



# South African National Society

History - Culture and Conservation.

Founded in 1905 for the preservation of objects of Historical Interest and Natural Beauty  
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## PROGRAM FOR JULY 2019

MEETING DATE: Tuesday 09 July 2019

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

TIME: Meeting commences at 17h15; Refreshments will be served from 16h30.

PARKING: Off Bram Fischer / Ordnance Road [next to the Museum]

COST: Members: R20.00                      Visitors: R40.00

TITLE OF TALK: **Durban's Afro-Indian race riots of 1949**

SPEAKER: **Prof Goolam Vahed**

The 'Durban riots' of 1949 were a bitter conflict marked by racialised violence between Indian and African residents of the city, which occurred over the course of three days in mid-January 1949. Beginning in Victoria Street (renamed Bertha Mkhize Street) on the evening of Thursday 13 January, the homes and businesses of Indian residents were attacked and looted, and many victims claimed that the aggression appeared co-ordinated. As a result of low-key police response to the initial outbreak, the rioting and looting resumed the following day when many hostel dwellers were incited to participate in further attacks, which spread from the central Durban area to suburban neighbourhoods of Cato Manor, Clairwood and Jacobs. Deadly violence ensued with murders and rapes being reported in addition to widespread arson and robbery. On Saturday the military and police were eventually deployed to re-establish order in Durban. In all, 142 people lost their lives, 1087 people were injured, an estimated 40 000 refugees were created, and over 300 buildings were destroyed and 2000 structures damaged. This presentation will examine the causes and consequences of the riots.

**Goolam Vahed** did his undergraduate degree at the University of Durban-Westville and PhD at Indiana University, Bloomington. He teaches in the Department of History at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and has written on various aspects of the history of Indians, Muslims and cricket in South Africa. His most recent work is *Chota Motala. A Biography of Political Activism in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands*.

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