



Jesse W. Lewis Jr. A Biographical Profile

"I am the 'Fresh Eye.'"

"My first trip to South Africa was in 2003 so I saw – indeed, am still seeing – this country for the first time."

"While I am aware of the country's history, I have been able to 'see' it with a 'fresh eye,' and to look at it through a 'clear lens' . . . without any personal bias."



This is how Jesse W. Lewis Jr., a keen videographer, photographer and occasional historian, describes his passion for making documentary films about South African history.

Mr. Lewis is the Managing Partner and Executive Producer of **Fresh Eye, Clear Lens Productions (Pty) Ltd.**, a company he established in 2009 to make documentary films about South African history.

His first visit to South Africa was in 2003, when started to acquire a lively interest in the nation's history.

"Sometimes I feel a little bit like Indiana Jones exploring the hidden history of South Africa and uncovering exciting and little-known facts."

Since then he has written articles and lectured on a variety of topics, including the links between Southeast Asia and South Africa that began in 1652 when Cape Town was part of the trading network of the former Dutch East India Company.

"One of the interesting facts I have 're-discovered' is that South Africa's first veterinarian was a Xhosa who qualified after graduating from the University of Edinburgh in 1886."

Mr. Lewis has lectured at the University of Stellenbosch, University of Cape Town, for various historical societies, professional groups and charity fund-raisers in the Cape. His articles have been published in **Die Burger** and **Rapport**, two of South Africa's Afrikaans-language newspapers.

He has also advised the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Veterinary Science at Onderstepoort about how to attract a wider spectrum of young South Africans to the veterinary professions.

During one his visits to South Africa, Mr. Lewis completed a 3-week intensive course in Afrikaans at the University of Stellenbosch. He plans to take a course in conversational Xhosa.

Mr. Lewis has more than 35 years of experience in journalism, diplomacy, public affairs and crisis management. After earning his university degree in 1964, he worked for **The Washington Post** for 12 years. During this time he held a variety of positions and assignments, including editorial writer, correspondent during the Vietnam War, correspondent the 1967 Middle East War, and then Middle East bureau chief based in Beirut. As a journalist, he received several awards for enterprising and analytical reporting, including citations for distinguished news coverage in Vietnam and the Middle East.

Between 1975 and 1983, Mr. Lewis was a U.S. Foreign Service Officer who served at the American embassies in Jidda, Nicosia and Athens. He received the Department of State's **Superior Honor Award** in 1978 for his performance in Saudi Arabia.

In 1983, he founded Admiralty Associates International, a crisis management firm providing corporate crisis communications services and training for the international ocean transportation industry. In this capacity, Mr. Lewis has handled emergency public affairs response assignments for more than 30 major marine casualties worldwide, including Brazil; Strait of Malacca; the Panama Canal; Fujairah in the Gulf of Oman; Trinidad; Singapore; the United States; and Japan. Most of these casualties involved multiple fatalities or significant oil pollution.

One of his response assignments was the pirate attack on the **MAERSK ALABAMA** in the Indian Ocean , which has been made into major movie, **Captain Phillips**, starring Tom Hanks.

It was a shipping accident in Cape Town in August 2003 that brought him to South Africa. He still accepts occasional marine crisis management assignments, and he is frequently invited to speak at international shipping conferences and workshops.

For 10 years until 2004, Mr. Lewis was a Visiting Professor at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy where he lectured on the public image of the shipping industry and using public relations as a crisis management tool following major marine casualties. He also gave a lecture on crisis management at the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business in 2003.

He is the author of the book, "**The Strategic Balance In The Mediterranean**," an analysis of naval power in the Mediterranean Sea during the Cold War, which was published in 1976 by the American Enterprise Institute (AEI).

"After working in other fields during the last 35 years, I finally discovered what I want to do when I grow up . . . make documentary movies. I also want to 'give back' and share many of the things I have learned with others."

