



South African National Society

History - Culture and Conservation. Join SANS.

Founded in 1905 for the preservation of objects of Historical Interest and Natural Beauty

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

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NEWSLETTER & PROGRAM FOR August 2015

THE DATE: Tuesday, 11th August 2015

VENUE: KwaMuhle Museum, Bram Fischer Road [Ordnance Road] Durban.

TIME: Meeting commences at 17:30; Refreshments will be served from 16:45.

PARKING: Off Bram Fischer/Ordnance road [next to the Museum]; security person is present

FEATURE: ***The conservation status of the waterbirds in Durban Bay***

David Allan, Curator of Birds, Durban Natural Science Museum

Members will recall that we literally ran out of time when David addressed SANS in May this year with riot type mumblings from members who wanted to learn more about the waterbirds of Durban Bay. So we welcome David back for what was billed as the second part of the talk. This will focus on research carried out by the Museum's Bird Department into the history of the conservation status of the waterbirds inhabiting Durban Bay over the long period of the harbour's development.

SANS is delighted that David will be talking to us as this embraces our conservation goal whilst keeping us abreast of developments in the Durban Natural History Museum. Please remember to bring friends to SANS Meetings especially in this the membership drive year.

Ian Smith writes from the Chair:

I would like to begin by thanking Graham Allan for the photographs and Hardy Wilson for last month's excellent Newsletter. His development of the website and the news briefs has extended the good work which Naureen carried out as the former editor of the newsletter. It is interesting that a visiting London journalist was last week drawn to make use of the good offices of SANS via one of our members and by reading our website.

It is really good to experience the increased numbers attending our monthly general meetings. The July meeting with an audience of 58 people attending exceeded the record set by the previous month's meeting of 50. The committee has realised the need for a loud speaker system, and encouraged by the increasing attendance, has purchased one which will enable all of us to hear the talks clearly. This has been costly and may I appeal to members to ensure that they pay the R10 fee for the meetings. The snacks are prepared by a few members at no charge although of course SANS has to pay for the prize for the draw, the tea, coffee, juice, and wine.

David Hughes has broken new ground for SANS by leading a week day outing to the 166 year old St Paul's Anglican Church. At the time of writing there were 28 people who had booked to join David's outing on 24th July. Again this is a joint outing as we will be joined by the World Ship Society members. The August meeting will be addressed by David Allen when he talks about the water birds of Durban Bay. At the same meeting President Robert King and his sub-committee will make the presentation of the Daphne Strutt award. They are busily working away on the Killie Campbell award for presentation later in the year. Looking further ahead, the AGM will take place on 21 November, so please diarise that date.

Finally I would like to send our good wishes to several members who have been ill and particularly those who have been hospitalised. I do hope that as they recover they will be comfortable.

SANS July Meeting Report:

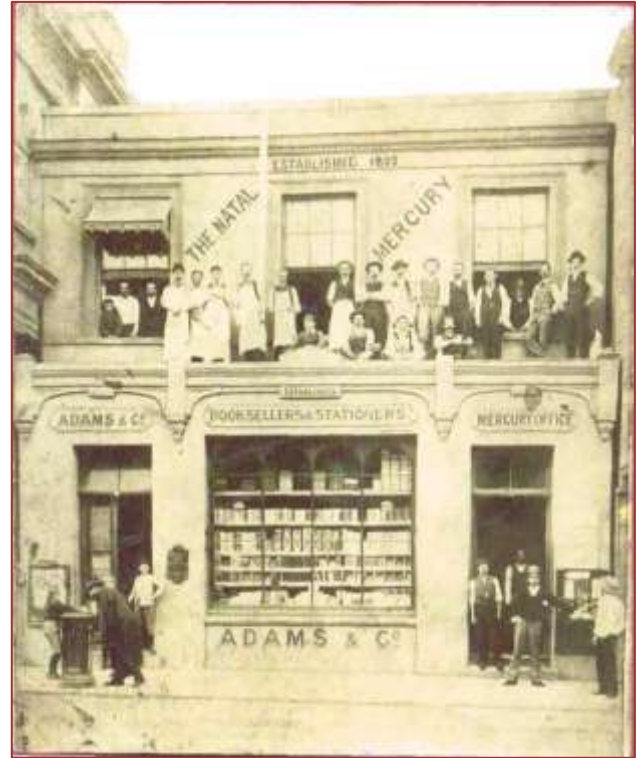
Adams
Booksellers and Stationers

Adams was founded in 1865 and guest speaker Peter Adams clearly showed why Adams Booksellers has a place firmly rooted in every Durban booklover's heart as well as the hearts of those who studied at UKZN. We listened enthralled as Peter painted the picture of how the company had looked when first started; then how it changed and evolved to become the business it is today as it achieves its remarkable milestone and 150th Anniversary.

In 1865 Durban was very much an evolving entry port and town so as Peter Adams showed us photos of the firm's early premises and explained how the business operated we were also looking at Durban in the 1860's. Until 1860 the Natal Mercury had a reading room offering international papers to local people to read.

From 1865 Adams and Co.'s stationers and booksellers provided not only the papers, but magazines, which were very popular at the time, and the latest books. Their subscription library offered monthly subscribers a library service long before the municipality supported libraries. And the magazines provided serials just as the radio and then the TV would do many decades later.

Adams & Co - the firm's first premises located in the same building as the Natal Mercury



The Prince Alfred - one of the faster sailing vessels to ply the United Kingdom to South Africa and Australia route - brought Francis and Stanhope Adams to Durban in November 1863. Mr Greenacre was a fellow passenger.

The founders of the business worked hard to establish the firm with family members in Britain purchasing the items needed in South Africa but the early days were often far from easy and we enjoyed pictures of the families that helped to get the company established. In fact this tradition is one which has continued through the company's long history and as Peter reported during some of the toughest years the firm's shareholders were never greedy but always supportive of the company. We also learned that some of the staunch shareholder supporters were extremely talented and well known in their own fields.

We were reminded that life on those 19th Century sailing ships did not mirror the luxury and comfort of the great ocean liners of today with passengers trying desperately to retain some dignity as the vessel tossed, pitched and rolled after leaving Britain as it crossed the Bay of Biscay with those who succumbed to seasickness trying to rest in the lower decks whilst others below decks were forced to return on deck because of the terrible malodorous conditions below.

The programme of events at the company's first Annual Outing in 1902.



Arthur Spence Adams - one of the two local managers - had just returned from service in the Natal Naval Reserve which helped in the relief of Ladysmith. All the staff caught the train and had a sports day with numerous races and a shooting competition followed by a lavish seven course meal. At the time all the staff were men. Adams Booksellers is now 25% owned by the staff and the majority are women.

4.7" Naval Gun at Colenso during the siege of Ladysmith. The gun carriages for these weapons were made in the Natal Government Railway workshops - the railway that was born just 10 years after Adams and Co was established.



At the Adams Centenary dinner at the Royal Hotel. l to r Joan Adams, Hugh Adams, Dixey Adams, Muriel Adams, Stella Harvey and Peter Harvey. The men were directors at the time, with Ernest Rabjohn.

Members thoroughly enjoyed this insight into one Durban's best loved companies as Peter painted a parallel history of the town that became a major city over the same period as his company. We also noted with pleasure Peter's enthusiasm as he warmed to his subject and shared his knowledge with the totally full house.

Hardy Wilson



REPORT BACK: **Weekday Outing to St Paul's Anglican Church, Durban**

Many will recall Chair Ian Smith asking whether members would attend a weekday outing and this was the first of these taking place on Friday 24 July 2015. Visits to leading churches must perforce take place outside weekends but in spite of this there was pressure from another group as keen to hear the history and the mysteries of St Pauls as we were.

David Hughes lead a group of 30 people on this visit some being members of SANS, as well as folk from The World Ship Society, The Mission To Seafarers and members of St. Paul's Church.

The ladies put up a truly delightful morning tea which was followed by a short address from David Hughes about the church's history. David concentrated on the mid-late 19th Century history and compared the early days of the church to the growing pains of the early, and then Town of Durban for this was long before it achieved city status. He concluded the talk discussing the fire that destroyed the first St. Paul's Church building in 1906.

The group visited the Boardroom on the Ground Floor of the Church Hall, viewing photos of the Rectors' & Vicars' of St. Paul's – starting with the first Vicar, Rev. Lloyd of 1854. The current incumbent at the church is Archdeacon May Laban.

A small effigy of Bishop Colenso was admired, set in to the wood panelling in the Boardroom.

The group then enjoyed a walkabout through the Church itself making full use of the historical brochure provided by the Church. Several guests were not aware of the main feature of the Warrior Chapel which is a marble altar taken from the marble of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, following war damage during the Second World War. The group then looked at the maritime memorabilia which consists of naval plaques and Mission To Seafarers Remembrance items displayed in the St. Nicholas' Chapel.

During the walkabout, SANS member Alison Bastable played inspiring and beautiful music on the church's pipe organ which certainly added to the ambience of the church tour.

David is grateful for members' support of this visit with a donation of R300.00 being made to the Church which consisted of monies collected from group.

317 Currie Road Court Case

Members are probably aware that Judge Esther Steyn ruled against both eThekweni and Serengeti Industries in the matter brought by neighbours who objected to the approval and development of a GR5 property on the Berea which with one known exception is zoned GR1, and ordered that the development be reduced to that consistent with a GR1 zoning. A property approved under this zoning is approximately one fifth the bulk of what has been built and in keeping with other Berea properties.

Carte Blanche described the case as one of David against Goliath. Last week on what we believe was the last day allowed for an appeal we learned that both parties have now appealed against the ruling so the saga is by no means at an end.

Members are invited to a public meeting to be held in St Thomas Church Hall next Tuesday 4th August at 18:30 for 19:00 which has been organised by **Save our Berea**.