1973. [DN]

26.

As I stood in Adderley Street amid the dense crowd watching the "organized" coon parade shattering the usual quiet of the city at that time on Saturday with the gay music of twanging guitars and strumming banjos, I could not help contrasting the scene with that of the District Six on New Year's Day. The once favourite stamping ground of the

coon bands in Hanover Street and Caledon Street not only looked as inactive as siesta time in Mexico, but were as silent as a turkey farm on Boxing Day.

For close on a century band and coon processions were the gift of District Six to the Mother City's gaiety at holiday time [...]

Within the space of a few years, however, a whole pattern of living, of working and of "making sports" underwent a social metamorphosis. This was not the result of the gradual inevitability of change. It was caused by the swift blotting out by slide-rule techniques by outside powers-that-be of much that had given the city character and individuality.

In the days between the wars, however, the New Year was used as an excuse by many in District Six for going on the razzle-dazzle. Coonery was riotously gay, zestful, jolly, zippy and flamboyant. Old and young arrayed in garish finery joined in the Saturnalia-like holiday funmaking. Benches, chairs, even paraffin stoves and coffee pots were lugged down to the main highways in District Six. The baskets of food contained two traditional New Year items to relish — curried pickle fish and *Klappertert* (coconut tart) [...]

It was then the custom for the coons to give their unrestrained best in free street shows. The street was their preserve and onlookers did not leave the pavements to mob them as did the crowds along the route of the organized march in the centre of the city on Saturday [...]

Then the coon carnivals at Green Point Track were banned and the marches across town to reach this traditional carnival venue came to an end [...] Then District Six was sentenced to death (for the good of the people, it was said).

It was declared a group area for White occupation. The population was given marching orders. They were and are still being swept from the area like so much horse manure.

With the big shift out to the Cape Flats the coon marches across the central streets of the city stopped. A tradition had come to an end. A way of life was destroyed in the so called slum clearance move. In the process of modernization, in District Six, which is not for those who once lived there, nothing is holy or safe. Not only buildings but humans have been demolished. The insidious process of disintegration continues.

The tragedy of it all is that those who have been forcibly moved out of the outlying areas where soulless repetitious dwellings are arising from the ground with the alacrity of toadstools, have undergone a change [...]

The Blacks of the city, who used to be part of the living entity of Cape Town, have been forced to break their links with the old places. Legalized processes have de-urbanized them in their thousands as if they were a blight. In fact, they have been referred to as such by a top Government spokesman in a justification speech for their elimination from the city centre.

The Coloured people are no longer an integral part of Cape Town. They have no legal living status in its all-white group area confines. They have no longer a stake in it. They have been re-settled in the ghetto areas of the Cape Flats. It is from there that the coon element now springs from mainly. The coon image that was created on the invitation march gave to me at least the impression that they are happy in their new amenity lacking environment; that they have come back to town at the New Year in their carnival best to give a march which is a gesture of gratitude for all that has been done for them, rather than a protest procession of what has been done to the dignity and freedom of Coloured people of all social levels.

The "slaves" are happy and so the master class can feel pleased. The whole spectacle of the march on Saturday had an uninspired hollow and anachronistic flavour. I could not help feeling bloody-minded about it all.

"Has the Coon Carnival Had its Day?", *Cape Times*, January 13, 1973. [DN]

27.

Following the decision by the Chief Magistrate of Cape Town, Mr. J.W. van Greunen, to refuse permission to Coon Carnival troupes to march through the City streets, a snap survey yesterday showed that White opinion favoured the march, but Black opinion generally was opposed to the Coons.

Mr. Van Greunen took his decision on the advice of the police who felt that unpleasant incidents could arise.

A senior police spokesman said the police were not opposed to the Coon Carnival as such but that it was preferable to stage the various carnivals at stadiums where crowd control could be maintained more efficiently [...]

Mr. Tony Walters, a city councillor, commented: "I am bitterly disappointed at the lack of imagination of the police. I cannot accept that they do not have sufficient men, and I don't think they need so many. The crowds are not so undisciplined."

Mr. Hassan Khan, president of the Al-Jihaad Isamic Cultural Movement, said: "As a Moslem, I am not in favour of the Coons.

It is time non-Whites stopped making Coons of themselves. We cannot have a stake in running the City's affairs if we continue parading as Coons."

The Rev. I.D. Morkel, of Athlone, Moderator of the Calvinist Church, said: "I have always found the Coons humiliating to the Coloured people and I fully agree with the police that liquor flows too freely during the carnivals" [...]

The philosopher and poet Mr. Adam Small said: "The streets of the City should be open to anyone. On the other hand, the Coons are not representative of the people.

The carnivals, in any case, have become a mere commercial venture."

"Mixed Reaction to ban on Coon Carnival", *Cape Times*, December 7, 1973. [DN]

28.

Cape Town's traditional coon carnival parade through the centre of the city will take place after all. The go-ahead for a coon parade on January 2 has been given by the chief magistrate (Mr. J.W. Van Greunen) who has reversed an earlier ruling prohibiting the march [...]

[Mr. Van Greunen] reviewed his decision after representations were made to him by the Mayor, Mr. David Blomberg and the Town Clerk (Mr. H.G. Heugh) [...]

"Coons to March in City After All", *Cape Times*, December 8, 1973. [DN]

29.

"Islam enjoins people to do the right thing. It does not force them. All we can do is to warn them not to take part in the undignified and degrading carnival which has no meaning in life" said Dr. Kotwal [Chairman of the Cape Muslim Assembly] [...]

"As a Muslim it is my duty to oppose the carnival to the best of my ability." Dr. Kotwal said the Carnival was degrading because it encouraged people to pretend to be what they were not, because they painted their faces and pranced around in what he described as an undignified manner. The very word "coon" was so often used with contemptuous overtones [...]

Argus, December 29, 1973. [DN]

1974

30.

The 1974 Coons had to struggle through the streets of Cape Town yesterday as thousands of spectators all but blocked the route of the parade.

There was little evidence of crowd control as time and again the eager throngs brought the procession to a halt [...]

The best laugh of the day came before the parade started when a Coon with a mischievous sense of humour insisted on walking alongside a tall police officer and holding his sunshade over the officer's head.

The policeman was annoyed then embarrassed, but when it became obvious that the crowd enjoyed the joke, he gave way and the two marched up Wale Street together both sporting huge smiles [...]

In the end it was left to the Coons themselves to keep back the crowds. This they did with good humour and many dabbed streaks of boot polish on to faces pressed in a little too close. The crowd loved it.

But the general feeling was that it could have all been so much better if only the Coons had been given a little more space.

Mr. J.P. O'Connor, the City Traffic Manager said the carnival presented difficult problems.

"What do you do when people start inching forward? You ask them to move back, and when they don't, what do you do? Arrest them? We don't want to do that. We don't want to cause incidents" [...]

"Thousands Mob City's Coon Parade", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1974. [DN]

31.

Criticism came from many people that the traffic police had not adequately controlled the crowds. Mrs. Norma Baumberger of Orangezicht said she was "seething".

"Our mayor has fought so hard for the parade. I spoke to an officer and asked him why they wouldn't help hold the crowds back so that everyone could see, and he simply said that they didn't want the Coons in town anyway."

"Coons Are Late — But Well Worth the Wait", *Argus*, January 3, 1974. [DN]

32.

[...] Thirty years ago there may not have been much for the Cape Coloured people to be joyous about, but they did belong to Cape Town. Their city came alive at New Year and the troupes would vie with each other on familiar roads in District Six and upper Cape Town. SHEILA, Claremont.

"Letters to the Editor", *Argus*, January 28, 1974. [DN]

33.

[...] The Athlone Management Committee — which is dominated by the Labour Party — wants the coon carnivals banned. After talks between the committee and the Cape Town City Council, last week it was decided to hold a referendum to test public opinion on the coons.

The Athlone Management Committee claim that:

. The crime and violence rate is high when the coons parade.

. Many illegitimate children are born nine months after the carnival.

. The coons are of no value or credit to the Coloured community and their actions serve to degrade the Coloured people.

. The only people who gain from the carnival are the organizers.

. South African propaganda magazines distributed overseas cite the coons as an "example of Coloured culture."

But Mr. Cassiem Banoo, chairman of the Athlone Coon Carnival Board says the Athlone Management Committee are talking "rubbish" [...]

"Criticism of the coons comes too quickly and too frequently from people who suffer with a White-skin complex.

These people are against everything connected with the poorer class of people, and all apparently because these people are not in a position to afford the comforts and pleasures of White people [...]

The Management Committee should concern themselves rather with the problems of the poorer people in the townships — the lack of facilities, the state of housing — these are the things they should worry about."

[The Labour Party of South Africa was founded in 1969, supposedly to cater for coloured interests. It adopted a policy of collaboration with the apartheid authorities and opposed the struggle against apartheid fought by anti-apartheid movements such as the African National Congress (ANC) or the Panafricanist Congress (PAC). It participated in the Coloured Persons Representative Council and, after the adoption of the 1983 constitution, in the House of Representatives of the Tricameral Parliament.]

"[...] For Coon Carnival 'Smears'", by Howard Lawrence, *Sunday Times Extra*, May 19, 1974. [WM]

1976

34.

Prize winning coon troupes from the Hartleyvale carnival might perform for South African soldiers on the border and in various camps in the Republic.

Mr. Sonny Lloyd, who is retiring after organizing Cape coon carnivals for 33 years, announced yesterday that he was negotiating with the military authorities in Pretoria.

"Our board has in the meantime received an acknowledgement by telephone", he said. "We are awaiting a final decision. If our coons and other individual entertainers are accepted for performance up north they will, I am sure, prove valuable morale boosters."

"Coons Might Perform on Border", by George Manuel *Cape Times*, January 3, 1976. [DN]

35.

The chairman of the Witebome Management Committee says coons should be left out of any float parade during next year's Cape Town festival.

One item being considered for the festival is a float parade celebrating the city's cultural heritage.

"There should be no coons if such a parade is held because I don't think the coons have any part in the culture and heritage of the non-White people" says Mr. I.J. Stober, representative of the Peninsula Management Committee on the Cape Town Festival Committee [...]

"'No Part in our Culture', Don't Put the Coons on Parade — Plea", *Cape Herald*, July 27, 1976. [WM]

36.

Cape Town's Coon Carnival is in jeopardy because of the Riotous Assemblies Act. This law will prevent troupes from marching through the streets to Coon carnival venues in the Peninsula.

Organisers must give an undertaking to the authorities that no troupes will parade through any streets in the Cape Peninsula. Unless they can give this undertaking permission for the carnivals which are now all commercial will not be granted.

Uncertainty now faces the fate of the carnivals as permission for the carnivals has been withheld by the authorities until organisers agree to conditions imposed after recent unrest in the city [...]

Mrs. R. Allen of the [Western Province Coloured Jubilee Coon Carnival] Board said [...] "I sympathise with the authorities but let us hope we reach a compromise soon otherwise it will put a damper on the carnival spirit of the coons" [...]

"City Coon Carnival Is in Jeopardy", *Argus*, December 23, 1976. [DN]

37.

The Cape Coon Carnival is definitely on, but the troupes will perform at only three venues because of the Riotous Assemblies Act, Mr. Cassiem Banoo, director of the Athlone and Districts Coon Carnival Board, said yesterday.

There was great disappointment among the organizers of the carnival, members and the community as a whole because the coons were not permitted to march through the streets of the Peninsula while the Riotous Assemblies Act was operative, Mr. Banoo said [...]

The organizers of the carnival did not understand why the Christmas Choirs and the Malay Choirs were not affected by the Riotous Assemblies Act, Mr. Banoo said.

"It seems that we are the only ones hit by this law and while we appreciate and respect the law, we are very puzzled that the others are allowed to perform. Surely we serve a similar function and what applied to us must, as a right, also apply to them. I just can't understand it [...]"

A spokesman at the magistrate's office in Wynberg said yesterday that the decision to lift the Assemblies Act was in the hands of the Minister of Justice, Mr. J.T. Kruger.

"Coon Troupes to Perform at Three Venues", *Cape Times*, December 25, 1976. [DN]

38.

The annual Coon Carnival will go ahead but no coons will be allowed to march in Peninsula streets, according to Mr. Cassiem Banoo, organiser of the carnival at the Athlone Stadium.

Mr. Banoo made this announcement after talks with Brigadier P.A. Cerff, senior police officer in the Western Cape, to-day.

Mr. Banoo said the police had given a "sympathetic hearing" to a delegation of carnival organisers but had pointed out that incidents could arise if coons were allowed to march in the streets [...]

"The organisers must give an undertaking to the authorities that no troupes will parade through any streets in the Cape Peninsula if the prohibition on gatherings under the Riotous Assembly Act is extended after December 31 [...]

The coon organisers must ensure that coons who even live five minutes away from the Athlone Stadium must not march to the carnival venue and must be transported to and from the stadium instead", Mr. Banoo said.

"Coon Carnival to Go Ahead", *Argus*, December 29, 1976. [DN]

39.

[...] The organizer of the Hartleyvale event, Mr. Sonny Lloyd, yesterday said the authorities had been highly sympathetic to the needs of the 4 000 members taking part in the carnival which begins on January 1.

The acting chief magistrate for Cape Town, MR. J.H. Krige, said performers could walk individually to the stadium, but processions were not allowed.

Processions to the nearest railway station are to be permitted in the Goodwood magisterial district, according to a letter received by Mr. Lloyd from the authorities.

Processions have been banned in Athlone. One of the organizers of the carnival there, Mrs. C. Banoo, said this was because of tension in the area, but it was hoped that the restrictions would be relaxed by the Minister to allow house-to-house movements by the Coons.

"Coons Carnivals Allowed, Restricted", *Cape Times*, December 30, 1976. [DN]

1977

40.

A huge crowd — including a squad of riot police — packed the Athlone Stadium to celebrate the New year opening of the 1977 coon carnival [...]

A contingent of uniformed police were on duty and later they were joined by the riot police to whose presence many of the spectators in the stands objected. However the crowd seemed happy when they left through a side entrance soon afterwards [...]

"That's the Spirit!", *Sunday Times Extra*, January 2, 1977: 5. [WM]

41.

[...] This year the about 6 000 coon fans who jam-packed the Athlone Stadium to see the nine scheduled troops perform received a not-so-welcome bonus.

A tenth group, dressed in gay and fashionable camouflage uniforms came bouncing into the arena but instead of the traditional cheers, loud boos and jeers heralded their appearance.

They were a 20-man unit of the riot squad. As they sat down a coon captain said to me: "Now there is going to be trouble. This is unnecessary."

However, their appearance was brought to an end long before they got the chance to sing the "juvenile sentimental" or the "Afrikaanse moppie" when they were invited to leave by M. Cassiem Banoo of the Athlone and District Coon Carnival Board. And they promptly left [...]

Then there was the white coon who unbeknown to the crowd pranced about the stadium. He turned to be well-known Cape Town psychologist Gerald Stone who is doing research on the coons [...]

But the thing that made me wonder was when the African Zonks entered the arena dressed in patriotic orange, white and blue and carrying a larger than-life South African flag. The same people who, minutes earlier, had booed the riot squad cheered like crazy.

"Boos Greet Riot Squad at Stadium", *Cape Herald*, January 4, 1977. [WM]

42.

Well, they have done it again.

Whether you liked it or not, the Coons have come, done their annual thing — dancing, singing, robbing and raiding, handed out pleasure and pain, joy and disgust — and have eloped away laughing.

It happens every year without fail [...]

Every year, too, with their appearance comes that concerted call from sections of the Coloured community for the Coons to be disbanded and to fade from the scene.

But, the Coons have proved once again to be invincible [...]

Next year, they will be back again whether you like it or not, to make you clap your hands or raise them in resignation. They will remain the annual carnival — and calamity — of Cape Town.

"Coons Came, Saw and Conquered, with Tears in my Eyes", by Jacky Heyns, *Sunday Times Extra*, January 16, 1977. [WM]

43.

In the Black townships of Soweto, Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu the people were mourning for those who had offered their lives in the belief of equitable society. Black people elsewhere in the Republic shared their sentiments because they too had lost loved ones in the same manner but except for a section in the Western Cape who blissfully accept the status of Coloured, the label whites have bestowed upon them. And for these Coloureds, "coonery" is part and parcel of being Coloured.

They celebrated the New Year with coon carnivals, revelling in the debasement of theirselves.

While other Blacks visited the graves of those killed and abstained from merry-making, these Coloured coons, and their followers acted as if to them living in South Africa with its stringent laws was Utopia a land of happy brown folks all ready to sing and dance and not a thought of the ravages done to them physically and spiritually.

They prefer to perform while other Blacks mourn.

"Performers and not Mourners", *Muslim News*, January 21, 1977. [WM]

44.

Mr. J.W.G. Allen, a Coon carnival organizer and sports administrator for the past 50 years died in hospital yesterday after being knocked down by a car in Strand Street, Cape Town, a few weeks ago. He was 75.

Mr. Allen, a teacher, conducted music classes for many years. He was known particularly for his charity work and served on many welfare and educational committees. He was chairman of the sub-committee of the Maitland Cottage Home for Cripples.

He was prominent as a sportsman and sports administrator in rugby and held various official positions in the City and Suburban Rugby Union and in other unions.

He started the Western Province Jubilee Carnival Board which this year celebrated its 42nd anniversary at the Cape Showgrounds, Cape Town [...]

"Death of Coon Organizer", *Cape Times*, January 27, 1977. [DN]

45.

[...] In an editorial article earlier this year, the *Muslim News* attacked Coloured coonery at a time when people were mourning the death of many who had died "in the belief of equitable society" [see 44] [...]

But is the *Muslim News* and similar criticism of the coons fair?

The article made no mention of Manenberg, Bonteheuwel and Retreat and all those other so called "coloured" places where people also died. Places where people stood as one and ironically also those places where most of the coons come from.

In their attack the *Muslim News* failed to mention those "coloureds" who not only refrain from attending coon carnivals but also detach themselves from the dying when it is being done.

They did not mention the leeches who grow fat from the fork outs, who sit back and relax until the fighting is over and then step in to reap the benefits went unnoticed.

[Can we give a man no recognition] just because he dances and sings in the streets? Do we now say that we do not care whether he did not go to work when a stayaway occurred or we do not care whether he was also one of those nearly killed when the bullets flew in Bonteheuwel?

Can we erase all this just because he dances in the streets? The question of whether this is right or wrong is a small one in relation to the problem in South Africa.

Other people play white again and others leave the country. Every one has a little place he escapes to sometimes. Some use music, or drink and dance or something else and most seek no justification for what they are doing and it can be excused as long as they do it only some of the time.

We must be like the reeds that bend in the wind not the stiff oak that gets blown over. All the world's a stage, but we cannot all be leading actors.

"Is It Fair to Attack the Coons?", by Maruwan Gasant, *Cape Herald*, February 8, 1977.

[WM]

1978

46.

[...] In terms of the Riotous Assemblies Act, the strumming minstrels have been forbidden to march through Peninsula streets his year [...]

Mr. Sonny Lloyd, doyen of the Coon Carnival, was fairly philosophical when interviewed by Weekend Argus yesterday [...]

"I think it was a disgrace that the Chamber of Commerce tried to stop [the coons'] traditional Tweede Nuwe Jaar by declaring the shops open on second New Year's Day. What right have they to stop the coloured people's traditional holiday for the past 62 years."

He continued: "I was heartbroken when the City Council represented by Cape Town's traffic department and then the Government clamped down on the march through the city [...]

There's one important question I want to ask the Government and the City Council. Why should the UCT Rag have the whole city turned over to them while my people are denied the same privilege? All they would need would be barrels and ropes and a little help from the Traffic Department to contain the crowds.

There would be no incidents and the Coons would collect money from spectators by rattling money boxes — just like the students.

I would be prepared to give those monies to any charities prepared to help me on that day" [...]

The Minister of Justice, Mr. Jimmy Kruger, was not available for comment on the banning of the Coon Carnival Parade, under the Riotous Assemblies Act.

"Coons: Near the End?", by Pamela Diamond, *Argus*, January 7, 1978. [DN]

47.

The Coon Carnival is fast on its way out because of deteriorating standards and bad behaviour, mainly of the spectators, according to Mr. Walter Swanson, who has been associated with the carnival fraternity for 30 years.

Mr. Swanson, who was a judge at the Coon festival held at Hartleyvale Stadium on Saturday, said the behaviour of the spectators had become so poor that he was mugged after the show.

"My opinion is that the whole thing is dying and I feel it should be allowed to die a natural death. As far as I am concerned, I am through with it."

The festival has become commercial and the standard of singing and the rest of the trimmings that went with making a good show, had all gone down the drain.

He believed the Riotous Assemblies Act, which prevented the Coons from marching in the streets, was also largely responsible [...]

"I Was Mugged at Show — Judge", by Mark August, *Cape Times*, January 9, 1978. [DN]

48.

In most Western cities the street parade is a recreation by working class men and boys, in which they show their solidarity in cultural groups and clubs, show off their skill in marching and music, and often have fun.

In countries with warm climates, summer is time for a community carnival, with funny costumes, raucous music, merry-making, and wild, happy disorder.

Put the two together and you have the basics of the Coon Carnival, in which working class Capetonians of colour, like their counterparts in Brazil, Spain, Italy and other European countries.

But there is, of course, more to the Coon Carnival, which is always the centre of controversy.

Many working class people disregard it as disreputable and even dangerous. Many middle class people see it as degrading and politically embarrassing.

Muslim religious leaders condemn joining it as un-Islamic in its lack of self-respect.

The police regard it as a nuisance.

Troupe captains accuse each other of winning trophies unfairly, and accuse Board organisers of hiding huge profits.

Board organisers try to keep their affairs very secret, sometimes claiming that they organise carnivals "for the love of the coloured people" or "to do something for the boys over New Year" [...]

Much of the audience at the competitions and lining the streets consists of the Coons' families and friends, for whom the street is a place to meet and relax, away from the chores and tensions of overcrowded, overheated homes.

For them the "big days" are a time to live it up, two or three weeks into which to cram as much pleasure and excitement as possible, enough to compensate for dull year after year of a dead-end job on dead-end pay (if there is work at all these days).

Middle class people usually have more comfortable homes and perhaps gardens to relax in, and are more likely to have cars to move around and wealth to spend, celebrating their better fortune and expecting more.

Many of them have contempt for the Coons as failures in life who care nothing either for themselves or of the embarrassment and other troubles they cause the more successful.

And white people, mostly middle class, regard the Coons vaguely as a colourful spectacle, to be smiled at and patronised if the Coons are friendly, and to be avoided if they look like getting a bit wild: the police will take care of them — if the police are around.

And the Coons are aware of the potential strength in their numbers as their open mocking of the police shows. And for once the police put up with most of it, but only at Nuwejaar.

There are the seeds of rebellion in the carnival, just hinted at now and then...

And black Bantu-speakers? Well, for them, the Coons are just another of the "amalawus" hang-ups which they took on from the white man... and anyway it's best to keep out of public attention on the streets outside the townships [...]

"Coons Black Faced Mockery?", by Gerald Stone, *Cape Herald*, January 14, 1978. [WM]

49.

The Department of Community Development has given permission for the Coon Carnival to be held at Green Point Stadium. It is the first time the carnival will be held there.

Mr. Gasant Levy, secretary of the Peninsula Coon Carnival Board, said 10 troupes would take part in the carnival on January 1, 2 and 6.

"The City Council said we could use the stadium but we had to apply to the department for permission because it is situated in a proclaimed white Group Area and the troupes are from the coloured race group", he said.

Mr. Solly Levy, public relations officer for the board, said the news that the department had given permission for the carnival at the stadium was "most welcome".

"We have been given permission to allow a multiracial crowd to attend the carnival", he said.

"Stadium Venue for Coon Carnival", *Argus*, August 2, 1978. [DN]

1979

50.

Police were called in to disperse a large stone-throwing crowd who damaged motor-cars and broke windows in Wale Street on New Year's Eve.

The crowd of about 4 000 had gathered in Wale Street to welcome the coon carnival procession. [...]

"Police Stop City Riot", *Argus*, January 2, 1979. [DN]

1980

51.

Coon carnivals have been a New Year tradition for 94 years, but Cape Town people are divided on the issue and once again coloured leaders have spoken against them.

The introduction of the Group Areas Act, which caused thousands of people to be moved from District Six, a focal point of coon tradition, and the Riotous Assembles Act in 1976 preventing them marching through the streets has done much to dampen the spirit and spontaneity of carnivals.

Mr. Norman Daniels, vice chairman of the Western branch of Tucsa [Trade Union Council of South Africa] said: "Over the years, I have condemned the coon carnival, not because it is a carnival, but because it is a coloured thing. People deplore this.

I do not believe it adds to the dignity of the individual. Most thinking coloured people do not support it," he said.

Mr. Hassan Howa, president of the SA Council on Sport said talking to him of coon carnivals was like waving a red flag before a bull.

"I have no doubt that the discipline involved is good for the people and many enjoy the shows, but I believe the good is outweighed by the harmful image coon carnivals convey.

White people look on them as typical of non-white culture. This is not so — the coon carnival is a pseudocultural activity. It gives people a false sense of identity. They forget their dignity," he said.

"Twenty to 40 years ago, it was different. People could sit in the streets watching the troupes go by. All could join in, but the Group Areas Act and the Riotous Assemblies Act have changed all that. New Year's Day should be a day of carnival, mardi gras with everybody participating equally," he added.

Chairman of the Cape Peninsula Coon Carnival, Mr Solly Levy, who is in his 70s, has been in the game for over 40 years — mostly involved with costume making.

"Many educated coloured people believe coon carnivals make monkeys of people — this is non sense. They are pure entertainment, fun, and give a lot of enjoyment.'' [...]

Mr. Sonny Lloyd [...] said not only do the carnivals give immense pleasure to many, they also provide employments. Many tailors and seamstresses make their year's living from sewing the costumes.

And how does the man in the street feel?

Only two of the 20 people spoken to said the carnivals should be phased out [...]

"Discordant ''notes'' on Coon Carnival", *Argus*, December 31, 1980. [DN]

1981

52.

A youth was shot dead at a Coon carnival at the Athlone Stadium on New Year's Day and another person was injured. The youth died yesterday in hospital.

The motive for the shooting is not known but it appeared that the two people who were shot belonged to one troupe of artists and the man with the gun to another [...]

Large crowds gathered in Adderley Street before midnight on New Year's Eve and a contingent of uniformed police were on hand to prevent incidents.

While what appeared to be a number of gang members including members of the Glitter gang, mingled with the crowd, there were no reports of violent crime.

However, a number of people moved swiftly through the throng, jumping out of darkened doorways and alleys and smearing black shoe polish on the faces of and clothes of hundreds of Capetonians and tourists who were in the City centre to see the New Year in.

Police stopped a number of people and reprimanded them before releasing them. There were no arrests.

"Youth Is Shot Dead at Coon Carnival", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1981. [DN]

1982

53.

A troupe of Coons hijacked a bus in Athlone on Saturday evening and forced the driver at gunpoint to drive to Valhalla Park where they robbed him of R. 5.

A City Tramways bus driver, Mr. S. Abrahams, 22, told the police he was driving on the Athlone-Bonteheuwel route at 9 pm when about 13 men in coon outfits outside the Athlone stadium forced him to stop.

They climbed aboard and, with firearm at his head, forced him to drive to Valhalla Park.

At Valhalla Park, he was robbed of R5 and R5 worth of bus tickets.

In another incident involving coons two men were shot — but not seriously hurt — during an argument on a passenger train near Pinelands on Saturday. The Railways Police chief in the Western Cape, Brigadier H du Plessis, said today his detectives were investigating the shooting which occurred when a number of Coons returning home allegedly moved into the white section of the train [...]

"Coons Hijack Bus in Athlone", *Argus*, January 18, 1982. [DN]

54.

At times like this old Kapenaars like myself sigh for those dandy Coon bands and troupes that once strummed and swayed their insouciant way through the crowded streets of this old town, bringing life and gaiety and an air of centre-city carnival. They are gone now, but need it be for ever? [...]

No wonder our lively Captour organisation has been trying to get the Coons back on the city streets [...]

The Group Areas removals, and in particular the banishment from District Six, punctured their bubble, understandably. A catastrophe such as this might have soured a saint.

What we have left of the Coon phenomenon are emasculated, stadium-bound competitions at various centres. And even these have been degenerating. Last year there were violent scenes in and outside some stadiums, the worst at Hartleyvale, where police were hard put to restore peace in a bottle-throwing outbreak.

Increasingly, coloured leaders have been calling for an end to the Coon carnival tradition. Adam Small, the poet, called it a "commercialised mockery". Others liken today's compartmentalised Coons to "performing monkeys" and suggest the community has developed culturally beyond such "exhibitionism".

I see their point, but there is a resilient body of young coloured and Malay opinion which still sees the annual Coon explosion as a fun thing, a joyous letting-down of the

hair, an outlet for their instinctive sense of rhythm and musicality. Yes, and inherent exhibitionism, too [...]

"Bring Back the Coons to the City, Talk at the Tavern of the Seas", by The Wanderer, *Argus*, December 27, 1982. [DN]

1983

55.

Zane Adams, one of Cape Town's veteran entertainers, said it on the box for all the world to hear — he was not very proud of the fact that he was part of the coons [...]

"I started singing in a vocal group in 1962 with some other young boys and we simply did what the older, more established groups did," Zane said after the TV screening.

"Unfortunately they introduced us to the coons and that was the worst thing they could have done. It just put us in a rut [...]

When I was introduced to a coon troupe [ca. 1962], I joined the Sterling Stars, from Sterling Street and I actually won the juvenile solo. The next year the leader of the American Jazz Singers told me he wanted me for his troupe.

He wanted to make sure he had the top juvenile singer and they were a 900 strong troupe [...]

As far as I am concerned, coon carnivals are a breeding ground for crime [...]

There is a terrible stigma attached to the coons and we have enough problems without people saying this is how "they" look and behave."

"Not Proud of my Coon Days", *Cape Times*, July 23, 1983. [DN]

56.

On a recent television programme on jazz in South Africa, Cape Town musicians Tony Schilder, and Leslie Klensmith were persistently asked by presenter Don Albert about "ethnic" or "Cape Town" influence of their music and inevitably were asked about the coons, which was obviously what the presenter meant by "ethnic".

Why, oh why, do they have to associate people of colour with the coons? The word ''coon'' is derogatory. [...] I do take exception to being referred as a coon, in whatever form it may be.

The other fallacy brought up by Mr. Albert was that people of colour are "happy". What do we have to be happy about? Everybody knows the political and social upheavals we have been through and the facade some show only hides deeper emotions and misgivings. T. JOHNSON, Lansdowne

"Ethnic Labels", *Argus*, December 5, 1983. [DN]

1985

57.

The Coon Carnival and Malay Choir organisations are seriously considering calling off their annual year-end festivities in the light of the unrest in the Cape [...]

Many people feel that "this is not a time for celebrations" and some tailors have been asked not to make the Coons' satin outfits or choir suits.

Cape Malay Choir Board president, Mr. Kashief Ernest said: "In view of the suffering of the community and the loss of lives in the present crisis, the Cape Malay Choir Board has decided to call off its New Year's Eve parade.

It commiserates with all those who lost loved ones during the unrest and expresses its solidarity with those striving for a just society in which all South Africans will be free and equal in human dignity and rights [...]

Although no decision has been taken yet regarding the January competitions, two choirs at the Cape Malay Choir Board's meeting this week — each of whom lost a member in the recent unrest — pressed for a total cancellation of January's competitions [...]

Mrs. Margie Arenz who has successfully tendered to stage coon carnivals at the Athlone Stadium, said their annual carnival competition scheduled for January 1, 2, 4 and 11 would go on as planned [...]

One [coon] troupe captain told the Sunday Time he had been warned not to enter his troupe as there could be lots of trouble because "this is no time to dance and jive in the roads".

Doyen of Cape Coon carnivals, Mr. Sonny Lloyd, said that if this year's coon carnival competitions were cancelled, it would be the first time in the 45-history of organised carnivals that such a decision had been taken.

[The Athlone carnival will eventually be cancelled. *Sunday Times*, December 8, 1985]

"Not the time to celebrate", by René Du Preez, *Sunday Times*, November 3, 1985. [WM]

58.

The Hartleyvale based Coon Carnival Board are determined to continue with their New Year celebrations — despite calls to refrain from performing because of the unrest [...]

Although the board has much sympathy with people's feelings, especially those who have lost family during the unrest, they believe coon carnivals bring people together and are a way for people to ring in the New Year on a happy note [...]

Mr J. Gordon, spokesman for the Hartleyvale Coon Carnival Board said: [...] "We believe coon carnivals are necessary to bring some joy to the tens of thousands of people in the Cape [...]

Also, the troupes have already spent tens of thousands of Rands on their outfits. Asking them to throw all this away is grossly unfair" [...]

"One Coon Board to Go Ahead", by René Du Preez, *Sunday Times*, November 10, 1985. [WM]

1986

[Death of Edgar James "Sonny" Lloyd, born 1901, tailor and "non-white events promoter". *Cape Times*, May 13, 1986]

1987

59.

The 100th Coon Carnival takes place at the Cape Showgrounds in Goodwood on January 1, 2, 16 and 23.

The Coons will also be marching through the streets of Cape Town for the first time in a decade on January 2 from 9 am. to noon.

For the first time in its history, the carnival is being organized by two women, Anne Carstens and Lisa Hogarth, and for the first time one troupe, the Famous New Blue Girls, will be captained by a woman.

Lisa and Anne say it is their dream to see the "old tradition" of the coon carnival restored to Cape Town.

Many stars were discovered through the coon carnival — Danny Williams, Jonathan Butler, Zayne Adams, Ronnie Joyce and others.

"Cape Coons Go Back on the March Again", *Cape Times*, Funfinder supplement, December 23, 1987. [DN]

1988

60.

Thousands of people flocked to the city centre on Saturday to see the first Coon Carnival street procession in 14 years.

The traditional street parade on "Tweede Nuwe Jaar" was originally banned from the streets because of unruly crowd behaviour and violence but was revived this year after magisterial permission was obtained.

Mr. John Miranda, secretary and manager of the Cape Centenary Coon Carnival Board and participant in Saturday's parade, said thousands of people had lined the route from the Grand Parade via Adderley, Wale, Rose and Strand streets back to the Parade.

"It was wonderful to be back in the streets of Cape Town after so many years", Mr. Miranda said [...]

"Thousands Flock to see "Coons" in City", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1988. [DN]

61.

Cape Town streets are to swing with all the new year fun and frolic of a Coon Carnival procession when, for the first time in 12 years, Coon troupes march the traditional route to Green Point.

According to a spokesman for the organisers, Mr. Al Hendricks, the green light has been given for a "mardi gras procession" in Adderley and Wale streets on Tuesday, January 3 from 11 am.

"It'll be just like old times", said Mr. Hendricks [...]

The procession is linked to carnival festivities to be held at the Green Point stadium on January 2, 3, 7 and 14 [...]

"Coons to March to Green Point — "Just Like Old Times"", *Argus*, December 19, 1988. [DN]

62.

He began with the coon troupes when he was only six years old and he's also the man who discovered Jonathan Butler.

The name Al Hendricks is synonymous with the Coon Carnival, and it will be a proud day for him on Tuesday when the troupes return to the streets of Cape Town [...]

Thirty years ago he won a national Al Jolson contest at the old Alhambra Theatre in the city and from that day on his given name of Ebrahim became just a memory.

"I was number 70 something on the list, but I think I got it because I used the Jolson line "put on the lights, I want to see their faces!"

"That was an entertainer, everybody loved him."

Entertainment has been Al's life. He remembers as a little boy in District Six that he looked forward to New Year more than to Christmas and to the opportunity of seeing his father — Abdullah, known as "Fred" — taking part in the troupes.

"It was our day. They call it the "minstrel carnival" now because they don't want to offend anyone, but to us it will always be the Coon Carnival" [...]

Al has been involved with the Coons for 48 years, and was a stalwart through the days when District Six was demolished and the carnival was reduced to a one-day happening at the Green Point Stadium. For 12 years the traditional march though the city was banned.

"We really battled to get the march back, and its future depends on the behaviour of everyone taking part. I have personally addressed every member of every troupe and they understand that everything rests on it being under control'' said Al this week [...]"

"Carnival Returns: Proud Day for Al", by Diane Cassere, *Cape Times*, December 31, 1988. [DN]

1989

63.

Tens of thousands of spectators lined the streets of Cape Town yesterday to watch the city's first official "Coon Carnival" parade through the city in 12 years.

Troupes taking part in the Original District Six OK Minstrels Carnival '89 arrived for the start of the march at the Grand Parade about half an hour late to find a huge crowd waiting.

Even more people lined Darling, Adderley and Wale streets [...]

Some of the minstrels claimed they came from "District Six Bush" [...]

It seemed all of Cape Town revelled in the carnival atmosphere."

"'Coons' Welcomed Back to City Centre", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1989. [DN]

64.

[...] It is worth noting that at the 1989 May Day celebrations at Athlone stadium the Cosatu unions marched to the Internationale — but the workers anthem was sung (by a Garment Workers Union choir) to guma beat (played by the Musical Action for Peoples Power band) and the unions marched in klops (coon) style [...]

Jeppie 1990: 73 [AD]

Epilogue
1990–1996: Klopse in a non racial South Africa

1990

1.
Cape Town's traditional Coon Carnival, a scene reminiscent of the City big peace marches of 1983. Thousands of spectators lined the streets to catch a glimpse of the coons troupes, dressed for the occasion as they marched through the City from District Six to the Green Point Stadium, for only the second time in the past 12 years. The carnival marked the District Six Coon Carnival Board's 100th anniversary and the Parade followed weeks of painstaking preparations and practice, and frantic fundraising to find the R. 28 000 to hire the necessary 36 buses.

"On Parade...", *Cape Times*, January 3, 1990. [DN]

2.
[...] Ismail [Dante] started in his first troupe, called quaintly The Honolulu Dainty Darkies, at the age of five. By that time, his father had gone on to become involved in the Cape Malay Choir Board with Dr. I.D. du Plessis, an expert on Malay songs and traditions at the Cape.

"At that time our family was living in the Bo-Kaap and we were involved with the coons", says Ismail.

Today he is a tailor in Mitchells Plain: "As far as I know, I am the only Dante to be a tailor. Mr. Edries Dollie of the Bo-Kaap taught me how to cut a jacket and sew."

His other major involvement is with his own coon troupe. The Good Hope Entertainers, which was also the name of his father's troupe. The Good Hope Entertainers also have a rugby team and a cricket team.

Ismail has five children — three daughters and two sons. The coon tradition is peculiarly male, so it is the sons who will follow on.

Although the Coon Carnival will take place at the Green Point Stadium this year (on January 1, 2, 5 and 12), it is unlikely that a large march of all the troupes through the streets of Cape Town will take place because of lack of sponsorship for the transport required.

"As the Good Hope Entertainers are based in Cape Town and because we were established in the Bo-Kaap we have permission to march there, but many of the troupes

are out in the suburbs and they will not be able to get here for a march," explained Ismail.

The organiser and spokesman for the Coon Carnival, Al Hendricks, says that R 28 000 would be needed to make it possible [...]

"Dantes Are Part of the Cape's Tradition", *Cape Times*, December 12, 1990. [DN]

1993

3.

Coon Captains, who believe they've been exploited by "unscrupulous promoters" in the past, have resolved to take over the organisation of next year's carnival themselves — and charity will reap the rewards.

The captains of 25 troupes representing more than 10 000 "soldiers", have contracted themselves to a new body — Cape Town's Original Coon Carnival Board [...]

Board chairman Mr. Melvyn Matthews said: "In the past the captains had no say in the running of the carnival yet they had massive bills to foot.

Captains and soldiers get the short end of the stick. The captain pays out huge sums of money for no return while the soldier gets nothing, yet still pays for his uniform [...]

We feel, rather than lining the pockets of promotors, the coons would rather see profits being ploughed back into the community" [...]

"Can Cape Carnival Rival Rio's?, Coons Aiming for Big Time", by Roger Friedman, *Argus,* May 1/2, 1993. [DN]

4.

The Original Coon Carnival Board has asked the Supreme Court for an order setting aside a Cape Town City Council's decision to award the contract to use two stadiums for next month's Coon Carnival to a promoter.

In papers, board chairman Melvyn Matthews said the council had granted Victor Adams, promoter of the District Six Coon Carnival for the past four years, the tender to use Green Point and Hartleyvale next month.

He said 24 captains (owners of coon troupes) had formed the Original Coon Carnival Board in March because they were dissatisfied with the way Mr. Adams had run previous carnivals [...]

"Coons Challenge Rival in Court on Stadiums", *Argus*, December 12, 1993. [DN]

5.
Rival Coon Carnival factions took a judge at his word when he told them that as it was the festive season, they had to try to settle their differences out of court.

The Original Coon Carnival Board, rival promoter Victor Adams and the Cape Town City Council did just that yesterday and went back to court a few hours later with a deed of settlement [...]

"Coons Heed Judge, Make Up", *Argus*, December 14, 1993. [DN]

1994

6.
Spokesmen for the two rival coon carnivals have slated the city council for "money-wasting" and attempting to "stifle and manipulate" what should be a prestigious event on the city's calendar.

The carnivals begin today at adjacent stadiums in Green Point but the highlight will be Monday when a record number of coon teams stage their annual march through the streets of the city.

Spokesman for the Green Point Stadium-based District Six Coon Carnival Board, Fagmie Carelse, said the coon fraternity were giving people a free show but had to make do with no assistance from the council, Captour or Satour

Instead, the council seemed determined to make as much money as possible from the popular event [...]

Mr. Carelse said [...]: "Whereas top international artists pay R. 13 500 a day for the stadium we had to tender 30 000 a day. But the council succumbed to our request to waive the tender system and we were finally given the stadium at the correct price [...]

Cape Town Original Coon Carnival boss Melvin Matthews said the Cape Town Carnival was the only carnival in the world which got absolutely no support from the local authority [...]

He called for the creation of a "Carnival Development Committee" early next year to include representatives of the city council and the two rival boards [...]

There should be no middle-men, promotors or outsiders — the carnival should be run by the coon captain themselves.

"Coons Blast City Council", *Week End Argus*, January 1/2, 1994. [WEE]

7.
Cape Town's traditional *Tweedenuwejaar* coon carnival march through the streets of the city on Monday will be slightly different this year. Not only is Monday the third

day of January — traditionally not a bank holiday — but the two rival boards will be taking to the streets together [...]

"This Year, It's a Carnival with a Difference", *Week End Argus*, January 1/2, 1994. [WEE]

8.

Cape Town, Jan. 1 — This is how Marawan Giergo and thousands of other victims of apartheid greeted 1994, the year of their expected liberation from white rule:

They dressed themselves in bright satin suits and bow ties and cheap Panama hats. They painted their faces minstrel-type in black and white. Clutching little umbrellas, they capered before their families and friends to songs that ranged from "Old Folks at Home" to "The Impossible Dream".

They called themselves "coons", a term innocently borrowed along with the costume designs and songs from an America where such displays long ago passed into the realm of shame.

The Coon Carnival, the climax of a New Year revel unique to Cape Town, is an annual celebration of identity for the mixed-race South Africans known as "coloreds" and a disconcerting admonition to anyone tempted to think of South Africa as simply black and white [...]

With elections coming, former critics have made their peace with the tradition.

Among the sausage vendors and popcorn sellers at the competition in Green Park [sic] Stadium today, the African National Congress had a booth selling Nelson Mandela T-Shirts.

"One could disapprove of it and say that it's demeaning" a congress volunteer said. "But we feel that now is the time to include everybody".

"But Will '94 Be a Cakewalk for These Strutters?", *New York Times International*, January 3, 1994. [DN]

9.

Mile upon mile of bright satin, transvestites, clowns, dogs in drag — a slice of Cape Town on show for all to see.

Third of January or not, the annual coon carnival *Tweedenuwejaar* march through the streets of Cape Town brought the city to a standstill for several hours either side of midday yesterday.

Despite the bickering, the threatening, the backstabbing and the court appearance which marred the run-up to the annual event, this year's carnival proved the coons could draw major crowds [...]

"They should have closed the streets. There are too many cars compared to previous years,'' 75-years-old Hazendal veteran Freda Paulsen said [...]

Before the procession began African National Congress secretary Lerumo Kalako handed cheques for R 5 000 to representatives of the rival District Six and Original Coon Carnival boards.

Mr. Kalako siad: "Donations are a token show of support for the people's culture. It is so much part of the Western Cape culture, we all have to promote it.

The council should get behind the carnival which contributes to city revenue, it deserves city's support."

"'Cacoonphony' of Swaggering, Stupendous Cape Entertainment, Jovial Outpouring of Emotions as True-Blue Culture Comes Marching Home", *Argus*, January 4, 1994. [DN]

10.

[...] Thousands of Capetonians and holiday makers watched the Derde Nuwe Jaar procession.

During proceedings, ANC regional secretary Mr. Lerumo Kalako presented R 5 000 cheques to both rival coon carnival boards — the District Six Coon Carnival organisers and the Original Cape Coon Carnival Board.

He said the funds would help organisers improve facilities, infrastructure, transport and management of the carnival which "for too long has been relegated to the side of mainstream cultural entertainment in the city.

He said the ANC would hold meetings with both boards in the hope of achieving unification."

"City Mesmerised by Jitterbugging Coons", *Cape Times*, January 4, 1994. [DN]

11.

It's a new year and Cape Town's streets are again buzzing with the sound and sight of the Kaapse Klopse. A sour note has crept into the festivities, though, with talks of this year's Coon Carnival perhaps being one of the last.

In 1998 Ramadaan will fall during the New Year, meaning that no Muslims will be able to participate in the Carnival for that year.

Another concern is the rocketing costs of participating in a troupe. Costumes are changed every year and, according to a carnival veteran, a costume costs around R 200 [...]

"Coon Carnivals at the End of the Road?", by Shannon Neil, *South*, January 21, 1994. [GM]

12.

[caption of a picture showing young Beach Boys waving ANC flags:] Some of the Beach Boys coons who stole the show at the launch of the African National Congress' election manifesto in Bonteheuwel yesterday. The coons, who were joined on the stage by Dr.

Allan Boesack, whom they called "the future prime minister of the Western Cape", sang their songs including *I can't help falling in love with the ANC*, an adaptation of the hit song by the British group UB 40.

"African National Co(o)ngress ?", *Week End Argus*, January 29-30, 1994. [WEE]

13.

Green, black and gold balloons; hundreds of miniature ANC flags; and a popular *klopse* band were all part of the carnival atmosphere on Saturday when the ANC released its election manifesto in Bonteheuwel.

A packed civic hall was treated to more than politics and, at one stage, Dr. Allan Boesack, ANC Western Cape chairperson, in true *klopse* style, pranced around the stage in the red and white colours of the Beach Boys.

The crowd of 2 000 swayed and sang the songs they knew like "I Will Always Love You" and "I Can't Help Falling in Love (with the ANC)". They waved flags while Boesack boogied with his wife Elna and ANC executive member Mr. Reg September [...]

"Cape-Style Carnival Greets ANC Manifesto", by Quentin Wilson, *South*, February 2, 1994. [GM]

14.

Future coon carnivals will be operated and controlled by the Coon Carnival Development Committee, the Cape Town City Council has decided.

In a bid to iron out problems surrounding the allocation of venues, council officials met carnival promoters and coon captains who took part in last year's carnival.

The main role players said they did not like the tender system, they wanted Captour to advertise the event and obtain sponsorships and they wanted a single carnival body.

Conflicting suggestions were put forward, but the executive committee overturned the amenities and health committee's recommendations.

Instead, the council voted in favour of the main role player's recommendations [...]

"Single Coon Carnival Body", *Argus*, July 1, 1994. [DN]

15.

In a bid to end conflict among coon carnival factions, the city council has given operators the go-ahead to use the Green Point, Athlone or Hartleyvale stadiums for less than half the professional daily tariff [...]

The decision will be reviewed next July.

Amenities and health committee chairman Chris Joubert asked councillors to accept the package, which had been painstakingly negotiated "for hours and hours" with rival carnival operators.

In terms of the deal, the carnival will be operated and controlled by the Coon Carnival Development Committee, comprising councillors and operators [...]

"Go-Ahead for New Coon Carnival Deal", *Argus*, July 29, 1994. [DN]

16.

Members of Cape Town's three rival coon carnival boards say they have finally settled their differences and formed a united board to organise the colourful New Year carnival [...]

Yesterday members of the Original Coon Carnival Board, the District Six Coon Carnival Board and he Cape Town Original Coon Carnival Board announced they had formed the Coon Carnival Development Trust Committee which would be the only body representing the more than 30 coon troupes [...]

"Rival Coon Groups Form United Body", *Argus*, August 4, 1994. [DN]

1996

17.

The arrival of President Mandela by helicopter was greeted by a roar from the crowd and a standing ovation at the opening of the Coon Carnival at Green Point Stadium.

Wreathed in smiles and wearing a sequinned minstrel-style outfit in the colours of the ANC, Mr. Mandela stole the show from the spectacularly dressed teams yesterday.

Amid tight security he took a slow 15-minute walk around the stadium, smiling cheerfully and constantly waving his white cap at the crowds and participants [...]

A number of songs were dedicated to him, including a rousing "Nelson Mandela" sung to the tune of Mona Lisa by well-known jazz singer Robbie Jansen and his band.

Mr. Mandela said the country's coloured community need not feel they were a minority dependant on Africans or whites.

They belonged to the majority and their rights, which could not be taken away, were protected in the constitution.

"Ovation for Mandela at Spectacular Carnival", by Lindsay Barnes, *Argus*, January 23, 1996. [DN]

II

THEMES IN KLOPSE NAMES

a research document compiled by

DENIS-CONSTANT MARTIN

1998
(revised in September 2020)

Klopse names

In the course of my perusing newspaper articles and literature dealing with the *Kaapse klopse*, I found 485 different names of *klopse*. They are listed below and most are classified according to the connotations, associations and identifications they may suggest. Many names appear under several headings to allow for the possibility — even probability — of multiple connotations. This survey does not provide precise information on troupes, their existence at a particular moment, their life span: most newspaper articles dealt with official carnival competitions and it is possible that some troupes, although active in their neighbourhoods, never participated in those competitions. The same troupe may appear under different, slightly altered names; journalists did not always report correctly the names of the troupes (especially in the times preceding the presence of electric amplification at the stadia), this is particularly evident where *Atjas* (Red Skin or American Indians) are concerned, but although the "core" of the name (Pennsylvania, Louisiana, Broadway, Diamond Eyes) was usually recorded and printed correctly, qualifiers (famous, fabulous, young) and mentions such as "coons" or "minstrels" may have been omitted, or added in print. This list is probably far from exhaustive; especially since mentions of the troupes' names were not systematic in newspapers reports and changed from year to year. However the number of occurrences, the period covered, as well as memories collected during interviews suggest that it is not unreasonable to assume that it is fairly representative and that, although in a somewhat fuzzy manner, it provides useful indication on tendencies, interests and fashions revellers and carnival organisers — who probably represent a large part of the coloured working class population — were sensitive to. I have tried to identify what could be associated with the names of certain *klopse*, an attempt which largely amounted to guesswork and is probably quite subjective; I have nevertheless signalled these (tentative) associations by "⋆" and provided sketchy explanations at the end of the document where is also given a list of carnival venues.

Titles of publications are underlined; names in capital refer to works cited in the reference section above, except "personal observation, 1994" and "CCDB 1996": photocopied volume gathering the notation sheets for the Coon Carnival Development Board competitions, 1996 (unpublished), kindly communicated by Mr Melvyn Matthews.

KLOPSE NAMES

African Zonks*
Cape Herald 4/1/1977 + Cape Times 1/1/1983 + Argus 18/1/1988 + Argus, 4/1/1994 + CCDB 1996

Alabama Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1927 + Argus 2/1/1930 + Argus 2/1/1931 + Cape Times 28/12/1935 [1936] + Cape Times 15/2/1938 + GREEN 1951: 193
. founded by Johnny Cavalla, ca. 1900
- sing "Die Alabama"

Alabama Sunflower Gentlemen Darkies
Cape Times 6/1/1964

Ambassador Carnation Coons
Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940]

American Darkies
Argus 31/12/1927 [1928]

American Hunters
Argus 30/12/1921 [1922]

American Jazz Singers
Cape Times 30/12/1936 [1937] + Cape Times 23/7/1983 [1964]

American Jubilee Singers*
Cape Times 11/1/1937

American Jubilee Jazz Singers*
Cape Times 12/1/1948

American Masqueraders
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

American Sporting Troupe
Cape Times 3/1/1907 / American Sporting Club. Argus 1/1/1908 + A.P.O. 17/1/1920 + Cape Times 1/1/1921 + Argus 30/12/1921 [1922]

American Starlights Entertainers
Argus 7/1/1961 + Argus 12/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963

American Stars
Cape Times 6/1/1964

American Yanks
Cape Times 1/1/1921

Arcadian Film Star Jazz Singers
Cape Times 4/1/1958 + Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 9/1/1961 + Cape Times 6/1/1964 + Argus 10/1/1970 + Cape Times 11/1/1971

Ashley Coons Masquerading Troupe
Argus 1/1/1908

Athlone City Dixies
Cape Times 9/1/1973 + Cape Times 7/1/1974

Athlone Cottonfield Darkies
Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940]

Atlantis Superstars
CCDB 1996

Bachelor Hawker Boys
Cape Times 11/1/1971

Baltimore Lawn Tennis Coons
Argus 1/1/1908 / Baltimore Coons. Cape Times 4/1/1909

The Bambara Warriors of the Sudan*
The Sun, 12/1/1940

Banana Boys
Argus 2/1/1979

Banana Jazz Singers
Cape Times 17/1/1972 + Argus 6/1/1973.

Barcelona Bull Fighters
Argus 2/1/1930

Beach Boys (Athlone)
Sunday Times 2/1/1994 + Cape Times 3/1/1996

Beaconsfield Darkies
Cape Times 3/1/1948 + Outspan 25/11/1949 [1950] + The Sun 6/1/1950 + Cape Times 5/1/1953 + Cape Times 4/1/1954
- captain 1949: Cassiem Manan (36, hawker)

Beau Brummels
MANUEL 1977 + Cape Times 18/12/1954

Billionaire Boys
Cape Times 17/1/1994 + CCDB 1996

Bits and Pieces*
Cape Times 11/1/1937 + Cape Times, 28/12/1940 [1941] + Cape Times 3/1/1948 + Cape Times 12/1/1948 + Cape Times 10/1/1953 + Cape Times 1/1/1983

Bits and Pieces Sporting Troupe*
Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940] + Cape Times 10/1/1949

Black Star Line Coons
Argus 30/12/1921 [1922]

Blue Danube Troubadours
Cape Times 4/1/1937
- one of the leading troupes in the 1930s - 1940s: Jeppie in CRAIN, SOUDIEN 1990: 76-77 + JEPPIE 1990: 53

Bluegum Entertainers (Bonteheuwel)
Argus 27/1/0/1987 [1988]

Bo-Kaap Entertainers
Cape Times 1/1/1983

Bokomo Cornfield Darkies
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Bontevanian Roses
Argus 27/1/0/1987 [1988]

Bontevanians
Cape Times 11/1/1971

Bontevanians Hot Shots
Cape Times 30/12/1989 [1990]

Britannia Volunteer Minstrels
Cape Times 4/1/1954

Broadway Ex-Volunteers Darkies
Cape Times 12/1/1948

Broadway Gentlemen Singing Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1937 + Cape Times 15/2/1938

Broadway Gentlemen
Cape Times 19/12/1945 [1946] + Cape Times 3/1/1956

Broadway Serenaders
Cape Times 10/1/1949

Bullfighters
MANUEL 1977 + Cape Times 18/12/1954

Bunny Crush Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Caledonian Jazz Singers
Argus 5/1/1959

Caledonian Roses Crooning Minstrels
Argus 5/1/1959

California Jazz Singing Coons
Argus 2/1/1930

Californians
The Sun 6/1/1950

Californian Crooning Minstrels
Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 10/1/1961

Camptown Jockeys Masquerading Troupe*
Argus 1/1/1908

Cape Corps Original*
Cape Times 19/12/1945 [1946]

Cape Corps Original Louisiana Coons*
Cape Times 12/1/1948

Cape Town Checker Coons / Cape Town Checkers / Cape Town Famous Checker Coons
The Cape Standard 10/1/1939 + Cape Times 3/1/1941 + Cape Times 3/1/1942 + Cape Times 10/1/1955

Cape Town City Entertainers
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Cape Town Ex-Servicemen Darkies
Cape Times 12/1/1948

Cape Town Gentlemen Jazz Singers
Cape Times 3/1/1948 + Cape Times 12/1/1948

Cape Town Hawkers (Coons)
Argus 2/1/1930 + Argus 2/1/1934 + Cape Times 3/1/1934 + Cape Times 20/3/1937 + Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940] + Cape Times 12/1/1948 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Argus 12/1/1961 + 1994 + CCDB 1996 + GREEN 1951: 192
- from District Six

Cape Town Hawkers Costers Coons
Cape Times 4/12/1935 [1936]

Cape Town Hawkers' Derby Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1937

Cape Town Jong Span*
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Cattle Stampers
Cape Times 3/1/1923 + Argus 3/1/1924

Checkers*
Argus 2/1/1925 + Cape Times 10/1/1930 + Cape Times 11/1/1937 + Cape Times 6/1/1943

Checker Plantation Coons*
Cape Times 3/1/1934

Cherry Pickers
GREEN 1951: 193 + MANUEL 1977 + Cape Times 18/12/1954
- founded by Gamat Longfield
- riding horses, wearing red trousers and swords

Cinnamon Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1909

City Grand Minstrels
Cape Times 4/1/1958

College Boys (probably a Malay Choir)
Cape Times 3/1/1923 + Argus 3/1/1924 + Argus 2/1/1925

Colorado Bright Eye Coons
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Coming Stars (Moffees Troupe)
Argus 31/12/1927 [1928] + Cape Times 10/1/1929

Continental Darkies
Cape Times 10/1/1949

Continental Jazz Singers
Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940]

Coony Stars
Cape Times 10/1/1930

Cornwall Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 4/1/1958 + Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Argus 12/1/1961

Coronation Canadian Minstrels
Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 10/1/1961

Coronation Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Coronation Darkies
Cape Times 3/1/1948 + Cape Times 12/1/1948

Coronation Groovy Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Coronation Jazz Singers
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Coronation Palladium Minstrels
Cape Times 4/1/1958 + Argus 5/1/1959

Coronation Performing Crooning Minstrels
Argus 6/1/1973

Coronation Jubilee Jazz Singers* (Claremont)
Cape Times 30/12/1961 [1962] + Argus 7/1/1963

Cotton Field Darkies
Cape Times 4/1/1927 + Cape Times 27/12/1932 + Cape Times 11/1/1937

Crooning Dixiana Minstrels of Broadway
Outspan 25/11/1949 [1950]

Dahomey Coons/ Dahomeys*
Cape Times 3/1/1907 + A.P.O. 17/1/1920 + Cape Times 1/1/1921 + Cape Times 3/1/1923 + Argus 3/1/1924 + Argus 2/1/1925 + Argus 5/1/1959

Dahomeys Masquerading Troupe*
Argus 1/1/1908

Dahomey Gentlemen Coons*
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952] + Argus 12/1/1961

Dahomey Minstrels*
Argus 7/1/1963

Dainty Dixie Darkies
Cape Times 4/1/1954

Dandy Coloured Coons
Argus 1/1/1908

Darktown Brigade Coon Troupe
Cape Times 3/1/1907

Darktown Strutters*
Cape Times 3/1/1956 + Cape Times 4/1/1958 + Cape Times 10/1/1961 + Cape Times 11/1/1977

Dawn Darkies
Cape Times 4/1/1937

Darktown Fire Brigade Sporting Club
Argus 1/1/1908

Delta Jazz Minstrels
Argus 6/1/1968
- captain 1968: D. Sain

Desert Arabs
MANUEL 1977 + Cape Times 18/12/1954

Desert Outlaws
Argus 31/12/1927 [1928]

Diamond Eyed [or Eyes]* Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1909 + Cape Times 4/1/1927+ Argus 2/1/1930 + Argus 2/1/1931 + Cape Times 3/1/1934 + Cape Times 4/12/1935 [1936] + Cape Standard 26/5/1936 + Cape Times 4/1/1937 + Cape Times, 28/12/1940 [1941]
- founded by Fatie Abrahams in 1911 (GREEN 1951: 193) or in 1910: Cape Times, December 4, 1935 [????]

Diamond Eye Minstrel Troupe*
Argus 5/12/1905

Dixiana Jazz Singers
Cape Times 19/12/1945 [1946] + GREEN 1951: 192

Dixie Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 11/1/1960

Dixie Diamond Eyed Minstrels*
Argus 7/1/1963

Dixie Entertaining Minstrels
Argus 7/1/1978

Dixie Glamour Star
Argus 8/1/1966

Dixie Groovy Minstrels
Cape Times 11/1/1977

Dixieland
Argus 7/1/1963

Dixie Nigger Minstrels
Cape Times 10/1/1961

Dumont Radio Coons*
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Dusky Dinah Coons*
A.P.O. 17/1/1920 + Cape Times 1/1/1921 + Argus 30/12/1921 [1922] + Cape Times 3/1/1923 + Argus 3/1/1924 + Argus 2/1/1925

Eastridge Crooning Minstrels
Argus 1-2/5/1993

Echo Minstrels
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Eddie Cantor Jazz Singers*
Argus 5/1/1959

Elsie's River Film Stars
Argus 8/1/1966

Elsie's River Pep Crooning Minstrels
Argus 6/1/1973

Enfield Darkies
Cape Times 10/1/1949

Enfield Gentlemen Coons
The Sun 6/1/1950 + Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Egyptian Burglars
Cape Times 1/1/1921

Enslin Dusky Diamond Eyes (Worcester)
Cape Times 2/1/1953 [see Worcester Esselen Park]

Ethiopian Broadway Jazz Serenaders
Cape Times 9/1/1961

Ethiopian Hollywood Jazz Singers
Argus 8/1/1966

Ethiopians Jazz Serenaders (Hollywood)
Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960

Ethiopian Jazz Singers
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952] + Cape Times 10/1/1955 + Cape Times 6/1/1958

Ethiopian Jubilee Jazz Singers*
Argus 8/1/1968

Ex-Volunteers
Week End Argus, 1-2/1/1994

Ex-Volunteers Starlight Minstrels*
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Fabulous Cincinati Jazz Singers
Cape Times 5/1/1953 + Cape Times 10/1/1955

Famous African Zonks*
Cape Times 3/1/1989

Famous Carnivals
Cape Times 1/1/1983

Famous Invincible Darkies
Cape Times 4/1/1958 + Argus 12/1/1961

Famous Pennsylvania Darkies
Cape Times 5/1/1953 + Cape Times 4/1/1954

Famous Richmond Gentlemen Coons
Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 9/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963

Famous Original Wild American Masqueraders
Argus 7/1/1963

Famous Wild Apaches
Argus 10/1/1970

Famous Young Apaches
Argus 6/1/1973

Famous Young Masqueraders
Cape Times 3/1/1989

Five Star Crooning Minstrels
Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 9/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Argus 8/1/1966

Five Star Melody Darkies
Cape Times 11/1/1960

Floridian Young Ones Minstrels
Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 17/1/1972 + Argus 6/1/1973

Flush (Glee) Party
Argus 31/12/1927 [1928] + Cape Times 10/1/1929

Four Arts Crooning Minstrels
Argus 3/1/1970 + Cape Times 11/1/1971
- captain 1970: J. Bell

Gaiety Jazz Singers
Argus 5/1/1959

Gaiety Swing Stars
Cape Times 11/1/1960

Gallotone's Rumba Serenaders*
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Gardenian Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 6/1/1958 + Argus 5/1/1959

Gentleman Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1909

Geronimos
Cape Times 1/1/1983

Glamour Boys
Week End Argus, 1-2/1/1994 + CCDB 1996

Glamour Star Dusters / Glamour Stardusters Coons
Cape Times 12/1/1948 + Cape Times 29/12/1952 [1953]

Glamour Star Hawkers
Cape Times 11/1/1971 + Cape Herald 15/1/1972

Glamour Students
Cape Times 11/1/1971

Glamourous Superstars
Argus 4/1/1996

Gold Bar Broadway Gentleman Coons
The Cape Standard 10/1/1939

Gold Dollar Gentlemen Darkies
Cape Times 11/1/1960

Gold Dollar Serenaders
Argus 7/1/1963

Golden Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 4/1/1958 + Cape Times 11/1/1960

Golden Eye Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1927

Golden Eye Darkies
Cape Times 10/1/1930

Golden Lily Minstrels
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Golden Moments
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Golden Star Dixies
Argus 8/1/1966

Good Hope Independents/Entertainers
Cape Times 3/1/1989 + Cape Times 30/12/1989 [1990] + Week End Argus, 1-2/1/1994 + CCDB 1996

Goodwood
Cape Times 11/1/1960

Goodwood Broadway Jazz Singers
Argus 7/1/1963

Grand Parade Crooning Minstrels*
Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 6/1/1973 + Cape Herald 4/1/1977

Grand Parade Darkies*
Cape Times 4/12/1935 [1936] + Cape Times 4/1/1937

Grand Parade Minstrels* / Grand Parade Minstrel Coons*
The Cape Standard 10/1/1939 + Cape Times 4/1/1932 + GREEN 1951: 192

Granita Entertaining Minstrels
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Great Elsie's River Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 1/1/1983

Great Gatsbys (Bonteheuwel)
Cape Herald 7/12/1976 + Cape Herald 4/1/1977
- captain 1976: Farouk Harrison aka Jerry Lewis

Greek King's Bodyguard
Cape Times 4/1/1933

Haarlem Serenaders
Cape Times 10/1/1961

Haarlem Zonk Minstrels*
Argus 8/1/1966

Hamadia Soul Minstrels*
Argus 6/1/1973 + Cape Times 7/1/1974

Hamediah Crooning Minstrels*
Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960

Hamediahs Diamond Jazz Serenaders*
Cape Times 4/1/1958

Hanover Gentlemen Coons*
Cape Times 5/1/1953 + Cape Times 4/1/1954 + Cape Times 10/1/1955 + Argus 12/1/1961

Hanover Nigger Minstrels*
Cape Times 9/1/1973

Happy Bar Boys
Argus 31/12/1927 [1928] + Cape Times 10/1/1929 + Cape Times 3/1/1930 + Cape Times 10/1/1930

Happy Boston Coons / Happy Bostons
Cape Times 4/1/1927 + Argus 2/1/1930 + Cape Times 4/1/1932 + The Cape Standard 10/1/1939

Happy Bostons Minstrels
Argus 8/1/1966

Happy High Born Coons
Argus 31/12/1927 [1928]

Happy Little Darkies Masquerading Troupe / Happy Little Darkies
Argus 1/1/1908 + The Cape Standard 10/1/1939

Happy Little Niggers
The Sun 6/1/1950

Happy Niggers of Broadway
Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940] + Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Harlem Darkies
Cape Times 1/1/1921 + Cape Times 10/1/1955

Hawaian Tropical Serenaders / Hawaian Serenaders
Cape Times 12/1/1948 + Cape Times 10/1/1949

Hawkers Serenaders
Cape Times 10/1/1949

Hennent Crooning Minstrels
Argus 5/1/1959

High Born Coons
Argus 29/12/1929 [1923] + Cape Times 10/1/1930

Highwaymen
MANUEL 1977 + Cape Times 18/12/1954

Hi-Notes Jazz Minstrels
Cape Times 6/1/1958

High Notes Nigger Minstrels / Hi Notes
Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 4/1/1969 + Argus 3/1/1970 + Cape Times 11/1/1971 + Cape Times 7/1/1974 + Cape Times 1/1/1983
- captain 1967, 1970: D. Martin

Hippie Entertaining
Cape Times 11/1/1971

Hit Paraders Minstrels
Argus 3/1/1970 + Cape Times 11/1/1971
- captain 1970: A. Solomons

Hollywoods.
Argus 7/1/1967

Hollywood Film Stars Serenaders
Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960

Hollywood Jazz Singers
Cape Times 15/2/1938

Hollywood Palm Beach Serenaders
Outspan 25/11/1949 [1950] + Cape Times 4/1/1954 + Cape Times 10/1/1955 + Cape Times 28 12/1957 [1958] + Cape Times 4/1/1958 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964

Hollywood Panamanian Serenaders
Cape Times 5/1/1953

Hollywood Serenaders
Cape Times 3/1/1948 + GREEN 1951: 192 + The Sun 6/1/1950

Honolulu Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 17/1/1972

Honolulu Dainty Darkies
Cape Times 3/1/1948 + Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952] + Argus 12/1/1961

Honolulu Jazz Singers
Cape Times 10/1/1953

Incombator Coons
Cape Times 10/1/1929 [incubator?]

Incubator Coons
Cape Times 10/1/1930 + Cape Times 4/1/1932 + Argus 3/1/1933 + Cape Times 3/1/1934 + Cape Times 11/1/1937

Independent Broadway Darkies
Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940]

Independent Broadway Jazz Singers
Cape Times 28/12/1935 [1936]

Independent Broadway Minstrels
Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964 + Cape Times 6/1/1969 + Argus 10/1/1970 + Cape Times 11/1/1971 + Cape Times 17/1/1972

Independent Dawn Darkies
Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940]

Indian Outlaws
Argus 3/1/1933

Indian Waiters Masquerading Troupe
Argus 1/1/1908

Invincible Darkies
Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960

Italian Lifeguards
Cape Times 4/1/1921

Irish Princes
Cape Times 4/1/1921

Jazzy Singers
Argus 2/1/1931

Jolson Jazz Singers*
Cape Times 10/1/1955 + Cape Times 4/1/1958 + Cape Times 11/1/1960

Jolly Jolson Nigger Minstrels*
Argus 4/1/1969 + Cape Herald 10/1/1970 + Cape Times 11/1/1971 + WE Argus 2/1/1982
captain 1970: W. Albertyn

Jubilee Singers*
Cape Times 4/1/1932

Junior Young Happy Bostons
Cape Times 1/1/1983

Kensington Famous Ex-Volunteer Jazz Singers
Cape Times 5/1/1953

Kensington Young Stars
Cape Times 3/1/1991

Kentonian Crooning Minstrels*
Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964

Kentucky Coons
Argus 3/1/1933

Kentucky Entertainers
Cape Herald 4/1/1977

Kentucky Gentlemen Coons
Cape Times 11/1/1960

Kentucky Minstrel Darkies
Cape Times 10/1/1949

Kentucky Plantation Coons
The Cape Standard 10/1/1939 + Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940]

Kentucky Victory Coons
Cape Times 19/12/1945 [1946]

Kikuyu Warriors*.
Cape Times 4/1/1937
- one of the leading troupes in the 1930s - 1940s: Jeppie in CRAIN, SOUDIEN 1990: 76-77 + JEPPIE 1990: 53

King of Roses
Cape Times 4/1/1927

King's Messengers
Cape Times 4/1/1909

Lavender Nigger Minstrels
Cape Times 4/1/1982

Lavender Superstars
Argus 4/1/1982

Lentegeur Entertainers
personal observation, 1994

Liberian Coons
Cape Times 4/12/1935 [1936]

Lavistown Crooning Minstrels
Argus 27/1/0/1987 [1988] + Cape Times 3/1/1989

Lawn Tennis Coons
Argus 29/12/1922 [1923]

Liberty Philadelphia Minstrels
The Sun 6/1/1950 + Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Lieberstein Gentlemen Serenaders
Cape Times 6/1/1964

London Hawker Jubilee Coons*
Cape Times 4/1/1937
- one of the leading troupes in the 1930s - 1940s: Jeppie in CRAIN, SOUDIEN 1990: 76-77 + JEPPIE 1990: 53

Lord Nelson's Escorts
Argus 1/1/1908

Lord Nelson Marines
Cape Times 4/12/1935 [1936]

Lords of London
MANUEL 1977 + Cape Times 18/12/1954

Louisiana Coon Troupe
Cape Times 3/1/1907

Louisiana Gentlemen Coons
Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940] + Cape Times 10/1/1949 + Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 9/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1967

Louisiana Coons
Cape Times 10/1/1949 + Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952] + Cape Times 6/1/1958

Louisiana Happy Little Darkies
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Loyal Ex-Volunteers Darkies
The Sun 6/1/1950

Luxa Rama Serenaders*
Argus 7/1/1963

Mahobla Coons
Cape Times 10/1/1929

Manenberg Entertaining Minstrels
Argus 4/1/1969

Manenberg Darkie Minstrels
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Manenberg Serenaders
Cape Herald 8/1/1972

Manhattan Coons
GREEN 1951: 192

Manhattan Broadway Serenaders
Cape Times 12/1/1948

Manhattan Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 17/1/1972

Manhattan Dixie Darkies
Cape Times 4/1/1954 + Cape Times 10/1/1955

Mardi Gras Fun Makers
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Masonic Crooning Minstrels
Argus 7/1/1967

Matabele Warriors*
Cape Times 1/1/1921 + Argus 30/12/1921 [1922]

Matabele Cotton Plantation Darkies*
Cape Times 28/12/1957 [1958]

Meadow Cottonfield Gentlemen Singers*
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Meadow Cottonfield Jazz Singers*
Argus 7/1/1963

Meadow Cottonfield Minstrels*
Argus 8/1/1966 + Argus 4/1/1969 + Argus 6/1/1973

Meadow Crooning Minstrels*
Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 6/1/1968
- captain 1967: G. Houston
- captains 1968: A Jacobs, R. Raatz

Meadow Gentlemen Jazz Singers*.
Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 11/1/1971

Memphis Tennesse Sporting Club
Cape Times 3/1/1908

Mexican Cattle Stampers
Cape Times 28/12/1935 [1936]

Mexican Cattle Thieves
MANUEL 1977 + Cape Times 18/12/1954

Mexican Cow Boys
Argus 2/1/1925

Mexican Mash Riders
Argus 31/12/1927 [1928]

Mexican Outlaws
A.P.O. 17/1/1920

Mexican Raiders
A.P.O. 17/1/1920

Millionaire Darkies
Cape Times 28/12/1935 [1936] + Cape Times 4/1/1937

Mississippi Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 11/1/1960

Mississippi Nigger Minstrels
Argus 5/1/1959 + Argus 12/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964 +

Argus 8/1/1966 + Argus 6/1/1968 + Cape Times 3/1/1989 + personal observation, 1994
- captain 1968-1994: G. Williams

Mississippi Sporting Club
Argus 1/1/1908

Mississippi Darkies
The Cape Standard 10/1/1939 + Cape Times 19/12/1945 [1946]

Mobil Crooning Minstrels
Argus 3/1/1970
- captain 1970: A. Jacobs

Mohegan American Masqueraders
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Mohican American Masqueraders
Cape Herald 10/1/1970
- captain 1970: G. de Lange

Mohican Indian Masqueradors
Argus 8/1/1966 + Argus 6/1/1973

Mohicans
Cape Times 6/1/1969

Mohigan Americans
Cape Times 11/1/1971

Moonlight Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 3/1/1956

Multi-Millionaire
Argus 8/1/1966 + Cape Times 1/1/1983 + personal observation, 1994

Negresco Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 1/1/1983

Nestle Dixieland
Cape Times 6/1/1964

Nestles Fabulous Entertaining Minstrels
Cape Times 11/1/1960

New Orleans (Athlone)
Cape Times 4/1/1954

New Orleans Coronation Darkies
Cape Times 5/1/1953

New Orleans Minstrel Darkies
Cape Times 4/1/1958

New Orleans Crooning Minstrels
Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964 + Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 4/1/1969
- Captain, 1967: G. Houston

New World Classics
personal observation, 1994

Nooitgedacht Gatsbys
Cape Times 3/1/1989 + personal observation, 1994

Odds and Ends
Cape Times 10/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Argus 7/1/1967 + Cape Times 11/1/1971 + Cape Herald 4/1/1977
- from District Six

OK Napier Surprise Coons
Cape Times Supplement 7/1/1933

Old Young Louisiana Troupe
Cape Times 29/12/1952 [1953]

Orange Plantation Darkies
Cape Times 28 12/1957 [1958] + Cape Times 10/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960

Orange Plantation Gentlemen Coons
Argus 3/1/1956

Orange Plantation Minstrels
Argus 12/1/1961 + Cape Times 6/1/1964

Orient Plantation Darkies
Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 8/1/1968
- captain 1967: D. Jacobs

Original Colorado Jitterbugs
Cape Times 11/1/1960

Original Diamond Eyed Coons
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Original Famous Wild Apaches
Cape Times 7/1/1974 + Cape Times 1/1/1983

Original Grand Parade Darkies*
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Original Happy Boston Coons
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Original Hollywood Jazz Singers
Argus 5/1/1959

Original Jazz Singing Coons
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Original Jazz Singers
Cape Times 10/1/1961

Original Multi-Millionaire Minstrels
Argus 8/1/1966

Original Newarks Minstrel Troupe
Cape Times 3/1/1908 / Newarks. Cape Times 4/1/1909

Original Seven Up Jazz Singers
Cape Times 4/1/1958

Original Wild Apaches
Cape Times 3/1/1989 + CCDB 1996

Panamanian Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952] + Cape Times 10/1/1955 + Argus 8/1/1966

Panarama Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 17/1/1972

Parkwood Jet Star Minstrels
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Pearly Kings*
Cape Times 4/12/1935 [1936]

Pennsylvania Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 30/12/1989 [1990] + Cape Times 31/12/1991 [1992] + Argus 1-2/5/1993 + Argus, 4/1/1994 + Argus 28/12/1994 [1995] + CCDB 1996

Pennsylvania Dandy Darkies
Cape Times 10/1/1949

Pennsylvania Darkies
Cape Times 12/1/1948 + The Sun 6/1/1950 + Cape Times 8/1/1951 + Cape Times 7/1/1952

Pennsylvanians
Cape Herald 15/1/1972

Penny Pinchers All Stars
Argus, 4/1/1994 + Argus 13/1/1995 + CCDB 1996

Philadelphia Hotshots
Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Argus 12/1/1961 + Cape Times 9/1/1973

Philadelphians
Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Argus 7/1/1967

Philco Radio Jazz Singing Coons
Cape Times 3/1/1942

Plantation Coons
Cape Times 3/1/1923

Play Boys / Fabulous Play Boys
Argus 7/1/1967 + Cape Times 11/1/1971 + personal observation, 1994 - from District Six

Portuguese Guards
Argus 29/12/1922 [1923]

Prince Charles I
Cape Times 3/1/1934

Prince Harold Troupe
Cape Times 10/1/1929

Prince of Benin's Escort
Cape Times 4/1/1909

Prince of Lilies
Cape Times 4/1/1927

Prince of Malabars
A.P.O. 17/1/1920

Princess Escort
Argus 2/1/1907

Progressives
Cape Times 4/1/1909

Pumpkin Coons
Cape Times 28/12/1935 [1936]

Q Town entertainers
personal observation, 1994

Queen of Tar Tars
Cape Times 4/1/1921

Radio Broadcasting Singing Coons / Radio Broadcast Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1937 + The Sun 6/1/1950 + Cape Times 8/1/1951 + Cape Times 5/1/1953 + Cape Times 4/1/1954

Radio Minstrels
Cape Times 3/1/1941 + Cape Times 12/1/1948

Radio Allied Minstrels
Cape Times 19/12/1945 [1946]

Radio Students of Broadway
The Cape Standard 10/1/1939

Ragtime Millionaire Darkies*
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Rainbow Darkies*
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Rainbow Dixie Darkies*
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Rainbow Red Indians*.
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Ravensmead TV Stars
Cape Times 3/1/1989

Red Eagles
Cape Times 4/1/1932

Red Eye Coons
Argus 31/12/1927 [1928]

Red-Eye Sunshine Coons
Argus 1/1/1908

Red-Eye Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1909

Red Eye Minstrels
Argus 3/1/1924 + Argus 2/1/1925

Red Girl Minstrels
Cape Times 3/1/1923

Red Heart Biancas
Cape Times 31/12/1986

Red Indians
Argus 29/12/1922 [1923] + Argus 7/1/1963

Red Skinaars
Argus 7/1/1963

Renegade Apaches
Cape Herald 4/1/1977

Renegades
Cape Times 1/1/1983

Richmond Gentlemen Coons
Cape Times 6/1/1958

Riverside Coronation Jazz Singers
Cape Times 17/1/1972

Rosebud Troupe
Cape Times 3/1/1907

Rose Tree Sporting Club
Argus 30/12/1921 [1922]

Rosewood Red Wild Indians
Cape Times 6/1/1964

Ruby Lips Coons
A.P.O. 17/1/1920

St. Julian Club
Cape Times 4/1/1921

Satellite Paging Minstrels (Mowbray)
Cape Times 28 12/1957 [1958]

Savoy Jazz Singers*
Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940]

Schotsche Kloof Cape Town Crooning Minstrels
Cape Herald 15/1/1972

Schotsche Kloof Glamour Boys
Cape Times 9/1/1973 + Cape Times 7/1/1974 + Cape Herald 4/1/1977

Schotsche Kloof Minstrels
Argus 3/1/1970
- captain 1970: D. Adams

Schotsche Kloof Young Ones
Cape Times 1/1/1983

Sea Pirates
Cape Times 4/12/1935 [1936]

Sea Winds Entertainers
personal observation, 1994 + CCDB 1996

Selma Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1909

Seven Steps*
Cape Times 11/1/1971

Seven Steps Darkies*
Cape Times 4/1/1958

Seven Up Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 4/1/1958

Ship Stewards
Argus 2/1/1925

Silver Stars
Cape Times 4/1/1921

Simba Entertainers Minstrels
Argus 6/1/1973 + Cape Times 7/1/1974

Smiling Coons
Argus 31/12/1927 [1928]

South African Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 5/1/1953

South African Broadway Dixie Darkies
Cape Times 19/12/1945 [1946]

South African Darkies
Cape Times 10/1/1929

S.A. Darktown Strutters*
Outspan 25/11/1949 [1950]

South African Dawn Darkies
Cape Times 27/12/1937 [1938]

S.A. Gold Miners
Cape Times 3/1/1923

South African History Darkies
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

S.A. Independent Darkies
Argus 31/12/1927 [1928]

S.A. Personality Serenaders*
Cape Times 11/1/1960

South African Springbok Darkies*
Argus 7/1/1963

South African Springbok (Gentlemen) Serenaders*
Cape Times 9/1/1961 + Cape Times 6/1/1964

Spanish Burglars (Newlands)
A.P.O. 17/1/1920 + Cape Times 4/1/1921

Spanish Burglars (Green Point)
Cape Times 1/1/1921 + Argus 30/12/1921 [1922]

Spanish Cavaliers
Cape Times 4/1/1909 + Cape Times 15/2/1938

Spanish Cow Punchers
Cape Times 3/1/1923

Spanish Mexican Riders
Cape Times 4/1/1937

Spanish Mountaineers Outlaws
Cape Times 3/1/1934

Spanish Noblemen
MANUEL 1970 + Cape Times 18/12/1954

Spanish Outlaws
Cape Times 10/1/1929

Spes Bona Black and White Minstrels
Argus 6/1/1968
- captain 1968: Y. Thomas

Spes Bona Carnival Paraders
Cape Times 3/1/1948 + Cape Times 12/1/1948

Spes Bona Coons
Cape Times 20/3/1937 + Cape Times 8/1/1951 + Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]
- founded 1926 (?), David Stevens, Davie Petersen

Spes Bona Elton Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1937

Spes Bona Coronation Coons
Cape Times 30/12/1939 [1940] + Cape Times 6/1/1943

Spes Bona Festival Darkies
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Spes Bona Nigger Minstrels
Cape Times 10/1/1955 + Cape Times 3/1/1956 + Cape Times 4/1/1958 + Argus

5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964 + Argus 8/1/1966 + Argus 7/1/1967

Spes Bona Pinetown
Cape Times 10/1/1961

Springboks*
Argus 2/1/1907 + Cape Times 4/1/1909

Springboks Masquerading Troupe*
Argus 1/1/1908

Springbok Radios*
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Springbuks*
Cape Times 3/1/1907

Springfield Coons
Argus 30/12/1921 [1922]

Star Spangled Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 4/1/1958

Star Spangles
Cape Times 6/1/1964

Starlight Melody Darkies*
Cape Times 10/1/1955 + Cape Times 28/12/1957 [1958] + Cape Times 6/1/1958 + Argus 5/1/1959

Starlight Melody Minstrels*
Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 8/1/1968
- captain 1967: M. Davids

Starlight Serenaders*
Cape Times 6/1/1958 + Cape Times 9/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963

Sterling Stars
Argus 7/1/1963

Strollers*
Cape Times 1/1/1983

Sunflower Darkies
Cape Times 12/1/1948

Sunnyside
The Sun 6/1/1950

Sunnyside Broadway Serenaders
Cape Times 5/1/1953 + Cape Times 4/1/1954 + Argus 5/1/1959

Sunnyside Broadway Gentlemen Serenaders
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Sunnyside Serenaders
Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964

Sunnyside Student Serenaders
Cape Times 9/1/1973

Sunrise Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 10/1/1955 + Argus 6/1/1968
- captain 1968: T. Tinker

Sunshine Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1909

Sunshine Entertainers
Argus 28/12/1994 [1995] + Argus 12/12/1995 [1996]

Surprise Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1932

Syncopated Coons
Cape Times 3/1/1930

Tay Mouth Jolly Boy Serenaders (Woodstock)
Cape Times 30/12/1961 [1962] + Argus 7/1/1963

Tay Mouth Rock and Roll Serenaders
Argus 12/1/1961

Taymuth Broadway Serenaders
Cape Times 4/1/1958

Tennant Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 11/1/1960

Tennessee Coons
Argus 5/1/1959

Tipperary Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1921

Top Twenty Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Travelling Coloured Coons
Argus 1/1/1908

Travelling Star Coons
Cape Times 1/1/1921

Trevenna Mississippis
Cape Herald 15/1/1972

Triumph Gentlemen Darkie Minstrels
Cape Times 11/1/1977

20th Century Hit Paraders
Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Argus 8/1/1966 + Cape Times 11/1/1971

United Broadway Gentlemen Coons
Cape Times 5/1/1953 + Cape Times 4/1/1954 + Cape Times 10/1/1955 + Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960

United Broadway Jubilee Jazz*
Cape Times 11/1/1960

United Broadway Serenaders
Cape Times 12/1/1948

United Commando Broadcasting Coons
Cape Times 6/1/1958 + Argus 8/1/1966

United Gaiety Coons
Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 8/1/1968 + Argus 10/1/1970

United Gaiety Star Hawkers
Cape Herald 15/1/1972

United Gaiety Hawker Boys
Argus 6/1/1973

United Gold Dollar Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 10/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964 + Cape Times 11/1/1971 + Argus 6/1/1973

United Starlights*
The Cape Standard 10/1/1939

Unknown Invisible Darkies
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Valentino Bull Fighters
Argus 2/1/1930

Valencia Bull Fighters
Argus 2/1/1931

Valhalla Hit Parades
Cape Times 3/1/1989 + Cape Times 30/12/1989 [1990] + personal observation, 1994

Varsity Coons
Cape Times 10/1/1929 + Cape Times 10/1/1930

Varsity Entertainers
Cape Times 6/1/1964

Victoria Demons Masquerading Coons
Argus 1/1/1908

Vienna Darkies
Cape Times 3/1/1948

Virginia Barn Coons
Argus 29/12/1922 [1923]

Virginia Coons
Cape Times 3/1/1923

Virginia Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 4/1/1954

Virginia Cuban Serenaders
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Virginian Surprise Coons
Cape Times 5/1/1953

Warriors of Mahratta*
Cape Times 4/1/1937
- one of the leading troupes in the 1930s - 1940s: JEPPIE in CRAIN, SOUDIEN 1990: 76-77 + JEPPIE 1990: 53.

Weeping Darkies
Argus 2/1/1930

Westminster
Cape Times 11/1/1960

White Eye Coons
Cape Times 10/1/1930 + Cape Times 5/1/1937

White Nose Masquerading Troupe
Cape Times 3/1/1907

White Noses
Cape Times 4/1/1909

White Noses Masquerading Club
Argus 1/1/1908

White Roses
Cape Times 3/1/1907

Wild Americans
Cape Times 11/1/1971

Wild American Apaches
Argus 8/1/1966

Wild American Indians
Argus 6/1/1973

Wild American Masqueraders
Cape Times 10/1/1949 + Cape Times 8/1/1951 + Cape Times 6/1/1958 + Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 9/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964 + Argus 8/1/1966 + Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 8/1/1968 + Cape Times 6/1/1969 + Cape Herald 10/1/1970 + Cape Times 7/1/1974
- captain 1967: C. Van Houten; 1970: K. Misrolls

Wild Apaches
Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964 + Cape Times 11/1/1971 + Cape Herald 8/1/1972 + Cape Herald 4/1/1977 + Cape Times 30/12/1989 [1990]
- captain 1977: Boeta Kamallie of Hanover Park

Wild Apache Indians
Argus 6/1/1968

Wild Mohegian Masqueraders
Argus 6/1/1968

Wild Mohican Masqueraders
Argus 5/1/1959

Wild Mohicans
Cape Times 29/12/1952 [1953]

Wild Morhegans
Cape Times 1/1/1983

Wild West Indians
A.P.O. 17/1/1920 + Cape Times 4/1/1921

Wingfield Jazz Singers
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Woodstock Mohawk Minstrels
BICKFORD-SMITH (Vivian), "Meanings of freedom, social position and identity among ex-slaves and their descendants in Cape Town, 1875-1910" in: WORDEN (Nigel), CRAIS (C.) eds., Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its Legacy in the Nineteenth Cape Colony, Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1994: 300

Woodstock Starlights*
Cape Times 7/1/1974 + Cape Times 3/1/1989 + Week End Argus, 1-2/1/1994 + CCDB 1996

Wynberg Lawn Tennis Coons
Argus 1/1/1908

Yankee Doodle Dandy Darkies/Dandies (Claremont)
Cape Times 4/1/1958 + Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 10/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963

Yam Yam Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Yanx Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 6/1/1958

Young American Navals
A.P.O. 17/1/1920

Young Bachelor Entertaining Minstrels
Argus 8/1/1968

Young Beach Boys (Athlone)
Cape Times 9/1/1973 + Cape Times 7/1/1974 + Cape Herald 4/1/1977 + Sunday Times 1/1/1978

Young Boston Singing Broadcasting Coons
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Young Broadway Students Gentlemen Coons / Young Broadway Student Minstrels.
Cape Times 6/1/1964 + Argus 8/1/1966 + Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 8/1/1968 + Argus 3/1/1970 + Cape Times 11/1/1971 + Argus 6/1/1973 + Cape Times 7/1/1974 + Cape Times 11/1/1977
- captain 1967: Arendse; 1970: V. and R. Arendse

Young Casino Minstrels
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Young Commachies
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Young Dahomey Coons*
Cape Times 10/1/1949 + Cape Times 6/1/1958 + Cape Times 11/1/1960

Young Dahomey Crooning Minstrels*
Cape Times 12/1/1948 + Argus 8/1/1966 + Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 6/1/1968 + Argus 4/1/1969
- captain 1968: C. Watkins

Young Dahomey Darkies*
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Young Gloxonia Crooning
Argus 7/1/1967
- capts. J. Jehoma, S. Blouss

Young Golden Lily Minstrels
Argus 6/1/1973

Young Happy Bostons
Cape Times 29/12/1952 [1953] + Cape Times 9/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964 + Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 6/1/1968 + Argus 4/1/1969 + Argus 3/1/1970 + Cape Times 11/1/1971 + Argus 6/1/1973 + Cape Times 7/1/1974 + personal observation, 1994
- captain 1967, 1968: H. Dedericks; 1970: B. Adams

Young Jolly Jolson Minstrels*
Argus 7/1/1967 + Argus 6/1/1968
- captain 1968: P. Syce

Young Happy Boston Minstrels
Argus 7/1/1978

Young Hollywood Jazz Singers
Cape Times 11/1/1937

Young Louisiana Coons
Cape Times 4/1/1937 + Cape Times 19/12/1945 [1946] + picture SAL 1949 + Cape Times 10/1/1953 + Cape Times 10/1/1955
- one of the leading troupes in the 1930s - 1940s: JEPPIE in CRAIN, SOUDIEN 1990: 76-77 + JEPPIE 1990: 53

Young Louisiana Gentlemen Coons
Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964

Young Pennsylvanians
personal observation, 1994

Young Philadelphia Serenading Hawkers
Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Young Spes Bonas
Cape Times 1/1/1983

Young Springfields
Cape Times 3/1/1923

Young Top Twenty Minstrels
Argus 6/1/1973

Young Travellers
Argus 3/1/1924

Young Sioux
Cape Times 4/1/1982

Young Stars Crooning Minstrels
Cape Times 6/1/1958 + Argus 5/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 9/1/1961 + Argus 12/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963

Young Wild Masqueraders
Argus 7/1/1978

Young Wohegan Masqueraders
Argus 7/1/1967
- captains 1967: G. de Lange, V. Bryan

Zonk Crooning Minstrels*
Cape Times 10/1/1955

Zonk Swing Stars Crooning Minstrels / Zonk Swing Star Minstrels*
Cape Times 12/1/1948 + Cape Times 6/1/1958 + Cape Times 10/1/1959 + Cape Times 11/1/1960 + Cape Times 10/1/1961 + Argus 7/1/1963 + Cape Times 6/1/1964

Zonk Swing Star Darkies*
Cape Times 10/1/1949

Zonk Swing Stars Minstrels*
Cape Times 3/1/1948 + Cape Times 29/12/1951 [1952]

Zonnheimer Jubilee Jazz Singers*
Cape Times 7/1/1974

Zulu Warriors
Cape Times 20/3/1937 + Cape Times 27/12/1937 [1938] + The Cape Standard 10/1/1939 + Cape Times 12/1/1948 + Argus 7/1/1963

Main themes

AFRICA (1907-1996)

. African Zonks* (1977-1996) / Famous African Zonks* (1989)

Dahomey (1907-1969)*

. Dahomey Coons (**1907**-1925)
. Dahomeys Masquerading Troupe (1908)
. Dahomey Gentlemen Coons (1952 + 1961) / Dahomey Coons (1959)
. Dahomey Minstrels (1963)
. Prince of Benin's Escort (1909)
. Young Dahomey Coons (1949 + 1958-1960)
. Young Dahomey Crooning Minstrels (1966-**1969**)

Ethiopia (1951-1968)

. Ethiopian Broadway Jazz Serenaders (1961)
. Ethiopian Hollywood Jazz Singers (**1951**-1966)
. Ethiopian Jubilee Jazz Singers* (**1968**)

Liberia

. Liberian Coons (1936)

African Warriors (1921-1963)

. Kikuyu Warriors* (1937)
. Matabele Warriors* (1921/2)
. Zulu Warriors (1937/8 + 1963)

ARMY / FIREMEN (1907-1994)

Army (1953-1994)

. Britannia Volunteer Minstrels (1954)
. Cape Corps Original* (1946)
. Ex-Volunteers (**1994**)
. Kensington Famous Ex-Volunteer Jazz Singers (**1953**)
. United Commando Broadcasting Coons (1958 + 1966)

Fire brigade (1907-1908)

. Darktown Brigade Coon Troupe (1907)
. Darktown Fire Brigade Sporting Club (1908)

Guards (1921-1933)

. Greek King's Bodyguard (**1933**)
. Italian Lifeguards (**1921**)
. Portuguese Guards (1923)

Warriors (1921-1939 + 1963)

. Kikuyu Warriors* (1937)
. Matabele Warriors (**1921**/2)
. Warriors of Mahratta* (1937)
. Zulu Warriors (1937/**1938** + 1963)

ATJAS (1908-1996)

. Young Wild Masqueraders (1978)

AMERICAN (1949-1974)

. American Masqueraders (1952)
. Famous Original Wild American Masqueraders (1963)
. Wild Americans (1971)
. Wild American Masqueraders (**1949-1974**)

Apaches (1960-1996)

. Famous Wild Apaches (1970)
. Famous Young Apaches (1973)
. Geronimos (1983)
. Original Famous Wild Apaches (1974 + 1983)
. Original Wild Apaches (1989 + **1996**)
. Renegade Apaches (1977)
. Wild American Apaches (1966)
. Wild Apaches (**1960**-1989)

Comanche

. Young Commachies (1974)

Indian (1908-1973)

. Indian Outlaws (1933)
. Indian Waiters Masquerading Troupe (**1908**)
. Wild American Indians (**1973**)
. Wild West Indians (1921)

Mohican (1953-1983)

. Mohegan American Masqueraders (1974)
. Mohican American Masqueraders (1970)
. Mohican Indian Masqueradors (1966 + 1973)
. Mohicans (1969)
. Mohigan Americans (1971)
. Wild Mohegian Masqueraders (1968)
. Wild Mohican Masqueraders (1959)
. Wild Mohicans (**1953**)
. Wild Morhegans (**1983**)
. Young Wohegan Masqueraders (1967)

Red (1922-1964)

. Red Eagles (1932)
. Red Indians (**1922** + 1963)
. Red Skinaars (1963)
. Rosewood Red Wild Indians (**1964**)

Sioux

. Young Sioux (1982)

BITS AND PIECES* (1937-1983)

. Bits and Pieces (**1937** + 1940 + 1953 + **1983**)
. Bits and Pieces Sporting Troupe (1940 + 1949)
. Odds and Ends (1961-1977)

BLACK AFRICAN MUSIC (ZONK*, 1949-1996)

. African Zonks* (1977-**1996**)
. Famous African Zonks* (1989)
. Haarlem Zonk Minstrels* (1966)
. Zonk Swing Stars Crooning Minstrels* (1958-1964)
. Zonk Swing Star Darkies* (**1949**)
. Zonk Swing Stars Minstrels* (1952)

BLACK PRIDE

. Black Star Line Coons* (**1922**)

Britain and Empire (1908-1974)

. Britannia Volunteer Minstrels (1954)
. Pearly Kings* (1936)
. Tipperary Coons (1921)
. Victoria Demons Masquerading Coons (**1908**)
. Westminster (1960)

Coronation (1940-1974)

. Coronation Canadian Minstrels (1960/1)
. Coronation Groovy Crooning Minstrels (**1974**)
. Coronation Palladium Minstrels (1958/9)
. Coronation Performing Crooning Minstrels (1973)
. Coronation Jubilee Jazz Singers* (1962/3)
. Riverside Coronation Jazz Singers (1972)
. Spes Bona Coronation Coons (**1940**-1943)

Lords and Princes (1908-1936)

. Irish Princes (1921)
. Lord Nelson's Escorts (**1908**)
. Lord Nelson Marines (**1936**)
. Lords of London (?)
. Prince Charles I (1934)
. Prince Harold Troupe (1929)

Regions (1921-1961)

. Cornwall Crooning Minstrels (1958-**1961**)
. Irish Princes (**1921**)
. London Hawker Jubilee Coons* (1937)

Canada

. Coronation Canadian Minstrels (1960/1)

Carnival (1974-1983)

. Famous Carnivals (**1983**)
. Mardi Gras Fun Makers (**1974**)

Cattle (1923-1936 + 1952)

. Cape Town Jong Span* (1952)
. Cattle Stampers (**1923**/4)
. Mexican Cattle Stampers (**1936**)
. Mexican Cattle Thieves (?)
. Spanish Cow Punchers (**1923**)

Bull fighters (1930/1 + 1954)

. Barcelona Bull Fighters (**1930**)
. Bullfighters (**1954**)
. Valencia Bull Fighters (**1931**)
. Valentino Bull Fighters (**1930**)

Character / Quality

Bachelor (1968-1971)

. Bachelor Hawker Boys (**1971**)
. Young Bachelor Entertaining Minstrels (**1968**)

Dainty (1951-1961)

. Dainty Dixie Darkies (1954)
. Honolulu Dainty Darkies (**1951** + **1961**)

Dandy (1908-1963)

. Dandy Coloured Coons (**1908**)
. Pennsylvania Dandy Darkies (1949)
. Yankee Doodle Dandy Darkies (1958-**1963**)

Funny

. Mardi Gras Fun Makers (1974)

Gay (1959-1973)

. Gaiety Jazz Singers (**1959**)
. Gaiety Swing Stars (1960)
. United Gaiety Coons (1967-1970)
. United Gaiety Star Hawkers (1972)
. United Gaiety Hawker Boys (**1973**)

Groovy (1974-1977)

. Coronation Groovy Crooning Minstrels (**1974**)
. Dixie Groovy Minstrels (**1977**)

Happy (1908-1994)

. Happy Bar Boys (1928-1930)
. Happy Boston Coons (1927-1932)
. Happy Bostons Minstrels (1966)
. Happy High Born Coons (1928)
. Happy Little Darkies Masquerading Troupe (**1908**)
. Happy Niggers of Broadway (1940 + 1952)
. Junior Young Happy Bostons (1983)
. Louisiana Happy Little Darkies (1952)
. Original Happy Boston Coons (1952)
. Young Happy Bostons (1953-**1994**)

Invincible (1958-1961)

. Famous Invincible Darkies (**1958-1961**)
. Invincible Darkies (1959-1960)

Invisible

. Unknown Invisible Darkies (1952)

Hippie

. Hippie Entertaining (1971)

Jolly (1962-1992)

. Jolly Jolson Nigger Minstrels* (1969-1971 + **1992**)
. Tay Mouth Jolly Boy Serenaders (**1962**/3)
. Young Jolly Jolson Minstrels* (1967/8)

Little (1908 + 1952)

. Happy Little Darkies Masquerading Troupe (**1908**)
. Louisiana Happy Little Darkies (**1952**)

Original (1908 + 1952-1996)

. Original Colorado Jitterbugs (1960)
. Original Diamond Eyed Coons* (**1952**)
. Original Famous Wild Apaches (1974 + 1983)
. Original Happy Boston Coons (**1952**)
. Original Hollywood Jazz Singers (1959)
. Original Jazz Singing Coons (**1952**)
. Original Jazz Singers (1961)
. Original Multi-Millionaire Minstrels (1966)
. Original Newarks Minstrel Troupe (**1908**)

. Original Seven Up Jazz Singers (1958)
. Original Wild Apaches (1989 + **1996**)

Pep

. Elsie's River Pep Crooning Minstrels (1973)

Playboys

. Fabulous Play Boys (1967 + 1971 + 1994)

Progressive

. Progressives (1909)

Smiling

. Smiling Coons (1928)

Stroller*

. Strollers (1983)

Travel (1908-1924)

. Travelling Coloured Coons (**1908**)
. Travelling Star Coons (1921)
. Young Travellers (**1924**)

Unknown

. Unknown Invisible Darkies (1952)

Weeping

. Weeping Darkies (1930)

Wild (1921 + 1949-1996)

. Famous Original Wild American Masqueraders (1963)
. Famous Wild Apaches (1970)
. Original Famous Wild Apaches (1974 + 1983)
. Original Wild Apaches (1989 + **1996**)
. Rosewood Red Wild Indians (1964)
. Wild Americans (1971)
. Wild American Apaches (1966)
. Wild American Indians (1973)
. Wild American Masqueraders (**1949**-1974)
. Wild Apaches (1960-1989)
. Wild Mohegian Masqueraders (1968)
. Wild Mohican Masqueraders (1959)
. Wild Mohicans (1953)

. Wild Morhegans (1983)
. Wild West Indians (**1921**)
. Young Wild Masqueraders (1978)

Young (1923-1994)

. Cape Town Jong Span* (1952)
. Famous Young Apaches (1973)
. Famous Young Masqueraders (1989)
. Floridian Young Ones Minstrels (1963 + 1972/3)
. Junior Young Happy Bostons (1983)
. Kensington Young Stars (1991)
. Old Young Louisiana Troupe (1953)
. Schotsche Kloof Young Ones (1983)
. Young Bachelor Entertaining Minstrels (1968)
. Young Beach Boys (1973-1978)
. Young Boston Singing Broadcasting Coons (1952)
. Young Broadway Students Gentlemen Coons (1964-1977)
. Young Commachies (1974)
. Young Dahomey Coons* (1949 + 1958-1960)
. Young Dahomey Crooning Minstrels* (1966-1969)
. Young Gloxonia Crooning (1967)
. Young Golden Lily Minstrels (1973)
. Young Happy Bostons (1953-**1994**)
. Young Jolly Jolson Minstrels* (1967/8)
. Young Hollywood Jazz Singers (1937)
. Young Louisiana Coons (1937 + 1946-1953)
. Young Louisiana Gentlemen Coons (1963/4)
. Young Pennsylvanians (**1994**)
. Young Philadelphia Serenading Hawkers (1952)
. Young Spes Bonas (1983)
. Young Springfields (**1923**)
. Young Top Twenty Minstrels (1973)
. Young Travellers (1924)
. Young Sioux (1982)
. Young Stars Crooning Minstrels (1958-1963)
. Young Wild Masqueraders (1978)
. Young Wohegan Masqueraders (1967)

Old

. Old Young Louisiana Troupe (1953)

CINEMA (1928-1994)

. Arcadian Film Star Jazz Singers (1958-1971)
. Beau Brummels (?)
. Desert Outlaws (**1928**)
. Elsie's River Film Stars (1966)
. Great Gatsbys (1976/77)
. Jolson Jazz Singers* (1958-1960)
. Jolly Jolson Nigger Minstrels* (1969-1971 + 1992)
. Luxa Rama Serenaders* (1963)
. Nooitgedacht Gatsbys (1989 + **1994**)
. Panarama Crooning Minstrels (1972) [*] [Panarama = cinema in Elsie's River]
. Rainbow Darkies* (1952) [Rainbow on the River ?]
. Rainbow Dixie Darkies* (1952) [d° ?]
. Red Heart Biancas (1986)
. 20th Century Hit Paraders (1960 + 1966 + 1971)
. Valentino Bull Fighters (1930)
. Young Jolly Jolson Minstrels* (1967/8)

Hollywood (1937/8 + 1950-1967)

. Ethiopian Hollywood Jazz Singers (1951-1966)
. Hollywoods (**1967**)
. Hollywood Film Stars Serenaders (1959/60)
. Hollywood Jazz Singers (1938)
. Hollywood Palm Beach Serenaders / Hollywood Serenaders (**1950**-1964)
. Hollywood Panamanian Serenaders (1953)
. Original Hollywood Jazz Singers (1959)
. Young Hollywood Jazz Singers (**1937**)

COLOUR / LIGHT (1908-1986)

. Ambassador Carnation Coons (1940)
. Cinnamon Coons (1909)
. Silver Stars (1921)
. Sterling Stars (1963)

Blue (1930s-1988)

. Blue Danube Troubadours (**1930s**-1940s)
. Bluegum Entertainers (**1988**)

Checkered / pied (1925-1968)

. Cape Town Checker Coons (1941/2)
. Checkers (**1925**-1943)
. Checker Plantation Coons (1934)
. Spes Bona Black and White Minstrels (**1968**)

Coloured (1908)

. Dandy Coloured Coons (1908)
. Travelling Coloured Coons (1908)

Orange (1956-1964)

. Orange Plantation Darkies (1959/60)
. Orange Plantation Gentlemen Coons (**1956**)
. Orange Plantation Minstrels (1961-**1964**)

Rainbow

. Rainbow Darkies* (1952)

Red (1908-1986)

. Red Eagles (1932)
. Red Eye Coons (1928)
. Red-Eye Sunshine Coons (**1908**)
. Red Eye Minstrels (1924 + 1925)
. Red Girl Minstrels (1923)
. Red Heart Biancas (**1986**)
. Red Indians (1922 + 1963)
. Red Skinaars (1963)

Rose (1907-1964)

. Caledonian Roses Crooning Minstrels (1959)
. King of Roses (1927)
. Rosebud Troupe (1907)
. Rose Tree Sporting Club (1922)
. Rosewood Red Wild Indians (**1964**)
. White Roses (**1907**)

White (1907-1937)

. White Eye Coons (1930 + **1937**)
. White Nose Masquerading Troupe (1907-1909)
. White Roses (**1907**)

LIGHT (1907-1996)

Dark (1907-1977)

. Darktown Brigade Coon Troupe (**1907**)
. Darktown Fire Brigade Sporting Club (1908)
. Darktown Strutters* (1956-1961 + **1977**)
. Dawn Darkies (1937)
. Independent Dawn Darkies (1940)
. S.A. Darktown Strutters* (1950)
. South African Dawn Darkies (1938)

Dawn (1937-1940)

. Dawn Darkies (**1937**)
. Independent Dawn Darkies (**1940**)

Dusk

. Dusky Dinah Coons* (1921-1925)

Moonlight

. Moonlight Crooning Minstrels (1956)

Starlight* (1958-1996)

. Starlight Melody Darkies (**1958**/9)
. Starlight Melody Minstrels (1967/1968)
. Starlight Serenaders (**195**8-1963)
. Woodstock Starlights (1974-**1996**)

Sunrise

. Sunrise Crooning Minstrels (1968)

Sunshine (1909 + 1995/6)

. Sunshine Coons (**1909**)
. Sunshine Entertainers (**1995/6**)

COW BOYS

. Mexican Cow Boys (1925)

Demons

. Victoria Demons Masquerading Coons (1908)

Derogatory[2] (1907-1996)

Boys[3] (1928-1930 + 1962-1996)

. Bachelor Hawker Boys (1971)
. Banana Boys (1979)
. Billionaire Boys (1994-**1996**)
. Glamour Boys (1994-1996)
. Happy Bar Boys (**1928-1930**)
. Schotsche Kloof Glamour Boys (1973-1977)
. Tay Mouth Jolly Boy Serenaders (**1962**/3)
. United Gaiety Hawker Boys (1973)

Darkies (1908-1977, 6 of 48 after 1960)

. Alabama Sunflower Gentlemen Darkies (1964) [*]
. American Darkies (1928)
. Athlone Cottonfield Darkies (1940)
. Beaconsfield Darkies. (1950-1954)
. Bokomo Cornfield Darkies (1952)
. Continental Darkies (1949)
. Cotton Field Darkies (1927-1937)
. Dainty Dixie Darkies (1954)
. Dawn Darkies (1937)
. Enfield Darkies (1949)
. Famous Invincible Darkies / Invincible Darkies (1958-1961) [*]
. Famous Pennsylvania Darkies (1953/4)
. Five Star Melody Darkies (1960)
. Gold Dollar Gentlemen Darkies (1960)
. Golden Eye Darkies (1930)
. Grand Parade Darkies (1936/7)
. Happy Little Darkies Masquerading Troupe (**1908**)

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[2] Qualifiers that are nowadays considered derogatory or insulting, which may not have been the case in the past; they may also have been used with a pinch of humour, or as part of strategy of inverting the stigma. The original influence of blackface minstrelsy is probably responsible for the pervasiveness of this terminology.

[3] In racist parlance, “boy” was commonly used to address a black person, whatever her or his age, and was part of an ideology considering that infantilism was a characteristic of “inferior races”.

. Independent Broadway Darkies (1940)
. Independent Dawn Darkies (1940)
. Kentucky Minstrel Darkies (1949)
. Louisiana Happy Little Darkies (1952)
. Manenberg Darkie Minstrels (1974) [*]
. Manhattan Dixie Darkies (1954)
. Millionaire Darkies (1936/7)
. Mississippi Darkies (1946)
. New Orleans Coronation Darkies (1953)
. New Orleans Minstrel Darkies (1958)
. Orange Plantation Darkies (1959/60)
. Orient Plantation Darkies (1967-8) [*]
. Pennsylvania Dandy Darkies (1949)
. Pennsylvania Darkies (1951/2)
. Ragtime Millionaire Darkies* (1952)
. Rainbow Darkies* (1952)
. Rainbow Dixie Darkies* (1952)
. Seven Steps Darkies (1958)
. South African Broadway Dixie Darkies (1946)
. South African Darkies (1929)
. South African Dawn Darkies (1938)
. South African History Darkies (1952)
. S.A. Independent Darkies (1928)
. South African Springbok Darkies* (1963)
. Spes Bona Festival Darkies (1952)
. Starlight Melody Darkies* (1958/9)
. Triumph Gentlemen Darkie Minstrels (**1977**) [*]
. Unknown Invisible Darkies (1952)
. Weeping Darkies (1930)
. Yankee Doodle Dandy Darkies (1958-1963) [*]
. Zonk Swing Star Darkies* (1949)

Nigger (1940 + 1952-1994)

. Dixie Nigger Minstrels (1961)
. Hanover Nigger Minstrels* (1973)
. Happy Niggers of Broadway (**1940** + **1952**)
. High Notes Nigger Minstrels (1967 + 1983)
. Jolly Jolson Nigger Minstrels* (1969-1971 + 1992)

. Lavender Nigger Minstrels (1982)
. Mississippi Nigger Minstrels (1959-**1994**)
. Spes Bona Nigger Minstrels (1956-1967)

Strollers* [?]

. Strollers (1983)

Coons (1907-1977, 8 of 79 after 1960)

. Alabama Coons (1927-1938)
. Ambassador Carnation Coons (1940)
. Ashley Coons Masquerading Troupe (1908)
. Baltimore Lawn Tennis Coons (1908)
. Baltimore Coons (1909)
. Black Star Line Coons* (1922)
. California Jazz Singing Coons (1930)
. Cape Town Checker Coons (1941/2)
. Cape Town Hawkers Costers Coons (1936)
. Cape Town Hawkers' Derby Coons (1937)
. Checker Plantation Coons (1934)
. Cinnamon Coons (1909)
. Coony Stars (1930)
. Dahomey Coons* (**1907**-1925 + 1959)
. Dahomey Gentlemen Coons* (1952 + 1961) [*]
. Dandy Coloured Coons (1908)
. Darktown Brigade Coon Troupe (**1907**)
. Diamond Eyed [or Eyes] Coons* (1909-1941)
. Dumont Radio Coons* (1952)
. Dusky Dinah Coons* (1921-1925)
. Enfield Gentlemen Coons (1952)
. Famous Richmond Gentlemen Coons (1960-1963) [*]
. Gentleman Coons (1909)
. Golden Eye Coons (1927)
. Hanover Gentlemen Coons* (1953/4 + 1961) [*]
. Happy Boston Coons (1927-1932)
. Happy High Born Coons (1928)
. High Born Coons (1923 + 1930)
. Incubator Coons (1930-1937)
. Kentucky Coons (1933)
. Kentucky Gentlemen Coons (1960)

. Kentucky Plantation Coons (1940)
. Kentucky Victory Coons (1946)
. Liberian Coons (1936)
. Lawn Tennis Coons (1923)
. London Hawker Jubilee Coons⋆ (1937)
. Louisiana Coon Troupe (**1907**)
. Louisiana Gentlemen Coons / Louisiana Coons (1940-1967) [*]
. Mahobla Coons (1929)
. Manhattan Coons (?)
. OK Napier Surprise Coons (1933)
. Orange Plantation Gentlemen Coons (1956)
. Original Diamond Eyed Coons⋆ (1952)
. Original Happy Boston Coons (1952)
. Original Jazz Singing Coons (1952)
. Philco Radio Jazz Singing Coons (1942)
. Plantation Coons (1923)
. Pumpkin Coons (1936)
. Radio Broadcasting Singing Coons (1937 + 1951-1954)
. Red Eye Coons (1928)
. Red-Eye Sunshine Coons (1908)
. Richmond Gentlemen Coons (1958)
. Selma Coons (1909)
. Smiling Coons (1928)
. Spes Bona Coons (1937-1952)
. Spes Bona Elton Coons (1937)
. Spes Bona Coronation Coons (1940-1943)
. Springfield Coons (1922)
. Sunshine Coons (1909)
. Surprise Coons (1932)
. Syncopated Coons (1930)
. Tennessee Coons (1959)
. Tipperary Coons (1921)
. Travelling Coloured Coons (1908)
. Travelling Star Coons (1921)
. United Broadway Gentlemen Coons (1953-1960)
. United Commando Broadcasting Coons (1958 + 1966) [*]
. United Gaiety Coons (1967-1970) [*]

. Varsity Coons (1929/30)
. Victoria Demons Masquerading Coons (1908)
. Virginia Barn Coons (1923)
. Virginia Coons (1923)
. Virginian Surprise Coons (1953)
. White Eye Coons (1930 + 1937)
. Young Boston Singing Broadcasting Coons (1952)
. Young Broadway Students Gentlemen Coons (1964-**1977**) [*]
. Young Dahomey Coons* (1949 + 1958-1960)
. Young Louisiana Coons (1937 + 1946-1953)
. Young Louisiana Gentlemen Coons (1963/4) [*]

DRINKS (1952-1986)

. Bunny Crush Crooning Minstrels (**1952**) [Bunny Crush = soft drink]
. Granita Entertaining Minstrels (1974) [*] [Granita = soft drink]
. Lieberstein Gentlemen Serenaders (1964) [Lieberstein = cheapest wine available]
. Red Heart Biancas (**1986**) [Red Heart Bianca = rum]
. Zonnheimer Jubilee Jazz Singers* (1974) [Zonnheimer = cheap wine brand]

EAST / ORIENT (1921-1968)

. Desert Arabs (?)
. Egyptian Burglars (**1921**)
. Orient Plantation Darkies (1967-**1968**)
. Queen of Tar Tars (**1921**)

EDUCATION (1929/30 + 1964-1977)

. Glamour Students (1971)
. Sunnyside Student Serenaders (1973)
. Varsity Coons (**1929/30**)
. Varsity Entertainers (**1964**)
. Young Broadway Students Gentlemen Coons (**1964-1977**)

EUROPE (1921-1949)

. Barcelona Bull Fighters (1930)
. Blue Danube Troubadours (1930s-1940s)
. Continental Darkies (**1949**)
. Continental Jazz Singers (1940)

. Greek King's Bodyguard (1933)
. Italian Lifeguards (**1921**)
. Portuguese Guards (1923)

Eye (1905-1963)

. Diamond Eyed [or Eyes] Coons* (1909-1941)
. Diamond Eye Minstrel Troupe* (**1905**)
. Dixie Diamond Eyed Minstrels* (**1963**)
. Golden Eye Coons (1927)
. Golden Eye Darkies (1930)
. Original Diamond Eyed Coons* (1952)
. Red Eye Coons (1928)
. Red-Eye Sunshine Coons (1908)
. White Eye Coons (1930 + 1937)

Games (1928-1955)

. Flush (Glee) Party (1928/9)
. Young Casino Minstrels (1955)

Girl

. Red Girl Minstrels (1923)

Holland (1961-1966)

. Haarlem Serenaders (1961)
. Haarlem Zonk Minstrels* (1966)

Independence / Liberty (1928-1989)

. Good Hope Independents (**1989**)
. Independent Broadway Darkies (1940)
. Independent Broadway Jazz Singers (1936)
. Independent Broadway Minstrels (1963/4 + 1969-1972)
. Independent Dawn Darkies (1940)
. Liberty Philadelphia Minstrels (1952)
. S.A. Independent Darkies (**1928**)

Islam (1958-1974)

. Hamadia Soul Minstrels* (**1973/4**)

. Hamediah Crooning Minstrels* (1959/60)
. Hamediahs Diamond Jazz Serenaders* (**1958**)

LOCALITY

Cape town / Cape / City / Good Hope / Spes Bona (1930-1996)

. Cape Corps Original* (1946)
. Cape Town Checker Coons (1941/2)
. Cape Town City Entertainers (1974)
. Cape Town Hawkers (**1930**-1939 + 1960/1 + 1994-**1996**)
. Cape Town Hawkers Costers Coons (1936)
. Cape Town Hawkers' Derby Coons (1937)
. Cape Town Jong Span* (1952)
. City Grand Minstrels (1958)
. Good Hope Independents/Entertainers (1989-**1996**)
. Grand Parade Crooning Minstrels (1967 + 1973 + 1977)
. Grand Parade Darkies (1936/7)
. Grand Parade Minstrels (1932)
. Schotsche Kloof Cape Town Crooning Minstrels (1972)
. Spes Bona Black and White Minstrels (1968)
. Spes Bona Coons (1937-1952)
. Spes Bona Elton Coons (1937)
. Spes Bona Coronation Coons (1940-1943)
. Spes Bona Festival Darkies (1952)
. Spes Bona Nigger Minstrels (1956-1967)
. Spes Bona Pinetown (1961)
. Young Spes Bonas (1983)

Bo-kaap (1970-1983)

. Bo-Kaap Entertainers (**1983**)
. Schotsche Kloof Cape Town Crooning Minstrels (1972)
. Schotsche Kloof Glamour Boys (1973-1977)
. Schotsche Kloof Minstrels (**1970**)
. Schotsche Kloof Young Ones (1983)

District Six (1908 - 1922/3 - 1953-1971)

. Ashley Coons Masquerading Troupe (**1908**) [Ashley St.]
. Caledonian Jazz Singers (1959) [Caledon St.]
. Caledonian Roses Crooning Minstrels (1959) [Caledon St.]

. Hanover Gentlemen Coons* (**1953**/4 + 1961) [Hanover St.]
. Famous Richmond Gentlemen Coons (1960-1963) [Richmond St. see also Richmond]
. Richmond Gentlemen Coons (1958) [Richmond St. see also Richmond]
. Seven Steps* (**1971**)
. Seven Steps Darkies* (1958)
. Springfield Coons (**1922**) [*] [Springfield St. in D 6, STONE 1971, see also Springfield]
. Young Springfields (1923) [*] [Springfield St. in D 6, STONE 1971, see also Springfield]
. Tay Mouth Jolly Boy Serenaders (**1962**/3) [Taymouth St. in D 6 ?, STONE 1971, see also Woodstock]
. Tay Mouth Rock and Roll Serenaders (1961) [Taymouth St. in D 6 ?, STONE 1971, see also Woodstock]
. Taymuth Broadway Serenaders (1958) [*] [Taymouth St. in D 6 ?, STONE 1971, see also Woodstock]
. Tennant Crooning Minstrels (1960) [Tennant St.]

Out of city neighbourhoods and townships[4] (1908-1996)

Athlone (1940-1974)

. Athlone City Dixies (1973/1974)
. Athlone Cottonfield Darkies (1940) [*]
. Enfield Darkies (1949) [Athlone] [*]
. Enfield Gentlemen Coons (1952) [Athlone] [*]
. St. Julian Club (1921) [St. Julian Road, Sunnyside = suburb of Athlone?]
. Sunnyside. The Sun 6/1/1950 [Sunnyside = suburb of Athlone]
. Sunnyside Broadway Serenaders / Sunnyside Serenaders (1953-1964) [Sunnyside = suburb of Athlone]
. Sunnyside Student Serenaders (1973) [Sunnyside = suburb of Athlone]

Atlantis

. Atlantis Superstars (**1996**)

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[4] 14 out of 53 before 1960: Athlone, Kensington, Maitland, Richmond, Springfield, Walmer Estate, Wingfield, Woodstock and Wynberg. In 1966, the Government declared District Six a "white area" and decided that its inhabitants would be relocated, most of them in the Cape Flats; forced removals started in 1968. Consequently, troupes based in District Six had to disband, sometimes to be reorganised in the new townships, where new troupes were also formed.

Bishop Lavis

. Lavistown Crooning Minstrels (1988/9)

Bonteheuwel (1964-1990)

. Bontevanian Roses (1988)
. Bontevanians (1971)
. Bontevanians Hot Shots (**1990**)
. Bluegum Entertainers (1988) [Bonteheuwel]
. Rosewood Red Wild Indians (**1964**) [?]
. Young Gloxonia Crooning (1967) [Bonteheuwel = Gloxinia St.]

Elsie's River (1966-1983)

. Elsie's River Film Stars (**1966**)
. Elsie's River Pep Crooning Minstrels (1973)
. Great Elsie's River Crooning Minstrels (**1983**)
. Panarama Crooning Minstrels (1972) [*] [Panarama = cinema in Elsie's River]

Goodwood (1960-1963)

. Goodwood (1960)
. Goodwood Broadway Jazz Singers (1963)

Kensington (1953-1991)

. Kensington Famous Ex-Volunteer Jazz Singers (1953) [*]
. Kensington Young Stars (1991)

Kew Town

. Q Town entertainers (1994)

Lavender Hill

. Lavender Nigger Minstrels (1982)
. Lavender Superstars (1982)

Maitland

. Gardenian Crooning Minstrels (1958/9) [Maitland Garden?, STONE 1971]

Manenberg (1969-1974)

. Manenberg Entertaining Minstrels (**1969**)
. Manenberg Darkie Minstrels (**1974**)
. Manenberg Serenaders (1972)

Mitchell's Plain (1988-1996)

. Eastridge Crooning Minstrels (1993)

. Lentegeur Entertainers (1994)
. Sea Winds Entertainers **(1988-1996)**

Nooitgedacht

. Nooitgedacht Gatsbys (1989 + 1994)

Parkwood

. Parkwood Jet Star Minstrels (1974)

Ravensmead

. Ravensmead TV Stars (1989)

Richmond ? [see also District Six]

. Famous Richmond Gentlemen Coons (1960-1963)
. Richmond Gentlemen Coons (1958)

Riverside [?]

. Riverside Coronation Jazz Singers (1972)

Springfield [? see also District Six]

. Springfield Coons (1922) [*]
. Young Springfields (1923) [*]

Valhalla

. Valhalla Hit Parades (1989-1994)

Walmer Estate **[Coronation Rd., Walmer Estate, also Maitland, Woodstock; Coronation St, Bellville, Plumstead]**

. Coronation Canadian Minstrels (1960/1) [*]
. Coronation Groovy Crooning Minstrels (1974) [*]
. Coronation Palladium Minstrels (1958/9)
. Coronation Performing Crooning Minstrels (1973) [*]

Westgate

. Coronation Palladium Minstrels (1958/9) [Palladium Street, Westgate]

Wingfield

. Wingfield Jazz Singers (1952) [*]

Woodstock (1908-1996)

. Tay Mouth Jolly Boy Serenaders (1962/3) [see also District Six]
. Tay Mouth Rock and Roll Serenaders (1961)
. Taymuth Broadway Serenaders (1958) [*]

. Victoria Demons Masquerading Coons (1908) [Victoria Rd, Woodstock?, STONE 1971]
. Woodstock Starlights* (1974-1996)

Worcester, Esselen Park

. Enslin Dusky Diamond Eyes (Worcester) (1953) [Esselen probably misspelt by the reporter]

Wynberg

. Wynberg Lawn Tennis Coons (**1908**)

Mask (1907-1989)

. American Masqueraders (1952)
. Ashley Coons Masquerading Troupe (1908)
. Camptown Jockeys Masquerading Troupe* (1908)
. Dahomeys Masquerading Troupe* (1908)
. Famous Original Wild American Masqueraders (1963)
. Famous Young Masqueraders (**1989**)
. Happy Little Darkies Masquerading Troupe (1908)
. Indian Waiters Masquerading Troupe (1908)
. Mohegan American Masqueraders (1974)
. Mohican American Masqueraders (1970)
. Mohican Indian Masqueradors (1966 + 1973)
. Springboks / Springbok Masquerading Troupe* (**1907**-1909)
. Victoria Demons Masquerading Coons (1908)
. White Nose Masquerading Troupe (1907-1909)
. Wild American Masqueraders (1949-1974)
. Wild Mohegian Masqueraders (1968)
. Wild Mohican Masqueraders (1959)
. Young Wild Masqueraders (1978)
. Young Wohegan Masqueraders (1967)

Masonic

. Masonic Crooning Minstrels (1967)

Mexico (1925-1937)

. Mexican Cattle Stampers (1936)
. Mexican Cattle Thieves (?)

. Mexican Cow Boys (**1925**)
. Mexican Mash Riders (1928)
. Spanish Mexican Riders (**1937**)

Minstrels (1905-1996, 64 out of 97 after 1960)

. Britannia Volunteer Minstrels (1954)
. Bunny Crush Crooning Minstrels (1952)
. Caledonian Roses Crooning Minstrels (1959)
. Californian Crooning Minstrels (1959-1961) [*]
. City Grand Minstrels (1958)
. Cornwall Crooning Minstrels (1958-1961) [*]
. Coronation Canadian Minstrels (1960/1) [*]
. Coronation Groovy Crooning Minstrels (1974) [*]
. Coronation Palladium Minstrels (1958/9)
. Coronation Performing Crooning Minstrels (1973) [*]
. Crooning Dixiana Minstrels of Broadway (1950)
. Dahomey Minstrels (1963) [*]
. Delta Jazz Minstrels (1968) [*]
. Diamond Eye Minstrel Troupe⋆ (**1905**)
. Dixie Crooning Minstrels (1960)
. Dixie Diamond Eyed Minstrels⋆ (1963) [*]
. Dixie Entertaining Minstrels (1978) [*]
. Dixie Groovy Minstrels (1977) [*]
. Dixie Nigger Minstrels (1961) [*]
. Eastridge Crooning Minstrels (1993) [*]
. Echo Minstrels (1952)
. Elsie's River Pep Crooning Minstrels (1973) [*]
. Five Star Crooning Minstrels (1959-1966) [*]
. Floridian Young Ones Minstrels (1963 + 1972/3) [*]
. Four Arts Crooning Minstrels (1970/1) [*]
. Gardenian Crooning Minstrels (1958/9)
. Golden Crooning Minstrels (1958-1960)
. Golden Lily Minstrels (1974) [*]
. Grand Parade Crooning Minstrels (1967 + 1973 + 1977) [*]
. Grand Parade Minstrels (1932)
. Granita Entertaining Minstrels (1974) [*]
. Great Elsie's River Crooning Minstrels (1983) [*]

. Haarlem Zonk Minstrels* (1966) [*]
. Hamadia Soul Minstrels* (1973/4) [*]
. Hamediah Crooning Minstrels* (1959/60)
. Hanover Nigger Minstrels (1973)* [*]
. Happy Bostons Minstrels (1966) [*]
. Hennent Crooning Minstrels (1959)
. Hi-Notes Jazz Minstrels (1958)
. High Notes Nigger Minstrels / Hi Notes (1967-1974 + 1983) [*]
. Hit Paraders Minstrels (1971/2) [*]
. Independent Broadway Minstrels (1963/4 + 1969-1972) [*]
. Jolly Jolson Nigger Minstrels* (1969-1971 + 1992) [*]
. Kentonian Crooning Minstrels* (1963/4) [*]
. Kentucky Minstrel Darkies (1949)
. Lavender Nigger Minstrels (1982) [*]
. Lavistown Crooning Minstrels (1988/9) [*]
. Liberty Philadelphia Minstrels (1952)
. Manenberg Entertaining Minstrels (1969) [*]
. Manenberg Darkie Minstrels (1974) [*]
. Manhattan Crooning Minstrels (1972) [*]
. Masonic Crooning Minstrels (1967) [*]
. Meadow Cottonfield Minstrels* (1966-1973) [*]
. Meadow Crooning Minstrels* (1967/8) [*]
. Mississippi Crooning Minstrels (1960)
. Mississippi Nigger Minstrels (1959-1994) [*]
. Mobil Crooning Minstrels (1970) [*]
. Moonlight Crooning Minstrels (1956)
. Negresco Crooning Minstrels (1983) [*]
. Nestles Fabulous Entertaining Minstrels (1960)
. New Orleans Minstrel Darkies (1958)
. New Orleans Crooning Minstrels (1959-1969) [*]
. Orange Plantation Minstrels (1961-1964) [*]
. Original Multi-Millionaire Minstrels (1966) [*]
. Original Newarks Minstrel Troupe (1908)
. Panamanian Crooning Minstrels (1952 + 1966) [*]
. Panarama Crooning Minstrels (1972) [*]
. Parkwood Jet Star Minstrels (1974) [*]
. Pennsylvania Crooning Minstrels (1990-**1996**) [*]

. Radio Minstrels (1941)
. Radio Allied Minstrels (1946)
. Red Eye Minstrels (1924 + 1925)
. Red Girl Minstrels (1923)
. Schotsche Kloof Cape Town Crooning Minstrels (1972) [*]
. Schotsche Kloof Minstrels (1970) [*]
. Seven Up Crooning Minstrels (1958)
. Simba Entertainers Minstrels (1973/4) [*]
. South African Crooning Minstrels (1953)
. Spes Bona Black and White Minstrels (1968) [*]
. Spes Bona Nigger Minstrels (1956-1967) [*]
. Star Spangled Crooning Minstrels (1958)
. Starlight Melody Minstrels* (1967/8) [*]
. Sunrise Crooning Minstrels (1968) [*]
. Tennant Crooning Minstrels (1960)
. Top Twenty Crooning Minstrels (1974) [*]
. Triumph Gentlemen Darkie Minstrels (1977) [*]
. United Gold Dollar Crooning Minstrels (1960-1964 + 1971-1973) [*]
. Virginia Crooning Minstrels (1954)
. Yanx Crooning Minstrels (1958)
. Young Bachelor Entertaining Minstrels (1968) [*]
. Young Dahomey Crooning Minstrels* (1966-1969) [*]
. Young Golden Lily Minstrels (1973) [*]
. Young Jolly Jolson Minstrels* (1967/8) [*]
. Young Top Twenty Minstrels (1973) [*]
. Young Stars Crooning Minstrels (1958-1963) [*]
. Zonk Swing Stars Crooning Minstrels* (1958-1964) [*]
. Zonk Swing Stars Minstrels* (1952)

Music (1930-1996)

Crooning (minstrels) (1950-1996)

. Bunny Crush Crooning Minstrels (1952)
. Caledonian Roses Crooning Minstrels (1959)
. Californian Crooning Minstrels (1959-1961)
. Cornwall Crooning Minstrels (1958-1961)
. Coronation Groovy Crooning Minstrels (1974)
. Coronation Performing Crooning Minstrels (1973)

. Crooning Dixiana Minstrels of Broadway (**1950**)
. Dixie Crooning Minstrels (1960)
. Eastridge Crooning Minstrels (1993)
. Elsie's River Pep Crooning Minstrels (1973)
. Five Star Crooning Minstrels (1959-1966)
. Four Arts Crooning Minstrels (1970/1)
. Gardenian Crooning Minstrels (1958/9)
. Golden Crooning Minstrels (1958-1960)
. Grand Parade Crooning Minstrels (1967 + 1973 + 1977)
. Great Elsie's River Crooning Minstrels (1983)
. Hamediah Crooning Minstrels* (1959/60)
. Hennent Crooning Minstrels (1959)
. Honolulu Crooning Minstrels (1972)
. Kentonian Crooning Minstrels* (1963/4)
. Lavistown Crooning Minstrels (1988/9)
. Manhattan Crooning Minstrels (1972)
. Masonic Crooning Minstrels (1967)
. Meadow Crooning Minstrels* (1967/8)
. Mississippi Crooning Minstrels (1960)
. Mobil Crooning Minstrels (1970)
. Moonlight Crooning Minstrels (1956)
. Negresco Crooning Minstrels (1983)
. New Orleans Crooning Minstrels (1959-1969)
. Panamanian Crooning Minstrels (1952 + 1966)
. Panarama Crooning Minstrels (1972)
. Pennsylvania Crooning Minstrels (1990-**1996**)
. Schotsche Kloof Cape Town Crooning Minstrels (1972)
. Seven Up Crooning Minstrels (1958)
. South African Crooning Minstrels (1953)
. Star Spangled Crooning Minstrels (1958)
. Sunrise Crooning Minstrels (1968)
. Tennant Crooning Minstrels (1960)
. Top Twenty Crooning Minstrels (1974)
. United Gold Dollar Crooning Minstrels (1960-1964 + 1971-1973)
. Virginia Crooning Minstrels (1954)
. Yanx Crooning Minstrels (1958)
. Young Dahomey Crooning Minstrels* (1966-1969)

. Young Gloxonia Crooning (1967)
. Young Stars Crooning Minstrels (1958-1963)
. Zonk Swing Stars Crooning Minstrels* (1958-1964)
. Zonk Swing Stars Minstrels (1952)*

Dance (1930s-1961)

. Blue Danube Troubadours (**1930s**-1940s)
. Gallotone's Rumba Serenaders* (1952)
. Original Colorado Jitterbugs (1960)
. Tay Mouth Rock and Roll Serenaders (**1961**)

Glee

. Flush (Glee) Party (1928/9)

High Notes (1958-1983)

. Hi-Notes Jazz Minstrels (1958)
. High Notes Nigger Minstrels / Hi Notes (1967-1974 + 1983)

Jazz (1940-1968)

. Delta Jazz Minstrels (**1968**)
. Ethiopian Broadway Jazz Serenaders (1961)
. Gaiety Swing Stars (1960)
. Hamediahs Diamond Jazz Serenaders* (1958)
. Hi-Notes Jazz Minstrels (1958)
. Kentonian Crooning Minstrels (1963/4)
. Savoy Jazz Singers* (**1940**)
. United Broadway Jubilee Jazz* (1960)
. Zonk Swing Stars Crooning Minstrels* (1958-1964)
. Zonk Swing Star Darkies* (1949)
. Zonk Swing Stars Minstrels* (1952)

Jazz Singers (1930-1974)

. American Jazz Singers (1937 + 1964)
. Arcadian Film Star Jazz Singers (1958-1971)
. Banana Jazz Singers (1972/3) ["Banana Boat" = calypso song]
. Caledonian Jazz Singers (1959)
. California Jazz Singing Coons (**1930**)
. Continental Jazz Singers (1940)
. Coronation Jubilee Jazz Singers* (1962/3)
. Dixiana Jazz Singers (1946)

. Eddie Cantor Jazz Singers* (1959)
. Ethiopian Hollywood Jazz Singers (1951-1966)
. Ethiopian Jubilee Jazz Singers* (1968)
. Fabulous Cincinatti Jazz Singers (1953)
. Gaiety Jazz Singers (1959)
. Goodwood Broadway Jazz Singers (1963)
. Hollywood Jazz Singers (1938)
. Honolulu Jazz Singers (1953)
. Independent Broadway Jazz Singers (1936)
. Jazzy Singers (1931)
. Jolson Jazz Singers* (1958-1960)
. Kensington Famous Ex-Volunteer Jazz Singers (1953)
. Meadow Cottonfield Jazz Singers* (1963)
. Meadow Gentlemen Jazz Singers* (1960 + 1971)
. Original Hollywood Jazz Singers (1959)
. Original Jazz Singing Coons (1952)
. Original Jazz Singers (1961)
. Original Seven Up Jazz Singers (1958)
. Philco Radio Jazz Singing Coons (1942)
. Riverside Coronation Jazz Singers (1972)
. Savoy Jazz Singers* (1940)
. Wingfield Jazz Singers (1952)
. Young Hollywood Jazz Singers (1937)
. Zonnheimer Jubilee Jazz Singers* (**1974**)

Jubilee* (1932-1974)

. American Jubilee Singers (1937)
. Ethiopian Jubilee Jazz Singers (1968)
. Jubilee Singers (**1932**)
. United Broadway Jubilee Jazz (1960)
. Zonnheimer Jubilee Jazz Singers (**1974**)

Melody (1958-1968)

. Five Star Melody Darkies (1960)
. Starlight Melody Darkies* (**1958**/9)
. Starlight Melody Minstrels* (1967/**1968**)

Ragtime

. Ragtime Millionaire Darkies* (1952)

Serenaders (1948-1964)

. Broadway Serenaders (1949)
. Ethiopian Broadway Jazz Serenaders (1961)
. Gallotone's Rumba Serenaders* (1952)
. Gold Dollar Serenaders (1963)
. Haarlem Serenaders (1961)
. Hamediahs Diamond Jazz Serenaders* (1958)
. Hawaian Serenaders (1949)
. Hawkers Serenaders (1949)
. Hollywood Film Stars Serenaders (1959/60)
. Hollywood Palm Beach Serenaders / Hollywood Serenaders (1950-1964)
. Hollywood Panamanian Serenaders (1953)
. Lieberstein Gentlemen Serenaders (1964)
. Luxa Rama Serenaders* (1963)
. Manenberg Serenaders (1972)
. Manhattan Broadway Serenaders (1948)
. S.A. Personality Serenaders* (1960)
. South African Springbok (Gentlemen) Serenaders* (1961-1964)
. Starlight Serenaders* (1958-1963)
. Sunnyside Broadway Serenaders / Sunnyside Serenaders (1953-1964)
. Tay Mouth Jolly Boy Serenaders (1962/3)
. Tay Mouth Rock and Roll Serenaders (1961)
. Taymuth Broadway Serenaders (1958)
. Young Philadelphia Serenading Hawkers (1952)

Singers (1932-1974)

. American Jubilee Singers* (1937)
. Broadway Gentlemen Singing Coons (1937/8)
. Jubilee Singers* (**1932**)
. Meadow Cottonfield Gentlemen Singers* (**1974**)
. Radio Broadcasting Singing Coons (1937 + 1951-1954)
. Young Boston Singing Broadcasting Coons (1952)

Syncopation

. Syncopated Coons (1930)

NATURE (1907-1988)

Flowers (1907-1988)

. Alabama Sunflower Gentlemen Darkies (1964)
. Ambassador Carnation Coons (1940)
. Bontevanian Roses (1988)
. Caledonian Roses Crooning Minstrels (1959)
. Gardenian Crooning Minstrels (1958/9)
. Golden Lily Minstrels (1974)
. King of Roses (1927)
. Prince of Lilies (1927)
. Rosebud Troupe (1907)
. Rose Tree Sporting Club (1922)
. White Roses (1907)
. Young Gloxonia Crooning (1967)
. Young Golden Lily Minstrels (1973)

Fruits and vegetables (1936-1979)

. Banana Boys (**1979**)
. Banana Jazz Singers (1972/3)
. Cherry Pickers (?)
. Orange Plantation Darkies (1959/60)
. Orange Plantation Gentlemen Coons (1956)
. Orange Plantation Minstrels (1961-1964)
. Pumpkin Coons (**1936**)

Meadow* (1960-1974)

. Meadow Cottonfield Gentlemen Singers (**1974**)
. Meadow Cottonfield Jazz Singers (1963)
. Meadow Cottonfield Minstrels (1966-1973)
. Meadow Crooning Minstrels (1967/8)
. Meadow Gentlemen Jazz Singers (**1960** + 1971)

Mountain

. Spanish Mountaineers Outlaws (1934)

Tree

. Bluegum Entertainers (1988)

Occupation (1908-1925)

. Cherry Pickers (?)
. Indian Waiters Masquerading Troupe (**1908**)
. Ship Stewards (**1925**)
. S.A. Gold Miners (1923)

Hawkers (1930-1996)

. Bachelor Hawker Boys (1971)
. Cape Town Hawkers (**1930**-1939 + 1960/1 + 1994-**1996**)
. Cape Town Hawkers Costers Coons (1936) [costers = vegetable/fruit sellers]
. Cape Town Hawkers' Derby Coons (1937)
. Glamour Star Hawkers (1971/2)
. Hawkers Serenaders (1949)
. London Hawker Jubilee Coons* (1937)
. United Gaiety Star Hawkers (1972)
. United Gaiety Hawker Boys (1973)
. Young Philadelphia Serenading Hawkers (1952)

Outlaws (1921-1934) and Renegades (1977-1983)

. Desert Outlaws (1928)
. Egyptian Burglars (**1921**)
. Highwaymen (?)
. Indian Outlaws (1933)
. Renegade Apaches (**1977**)
. Renegades (**1983**)
. Sea Pirates (1936)
. Spanish Burglars (Newlands) (1921)
. Spanish Burglars (Green Point) (1921/2)
. Spanish Mountaineers Outlaws (**1934**)
. Spanish Outlaws (1929)

Panama (1952-1966)

. Hollywood Panamanian Serenaders (1953)
. Panamanian Crooning Minstrels (**1952 + 1966**)

PRESTIGIOUS

Ambassador

. Ambassador Carnation Coons (1940)

Diamond* (1905-1963)

. Diamond Eyed [or Eyes] Coons (1909-1941)
. Diamond Eye Minstrel Troupe (**1905**)
. Dixie Diamond Eyed Minstrels (**1963**)
. Hamediahs Diamond Jazz Serenaders* (1958)
. Original Diamond Eyed Coons (1952)

Fabulous (1953-1994)

. Fabulous Cincinatti Jazz Singers (**1953**)
. Nestles Fabulous Entertaining Minstrels (1960)
. Fabulous Play Boys (1967 + 1971 + **1994**)

Famous (1953-1989)

. Famous African Zonks* (**1989**)
. Famous Carnivals (1983)
. Famous Invincible Darkies / Invincible Darkies (1958-1961)
. Famous Pennsylvania Darkies (**1953**/4)
. Famous Richmond Gentlemen Coons (1960-1963)
. Famous Original Wild American Masqueraders (1963)
. Famous Wild Apaches (1970)
. Famous Young Apaches (1973)
. Famous Young Masqueraders (1989)
. Kensington Famous Ex-Volunteer Jazz Singers (**1953**)
. Original Famous Wild Apaches (1974 + 1983)

Gentlemen (1909-1977)

. Alabama Sunflower Gentlemen Darkies (1964)
. Broadway Gentlemen Singing Coons (1937/8)
. Dahomey Gentlemen Coons (1952 + 1961)
. Enfield Gentlemen Coons (1952)
. Famous Richmond Gentlemen Coons (1960-1963)
. Gentleman Coons (**1909**)
. Gold Dollar Gentlemen Darkies (1960)
. Hanover Gentlemen Coons (1953/4 + 1961)
. Kentucky Gentlemen Coons (1960)

. Lieberstein Gentlemen Serenaders (1964)
. Louisiana Gentlemen Coons / Louisiana Coons (1940-1967)
. Meadow Cottonfield Gentlemen Singers* (1974)
. Meadow Gentlemen Jazz Singers* (1960 + 1971)
. Orange Plantation Gentlemen Coons (1956)
. Richmond Gentlemen Coons (1958)
. South African Springbok (Gentlemen) Serenaders* (1961-1964)
. Triumph Gentlemen Darkie Minstrels (**1977**)
. United Broadway Gentlemen Coons (1953-1960)
. Young Broadway Students Gentlemen Coons (1964-**1977**)
. Young Louisiana Gentlemen Coons (1963/4)

Glamour (1953 + 1966-1996)

. Dixie Glamour Star (**1966**)
. Glamour Boys (1994-**1996**)
. Glamour Star Dusters* (**1953**)
. Glamour Star Hawkers (1971/2)
. Glamour Students (1971)
. Glamourous Superstars (**1996**)
. Schotsche Kloof Glamour Boys (1973-1977)

Gold (1927-1974)

. Gold Dollar Gentlemen Darkies (1960)
. Gold Dollar Serenaders (1963)
. Golden Crooning Minstrels (1958-1960)
. Golden Eye Coons (**1927**)
. Golden Eye Darkies (1930)
. Golden Lily Minstrels (**1974**)
. Golden Star Dixies (1966)
. S.A. Gold Miners (1923)
. United Gold Dollar Crooning Minstrels (1960-1964 + 1971-1973)
. Young Golden Lily Minstrels (1973)

Grand

. City Grand Minstrels (1958)

Great (1976-1983)

. Great Elsie's River Crooning Minstrels (1983)
. Great Gatsbys (1976/77)

Hot Shots (1959-1973)

. Bontevanians Hot Shots (1990)
. Philadelphia Hotshots (1959-61 + 1973)

Invincible

. Famous Invincible Darkies / Invincible Darkies (1958-1961)

Money (1936-1996)

. Billionaire Boys (1994-**1996**)
. Gold Dollar Gentlemen Darkies (1960)
. Millionaire Darkies (**1936**/7)
. Multi-Millionaire (1966 + 1983 + 1994)
. Original Multi-Millionaire Minstrels (1966)
. Ragtime Millionaire Darkies* (1952)
. Sterling Stars (1963)
. United Gold Dollar Crooning Minstrels (1960-1964 + 1971-1973)

Royal / Aristocratic (1907-1974)

. Coronation Canadian Minstrels (1960/1)
. Coronation Groovy Crooning Minstrels (**1974**)
. Coronation Palladium Minstrels (1958/9)
. Coronation Performing Crooning Minstrels (1973)
. Coronation Jubilee Jazz Singers* (1962/3)
. Greek King's Bodyguard (1933)
. Irish Princes (1921)
. King of Roses (1927)
. King's Messengers (1909)
. Lord Nelson's Escorts (1908)
. Lord Nelson Marines (1936)
. Lords of London (?)
. New Orleans Coronation Darkies (1953)
. Pearly Kings* (1936)
. Prince Charles I (1934)
. Prince Harold Troupe (1929)
. Prince of Benin's Escort (1909)
. Prince of Lilies (1927)
. Princess Escort (**1907**)
. Queen of Tar Tars (1921)
. Riverside Coronation Jazz Singers (1972)

. Spanish Noblemen (1954)
. Spes Bona Coronation Coons (1940-1943)

Triumph

. Triumph Gentlemen Darkie Minstrels (1977)

Upper Class (1923-1983)

. Blue Danube Troubadours (1930s-1940s)
. Happy High Born Coons (1928)
. High Born Coons (**1923** + 1930)
. Negresco Crooning Minstrels (**1983**)

PRIVATES

(Others than Coon/Minstrels, Atjas or Bits And Pieces and Odds and Ends Troupes) (1908-1938 + 1954)
. Barcelona Bull Fighters (1930)
. Bullfighters (1954)
. Camptown Jockeys Masquerading Troupe* (1908)
. Cattle Stampers (1923/4)
. Cherry Pickers (?)
. Coming Stars (1928/9) [Moffees Troupe]
. Desert Arabs (?)
. Desert Outlaws (1928)
. Egyptian Burglars (1921)
. Greek King's Bodyguard (1933)
. Happy Bar Boys (1928-1930) (?)
. Highwaymen (?)
. Italian Lifeguards (1921)
. Irish Princes (1921)
. Kikuyu Warriors* (1937)
. King of Roses (1927)
. King's Messengers (1909)
. Lord Nelson's Escorts (1908)
. Lord Nelson Marines (1936)
. Lords of London (?)
. Matabele Warriors* (1921/2)
. Mexican Cattle Stampers (1936)
. Mexican Cattle Thieves (?)

. Mexican Cow Boys (1925)
. Mexican Mash Riders (1928)
. Pearly Kings* (1936) (?)
. Portuguese Guards (1923)
. Prince Charles I (1934)
. Prince Harold Troupe (1929)
. Prince of Benin's Escort (1909)
. Prince of Lilies (1927)
. Princess Escort (1907)
. Queen of Tar Tars (1921)
. Sea Pirates (1936)
. Ship Stewards (1925)
. S.A. Gold Miners (1923)
. Spanish Burglars (Newlands) (1921)
. Spanish Burglars (Green Point) (1921/2)
. Spanish Cavaliers (1909 + 1938)
. Spanish Cow Punchers (1923)
. Spanish Mexican Riders (1937)
. Spanish Mountaineers Outlaws (1934)
. Spanish Noblemen (1954)
. Spanish Outlaws (1929)
. Valencia Bull Fighters (1931)
. Valentino Bull Fighters (1930)
. Warriors of Mahratta* (1937)

Radio / Records / TV (1942-1989)

. Dumont Radio Coons* (1952)
. Gallotone's Rumba Serenaders* (1952)
. Philco Radio Jazz Singing Coons (**1942**)
. Radio Broadcasting Singing Coons (1937 + 1951-1954)
. Radio Minstrels (1941)
. Radio Allied Minstrels (1946)
. Ravensmead TV Stars (**1989**)
. Springbok Radios* (1952)
. United Commando Broadcasting Coons (1958 + 1966)
. Young Boston Singing Broadcasting Coons (1952)

SEA (1936-1996)

. Lord Nelson Marines (**1936**)
. Sea Pirates (1936)
. Sea Winds Entertainers (1988-**1996**)
. Ship Stewards (1925)

SHOW BUSINESS (1921-1996)

Bands (1973-1978)

. Beach Boys (1994-**1996**)
. Young Beach Boys (**1973**-1978)

Broadway (1936-1977)

. Broadway Gentlemen Singing Coons (1937/8)
. Broadway Gentlemen (1946 + 1956)
. Broadway Serenaders (1949)
. Crooning Dixiana Minstrels of Broadway (1950)
. Ethiopian Broadway Jazz Serenaders (1961)
. Goodwood Broadway Jazz Singers (1963)
. Happy Niggers of Broadway (1940 + 1952)
. Independent Broadway Darkies (1940)
. Independent Broadway Jazz Singers (**1936**)
. Independent Broadway Minstrels (1963/4 + 1969-1972)
. Manhattan Broadway Serenaders (1948)
. South African Broadway Dixie Darkies (1946)
. Sunnyside Broadway Serenaders / Sunnyside Serenaders (1953-1964)
. Taymuth Broadway Serenaders (1958)
. United Broadway Gentlemen Coons (1953-1960)
. United Broadway Jubilee Jazz* (1960)
. Young Broadway Students Gentlemen Coons (1964-**1977**)

Entertainers (1960-1996)

. American Starlights Entertainers* (1961-1963)
. Bluegum Entertainers (1988)
. Bo-Kaap Entertainers (1983)
. Cape Town City Entertainers (1974)
. Dixie Entertaining Minstrels (1978)
. Good Hope Independents/Entertainers (1989-1996)
. Granita Entertaining Minstrels (1974)

. Hippie Entertaining (1971)
. Kentucky Entertainers (1977)
. Lentegeur Entertainers (1994)
. Manenberg Entertaining Minstrels (1969)
. Nestles Fabulous Entertaining Minstrels (**1960**)
. Q Town entertainers (1994)
. Sea Winds Entertainers (1988-**1996**)
. Simba Entertainers Minstrels (1973/4)
. Sunshine Entertainers (1995/6)
. Varsity Entertainers (1964)
. Young Bachelor Entertaining Minstrels (1968)

Hit Parade (1960-1994)

. Hit Paraders Minstrels (1971/2)
. Top Twenty Crooning Minstrels (1974)
. 20th Century Hit Paraders (**1960** + 1966 + 1971)
. Valhalla Hit Parades (1989-**1994**)
. Young Top Twenty Minstrels (1973)

Performers

. Coronation Performing Crooning Minstrels (1973)

Songs (1921-1977)

. Banana Jazz Singers (1972/3) [Banana Boat = calypso song]
. Bachelor Hawker Boys (1971) [Bachelor = Cliff Richard's song]
. Darktown Strutters* (1956-1961 + 1977)
. Dusky Dinah Coons* (1921-1925)
. Glamour Star Dusters (1953) ["Stardust"]
. S.A. Darktown Strutters* (1950)
. S.A. Personality Serenaders* (1960)
. Starlight Melody Darkies* (1955; 1957 [1958]; + 1958; 1959)
. Starlight Melody Minstrels* (1967, 1968)
. Starlight Serenaders* (1958, 1961, 1963)
. Sunnyside Broadway Serenaders / Sunnyside Serenaders (1953-1964) ["on the sunnyside of the street"]
. Sunnyside Student Serenaders (1973) ["on the sunnyside of the street"]
. Yankee Doodle Dandy Darkies (1958-1963)

Stars (1921-1996)

. American Starlights Entertainers* (1961-1963)

. American Stars (1964)
. Atlantis Superstars (**1996**)
. Coming Stars (1928/9)
. Coony Stars (1930)
. Dixie Glamour Star (1966)
. Five Star Crooning Minstrels (1959-1966)
. Gaiety Swing Stars (1960)
. Glamour Star Dusters (1953)
. Glamour Star Hawkers (1971/2)
. Glamourous Superstars (**1996**)
. Golden Star Dixies (1966)
. Kensington Young Stars (1991)
. Lavender Superstars (1982)
. Parkwood Jet Star Minstrels (1974)
. Penny Pinchers All Stars (1994-**1996**)
. Ravensmead TV Stars (1989)
. Silver Stars (**1921**)
. Sterling Stars (1963)
. Travelling Star Coons (**1921**)
. United Gaiety Star Hawkers (1972)
. Woodstock Starlights* (1974-1996)
. Young Stars Crooning Minstrels (1958-1963)
. Zonk Swing Stars Crooning Minstrels* (1958-1964)
. Zonk Swing Star Darkies* (1949)
. Zonk Swing Stars Minstrels* (1952)

SOUTH AFRICA (1907-1964)

. South African Crooning Minstrels (1953)
. South African Broadway Dixie Darkies (1946)
. South African Darkies (1929)
. S.A. Darktown Strutters* (1950)
. South African Dawn Darkies (1938)
. S.A. Gold Miners (1923)
. South African History Darkies (1952)
. S.A. Independent Darkies (1928)
. S.A. Personality Serenaders* (1960)
. South African Springbok Darkies* (1963)

. South African Springbok (Gentlemen) Serenaders* (1961-**1964**)
. Springboks / Springboks Masquerading Troupe* (**1907**-1909)
. Springbok Radios* (1952)

Spain (1909-1938 + 1954)

. Barcelona Bull Fighters (1930)
. Bullfighters (**1954**)
. Spanish Burglars (Newlands) (1921)
. Spanish Burglars (Green Point) (1921/2)
. Spanish Cavaliers (**1909** + **1938**)
. Spanish Cow Punchers (1923)
. Spanish Mexican Riders (1937)
. Spanish Mountaineers Outlaws (1934)
. Spanish Noblemen (**1954**)
. Spanish Outlaws (1929)
. Valencia Bull Fighters (1931)

Sports (1907-1949 + 1961-1964)

. American Sporting Troupe (**1907**/8 + 1921/2)
. Baltimore Lawn Tennis Coons (1908)
. Bits and Pieces Sporting Troupe* (1940 + **1949**)
. Camptown Jockeys Masquerading Troupe* (1908)
. Cape Town Hawkers' Derby Coons (1937)
. Darktown Fire Brigade Sporting Club (1908)
. Lawn Tennis Coons (1923)
. Memphis Tennesse Sporting Club (1908)
. Mississippi Sporting Club (1908)
. Rose Tree Sporting Club (1922)
. South African Springbok Darkies* (1963)
. South African Springbok (Gentlemen) Serenaders* (**1961-1964**)
. Springboks / Springbok Masquerading Troupe* (1907-1909)
. Wynberg Lawn Tennis Coons (1908)

Surprise (1932-1953)

. OK Napier Surprise Coons (1933)
. Surprise Coons (**1932**)
. Virginian Surprise Coons (**1953**)

Tobacco / Cigarettes (1958-1973)

. United Commando Broadcasting Coons (**1958** + 1966) [commando = tobacco used in prison ?]
. United Gold Dollar Crooning Minstrels (1960-**1973**) [Gold Dollar = cigarette]

Trade Mark / Sponsors (1933-1986)

. Bokomo Cornfield Darkies (1952) [Bokomo = porridge]
. Bunny Crush Crooning Minstrels (1952) [Bunny Crush = soft drink]
. Elsie's River Pep Crooning Minstrels (1973) [Pep Stores]
. Cape Town Checker Coons / Cape Town Checkers / Cape Town Famous Checker Coons (1939-1955); Checkers (1925-1943); Checker Plantation Coons (1934) [supermarkets]
. Granita Entertaining Minstrels (1974) [*] [Granita = soft drink]
. Mobil Crooning Minstrels (1970)
. Nestle Dixieland (1964)
. Nestles Fabulous Entertaining Minstrels (1960)
. OK Napier Surprise Coons (**1933**) [OK = department stores]
. Original Seven Up Jazz Singers (1958)
. Penny Pinchers All Stars (1994-1996) [Penny Pinchers = building material retailers]
. Philco Radio Jazz Singing Coons (1942) [Philco = radio sets]
. Red Heart Biancas (**1986**) [Red Heart Bianca = rum]
. Seven Up Crooning Minstrels (1958)
. Simba Entertainers Minstrels (1973/4) [Simba = chips / crisps]
. Trevenna Mississippis (1972) [Trevenna = shirts]
. United Gold Dollar Crooning Minstrels (1960-1973) [Gold Dollar = cigarette]
. Zonnheimer Jubilee Jazz Singers* (**1974**) [Zonnheimer = cheap wine brand]

United (1953-1972)

. United Broadway Gentlemen Coons (**1953**-1960)
. United Broadway Jubilee Jazz* (1960)
. United Commando Broadcasting Coons (1958 + 1966)
. United Gaiety Coons (1967-1970)
. United Gaiety Star Hawkers (**1972**)
. United Gold Dollar Crooning Minstrels (1960-1964 + 1971-1973)

USA (1907-1996)

. Star Spangled Crooning Minstrels (1958)

. Star Spangles (1964)
. Yankee Doodle Dandy Darkies (1958-1963)
. Yanx Crooning Minstrels (1958)

America (1907-1994)

. American Darkies (1928)
. American Hunters (1922)
. American Jazz Singers (1937 + 1964)
. American Jubilee Singers* (1937)
. American Sporting Troupe (**1907**/8 + 1921/2)
. American Starlights Entertainers* (1961-1963)
. American Stars (1964)
. American Yanks (1921)
. New World Classics (**1994**)

Cities / Baltimore (1908-1909)

. Baltimore Lawn Tennis Coons (1908)
. Baltimore Coons (1909)

Cities / Boston (1927-1994)

. Happy Boston Coons (**1927**-1932)
. Happy Bostons Minstrels (1966)
. Junior Young Happy Bostons (1983)
. Original Happy Boston Coons (1952)
. Young Boston Singing Broadcasting Coons (1952)
. Young Happy Bostons (1953-**1994**)

Cities / Cincinatti

. Fabulous Cincinatti Jazz Singers (1953)

Cities / Manhattan (1930s-1872)

. Manhattan Coons (? ca. **1930s**)
. Manhattan Broadway Serenaders (1948)
. Manhattan Crooning Minstrels (**1972**)
. Manhattan Dixie Darkies (1954)

Cities / Memphis

. Memphis Tennessee Sporting Club (1908)

Cities / Newark (1908-1909)

. Original Newarks Minstrel Troupe (1908)

. Newarks (1909)

Cities / New Orleans (1954-1969)

. New Orleans (**1954**)
. New Orleans Coronation Darkies (1953)
. New Orleans Minstrel Darkies (1958)
. New Orleans Crooning Minstrels (1959-**1969**)

Cities / Philadelphia (1952-1973)

. Liberty Philadelphia Minstrels (**1952**)
. Philadelphia Hotshots (1959-61 + **1973**)
. Philadelphians (1960 + 1967)
. Young Philadelphia Serenading Hawkers (**1952**)

Cities / Selma

. Selma Coons (1909)

Dixie (1946-1978)

. Athlone City Dixies (1973/4)
. Crooning Dixiana Minstrels of Broadway (1950)
. Dainty Dixie Darkies (1954)
. Dixiana Jazz Singers (**1946**)
. Dixie Crooning Minstrels (1960)
. Dixie Diamond Eyed Minstrels (1963)
. Dixie Entertaining Minstrels (**1978**)
. Dixie Glamour Star (1966)
. Dixie Groovy Minstrels (1977)
. Dixieland (1963)
. Dixie Nigger Minstrels (1961)
. Golden Star Dixies (1966)
. Manhattan Dixie Darkies (1954)
. Nestle Dixieland (1964)
. Rainbow Dixie Darkies (1952)
. South African Broadway Dixie Darkies (**1946**)

Harlem [?] (1961-1966)

. Haarlem Serenaders (1961)
. Haarlem Zonk Minstrels* (1966)

South / Cornfield

. Bokomo Cornfield Darkies (1952)

South / Cottonfield (1927-1974)

. Athlone Cottonfield Darkies (1940)
. Cotton Field Darkies (**1927**-1937)
. Meadow Cottonfield Gentlemen Singers* (**1974**)
. Meadow Cottonfield Jazz Singers* (1963)
. Meadow Cottonfield Minstrels* (1966-1973)

South / Plantation (1923-1968)

. Checker Plantation Coons (1934)
. Kentucky Plantation Coons (1940)
. Orange Plantation Darkies (1959/60)
. Orange Plantation Gentlemen Coons (1956)
. Orange Plantation Minstrels (1961-1964)
. Orient Plantation Darkies (1967-**1968**)
. Plantation Coons (**1923**)

States / Alabama (1927-1964)

. Alabama Coons (1927-1938)
. Alabama Sunflower Gentlemen Darkies (1964)

States / California (1930-1961)

. California Jazz Singing Coons (1930)
. Californian Crooning Minstrels (1959-1961)

States / Colorado

. Original Colorado Jitterbugs (1960)

States / Florida

. Floridian Young Ones Minstrels (1963 + 1972/3)

States / Hawai (1949-1972)

. Hawaian Serenaders (**1949**)
. Honolulu Crooning Minstrels (**1972**)
. Honolulu Dainty Darkies (1951 + 1961)
. Honolulu Jazz Singers (1953)

States / Kentucky (1933-1977)

. Kentucky Coons (**1933**)
. Kentucky Entertainers (**1977**)
. Kentucky Gentlemen Coons (1960)
. Kentucky Minstrel Darkies (1949)

. Kentucky Plantation Coons (1940)
. Kentucky Victory Coons (1946)

States / Louisiana (1907-1967)

. Louisiana Coon Troupe (**1907**)
. Louisiana Gentlemen Coons / Louisiana Coons (1940-**1967**)
. Louisiana Happy Little Darkies (1952)
. Old Young Louisiana Troupe (1953)
. Young Louisiana Coons (1937 + 1946-1953)
. Young Louisiana Gentlemen Coons (1963/4)

States / Mississippi (1908-1994)

. Delta Jazz Minstrels (1968)
. Mississippi Crooning Minstrels (1960)
. Mississippi Nigger Minstrels (1959-1994)
. Mississippi Sporting Club (1908)
. Mississippi Darkies (1946)
. Trevenna Mississippis (1972)

States / Pennsylvania (1949-1996)

. Famous Pennsylvania Darkies (1953/4)
. Pennsylvania Crooning Minstrels (1990-**1996**)
. Pennsylvania Dandy Darkies (**1949**)
. Pennsylvania Darkies (1951/2)
. Pennsylvanians (1972)
. Young Pennsylvanians (1994)

States / Tennessee (1908-1959)

. Memphis Tennessee Sporting Club (1908)
. Tennessee Coons (1959)

States / Virginia (1923-1954)

. Virginia Barn Coons (**1923**)
. Virginia Coons (1923)
. Virginia Crooning Minstrels (**1954**)
. Virginian Surprise Coons (1953)

Unknown / Uncertain

. ARCADIAN (Arcadian Film Star Jazz Singers, 1958-1971)
. BACHELOR (Bachelor Hawker Boys, 1971)

. BEACONSFIELD (Beaconsfield Darkies, 1950-1954) [Beaconsfield, Kimberley, Northern Cape ?]
. COSTERS (Cape Town Hawkers Costers Coons, 1936)
. ELTON (Spes Bona Elton Coons, 1937)
. HENNENT (Hennent Crooning Minstrels, 1959)
. MAHOBLA (Mahobla Coons, 1929)
. NAPIER (OK Napier Surprise Coons, 1933)
. PINETOWN (Spes Bona Pinetown, 1961) [Pinetown, KwaZulu-Natal ?]
. PROGRESSIVE (Progressives, 1909) [political connotation?]
. PUMPKIN (Pumpkin Coons, 1936)
. RIVERSIDE (Riverside Coronation Jazz Singers, 1972) [may refer to several places in Cape Town]
. YAM YAM (Yam Yam Crooning Minstrels. Cape Times 10/1/1955) [equivalent to "yum yum"?]

* BAMBARA

Bambara is one of the most important languages of today's Mali, whose colonial name was French Sudan. A protracted conflict opposed the French army to the soldiers of Samory Touré, leader of the Wassoulu empire which included parts of the territory incorporated in the French Sudan.

* BITS AND PIECES / ODDS AND ENDS

The members of these troupes were usually dressed in rags; they did not participate in official competitions but usually went from door to door in coloured neighbourhoods, singing and dancing. They represented an independent current within the Klopse and embodied a certain aspect of the carnival's spirit; they were very popular.

* BLACK STAR LINE

Probably evokes the Black Star Line launched by Panafricanist activist Marcus Garvey in 1919; there were divisions of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association active in South Africa during the 1920s.

* CAMPTOWN

"Camptown Races" was one of the many popular tunes composed by Stephen Foster; it was published in 1850 and performed by the Christy Minstrels.

* CANTOR (EDDIE)

Eddie Cantor (1892–1964), was an extremely popular American singer, comedian and songwriter who performed in blackface and was for a time associated with African-American star Bert Williams.

* CAPE CORPS

The Cape Corps was a coloured unit of the South African army which was active during World War I (in Palestine) and, as a non-combatant service corps, during World War II.

* DAHOMEY

May refer to the African country named Dahomey (later Benin) and/or to the 1903 musical *In Dahomey* (music by Will Marion Cook; Lyrics by Paul Laurence Dunbar; book by Jesse A. Shipp, starring among others Bert Williams and George Walker,

known as “Two real coons”), the first musical written and performed by blacks to play on Broadway.

* DARKTOWN STRUTTERS

“Darktown Strutter’s Ball” (sometimes written “Darktown Strutters’ Ball”) is a song composed by Shelton Brooks and published in 1917; it became very rapidly a “jazz standard”.

* DIAMOND EYE

May have been inspired by: John Diamond (1823 –1857), a famous white minstrel dancer who was defeated in a dancing contest by Master Juba (William Henry Lane) the most acclaimed African-American dancer of the time; or by C.H. Chirgwin (1854 –1922), a British blackface minstrel who sported a white diamond made up over one of his eyes.

* DUMONT

Dumont (DuMont Laboratories, DuMont Labs, DuMont) was an American radio and television equipment manufacturer and broadcasting company founded in 1931, in New Jersey.

* DINAH

Several songs include the name *Dinah* in their title: “Dinah”, probably the best known, published in 1925, music by Harry Akst, lyrics by Sam M. Lewis and Joe Young, first performed by Ethel Waters; “Carolina Dinah”, music by Joseph Northup, lyrics by Morris S. Silver, published in 1905; “Dinah from Carolina”, music by Albert Von Tilzer, lyrics by Junie McCree, published in 1909.

* GALLOTONE

Gallotone is a label of Gallo, the most important record company of South Africa.

* GRAND PARADE

The Grand Parade is the central Cape Town square, where *klopse* used to congregate during the carnival.

* HAMADIA / HAMEDIAH

One of the notable mosques of Cape Town is the Noor El Hamedia Mosque, located in the town centre (at the corner of Long Street and Dorp Street). It was erected

around 1885 with the support of Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II and recently renovated with the aid of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency. However, given the hostility of Muslim authorities against the Klopse and the association of Hamadia with "soul", connoting African-American popular music, minstrels and jazz, the mention of a famous mosque in a troupe's name is quite puzzling.

⋆ HANOVER

Hanover Street was the main thoroughfare in District Six. When the District was razed and its inhabitants relocated in the Cape Flats, one of the new townships was named Hanover Park and got the reputation of being dangerous because of the gangs that operated there.

⋆ JOLSON (Al)

Al Jolson (1886 –1950) was the most popular American blackface singer, featured in *The Jazz Singer* (Alan Crosland, 1927), the first speaking and singing movie.

⋆ JONG SPAN

In Afrikaans, *span* = team, *jong* = young; *jongspan* = youngsters, young team.

⋆ JUBILEE

The word *Jubilee* comes from the Bible (Leviticus, 25: 8–13); the year of the jubilee concludes a cycle of 49 years and was an occasion for freeing slaves and prisoners.
It was used by American slaves to designate the time when they will be emancipated and, from 1865, Jubilee Day has been celebrated as a festival commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States. The choir organised at Fisk University (Nashville, Tennessee) to collect funds for the college, and which became the first to sing "Negro Spirituals" in concert, took the name Fisk Jubilee Singers. Many other choirs dedicated to singing black spirituals included jubilee in their name, including Orpheus M. McAdoo's Virginia Jubilee Singers who toured South Africa in 1890-1898. The Western Province Jubilee Coloured Carnival Board was one of the main Klopse carnival organisers in Cape Town from the 1930s to the 1970s.
The Diamond Jubilee celebrated the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria's reign in 1897. It was also the name given to a diamond discovered in 1895 in Jagersfontein mine (South Africa) to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

* KENTON (Stan)

Stan Kenton (1911 – 1979) was a pianist, composer and big band leader who explored new directions in modern jazz but also aimed at a wider audience with danceable pieces, some based on a very appealing Latin beat.

* KIKUYU

The Kikuyus are a people living in the centre of Kenya; in 1927, they were presented in South Africa as "a wild East African tribe of half a million natives [...] The tribe was then known as the most hostile and murderous in Africa" in the Argus (December 27, 1927); in the 1950s, many Kikuyus were involved in the Mau Mau rebellion.

* LUXA RAMA

The Luxarama was a theater located in Wynberg which was able to bypass segregation regulations and accommodate mixed audiences from 1964 till 1967. It was later used by the United Democratic Front for anti-apartheid meetings.

* MAHRATTA

Could refer to the Marathi-speaking warrior group from North India, who fought the British East India Company in the 18th and 19th centuries.

* MATABELE

Two "matabele wars" were important events in the history of Southern Africa. The first (1893-1894) opposed the British South Africa Company (BSAC, founded by Cecil Rhodes) to the Ndebele (Matabele) kingdom occupying the southern part of today's Zimbabwe; after the death of King Lobengula (from small pox), the Matebele forces were defeated. The second (1896 and 1897) is considered as the first Zimbabwean war of liberation (*chimurenga*); it again pitted the British South Africa Company against Matabele people, who again could not resist the power of the BSAC. Part of the Ndebele people live in South Africa; they numbered 1,1 million in 2011.

* MEADOW

Possibly inspired by the song "Meadowland", written in 1956 by Strike Vilikazi and interpreted by Dorothy Masuka and Miriam Makeba. Meadowlands was the name of the township where the black inhabitants of Sophiatown were forcibly relocated after the government decided to remove all black inhabitants living near the centre of Johannesburg in 1954. The symbolic dimension of Sophiatown (a hub of black

urban culture) and the violence of the 1955 removals contributed to make Sophiatown a *cause célèbre* as well as to the popularity of the song, understood as an anti-apartheid hymn.

* PEARLY KINGS

Pearly Kings (and Queens) are London working class charitable organisations. They wore spectacular costumes decorated with mother of pearl buttons, inspired by pants sported by hawkers.

* PERSONALITY

"Personality", a song by Harold Logan and Lloyd Price released in 1959 rose rapidly to the top of both the *Billboard* Hot 100 and the R&B hit parade and became popular worldwide.

* RAGTIME MILLIONAIRE

"Ragtime Millionaire" is the title of a song written and recorded in 1928 by William "Bill" Moore (1893 –1951), an African-American blues singer and guitarist; the song became a hit and was covered by numerous country and folk artists.

* RAINBOW

May have been inspired by Kurt Neumann's film *Rainbow on the River* (1936) which featured young singer and comedian Bobby Breen. It tells the story of an orphan raised by a loving ex-slave; his family having been discovered in New York he is sent there but is not very welcome until his grandmother falls under his charm. Both the film and the young singer were extremely popular in Cape Town, possibly because of the relationship that develops between a young white child and a former slave.

* SAVOY

The Savoy Ballroom was a famous Harlem ballroom ("the home of happy feet") where, from 1926 to 1958, played several of the best swing bands, including Chick Webb's; it was celebrated in the song "Stompin' at the Savoy" composed by Edgar Sampson.

* SEVEN STEPS

The Seven Steps in Hanover Street, District Six, was a favourite young people's meeting point and hanging around place. When the District was demolished it remained as a symbol of its social life as well as of the cruelty of the Group Areas

Act. It was especially exalted in Taliep Petersen and David Kramer's *District Six – The Musical.*

⋆ SPRINGBOK

The Springbok is an antelope (*Antidorcas marsupialis*) widespread in Southern Africa. It is the "national animal" of South Africa. The "Springboks" is the nickname of the South African national rugby team. Referring to Spingbok may suggest an identification with South Africa and/or an appreciation of rugby, a sport very popular among coloureds (a South Africa Coloured Rugby Board was created in 1896 and some of the first carnival troupes were formed by members of rugby clubs). However coloured rugby clubs and players became victims of segregation and apartheid. The Springboks eventually accepted black players, first in the 1980s (Errol Tobias and Avril Williams) then in 1995, when they won the World Cup with winger Chester Williams.

⋆ STARLIGHT

"Stella by Starlight" is a song composed by Victor Young and included in Lewis Allen's film *The Uninvited* (1944); it was later recorded by Harry James and his orchestra (1947), then by Frank Sinatra (1947); both versions climbed to the 21st position in the pop charts.

⋆ STROLLER

Stroller has taken in South Africa the meaning of young urban vagrant, tramp, wandering street child.

⋆ ZONK

Probably refers to the musical film *Zonk* (directed by Human Kirstein, 1950) and/or the magazine aiming at a black urban readership *Zonk*.

Competition venues

Athlone
1956

Athlone (new stadium)
1965, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1995, 1996

City Hall
1937, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1943, 1944, 1950, 1952, 1953

Gleemore Stadium (Athlone)
1957, 1958, 1959, 1960

Good Hope Center
1990

Goodwood Showgrounds
1953, 1954, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1970, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1981, 1988

Green Point Stadium
1979, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1995, 1996

Green Point Track
1907, 1908, 1909, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1927, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1994

Hartleyvale
1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1954, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1986, 1994

Kensington Sports Ground
1957

Maitland Sports Ground
1939, 1950, 1951, 1952

Mowbray, Non-European Sports Ground
1943, 1944, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1956, 1957, 1958

Newlands Football Ground
1921, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1962, 1963

Old Drill Hall, Darling Street
1939

The Pier
1923, 1925, 1926, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1936, 1937, 1938

Rosebank Show Grounds
1922, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1946, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953

Wynberg
1956