



South African National Society

History – Culture – Conservation
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We were delighted to welcome two Killie Campbell Bursary winners to the July meeting of the Society and to learn more about their projects, particularly as both had travelled some way to join us.

Nontobeko Ngubane, winner of a bursary in 2017, has a most impressive CV and has worked as an assistant at the Department of Arts and Culture and both the Msunduzi and Howick Museums. Of some interest is her present supervisor at UKZN is also a former Killie Campbell Bursary winner. Whilst working at the MM Nontobeko came across early records of the three Cottage Hospitals which led to her registering for a Masters to carry out further research on these establishments and the role they played in Society at that time. We should add that asking our presenter to watch the time proved a cruel instruction for it probably prevented everyone from learning more about her work.

Divided Facilities - Early Cottage Hospitals and the Provision of Health Care Services in Natal, 1880-1910

Nontobeko explained that her dissertation investigates the history of the introductory of the Cottage Hospital System in the colony of Natal. It explores the development, operation and impact of three cottage hospitals that were erected in Natal from the late 1880s to 1910, namely; Umsinga (1889), Newcastle (1901) and Dundee (1903). These three cottage hospitals were fee paying health institutions as African and Indian in-patients were expected to pay 2 shillings and white folks to pay 9 shillings per day. Importantly, all out-patients were treated free of charge regardless of their illness.

Several government-funded cottage hospitals were erected in different magisterial districts scattered around the British colony of Natal, such as Richmond, Port Shepstone, Ixopo and Eshowe. Nontobeko said her decision to analyse only three cottage hospitals was determined by a number of factors. Firstly, I found a large number of archival sources on these three hospitals in the Pietermaritzburg Archive Repository. Secondly, I chose this number as it was more manageable to study three hospitals in-depth than a large number, where I would not have been able to do justice



**Nontobeko Ngubane David Hughes Philani
Dlamini Mikhail Peppas around the book sales**

to them in terms of providing in-depth analysis. Finally, since these particular cottage hospitals were created with the intention of treating black patients, or treating black and white patients on a segregated basis, Nontobeko chose them to investigate what role segregation played in the establishment and operation of these facilities.

Briefly, a cottage hospital was usually opened in what had been a converted house or a small building with two or three separate rooms and a few beds used for the care of the sick. The first cottage hospitals were used in Britain in the 1850s to serve the rural poor. Historically, we know that the British used different techniques or approaches in order to establish its imperial presence in an overseas region. In addition, because of Britain's empire-building activities overseas, by the late 19th century, it spread its cottage hospital model to many of its colonies, including Natal.

Initially, these government-funded health care institutions were located in small villages, but in later years were also built in more urbanized areas. The British Government introduced cottage hospitals with the aim of spreading Western biomedicine and also, as a method to combat what its doctors regarded as "backward" indigenous methods of healing.

Although much research has focused on the Christian missionary's role in providing public health care services for blacks in the 19th and early 20th centuries, this study considers the important contributions made by these cottage hospitals in the magisterial districts where they were erected. Similar to other institutions, these cottage hospitals were not immune from inequalities that were associated with race, and as a result "race" played an important role in the provision of health care services.

These cottage hospitals were created on a racially segregated basis. For example, Umsinga cottage hospital served Africans (18 beds); both Newcastle (18 beds) and Dundee (11 beds) cottage hospitals served Africans, Indians and whites. Of the three hospitals analysed in this thesis Umsinga Cottage Hospital was the most racially segregated institution as it was created and designated as a "Native hospital" to serve the health care needs of the African population of this district. The first Medical Officer-in-charge to work at this hospital was Dr. John Mavuna Nembula who was appointed in 18 March 1889 with a salary of £400 per annum. Since this hospital was located in a "native reserve", it was only staffed by Dr. Nembula and one untrained African male assistant.

Nembula had a lot responsibilities placed on his shoulders, as both the District Surgeon and Medical Officer-in-charge. Indeed, the archival records discuss how Dr. Nembula worked long hours, often more than 12 hours a day, on a regular basis. In addition, he aided the staff of the dispensaries of the Church of Scotland's Gordon Memorial Mission and Berlin Lutheran Mission, when they needed his assistance with more serious cases. Dr. Nembula was a special person in South Africa's medical history as he was the first African to train in the USA to become a fully qualified and licensed biomedical practitioner who practices in Natal. Different from Umsinga CH,

the Dundee and Newcastle Cottage Hospitals did not have the challenge of staff shortage. These two cottage hospitals had additional medical staff such as the assistant medical officer, matron, professional nurse, probationer nurse and non- medical staff such as the Indian ward attendants, Indian cook and African servants who were mostly cleaners.

The Dundee Cottage Hospital was created to serve all race groups, though like Newcastle Cottage Hospital, on a segregated basis. However, in March 1904, just a few months after it had opened, the status of this hospital changed dramatically. Unlike Umsinga and Newcastle Cottage Hospitals, Dundee Cottage Hospital was re-designated a "European only" hospital by Dr. Ernest Hill, Health Officer of the Colony of Natal. This massive change occurred because of the large increase in black patients in the months after this hospitals opening and growing numbers of complaints by white residents in the town who objected to the overcrowding of facilities, including the housing of patients in the corridors that resulted soon after its opening. As a result of this new arrangement, Africans were attended at the Swedish Church Mission Hospital located in the area. As an incentive, the Health Officer for the Colony and other colonial government authorities agreed to grant this mission hospital an annual subsidy of £100 from "Public Funds".

We really look forward to seeing Nontobeko's full dissertation in due course.

Philani Dlamini winner of the 2015 Killie Campbell Bursary spoke about Oral History, something which is very dear to chair Hardy Wilson's heart, and his research with members of the congregation of the Methodist Church in Umlazi. Oral history is of particular relevance in any Society where written records have not been a priority. As with other forms of historical record it can be as much subjective as objective so the more records made hopefully the greater the probability of establishing real accuracy. We were entertained by stories revealing 'different' memories about the establishment of the church.

Philani had come from Limpopo where he is now a probationer minister with the local Methodist Circuit and this was possibly the furthest any guest speaker had travelled to address us. It was a very real pleasure to be entertained but this former winner and we really look forward to publishing his paper on the Society website once it has been accepted. What a superb title Philani *Trends of Memory*

Winter Excursions with the SA National Society from Angie St George

Howard College – A Walkabout with Prof Franco Frescura on 26 July

Prof Franco Frescura invited members to join him on a walk about of Howard College. The focus was on 'The Two Mausoleums', the university's oldest and most prominent buildings-Howard College and the Memorial Tower Building.

Howard College (designed by William Hirst and completed in 1931) has features of Classical Greece and Rome, a dome that refers back to government buildings in New Delhi and details of Art Deco inside the atrium. It stands as a memorial to the much loved son of its benefactor. Howard Leopold Davis died after the battle of the Somme in 1916.

By contrast the Memorial Tower Building was designed in 1947 to commemorate the lives of staff and students who died in WW2. In Franco's words "the building itself can be likened to a bully who shoulders aside its less imposing neighbour and thoroughly ignores the historical height lines established 18 years previously."

Prof Frescura's walk about lecture was a fascinating one and we look forward to his book on the history of the university which awaits publication. Thank you, Franco!

Tanglewood Outing

The Society always discusses events, both past and planned, at its committee meetings. Tanglewood proved a fascinating subject as half those who attended appeared not to have heard of this amazing place whilst those who had known about it waxed lyrical about both the place and some of its great achievements.

Our second outing, on Saturday 4 August, was to Tanglewood Farm. The outing, organised by the Highway Heritage society, included a superb talk by Adrian Rowe on the history of Kloof. The fascinating story focused on the lives of William Swan Field and his brother John Coote Field. Tanglewood was originally part of the farm known as "Richmond No 999" and included Kloof, part of Forest Hills, part of Wyebank, Padfield Park, Surprise Farm and Motala Farm; an area of 5606 acres.

After the talk we were introduced to Caryl Combrink who now lives at Tanglewood. She is the daughter of Bill and Joan Walker who bought the property in 1982. Caryl has built up a sanctuary for the care and rehabilitation of wild animals. We were introduced to her precious glass snake lizards, to the dassie who shares her bed and to a pair of amazing Trumpeter Hornbills. 'We don't relocate rehabilitated animals. When they are ready they just merge into the grassland and the forest 'she explained.

Tanglewood is home to a variety of game – the blesbok watched us enjoying our picnic and a small herd of wildebeest passed by in the late afternoon as we left this haven of tranquillity.

Thank you to Adrian Rowe and his committee for organising this excellent joint outing.



Tanglewood Tranquillity

Vale Elizabeth Milne,

The family of Liz Milne, who was for many years both a member of the Society as well as a very active member of the committee, has sent news of their Mother's passing to Robert King. We can think of no better way than to print their email for it serves as a summary of a remarkable life. We in turn send the heartfelt sympathy of our members to the family.

Hi Everyone,

We are deeply saddened to inform you that Mom passed away in her sleep on Friday afternoon. She was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma several months ago and finally succumbed peacefully with family by her side.

As expected, Mom fought the illness bravely until the very end. She was 86 and had a fantastic and adventurous life. Born in Burma in 1931, where her father was as an Engineer on the oil fields, she and her sister were initially raised in Scotland before the family returned to the tropics to escape war torn Europe. Ironically, they were evacuated during the Japanese invasion in 1941 and we recall her recounts of the sea voyage dodging German U Boats and the devastation of the war in the UK. She finished her schooling there but was always drawn to the sun and emigrated to Australia in the 1950's before moving to Canada where she met and married our Dad, Peter. Together they travelled overland by car through Europe and Africa and settled in South Africa in the early 1960s where she raised us and lived for over 40 years. She returned to Australia to be with family at the age of 79.

She loved her family, always made time for friends and will be sorely missed. As requested her ashes will be scattered off the beach which she enjoyed so often in recent years. Please enjoy the attached photos.

*Kind regards and love to all
Tracey, Doug & Family*



Elizabeth Milne with various members of her family

Vale Bryan Ward

The Society also extends deepest sympathy to Gill Ward and her family on the recent loss of a beloved husband and father, Bryan. Bryan's interests leaned heavily towards active pursuits rather than historical matters, he was a skipper on one of the yacht's caught up in the dreadful Vasco da Gama race of the 1980s, but supported Gill in her love and support of the society. They were both loyal and devoted members of the St Olav Church community where his recent Memorial Service showed just how people Bryan, and Gill, have supported and worked with over the decades.

Hardy E Wilson

<http://sanationalsociety.co.za/>

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