



10 Auditorium, NGK Welkom-Wes. Clockwise from top left: Section A-A (Uytenbogaardt Papers); perspective by Dennis Playdon (Nuttall, 2005: 65); photograph of liturgical centre (Uytenbogaardt Papers); details of lectern, pulpit and baldachin (Uytenbogaardt Papers). Interestingly, but for the designation of spaces, all documentation was in English, and this for a building in the Orange Free State during the early years of the Republic of South Africa. Besides the principals of the practice, Uytenbogaardt and Pelsler, the initials of Antonio (Tony) de Souza Santos, Willy van de Verre, Dennis Playdon and John Moyle are variously entered on the drawings (Uytenbogaardt Papers, UCT Libraries).

11 NGK Moederkerk, Welkom. Architect Leon Roodt, c. 1960.

from the street corner at human eye-level, followed by detailed plans with legends. But, the crux of the message of this newsletter was not the design, but attendance, a cause for serious concern, and saw Minnaar conclude with a rebuke: *era self of (u) ook skuldig is* (ask yourself if you aren't guilty).

The recorded statistics ranged from 15% for the main service and 5.8% for the evening service, which translates to 177 and 70 people respectively. These were reported to be the lowest in the church *ring* (circuit), as too was attendance at Sunday school, with, inversely, debt as the highest. However, there was also commitment as evidenced by the finding that pledges were highest (*Gedenkblad*, [vi]).

It was probably based on the last that, following the bankruptcy of the contractor, the *kerkraad* resolved on 31 March, 1965, to continue with construction as the “owner-builder”. While this alone is unconventional, Minnaar himself assumed the role of contractor and appointed sub-contractors while male members of the congregation persevered “day and night” pouring concrete to reach full building height of 64’ (19.5m) in August. The path must have been equally challenging for Uytenbo-

gaardt who, in June 1965, commenced independent practice (*SA Architectural Record*, Nov 1966), coincident with probably the thorniest part of construction at Welkom-Wes.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Curtis, W (1998) *Modern Architecture since 1900*. London: Phaidon.

Elliott, J (1987) Uytenbogaardt, RS, Morgan, A & Naylor, C (Eds) *Contemporary Architects*. Chicago: St James Press, pp928-930.

Gedenkblad. 25 Jaar van Genade, 1963-1988 [1988]. Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Welkom-Wes.

Koorts, J (1974) *Beginnels van Gereformeerde Kerkbou*. Bloemfontein: Sacum.

Krige, N (1967) Hier staan Welkom-Wes se NG Kerk. *Huisgenoot*, 10 Feb, pp. 28-29.

Le Roux, S (2008) Die Soeke van drie Argitekte na 'n Planvorm vir Afrikaanse Gereformeerde Kerkbou. *South African Journal of Art History*, 22(2), November, pp. 20-44.

McCarter, R (2005) *Frank Lloyd Wright*. London: Phaidon.

Murray, N (2010) Architectural Modernism and Apartheid Modernity in South Africa. A Critical Inquiry into the Work of Architect and Urban Designer Roelof Uytenbogaardt, 1960-2009. Unpublished PhD thesis in African Studies, Faculty of Humanities, University of Cape Town.

Notule van Kerkradsvergaderinge. Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Welkom-Wes [1963-66].

Nuttall, J (1993) Roelof Uytenbogaardt. *Transvaal Provincial Institute of Architects' Journal*, November, pp12-16.

Nuttall, JC (2005) The Dutch Reformed Church, Welkom West, 1964. *Architecture SA*, July/August, pp64-67.

Riley, T (Ed) *Frank Lloyd Wright Architect*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1994.

Roelof Uytenbogaardt Papers, University of Cape Town Libraries, BC1264.

Standard Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa (1974/5) Vol 11. Cape Town: NASOU.

Theron, D (1969) Contra Mundum. *CREDO*, No 19, October.

Uytenbogaardt, R (1965) Shop at Paarl, Cape of Good Hope. Donat, J (Ed) *World Architecture 2*. London: Studio Books, 178-183.

Vio, G (2006) *Roelof Uytenbogaardt. Senza tempo / Timeless*. Padua: Il Poligrafo.

Williams, R (1991) First Unitarian Church and School. Brownlee, D & De Long, D (Eds) *Louis I Kahn. In the Realm of Architecture*. New York: Rizzoli, pp 340-345.

ENDNOTES

¹Tenders varied from R67 784 to R81 000 (*Gedenkblad* [ix]).

²W De W Hartman, Kroonstad; Leon Roodt, Welkom; and Uytenbogaardt & Pelsler, Cape Town (*Gedenkblad* [ix]).

³Simultaneously with two other South Africans, WO Meyer and Ian Marshall who graduated from the master class of Louis Kahn.

⁴The identity of Pelsler, the reasons for the formation of the practice and the choice of practice style could not be established.

⁵Uytenbogaardt was not the only Kahn graduate to draw on precedents of Wright. For the rectory at RAU (unexecuted project, 1968),

WO Meyer chose a centrifugal cruciform plan, a plan type associated with Wright, and in particular with Wingspread, the house designed for Herbert Johnson of Johnson Wax, north of Racine, Wisconsin, 1937-8, which Meyer conceded as the progenitor. See Peters, W (Rand Afrikaans) University of Johannesburg, Kingsway Campus. *Architecture SA*, September/October 2011, p57.

This position is unusual. At Unity Temple the organ pipes complete the backdrop of the liturgical centre as was the case in older churches of the NGK. Alternatively a side wall or rear gallery, but it is known that an organ can better complement singing if placed within sight and more central to the worshipping community, possibly the reasoning of Uytenbogaardt.

Made possible by the development of construction in reinforced concrete. It should be noted that due to heaving clay, the church at Welkom-Wes was founded on piles, and the engineers, Kantey & Templer, Cape Town, even appointed supervising engineers in Welkom, SS Mostert & Ptnrs “as the structure is rather intricate” (UCT Uytenbogaardt Papers. Letter of 14 May 1964).

The date, 31 October, marks the beginning of the protestant Reformation in 1517 and is commemorated by reformed churches annually (*SESA*).

Personal communication, Minnaar to Kotze. This is a reference to the Book of Revelation, 21:6 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End”.

A photograph of the panel was kindly made available by Kobus du Preez, University of the Free State.

It is known that Uytenbogaardt suffered from dyslexia.

Letter, quantity surveyor Slingsby to Minnaar dated 24 Jan 1966 “Roelof has told me of the wonderful opportunity you have [been] offered to go on this American trip” (UCT Uytenbogaardt Papers). This ‘trip’ was, in fact, an opportunity for Minnaar to undergo a mentorship with evangelist Dr. Billy Graham, sponsored by Uytenbogaardt himself (personal communication, Minnaar to Kotze).

With a significant increase of members after World War II, the NGK in what was considered South Africa’s ‘fifth Province’, now Namibia, constituted itself as an independent synod in 1957 with Secretariats for mission, poverty-relief and evangelisation based in Windhoek (*SESA*, 1974, Vol 10, p193).

A copy of the handwritten manuscript headed ‘Sophia Gray 1990’ is held by Kotze. Related by Kotze, who also recalls that Uytenbogaardt expressed the wish to visit the church once more, a wish which remained unfulfilled due to his untimely death in 1998.

Walter Peters is Professor of Architecture at the University of Witwatersrand. Paul Kotze is Professor and Director of Architecture at the University of the Free State. This work is based upon research supported by the National Research Foundation. Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and therefore the NRF does not accept any liability in regard thereto.