

Where do I fit into the family? Searching for my roots.

Robert Douglas Morkel

I knew very little about my family. My parents were divorced and my mother was vague about my father. Later in my life I began the search where I fitted in the Morkel family. It was quite a journey

I was born in Johannesburg in 1945. I was 5 yrs old when my Mother and I moved to Durban. I was vaguely aware that I had an uncle, Basil. I had no contact with him but subsequently learned that he was married to Maureen (Stewart) a nurse and they had three children Beverley, Alan. and Vivienne.

Their relationship was clearly strained at the end. There was also no contact between us, my grandparents or Uncle Basil. My mother, Joyce Frances Holing was born and educated in Durban. Her family moved to the Rand and granddad Holing became Mine Captain at City Deep goldmine. She married my father Steven against the wishes of her father.

My mother worked at a ladies fashion shop and when we moved to Durban she was a fashion buyer for a major department store, Stuttafords. She did this at a time when it was difficult for women to get rewarding jobs. I was educated in boarding schools and because my mother worked long hours we did not have a close relationship. But she did the best she could to make a living for us. She now phones or sends regular birthday cards to her grandchildren

After high school I had a number of jobs in South Africa and also Rhodesia and Zambia.. Eventually I migrated to the UK where I met my wife Janet. We have four sons and a daughter and live in Scotland.

The desire to know more about my family heritage grew and about two years before retirement, I started to search more actively. The internet made the search possible. However, I had very little to go on, and some of it was completely wrong. For example, that my father was born in Calvinia in the Northern Cape. For a long time I searched in the wrong places. I later found that he was born on the diamond diggings at Christiana and my grandmother Mams cooked for the miners. I thought my grandfather's name was Hendrik or Henry. This was also wrong.

Some was right, for example that I had an uncle Basil, and that I was related to the rugby Springbok Morkels. I acquired the book *Springbok Saga* by Chris Greyvenstein which contained a wealth of information about the game and its players. Naturally it did not tell me where I fitted in.

I posted queries on several genealogy websites in the hope that someone could help me. A Google search using Morkel as key word led to the website (family.morkel.net) of André Morkel, with stories about the early Morkel settlers. André helped a lot to find my feet in ancestry research but with so little to go on, he could not tie me into the Family Genealogy. When André could not help he referred me to a colleague, Marietta van Zyl who came up with some very interesting snippets especially relating to my uncle Basil, my father's brother.

I searched several ancestry websites. However they did not help much and the information was sometimes vague and misleading. I saw little benefit of having to pay or sign up to annual deals with little to gain.

Then a major break-through occurred. Gerritt Morkel responded to my query on the Geni website. He informed me that my grandfather was in fact Steven Kimberley Morkel, and not Hendrik or Henry. Suddenly I could link with the Morkel family and where I fitted in — wonderful! Gerritt and I were related with the same great grandfather. I could now use André's genealogy to establish that I was related to famous rugby Springboks Sommie and Dougie Morkel.

In time I also got to know more about Granddad (Oupa). He was a man of few words. He sadly suffered from lung disease from his years of being a miner on the gold mines. There were no stories from him, other than that he was part of the rugby family. I also knew little about my grandmother called Johanna Adriana Smal or Moms as she was called, apart from that she was a nurse. My uncle Basil was also a mystery.

Facebook proved to be an invaluable source and a Facebook Friend Helen Riding provided information about my half sister Estelle, of whom I had no knowledge and it has led to us to communicate and exchanging what little we knew of our father, who is still an enigma to us. My father passed away when I was 11 years old and my big regret was that my Dad would not be part of my life. There were no stories of his life or where he was born and how he grew up. Even though the family records show he was born in Calvinia, I have found no records of him.

A kind researcher Michelle Rodgers linked me with my cousins Beverley and Allan, with whom I had had no contact since the age of five and we continue to keep in touch via Facebook.

As my contact with the family increased I got to know more, and I now even have some photos of them.

I would strongly recommend to any of the younger generation that they have a phone free weekend and talk to their grandparents and if still alive their great grandparents, so much gets lost and over time memories fade and valuable information is gone forever.

Tracing my Ancestry has been a wonderful experience and without the help of marvellous people out there I would be none the wiser. To all of you who have helped over many years, I say a big THANK YOU.

Bob Morkel.



Our family: Graeme, Claire, Me. Janet, Chris, Rob



Our son Nic † 2006



My mom: Joyce Frances Holing



My Dad Stephen Henry Morkel



My Father Stephen Henry Morkel



Moms in Johannesburg



Johanna Adriana Smal (Moms)



Oupa at Durban Beach



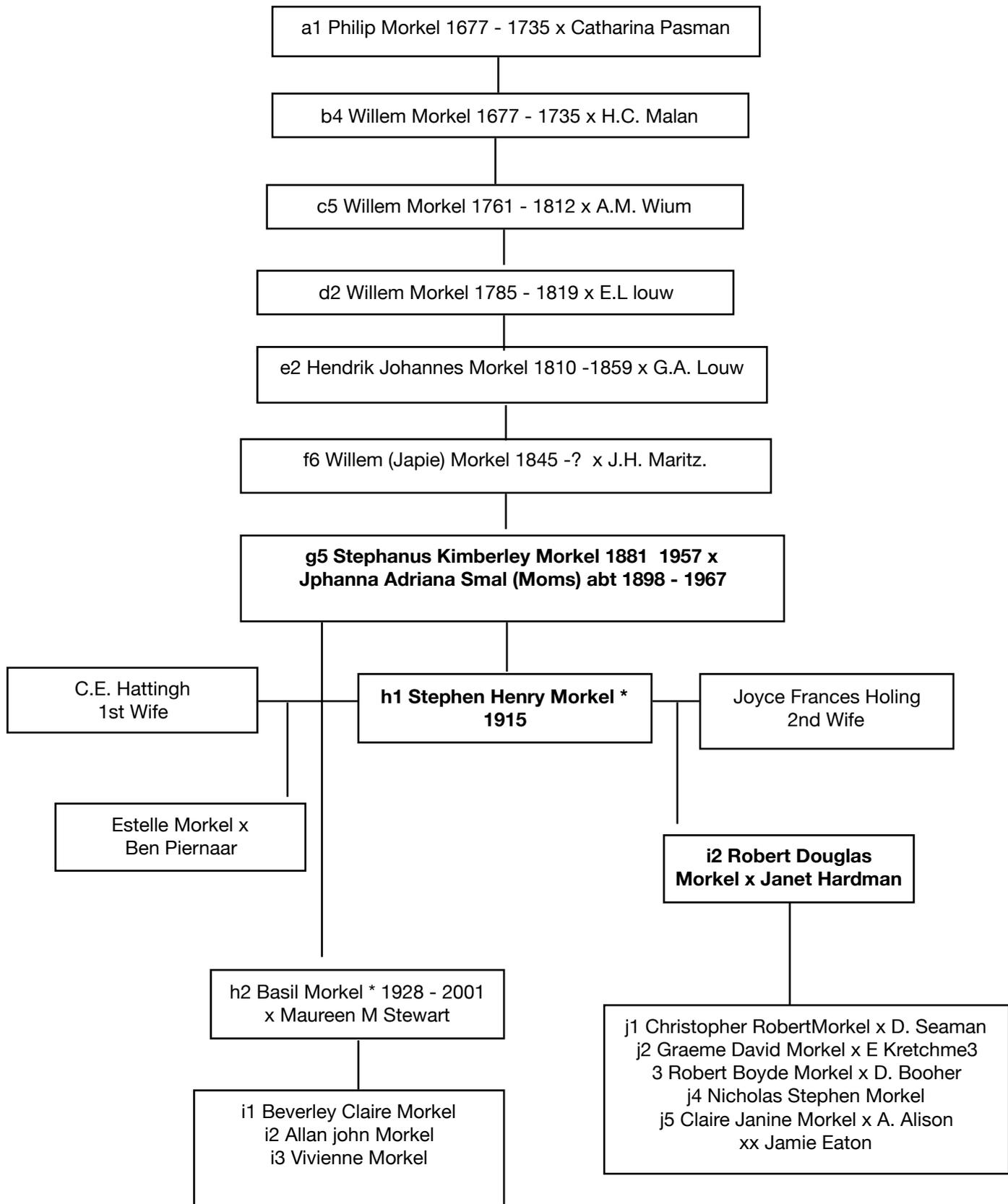
Oupa Steven Kimberly Mooker and Moms



Moms in uniform



My uncle Basil and Moms



**My part of the family tree
starting with my grandfather Stephanus Kimberley is as
follows;**

**g5 Stephanus Kimberley MORKEL * 18 Aug 1881, † 01 Feb 1957 Durban,
x Johanna Adriana SMAL(Moms) * Abt. 1898, † 1967 in Johannesburg**

h1 Stephen Henry MORKEL * 1915 in Calvinia,
x Catharina Elizabeth HATTINGH (h1 Stephen's 1st wife)
i1 Estelle MORKEL, x Barend (Ben) PIENAAR
j1 Anton PIENAAR
j2 Karin PIENAAR

xx Joyce Frances HOLING * 29 Jun 1926 Johannesburg, (h1 Stephen's 2nd wife)

**i2 Robert Douglas MORKEL * 30 Jan 1945 Johannesburg, x Janet Lilian HARDMAN
* 18 Nov 1947 Heaton Place, Manchester. UK**

j1 Christopher Robert MORKEL * 07 Nov 1966, x Dawn Natasha SEAMAN * 20 Aug 1975
k1 Ellie Lauren MORKEL * 20 Aug 1998
k2 boy* 13 Dec 2004

j2 Graeme David MORKEL * 16 May 1968, x Erica KRETCHMER
k1 Robyn Lynne KRETCHMER * 25 Mar 1992 Cape Town
xx Wendy Joanne WEBB, (j2 Graeme David's 2nd wife)
k2 Jonty Douglas MORKEL * 17 Apr 1999
k3 girl * 08 May 2000

j3 Robert Boyde MORKEL * 26 Jun 1969 in Durban, x Deborah BOOHER * 09 May 1964
k1 Jessica Shannon MORKEL * 18 Feb 1993
k2 girl * 11 Dec 2000

j4 Nicholas Stephen MORKEL * 08 Jan 1976 Cheshire, England, † 08 Jul 2006

j5 Claire Janine MORKEL * 12 Sep 1980 Potgietersrus,
x Arthur ALISON, (j5 Claire Janine's 1st husband)
k2 girl * 27 Mar 2003

xx Jamie EATON * 07 Sep 1986 (j5 Claire Janine's 2nd husband)
k1 boy * 18 Oct 2012
k2 girl * 25 Mar 2016

h2 Basil MORKEL * 10 Aug 1928, † 26 Nov 2001, x Maureen May STEWART * 02 May 1923

i1 Beverley Claire MORKEL * 03 Jul 1951, x David HOPKINS
xx Tony BEITH (i1 Beverley's 2nd husband)

j1 boy

i2 Allan John MORKEL * 09 Nov 1952, x Amanda BROCKBANK .

j1 girl * 12 Jan 2007

xx 1981 Amanda PETT (i2 Allan John's 2nd wife)

j2 boy

xxx Moragh WALKER * 24 Nov 1983 (i2 Allan John's 3rd wife)

j3 boy

i3 Vivienne MORKEL * 08 Oct 1954, † 2012, x Stephen VOS

xx Peter GRAY (i3 Vivienne's 2nd husband)