

A festschrift dedicated to Pieter Warnich

My mentor in so many ways

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I met Prof Pieter Warnich in 2010 when I had just started as a junior lecturer at North-West University (NWU). I was still quite green and had no clue what I was doing at this time. Even 12 years ago, this man was already quite the legend in the field of History Education. He introduced me to the South African Society for History Teachers (SASHT), where I attended my first academic conference that year. He also volunteered me to become the SASHT secretary during this time, which was a very tall order for me, but I took the challenge. I would work closely with him and Dr. Louisa Meyer for the next few years. Prof Pieter always had a way with words, always friendly and willing to help his colleagues.

Regarding our lecturing, I recall going through an entire re-curriculation of our BEd (History) program in 2013. We had to work extremely hard to create new outcomes and assessment criteria for 16 modules. This culminated in us dividing the responsibility to write completely new study guides aligned with the CAPS curriculum. I recall feeling lost, but through Prof Pieter's sheer organisational genius, I came up with a handy breakdown document that became my bible for the next few years as I wrote more and more study guides. Thank you, Prof, for teaching me how to set up good study guides.

I had the pleasure of authoring a book chapter that Prof Warnich was the editor of, titled *Teaching and Learning History and Geography* in the South African classroom, where I included some of my Master's work on cognitive development strategies in the history classroom. Thank you for that opportunity as well, sir. This was the first book chapter I have ever written, and the feedback I got, while seemingly too critical, really opened my eyes to this field of ours, where one needs to take critique almost daily.

Prof Pieter became a deputy director at the new School for Commerce and Social Science in Education at NWU in 2018. Under his suggestion, I was promoted to the subject leader for the History in Education subject group. I had to manage staff across three campuses, which was very nerve-wracking. Thank you again, sir, for believing in me during this time. I would not have had this managerial experience if not for you vouching for me.

Thanks for reminding me, even to this day, if I need to do my job correctly. I welcome any advice from you.

Lastly, I co-authored an article with Prof Pieter entitled *Utilising a Historically Imbedded Source-Based Analysis Model (HISBAM) in the History school classroom for Yesterday & Today* in 2021. Your expertise in assessment helped get this article published. I tried to do this myself but was rejected, and I am so glad I reached out to you for help. Your keen eye for the golden thread running through any research helped my academic writing.

It comes to an end, and we must acknowledge that a true legend will leave us at the end of 2022. Thank you for all the support over the years, sir. Just know that your influence will be felt for decades, and your work will stand the test of time. History Education has been enriched by your involvement at NWU with SASHT, book publications, and students who have all graduated. Cheers, sir. Now comes the well-deserved rest.

A passionate history education lecturer, researcher, and colleague

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Honouring Pieter Warnich as a passionate History Education lecturer, researcher, and colleague gives me great pleasure. I first met Pieter Warnich when he came for an interview for a position as a History Education lecturer in our Faculty of Education at NWU. Before his appointment in our Faculty as the responsible History Education lecturer, Pieter was a well-respected history teacher at Paarl Boys' High in the Western Cape. As the newly appointed history lecturer, Pieter had to plan and design most of the History Education modules for various programs, including the BEd, PGCE, Education Diploma, and the Advanced Certificate in Education. Despite a heavy teaching load, Pieter was also the driving force in developing a BEd Honours degree in History Education in the Faculty of Education. Over the years, he grew more than 50 study guides and many readers for the various History Education modules in the different programs. Since 2017 Pieter has planned and developed e-guides in some of the BEd and BEd History Education modules, with a stronger focus on a blended learning approach. Pieter also lectured in most programs' various history academic and methodology modules and received excellent feedback and evaluations from his History Education students. From my discussions with some of his BEd students, it is clear that Pieter was an inspiration and example to them all. Against this background, it was no surprise that with Pieter as the history lecturer, there was a steady increase in student numbers taking history as a subject in our Faculty. Pieter was invited regularly to act as an external moderator for the history exam papers and memorandums of BEd (Geography) modules at various South African universities. He also received good feedback from the external moderators for the BEd, PGCE, and BEd Honours History examination papers for which he was responsible.

After a few years in the Faculty, Pieter registered for his Ph.D. with the title *Uitkomsgebaseerde assessering van geskiedenis graad 10*. In this thesis, Pieter made relevant recommendations to promote the practical implementation of outcomes-based assessment in History Education at the school level. Pieter was always more than willing to advise and guide colleagues and student teachers regarding assessment activities and practices.

He has published numerous international and national articles in accredited history and educational journals and chapters in various accredited books. Most of his published work has practical applications for history and student teachers.

I had the privilege to publish two books with Pieter. For both books, Pieter was the editor or co-editor. At the same time, I was the consulting editor for one book (*Teaching and learning history and geography in the South African classroom*) and the contributing editor for the second book (*Meaningful assessment for 21st-century skills*). During this whole process of planning and publishing the books, I experienced first-hand that Pieter was not afraid to express his opinions engagingly and enjoyed being challenged. His years of experience as a teacher and lecturer contributed to these books' quality and practical value. He strove for originality and was a hard worker who pursued the goals that he set for himself with great determination. He also possesses excellent communication and writing skills and executes his tasks diligently, thoroughly, and on time.

In the Faculty of Education at North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus), Pieter acted in various leadership roles and served on multiple committees. As the subject chair and deputy subject chair for History Education over the last two decades, Pieter Warnich demonstrated initiative and excellent leadership skills to ensure that quality History Education students were well-prepared for their roles as future history teachers. A few years ago, he was appointed Deputy Director in the School of Commerce and Social Sciences in Education in the Faculty of Education at the NWU (Potchefstroom Campus) while acting as the deputy subject group leader for History Education. As the leader of his school, he successfully created a safe working environment for all the lecturers and administrative staff.

With Pieter's experience as a History Education lecturer and researcher, he was appointed to act as editor-in-chief of the accredited History Education journal *Yesterday & Today*. He is currently serving on the editorial board of *The International Journal of Research on History Didactics, History Education, and History Culture*. As an editorial board member, Pieter can share his knowledge and skills in History Education with fellow researchers and colleagues in South Africa. Pieter mentored several staff members in our Faculty to support, guide, and advise them on their career planning as researchers and in their research to reach their full potential as academic scholars.

Pieter Warnich, as a History Education lecturer and researcher, demonstrated his dedication to serving the History Education community and educators in other disciplines. His enthusiasm and genuine interest in his student teachers and colleagues, as well as his passion for History Education and assessment, positively influenced the quality of the

History Education students delivered to numerous schools by the NWU over the years.

Thank you for being my dear colleague and friend! Thank you for creating a motivating and pleasant atmosphere wherever you go. I will miss your presence in our building and the discussions in your office. Congratulations on stepping into a new chapter of life. I wish you a happy and healthy retirement!

A colleague par excellence

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As a high school teacher, it was a huge privilege to work alongside Pieter Warnich. I served with him on the SASHT executive and engaged with him when he was editor of *Yesterday & Today*. I remember giving a paper at a SASHT conference hosted by the University of the Witwatersrand and being approached by Pieter to write an article for *Yesterday & Today*. The presentation was on using Thinking Maps in teaching history, and my teaching colleague at the time, Charles Dugmore, and I co-presented. It is one thing presenting at a conference and another thing writing the presentation for a peer-reviewed journal. I witnessed Pieter's quiet but methodical nature as he sent back several drafts until he was satisfied. The academic rigour he applied is a testament to the status of the *Yesterday & Today*. When my article was published, I felt a deep satisfaction and accomplishment.

Teachers in the classroom do not do enough research, university staff writes most of the research published about teaching, and I am grateful to academics such as Pieter. He facilitated research through the SASHT conference and the journal for scholars and teachers. A few years later, I was fortunate enough to attend a course by Richard Churches on teacher-led research. Richard Churches was a principal advisor for research and evidence-based practice at the Education Development Trust in the United Kingdom. He also worked as an advisor on multiple policy initiatives. I was exposed to randomised control trials and other forms of experimental research, and this led to more papers in which I explored the latter approach to teacher-led research. It is often intimidating for teachers to conduct research even though they are at the coalface in education, simply because they lack confidence or don't see themselves as academics. It was mainly due to Pieter's gentleness, guidance, and persistence in maintaining a peer-reviewed journal for history educators, at a school level as well as at university, that encouraged me to attempt the articles I have done.

As a fellow executive member of SASHT, Pieter was again supportive but never pushy. He could listen and consider different points of view. I was genuinely grateful to have him as deputy president in my first year of SASHT presidency, as his vast experience of this organisation as a member and leader was invaluable. Pieter's commitment to the discipline of history, to his colleagues, and groom new leaders was constant. He was also very

aware of the changing context in our country and how the content of our subject needed transforming—a man who moved with the times and was genuinely tremendous to work alongside.

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In conversation with Pieter Warnich on his work in History Education

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For nearly two decades, I have been privileged to work with Pieter Warnich at North-West University (NWU). This was his last and final career change in which he temporarily left the Winelands of the Western Cape for the maize lands of the Northwest Province. In these fast flitting two decades, Pieter obtained a Ph.D., published several scholarly articles, co-edited books, and was the sole author of some. The most recent one is Pieter's *Meaningful assessment for 21st-century learning*. I also recall delightful academic moments at international and local conferences where Pieter acted as organiser and co-organiser. He was always reliable, cooperative, and committed to professional service. Pieter also played an immense role in further strengthening the *Yesterday & Today* journal on the SciELO platform during his term as editor-in-chief (2014-2017). Internationally, he has contributed excessively to the International Society for History Didactics scholarly journal activities. At the NWU, he designed several modules, programs, and short learning programs while contributing as a subject leader. From 2018 until now (2022), he fulfilled the position of deputy director of the School of Commerce and Social Studies at the Potchefstroom Campus of NWU.

Sadly, for us at the NWU and many academic scholars in history education who worked together with Pieter, the time for him to retire arrived too fast.

We occasionally sat at a favourite restaurant when I visited Potchefstroom for some academic obligations. When I sat with him for the last time, we engaged simply in conversation about himself and things we sometimes grossly neglect when we are so task-oriented in academia.

Elize: *Where have you, as a student, professionally matured? Why history as a profession? Any particular memories you can recall and some lecturers that truly impacted your thoughts?*

Pieter: Immediately after school, I joined the South African Defence Force (SADF) to do my two years of compulsory military service. I was also called upon to do my 'border duties'. After my time in the SADF, I started my studies in 1978 at the University of Stellenbosch. I studied languages, Geography and History, but I always knew that teaching

history was my ultimate goal. The person who played a massive role in my developing a love for history was my matric teacher, Mr. Jooste. He was a performer (or what I call an Edu performer). He presented his classes through storytelling, which he did in such a unique way that you felt that you were present and part of the historical events.

I was privileged to have Dr (at the time) Hermann Giliomee, Prof Diko van Zyl, Dr. Johann Bergh, and Gerrit Pool as my lecturers, who contributed immensely (especially on the postgraduate level) to my training as a history teacher. My Afrikaans lecturer, the (late) Dr. Hennie Aucamp, poet and short story writer, also made an indelible impression on me.

Elize: *I can imagine that your extraordinary performance to cum laude both the BA Hons and MA in History also must be momentous too... After university, you took up the challenge of being a history teacher. Please share some low ebbs, high points, and even hilarious moments with us!*

Pieter: The cum laude's was indeed momentous. So much more because during my undergraduate years, my results were average. I played and partied hard as a student but never neglected my studies. Being a postgraduate student in the 1980s, I admit I was more committed because it was only history. Due to my almost supernatural interest in history, I was always willing to find out more than was expected. The commitment and determination to perform well came from my days in the SADF.

In 1985 I started my professional career at Point High School in Mossel Bay, teaching history and Afrikaans from grades 8 to 12! I remember that I spent my time preparing lessons (we had a lesson book to be submitted to the principal on Monday mornings for his signature), marking history tasks, and Afrikaans essays. When the school closed on Fridays at 14:00, I was so tired that I slept until the following day, just in time for the sports bus to depart for the rugby games.

One of my high points of being a history school teacher was preparing my learners for the prestigious annual National History Olympiad. I was fortunate that my learners were, most of the time, in the top five positions. In 1992 first place was obtained from about 300 participants. I wonder if this achievement was the only reason. Still, that year, I received an 'award for exceptional service' for my contribution to teaching and learning history from the Department of the Western Cape.

Elize: *You exchange the 'Cape of Good Hope for the Northwest Province... Why and what have these years brought forth for you academically and otherwise?*

Pieter: Twenty years ago, in 2003, I was appointed as a lecturer at the Potchefstroom Campus of the NWU, where I have contributed to the training of history teachers. During this time, I have learned and academically grew a great deal, which enabled me to complete

my Ph.D., published various articles in national and international journals, wrote multiple chapters in books, and become co-editor/editor of five books. I have attended more than 20 national and ten international conferences where special friendships were built.

Elize: *What do you view as your most outstanding scholarly legacy? Why?*

Pieter: My students will be in a better position to answer this question. A combination of subject and pedagogical knowledge combines inspirational teaching and learning methods where students can own their training and make a difference in the lives of their learners.

Elize: *You took up the Yesterday&Today Editor-in-Chief position in 2014. What will be your most significant memories of achievement for this journal up to passing on the task to Prof Johan Wassermann?*

Pieter: I have had the privilege to be part of *Yesterday & Today* since the early 1990's when I was still a teacher at Paarl Boys' High School until the end of my time as the editor-in-chief in 2017. My most significant achievement as editor-in-chief was undoubtedly the successful outcome when I was asked to motivate in a 'mini-dissertation' to the Academy of Science of South Africa (Assaf) why the journal should further continue to be DHET-listed as an accredited journal. The Y&T fared exceedingly well then.

Elize: *You now unroot from maize country to the land of wine and oceans. What do you plan for yourself after retirement in December 2022?*

Pieter: To be honest, I am not sure. I am not too worried about it either, and I try not to ponder too much about it. However, I never had the privilege to take a 'gap year' (this is a word that never existed in my time). Next year will be my gap year (I waited 65 years for it). I will do whatever my hands find to do, but some traveling will be on the cards. After that, I might start a book on my family history.

Elize: *Any words of encouragement and wisdom from your thoughts to scholars that must still stand firm in the economically active environment?*

Pieter: "Just do it," but never confuse having a career with having a life!