

GLEN FRUIN MEADOWS

In addition to my recollections I asked David Leppan of Hermanus Property Sales to give us some accounts of Richard's introduction with Glen Fruin Meadows as they worked together on it from the outset.

David tells that he had it advertised as a rural development opportunity in the Cape Times and had worked out a theme for the development, that would also be acceptable to the Mussons who had owned it forever, and were very sensitive as to what development would take place there.

A few days before Richard phoned David on the advert, David remembers that he had a young whiz kid developer then come out from Cape Town to look at it and this young chap saw a 120+ plots – so, when Richard phoned David was very emphatic about the development only having 22 plots and that it would be rural in nature. After listening to his enthusiastic sales talk for a few minutes, David recalls Richard saying "Don't you think you are being very prescriptive?" to which David answered: "If you come out and look at it you will understand yourself..." and Richard did exactly that, walked around it together and made the instant decision to buy it.

Being an astute developer, he did however manage to squeeze an extra three plots out of it to take the total to 25! but Richard, always being generous, threw in the equestrian centre together with the lease on the municipal land where it is built. Some photographs of the original farm are attached.

Once the purchase had been finalised the mapping out of the plots took place. If you look at the attached map of Glen Fruin Meadows you will notice many irregular shaped plots and there was a good reason for this. In order to protect historical trees, etcetera, three people, namely land surveyor Peter Spronk, Richard and David walked the proposed subdivision lines and adjusted them to circumvent special trees and plants which might otherwise have been removed because of boundary walls and so on. An example is the dog's leg boundary line nearest the river between plots 7 and 8 – done like that so as to put the giant Pin Oak on common property so that it was not owned by an individual. The triangle leading down to the jail was created in order to protect the 100+ year old olive trees that still stand today, a tribute to a great developer and David believes that they are indeed standing silently watching over him.

When word of mouth got around the whole of the estate was sold out in ten, without a single advertisement and it was on the basis of virtually no infrastructure and sand roads; but David recalls the unusual generosity of this developer who added a few of the following features to the detriment of his profit because he felt it was the right thing to do.

- o The roads were properly surfaced with tar and then post and rail fencing went in;
- o Three thatch lapa areas were created;
- o Strategically placed street lighting was provided for and
- o Richard's niece from Kleinmond, an excellent landscaper, was employed to extensively landscape the road verges with the plants and trees creating the sylvan setting that Glen Fruin Meadows enjoys today, and are such an integral part of its established and peaceful atmosphere.