



KZ-NIA @ 100 : Buildings of Merit





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KZ-NIA News

LETTER

Botha Monument: An amusing late night idea over a beer

Jack Grossert, my art master at DHS, showed us on a visit (1947) that the Botha statue was the best of its type! Van Wouw, a well trained sculptor (Amsterdam) had great technical skills and feeling for detail.

The Botha figure is a little larger than life and, as is good practice for raised figures to be viewed from below, the upper part of the body is somewhat increased in scale to deal with foreshortening. Because of its height from the viewer Van Wouw used bold modeling detail of the surface and bold pose.

The base is also well designed and made, and is appropriate in its scale and detail. It could be Duff's Road Stone! (worth checking)

The suggestion to remove a couple of figures off their pedestals so they we can see them "eye to eye" is an amusing late night idea over a beer in the studio but is otherwise not that good an idea. To stop this type of iconoclasm, Anatoly Lunacharsky, the first post-revolution Minister of Education in Russia 1917/18, went to great lengths to maintain the cultural heritage of Russia intact. Thanks to him and Maxim Gorky we can visit the Hermitage (the Winter Palace) in St Petersburg to enjoy its marvellous collection.

Remember also that Botha was until the treaty at Vereeniging an enemy of Natal in an awful and unjust war. So the Botha statue represents a peace-making gesture by the City of Durban to honour a former enemy who did his best to ease tensions in a fractured society.

Hans Hallen, Sydney

CORRECTION Issue 1/2001:

KZ-NIA Service, Recognition & Honour

It was NIA and NPIA President Ben (BV) Bartholemew who also served as National President; and he too who in 1960 became a Recipient of an NPIA Scroll of Honour.

It was also Ben Bartholemew who at the request of the Durban Municipality was elected by the Institute to represented members on the selection committee for the site for the Genl. Louis Botha Memorial. In conjunction with monument sculptor, Anton van Wouw, he designed its pedestal and precinct! (*Building*, June 1921, p467)

RESONANCE

Financial Mail (Did You Hear? p122) of 8th June picked on the small print of the cover of our first Centenary Issue 'KZ-NIA@100:People'. It noted a placard on the cityscape cover-rendering by Themba Shongwe which reads 'Make SA a Free Crime Country', and quipped "It already is!"

PROFESSIONAL COUNCILS

Two KZ-NIA members have received ministerial appointments to serve on two related statutory professional Councils: Ms Rani Naicker has been appointed to the SA Council for the Architectural Profession (SACAP); and Mike Boulle to the SA Council for the Project and Construction Management Professions.

The full complement appointed to SACAP for the 4-year term is: Seven Registered Persons: Ms Trudi Groenewald, Khotso Moleko, Dean Scott-Hayward (SAIT) and Siphon Njobe, while Malcolm Campbell, Alex Robertson and Eyvind Finsen remain in office as members of the existing Council.

Two Professionals in the Service of the State: Ms Rani Naicker and Sam Manyathela.

Two Members of the Public: Lucas Chauke (Quantity Surveyor, Nelspruit); Themba Mthetwa (Institute of Housing, Durban).

COVER: Library at Chesterville Extension.

Photo: Angela Buckland

2001 COROBRIK REGIONAL STUDENT OF THE YEAR

The KwaZulu-Natal regional round of the 2001 Corobrik Architectural Student of the Year competition saw final-year architecture students from the University of Natal, Durban, submit a diverse range of projects that could provide practical solutions to some of the social and infrastructural challenges facing the Province and South Africa.

Nasreen Arabi earned the coveted regional title for her design dissertation entitled *Urban Outreach: Revitalisation of the Inner City*. Ms Arabi will now compete in the national round of the competition, against regional winners from five other universities across the country.

Second prize went to Nicholas Darby for his dissertation entitled *School of Design*, while Melissa Wilkins was awarded Third Prize for *A Chronic Care Facility for Children at Addington Hospital*.

A Special Award was made to Clinton Dove whose project *A Street Shelter for Warwick Junction*, demonstrated the best use of clay masonry products as building materials.

OBITUARY

Peter Hoal 1926-2001

After graduating at the University of the Witwatersrand, Peter Hoal gained experience in Salisbury (Harare), Johannesburg and Durban before joining the Durban Corporation in 1966. As Chief Architect, he was co-opted to the NPIA regional committee, and served until his retirement in 1989. In latter years he was most noted for conducting arbitrations, an appointment for which his professional approach and integrity were well suited. Our thoughts are with his family and especially John.

Editor



Nasreen Arabi with Mike Ingram, Corobrik Director of Sales.

Photo: Ted Brien

Editorial

Buildings of Merit

In this centenary issue, we review buildings in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal which have been judged by peers as meritorious, and therefore worthy of public acknowledgement, in the form of an award for architecture. This system with noble objectives has had a chequered history – or one of ongoing refinement.

When NPIA made its first call in 1936, the decision of an Award was by ballot. Members would vote on the building which should receive the year's NPIA Architecture Medal and the announcement was made by the President at the AGM. That worked until 1939 when, following that year's announcement, a member proposed that "the present method of adjudication be reviewed". The minutes record a "lengthy discussion" and "no agreeable solution" whereupon it was moved and seconded "that the annual award of the bronze medal be now abandoned", a motion carried by 10 votes to 5! (*SA Architectural Record*, April 1940)

In 1955, fifteen years later, an attempt was made to revive an awards programme. This time the Natal Award of Merit was conferred together with 3 honourable mentions, significantly public architecture was contained in each category, see List. But, the continuation of the programme left considerable doubt in the minds of the Provincial committee. It was debated whether an Award "achieved any good for the Profession as a whole" as "disputes had always arisen". It was argued that "in a small (architectural) community such as Natal, it might promote professional jealousy amongst members, as a result of the publicity which would be received by the successful member". Yet, wisely the Committee resolved that "this disadvantage was outweighed by the advantage of bringing before the Public, what the Profession considered to be buildings of merit". But, assessors should be appointed by the national body; comprise of members from outside the Province; and the programme period be every five years (Minutes of NPIA Committee meeting of 1 July 1960). However the item seems to have fallen off the agendas for no further award was made. Perhaps the period was too long or the building boom of the 1950s diverted all attention.

The current biennial Awards programme begun with an announcement by ISAA in 1976. The national body set the framework for assessment and devolved its powers to the provincial Institutes which confer ISAA Awards of Merit. In discussing the first programme, the NPIA committee insisted that in the appointment of its assessors there must be "no suspicion of collusion or favouritism" and further, that the panel include both local architects and some from elsewhere. Besides, said co-opted member, Peter

Hoal, "each building would have to be visited as its siting counted as much as the building itself", and cautioned that "If the Institute could not afford to assess the nominations properly, then it should not do so at all". Acknowledging his full support, member Danie Theron went on to announce that Corobrik had agreed to publish a brochure on all nominations! (Minutes of NPIA Committee meeting of 13 April 1977). These criteria and generous Corobrik sponsorship remain the hallmark for entries in KwaZulu-Natal.

Soon it transpired that not all buildings being submitted for Award consideration were new, but that some projects resulted from the recycling of historic buildings, a process requiring particular design skills and sensitivity (and still causing confusion to juries, see 2001 KZ-NIA Awards: Comments), hence the introduction in 1989 of ISAA Conservation Award category. Simultaneously, Natal juries felt that certain buildings, perhaps not worthy of national recognition, were nevertheless deserving of *Special Mention*, a cachet for many years a particularity of this Province, and which was first accorded the Conservation category. On the other hand, moves were afoot at national level to distinguish ISAA provincial Awards with the introduction in 1990 of a 'premier' award category, the ISAA Award of Excellence, adjudicated by a separate panel, and an honour first brought to KZ-N in 2000.

As of 2001 the Awards programme has been changed again. Complaints by regions and individuals prompted both a new Award level and adjudication process. Following national guidelines, all Awards are now regional (provincial) Awards. Successful regional entries could then be submitted for adjudication by a national panel for SAIA Awards of Merit, Conservation, or Excellence, and which panel will decide on in-loco inspections.

In this issue we list past recipients of Awards, and feature those receiving 2001 KwaZulu-Natal Institute for Architecture Awards, which for this 13th programme cover buildings completed during the calendar years 1999-2000.

Walter Peters, Editor

Building with two Awards:
325 Smith Street,
1939 NPIA Architecture Medal: Reserve Bank.
Architect: WG Moffatt & Hirst; and
1995 ISAA Conservation Award: Investec Bank.
Architects in Association: Stafford Associate Architects CC and Koseff Van der Walt Architects.



A Tribute to Martin Knoetze

In this centenary year of our professional Institute in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, it would be remiss of us not to pay tribute to the contribution made by Martin Knoetze to our provincial affairs over many years.

As many KZ-NIA members will know, Martin performed a dual role as Secretary of the National Board of the Institute of South African Architects, as well as Registrar of the South African Council for Architects, for a period of over 25 years. He relinquished this dual role in 1996 and is currently enjoying a somewhat different workload as Registrar of South African Council for the Architectural Profession in terms of the latest Act.

My acquaintance with Martin began almost 30 years ago when the profession was confronted with the then new Act of No. 35 of 1970, which replaced the profession's original Act of 1927. It was his job to steer us through the new legislation and its repercussions, such as the Board-Council dichotomy and the separation from the Quantity Surveying profession, which now had its own Act.

There were a number of not entirely unexpected teething problems in those early years, and my abiding memory of Martin Knoetze at the time, was his infinite patience in dealing with Board and Council personalities, many of whom were dual members of these organisations. This situation provoked a somewhat hilarious comment from the irrepressible late Gordon Small, who found it extraordinary how Martin had to often "write letters to himself", as Secretary of the Board writing to the Registrar of the Council, or vice-versa. It was sometimes quite confusing for dual Board and Council members, let alone Martin himself, but he never seemed to lose his way in this statutory and budgetary maze.

His relationship with our Provincial Institute in KwaZulu-Natal has always been cordial, and I like to think that the way in which our Provincial Committees and our Secretariat managed our affairs (and importantly our budget) over the years, gave him little cause for concern.

Martin's longstanding and loyal services to our profession were recognised in 1991 when the ISAA bestowed on him Honorary Membership, a just reward for his dedicated years in office. In this Centenary Year of our Regional Institute, it is appropriate that we reinforce this appreciation for his work, and say to Martin Knoetze – thanks for a job well done, and for your consistent support of, and invaluable advice to, our KwaZulu-Natal Institute.

Michael Taylor

Past-President: NPIA & SACA

KZ-NIA@100 : Buildings of Merit

Recipient Buildings of Awards

1936 NPJA Architecture Medal

Royal Durban Golf Clubhouse, 16 Mitchell Crescent, Greyville

GE le Sueur

1937 NPJA Architecture Medal

Grosvenor Court Flats, 41 Snell Parade
Kallenbach, Kennedy & Furner, Johannesburg & Durban

1938 NPJA Architecture Medal/ Bronze Medal

Natal Technical College Students' Clubhouse,
West Street (demolished 1989)

Ing, Jackson & Park-Ross

1939 NPJA Architecture Medal/Bronze Medal

Reserve Bank Building, 325 Smith Street.
WG Moffat & Hirst

1955 NPJA Award of Merit

Natal Provincial Administration Building, Pietermaritzburg
Street, Pietermaritzburg (now Education Building)
Corrigall, Crickmay & Partners, Pietermaritzburg

Honorable Mentions

Albany House, Victoria Embankment

Paton, Taylor & Partners

Natal Provincial Administration Offices, Acutt Street

SN Tomkin & Partners

Dunlop House, Sydney Road, Congella

Geoffrey le Sueur & Partners

1977 ISAA Natal Awards of Merit

Beer Hall, Umlazi Glebe

Franklin, Garland & Gibson

Faculty of Arts Building, University of Natal,
Pietermaritzburg

Small, Pettit & Baillon, Pietermaritzburg

Hulett's Head Office, Umhlanga Ridge

Hallen, Theron & Partners

1979 ISAA Natal Award of Merit

No Award made

1981 ISAA Natal Award of Merit

Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa, Imbali,
Edendale

Revel Fox & Partners, Cape Town

1983 ISAA Natal Awards of Merit

Mangosuthu Technikon, Umlazi

Hallen Theron & Partners Inc in association with Julian Elliott,
Cape Town

1985 ISAA Natal Awards of Merit

Old Mutual Industrial Centre, Prospecton

Interarc Architects

Golden Hours School for Mentally Handicapped Children,
Durban North

Hallen Theron & Partners Inc

Arcadia Park Office, Overport

Johnson Murray Architects

Musgrave Medical Centre, Musgrave Road

Don Smith Architects

Salisbury Centre, 332 Smith Street

Geraghty Little & McCaffery Associated Architects

1987 ISAA Natal Awards of Merit

The Natal Playhouse, Smith Street

Small Pettit & Robson, Pietermaritzburg

VARA Studio, St George's Street

Vandeverre, Apsey Robinson & Associates

Reckitt & Colman Pharmaceuticals Factory, Mobeni

Franklin Garland Gibson & Partners

1989 ISAA Natal Awards of Merit

Santorini (Phase 1), 110 Ocean Drive, Shaka's Rock

Campbell, Bernstein & Irving

Stowell Building, 295 Pietermaritz Street, Pietermaritzburg

Carter-Brown & Baillon, Pietermaritzburg

Professional Offices, 59 Musgrave Road

Stauch Vorster

Factory & Office Block for British Industrial Plastics,
47 Gillitts Rd, Pinetown (now Seventh-Day Adventist

Church and Conference Centre)

Johnson Murray Architects



Grosvenor Court and plaque in foyer (left).

ISAA Natal Conservation Award

Quadrant House, Victoria Embankment

Hallen Theron & Partners Inc

NIA Special Mention: Conservation Award

Soorti Sunni Mosque, Pietermaritzburg

Ismail Cassimjee, Pietermaritzburg

1991 ISAA Natal Awards of Merit

House Elphick, Westville

Elphick Proome Architects

Northdale Assessment Centre for the Disabled,
Pietermaritzburg

Kiran Lalloo, Pietermaritzburg

Action Bolt Factory, Springfield Park

Elphick Proome Architects

Conversion of Supreme Court to Tatham Art Gallery,
Pietermaritzburg

Small Pettit & Associates, Pietermaritzburg

Costa Maningi, Offices, Devonshire Ave, Glenwood

FGG Architects

NIA Special Mention

City Building, East Street, Pietermaritzburg

Ismail Cassimjee, Pietermaritzburg

NIA Special Mention

Residence G Hesse, Pietermaritzburg

Interplan Architects (Pty) Ltd, Pietermaritzburg

ISAA Natal Conservation Award

Cottam Grove, Florida Road

Interarc Architects

ISAA Natal Conservation Award

219 Florida Road

Interarc Architects in association with Brian Kearney

ISAA Natal Conservation Award

Kings House, Morningside

Interarc Architects in association with Roux Wildenboer

1993 ISAA Natal Awards of Merit

Architects' Offices, Tollgate

Elphick Proome Architects

House Thorpe, Morningside

Johnson Murray Architects

House Pattundeen, Westville

Johnson Murray Architects

NIA Special Mention

Jungle Nursery, Sherwood

Colin Savage Architect, Johannesburg

NIA Conservation Award Special Mention

Manor House, Morningside

Stauch Vorster

NIA Conservation Award Special Mention

Edgars Store, Pietermaritzburg

Ing, Jackson, de Ravel & Hartley

1995 ISAA KZ-N Awards of Merit

Glen Towy Holiday Cottage, Underberg

Johann Slee Architects, Johannesburg

Health & Racquet Club, Soldiers' Way

Johnson Murray

136 Victoria Embankment

Interarc Architects

Metlife, 391 Smith Street

Stafford Associate Architects in association with Dirksen

Blumenfeld & Krause

KZ-NIA Special Mention

Crematorium, Higginson Highway, Chatsworth

John Royal Architects

ISAA KZ-N Conservation Award

Clarendon Court, 378 Ridge Road, Berea

Robert Brusse Architect

ISAA KZ-N Conservation Award

Investec Bank (formerly Reserve Bank), 325 Smith Street

Stafford Associate Architects in association with Koseff Van der

Walt Architects, Johannesburg

1997 SAIA KZ-N Awards of Merit

Offices, 50 Prince Alfred Street

Dean Jay Architect

Auditorium and Church Centre, 90 Seventh Ave, Pinetown

Myles Pugh Sherlock Murray CC, Pinetown

KZ-NIA Special Mention

Thembalile Railway Station, KwaMashu

Architects Collaborative CC in association with John Royal

Architects CC

SAIA KZ-N Conservation Award

Quarters, Florida Road

Emmett-Emmett Architects CC

1999 SAIA KZ-N Awards of Merit

KwaMakhutha Library

Elphick Proome Architects

Durban Metro Electricity Training Centre, Springfield Park

McCaffery Wilkinson & Little

International Convention Centre, Durban

Architects in Association: Stauch Vorster; Hallen Custers Smith;

Johnson Murray. Consultant Architect: Philip Cox, Sydney,

Australia

KZ-NIA Special Mention

Zimbali Country Club and Zimbali Lodge

Theunissen Jankowitz SA Inc

KZ-NIA Special Mention

Highseas Holiday Cottage, Sheffield Beach

Dean Jay Architect

SAIA KZ-N Conservation Award

Maria Ratschitz Mission Station, Wasbank

Robert Brusse Architect

SAIA KZ-N Conservation Award

Stratford Sheds, Warwick Junction

Emmett-Emmett Architects CC

KZ-NIA Conservation Award Special Mention

5-7 Escombe Terrace, Point

VARA Architects in association with Mtetwa & Associates

2000 SAIA Award of Excellence

International Convention Centre, Durban

Architects in Association: Stauch Vorster; Hallen Custers Smith;

Johnson Murray. Consultant Architect: Philip Cox, Sydney,

Australia

Unless otherwise mentioned, all buildings and practices in Durban.

KZ-NIA@100 : Buildings of Merit

Moments in Time (1962-81)

A partial chronicle of two nostalgic decades

The plane radar noses its way through the towering architecture of thunderclouds. Through electric blue apertures, I glimpse the hazy pastel-coloured winter countryside. Pondering the editor's request to write for the KZ-NIA Journal.

KwaZulu-Natal. Land of warrior tribes and nativity. Sipping a scotch and soda. On the overhead speakers I imagined the whispering voice of the poet John Magee:

*And while with silent lifting wing I have trod,
To high, untrespassed sanctity of space.*

Put out my hand

And touch the face of God.

I touched the window cartouche and felt an acrylic pane. Yet in the days that I am writing about, creative architects, artists and poets found themselves in an equally high state of divination. In Natal, as well as in the national context, something was stirring. A beginning of sorts.

When the plane touched down on another day, 40 years ago, at Louis Botha Airport (as it was then called) in grey humidity, the city lay suffocated in its insular colonial and provincial dreams, amongst dark green and grey-brown mediocrity. But even then memorable architectural moments glinted: the Main Post Office, the City Hall, the mosques and temples, the Greenacres building, a unique system of arcades between Smith and West Streets, the old Standard Bank complex in Smith Street, the Marine Hotel and the Castle Arcade Building (all three demolished since then) and the Railway Station and its repair shops. (threatened by the Holford & Kantorowich plan in the sixties, they survived by skin of their architectural teeth). Also growing out of the mouldering fabric were the early houses and buildings of Hans Hallen and Jack Diamond, Issy Benjamin and ZAI (notably the Marine terminal building). Well timed in its decorative concrete construction to co-incide with the decline of passenger shipping).

741 Musgrave Road: there is a granite top table in a courtyard flanked by a colonnaded verandah. Shaded by massive euphorbia and bougainvillea. Small fountain-statues gurgle in niches and cornucopia. Around the table, lunch time and after work discussions flow, sometimes peaking in animation.*

During an imaginary debate around the table, I posed a question. Which were the seminal buildings of those early days? Highly contentious topic of course, but I offer the outcome of that discussion for acceptance or rejection.

- Issy Benjamin's (Crofton & Benjamin) early

buildings along the Esplanade and Marine Parade. They were pointers to the potential vibrance of a sub-tropical architecture influencing directly or indirectly later architects like Luis Ferreira da Silva, Andrew Murray, Brian Johnson, George Elphick and others.

- Barrie Biermann's house off Ridge Road (38 Glenwood Drive). A remarkable essay in the integration of indoor and outdoor spaces, and the innovative use of commonly available building materials and recycled components. Touching the dreams of virtually every young (and not so young) architect in Natal.

- A number of Hans Hallen's (Hallen & Dibb) buildings, but in my opinion notably the speculative apartment complexes that he built for the developer Peter Engelbrecht on the Berea. Distinguished by their ingenious structural simplicity, spatial directness and sculptural forms. Truly transforming pigs ears into silk purses.

- Paul Mikula's own house further along Ridge Road (207a). Continued in the tradition of the Biermann house, but in an iconoclastic manner that appealed to many architects of his generation and students.

- My buildings (Biermann & Theron) in Clarence, Argyle and Clark Roads for the Department of Community Development. Setting the style for a formal architectural sculpturism (if such a term is possible), constructed in off shutter concrete and common bricks (used as facing). During construction I received a letter from *Coronation Brick & Tile Co* reprimanding me for the "misuse" of their product and threatening to cut off supply).

- The Hulett's Group Office Building in Umhlanga (Hallen Theron & Partners). It pioneered the open plan office in Natal, the use of curved roof sheeting and the siting of elegant architectural forms in open landscape. (Ironically, Xanadu – House Jacobson, 1973, also by our practice, could also be termed 'seminal', in that it became, arguably, a precursor in Natal for the eclectic and pastiche architecture that plagued the eighties as PoMo style).

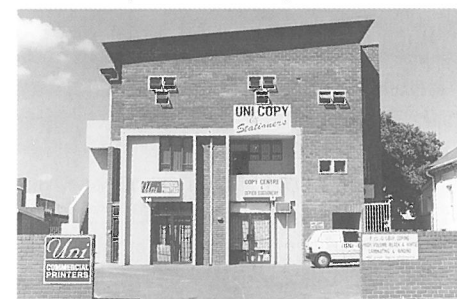
In categorising these buildings, I am not ignoring the rich harvest of fine architecture that marked these two productive decades. Looking at my own architectural guide, published in 1981, I count 186 buildings worthy of note.

The Durban Club. A dull, grey building, but finely proportioned. Inside: starched white table cloth and napkins. White turbaned waiters. Overhead fans revolve lazily. A lost dream lurking amongst the potted palms.

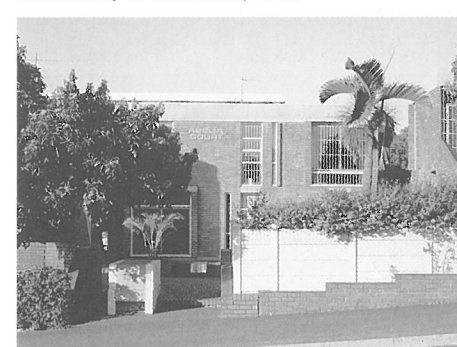


Architects: Biermann & Theron:

Crassula Flats, 76 Clarence Road, 1965.



Maisonettes, 15 Clark Road, 1965.



Abelia Flats, 155 Argyle Road, 1965.

Photographs of 2001.

Having lunch with the then President of the NPJA. Discussing a problem that I am experiencing with the Provincial Architect. I had been commissioned by the Province to do extensions to the Bulwer Park Primary School. Assisted by Brian Kearney we duly submitted the plans for approval. Rejected of course. "Follow the standard plans", the bureaucratic relic instructed, "or else". (We opted for "or else"). I put the problem to the President. His advice: do as instructed. He continued, sipping a glass of sherry, "take the standard plans, cut and stick them to suit the site. I never had any problems". "What about junctions, roof

* Premises of the practice Hallen & Theron & Partners (HTP), 1974-91

KZ-NIA@100: Buildings of Merit

KZ-NIA 2001 Awards of Merit & Conservation Programme

This year's Awards programme is different from its predecessors. Regional juries now recommend buildings for regional Awards to the regional Institutes. Successful regional entries are then eligible for submission to the national Institute which appoints an independent national jury to recommend SAIA Awards of Merit, Conservation, or Excellence. Retired KZ-NIA member, Errol Haarhoff, who was visiting South Africa at the time, agreed to serve on the KZ-NIA Awards jury, was elected its chair, and submitted the following:-

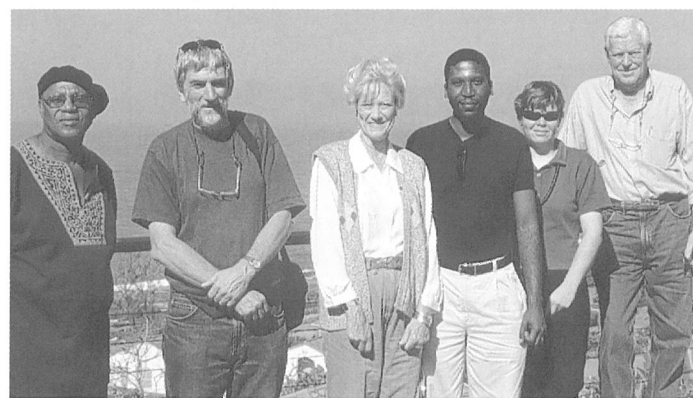
The jurors were Professor Errol Haarhoff (University of Auckland); Professor Pitika Ntuli (sculptor, poet and Executive Director of Sankofa African Renaissance Institute); and KZ-NIA members Minenhle Makhanya, Debbie Whelan, Derek Sherlock, and Sydney Baillon as co-ordinator. Twenty-four submissions for KZ-N Award of Merit and Conservation Award were received, and all entries were inspected *in situ* – a fundamental requirement if the objective of the Awards programme is to recognise and promote excellence in architecture, and to create public awareness and debate on architectural issues.

KZ-NIA 2001 Awards: Some Impressions

It was a pleasure and privilege to have participated as a juror in the 2001 KZ-NIA Awards programme for many of reasons. One was the opportunity afforded to view at first hand the most recent work of many colleagues (some of whom I remember as students), putting forward what they consider to be worthy of Award consideration. Another was the occasion this created to once again feel the warmth of friendship among the many friends and colleagues who inhabit the East Coast of Africa of which I still feel a part.

It is eight years since I moved to New Zealand, but my last visit to South Africa was in 1997. Any perceptions of change for me are thus bound to be less dramatic and more incremental than the experience of two previous commentators on the Award programmes: for Ron Lewcock (1997 awards) this was an absence of 27 years, and for Jack Diamond (1999 awards) this was 18 years.

Despite the relatively short period of my absence, changes were nevertheless perceptible in a place that is as dynamic as Durban. From



The 2001 KZ-NIA Awards jury with Sylvia Grobler (KZ-NIA Executive Officer) in centre. From left: Prof Pitika Ntuli; Prof Errol Haarhoff (Chair); Minenhle Makhanya; Debbie Whelan; Derek Sherlock.

The principle criterion employed by the jury was to seek the meritorious characteristics of the work, beyond simply being good architecture, which would distinguish the building as an exemplar to the profession and public alike. Some of the works recommended for Award contain what members of the panel considered to be shortcomings. However, where this occurred such shortcomings were regarded as minor in the light of the recognition of overwhelming qualities of merit.

The jury did find difficulty with the criteria for the Conservation Award. Whereas such an award could be restricted to projects intended

to restore historic buildings to their original condition if not use, the jury took a broader interpretation. This involved acceptance that the final outcome of the project would preserve the visual appearance of the historic building in its context, but that usage may change, the interior may be altered and extensions made. It is interesting to note that Prof Ronald Lewcock (jury member for the 1997 Awards raised the same issue (KZ-NIA Journal 3/1997). The current jury was unanimous that KZ-NIA should clarify the criteria for the Conservation Award, and refer these to national level.

The panel expresses its thanks for the opportunity afforded to participate in this award programme. Special thanks go to Sydney Baillon for his guidance on procedure, and the skilful navigation to the buildings scattered throughout the Province. Thanks is also due to KZ-NIA Executive Officer, Sylvia Grobler, for her efficient organisation of the three days, and ensuring that the jurors were well nourished.

Errol Haarhoff
Jury Chair



Hulett's Head Office, 1974-75 (right). Photograph of 2001.

a city-wide perspective, the most dramatic change was the extraordinary development occurring at La Lucia/Umhlanga Ridge. I recall making a visit to Hallen & Theron's Hulett's building in 1997, magnificently sited in the sugar cane fields. On this occasion, I could barely find the Hulett's building among the frenzy of construction and altered geography. There is perhaps a positive spin on this development to the extent that it reflects confidence in making substantial investment in the property market. It also reflects what is happening in many countries around the world: the emergence of so-called 'Edge Cities'.

Set up with the intention of offering more amenable and accessible working environments (especially for the 'high-tech' and service industries), 'Edge Cities' have threatened to further run down the traditional downtown areas as affluent businesses and their employees relocate. Motivation in the case of Durban (and other South African cities) for the emergence of 'Edge Cities' is probably no different, only underscored by an enhanced need for workplace security. In the case of many American cities, however, the threat of peripheral development has been countered by new investment in the renewal of downtown areas, intended to counter business and residential flight. These cities are also able to contrast the benefits of the denser, pedestrian-orientated downtown areas supported by public transport, with the more alienating vehicular orientated 'Edge City' environments. The challenge for Durban will be how the city centre can compete with its 'Edge Cities' to revalidate the centre as a vital part of being a city, and overcome the potential of a polarisation between a city for the rich and a city for the poor.

The second major change I perceived concerned Cato Manor. I recall being participating in preliminary discussions leading to the establishment of CMDA in the early '90s, just as the land and shack

invasions in Cato Manor were picking up momentum. At that time there was a sense of gloom that all opportunities of achieving a good residential environment might be lost in the chaos of the invasions. There was also a sense of solidarity with the view that this process was merely the reclaiming of land confiscated from legitimate owners during the dark days of apartheid. With a number of Award submissions located in Cato Manor, I was fortunately able to inspect the area at closer quarters, and this left a very positive impression. Problems clearly remain, but the chaos seems to be gone. There is a sense of ordering, and a demonstration that innovative planning can produce the framework for a good environment. I remember working in peripheral informal settlements of Durban where the main struggle was around getting water delivered to a few standpipes for thousands of people. But here in Cato Manor what I witnessed was a shifting of priorities to the provision of schools, clinics, markets and the range of social amenities long argued to be a necessary part of any residential development and the upliftment of poor communities. It was in this context that Awards of Merit were made for the design of new public amenities that would in the course of time contribute towards public place making for the emerging communities in Cato Manor. This reinforced my faith in the belief that good architecture can make a positive contribution to social development and environmental upliftment.

This body of work is deserving of far more international exposure...

On my return to New Zealand, my copy of *Architecture NZ* for May/June 2001 had been delivered during my absence and coincidentally reported on the NZIA 2001 Awards. Apart from being reminded of this ritual shared around the world whereby architects are rewarded by their colleagues for excellence, I felt compelled to make comparisons with what I had just seen in KwaZulu-Natal. With a few exceptions, the New Zealand work being rewarded (comprising residential, commercial and community buildings) revealed design agendas that reflects current international practice: what Hans Ibelings¹ has labelled 'supermodernism'. From a European perspective, the key notion in much of the architecture discussed by Ibelings (such as that of Perrault, Nouvel, Hertzog & De Meuron, OMA) is its disconnection to the cultural and physical landscape: an architecture that strives to be global, and consequently a-contextual. But when reflecting on the New Zealand work and what I had just seen in KwaZulu-Natal, I was struck by the extent to which cultural and physical contexts still appear to inform architectural production. Indeed, Melbourne archi-

1. Hans Ibelings, *Supermodernism: Architecture in the Age of Globalisation*, Rotterdam: NAI, 1998.

tect Kerstin Thompson (who was the international juror on the NZIA Awards) comments on the extent to which Australasian architecture is variably defined by responses to cultural and physical landscapes (NZIA Newsletter *Cross Section*, June 2001). Perhaps this is at least one distinguishing feature of southern hemisphere architecture: the continuing validation of the significance of cultural and physical landscapes in defining architecture, irrespective of any other design agendas that may be addressed.

When reflecting on this notion of landscape in the KZ-NIA Award submissions, it immediately brought to mind more obvious examples: work crafted in so-called "traditional" materials that achieve a direct harmonious relationship with stunning natural settings. But the point made by Kerstin Thompson is that the dialogue between architecture and the physical landscape can be achieved in many ways, from the notion of blending with nature (what she calls 'camouflage'), to bold forms touching the earth lightly. Whilst the KZ-N work of this kind was justifi-

ably rewarded for its design merit, perhaps the challenge remains that of finding different ways of responding to natural landscapes, other than by using 'traditional' materials and 'camouflage' techniques. The work of Glen Murcutt provides one example of how symbiosis between architecture and the vastness of the Australian outback can be achieved using rolled steel sections, corrugated iron and uncompromising modernist planning. The work of Kerstin Thompson in Australia provides further examples that demonstrate the range of design agendas that are possible when working with a more complex concept of the relationship between landscape and architecture.

Further reflections on the KZ-N work highlighted one striking distinction derived in part from a deep understanding of the cultural landscape. This is the ability to produce quality architecture that is reflective of cultural needs under conditions of extreme cost constraints, which would be bewildering to architects elsewhere in the world.



Centenary Centre, Hhuhluwe, Stafford Associate Architects, 2000.

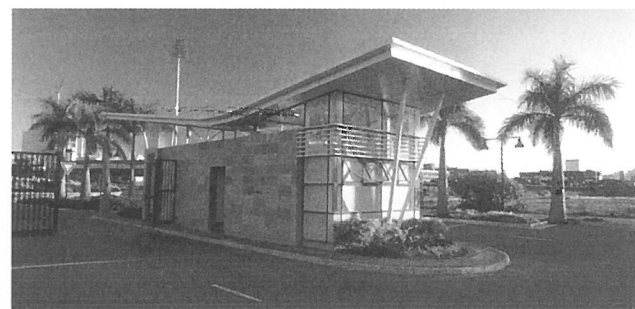


Magney House, Bingi Point, NSW, Australia. Architect: Glen Murcutt, 1982-84

Included in the body of work rewarded were buildings that are exemplary in achieving such outcomes in both the architecture and public space-settings, which will endure to be a positive force in shaping the lives of the communities concerned. This body of work is deserving of far more international exposure, both in terms of the process involved and the design agendas employed.

A final observation is an inevitable outcome when returning to South Africa after an absence: the extent to which security is now embedded into daily lives and rituals. From an architectural point of view this was perceptible in the extent to which security has become integral with much of the architecture seen and rewarded. Such a notion in itself is not historically remarkable: architecture in all ages and cultures has produced security responses from city walls to fortified buildings. Indeed some of the submissions for award were located within the security of gated communities (where razor wire was a substitute for stone), and one submission concerned the design of a gatehouse. The deeper challenge (I suggest) is how to reconcile the need for security and thus exclusion, with the notion that architecture is a unifying force in public life, and therefore inclusive.

Errol Haarhoff



Gatehouse, Kingsmead Office Park. Stauch Vorster Architects, 2000.

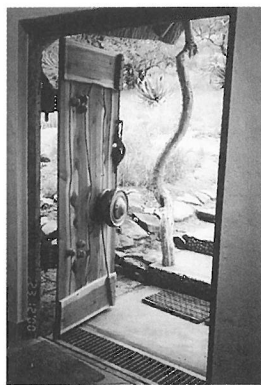


KZ-NIA 2001 AWARD OF MERIT
SEWULA GORGE CAMP
 Estcourt
 Harber & Associates

The merit of this project was judged to be in the convergence of a number of factors: the recognition of a magnificent site and setting; the incorporation of owner-builder and craft processes into the construction process; and the skills and confidence in which the elements are assembled to create a unified whole.

Of particular note are details involving creative craftsmanship (such the carpentry in the doors and windows), which transform ordinary objects into stunning elements.

Various methods of integrating the building to its site is another aspect of note, such as the incorporation of natural rock elements into architecture. This is considered to result in a strong building, superbly integrated with its natural setting, reflecting in the words of one judge "a labour of love".



Front door by wood sculptor
 Bruce Atwood.

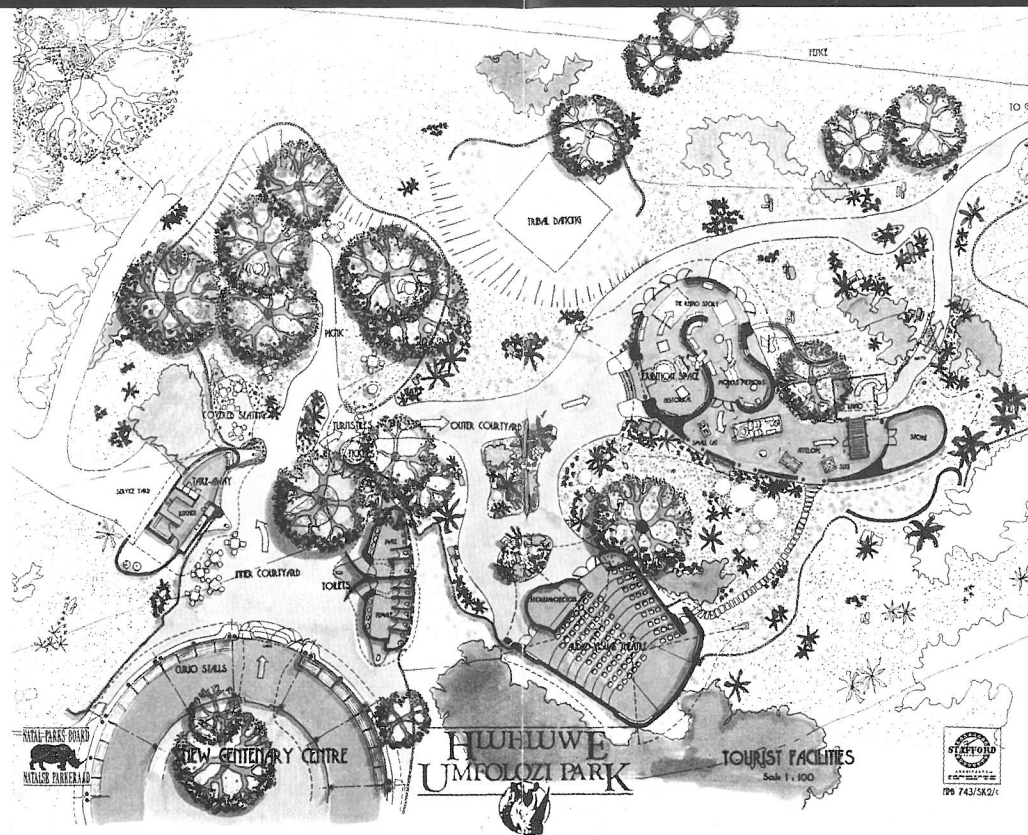
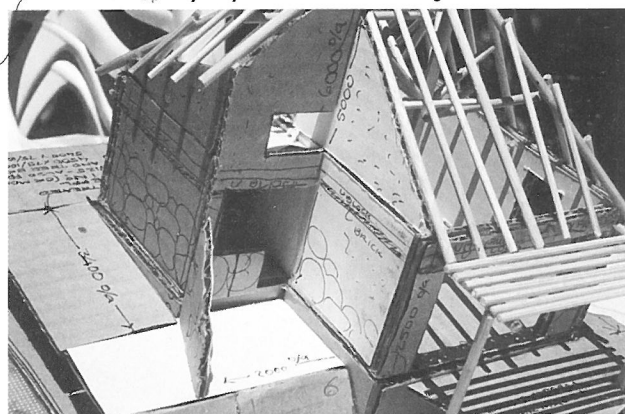
The site is in a steep, aloed gorge along the banks of the Rensburgspruit which meanders down many cascading waterfalls, just beyond the remnants of a stone staging post on the 19th century road between Estcourt and Mooi River, a site with iron age vestiges, and Zulu, Voortrekker and Anglo-Boer associations.

A road had to be cut into the previously inaccessible gorge and the development consisting of a central facility, 4 bungalows and a service block, was laid out between trees with plastic 'danger tape'.

The structure of the central facility was set out on site by the architects and all construction was carried out by farm labour, the foreman being trained by attending both a block-laying and a thatching course. Construction consists of dry-stone walling, concrete blocks, manufactured on site, and poles and thatching sourced nearby.

The banana-shaped central facility is terminated on one end with a conversation pit which incorporates a large natural rock at the hearth, and on the other, with an "HS" toilet. Because it would have been impossible to lay traditional sewerage without damaging the rocky site, this toilet flushes with only one litre of water and provides for decomposition in the topsoil layer.

BELOW: Construction information was communicated by way of detailed 3-D working models.



KZ-NIA 2001 AWARD OF MERIT
CENTENARY TOURIST AND INFORMATION CENTRE for KZ-N NATURE CONSERVATION SERVICE
 Hluhluwe/Umfolozi Park

Stafford Associate Architects CC. Project Architect: Peter Schwerzel

So-called 'gum pole' architecture common to game reserves in Africa is in danger of using traditional architecture as a decorative mannerism. This project was distinguished from this possibility by offering new approaches to building in the context of 'traditional materials'.

The plan arrangement was conceived as a set of interrelated spaces leading to large elements such as the exhibition spaces and auditorium. Innovation was judged to be found in a number of elements such as the combining of steel and timber in the connections of the rafters to the buttresses; the manner in which the roof line is a flowing curve responding to the non-traditional functions accommodated; and in the walls and fences which, whilst reflective of tradition, are fabricated in new and fresh ways.

The purpose of the Centre was to provide a destination at which tourists and local visitors could learn about the history and current nature-conservation and game-capture operations in the Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Park, by viewing the exhibition, attending audio-visual presentations in the new theatre, and by visiting the nearby game capture center. The Vulamehlo Craft Centre provides an opportunity to view and purchase craft-work from the local community.

Rather than a large, single building, the complex was designed as a series of individual ones. This was considered an 'African' response with small buildings combined as a community around a central space, and approached along a sinuous route. The buildings, at a scale appropriate to the indigenous bush, were sited alongside trees, identified specifically to provide concomitant outdoor shady "rooms".



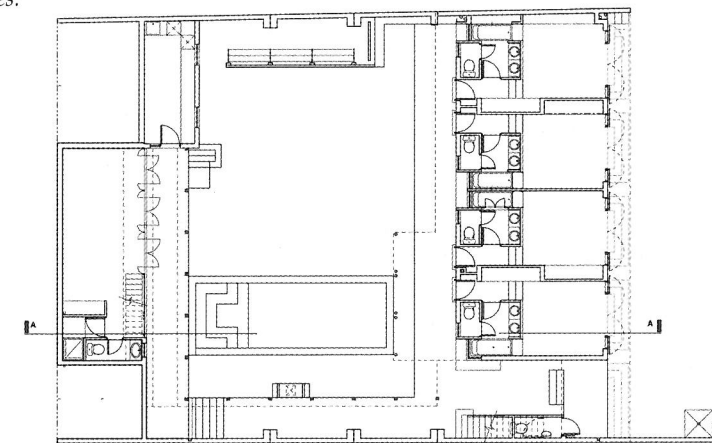
KZ-NIA 2001 AWARD OF MERIT
HOLIDAY HOME for ACCURATE TRADING
 Sandhills Road, Prince's Grant Estate
 OMM Design Workshop

Set in a gated community of holiday homes arranged in dense clusters where developers are set design guidelines and requirements, this house both complies with, and breaks all the rules.

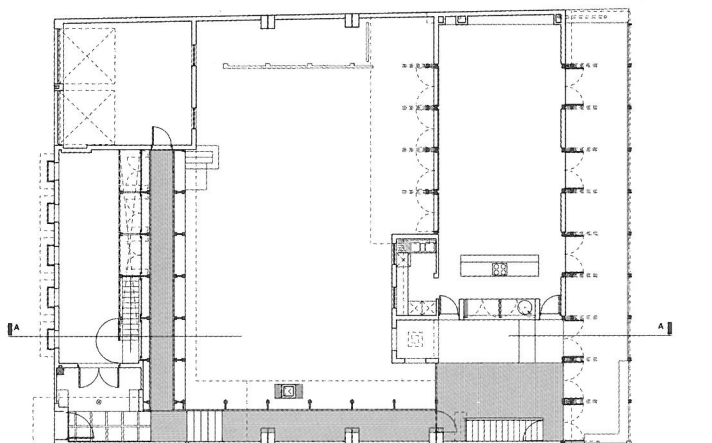
On a site lacking any outward view (despite the close proximity to the sea), the house is arranged around an internal courtyard, into which opens a series of functionally ambiguous rooms and spaces.

Whilst the exterior responds to the imposed design guide regard to form, colour and materials, a playfulness is introduced in the form of red brick chimneys. The heaviness of brick is contrasted internally with the lightness of timber and steel, and the interconnectiveness of the spaces, to create an innovative architecture.

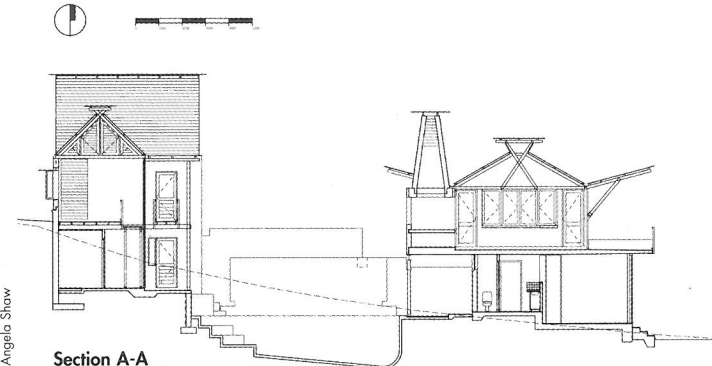
The jury noted the claimed source of brick structures to be cottages found on local sugar cane farms, but was concerned that the (non-functional) chimneys over the garage may have been excessive, the omission of which would not have diminished the overall merit of the work.



Lower level plan



Upper level plan



Section A-A



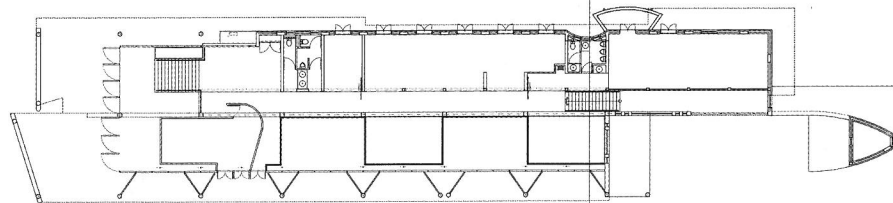
Angela Shaw

Angela Shaw

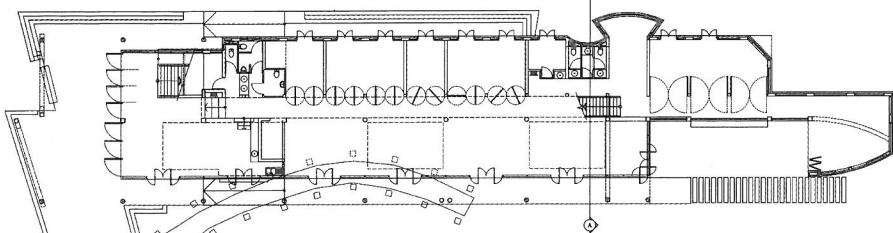
"Traditional settlements and villages derive their characteristic qualities from a continuity of form, materials and methods of construction and from variations and individualities which occur within these parameters. It is the differences in the built form that make orientation possible, which make an environment legible and give it character."



KZ-NIA 2001 AWARD OF MERIT
OFFICE DEVELOPMENT for
ELECTRIC LADYLAND PROPERTIES
Bellevue Road, Kloof
OMM Design Workshop

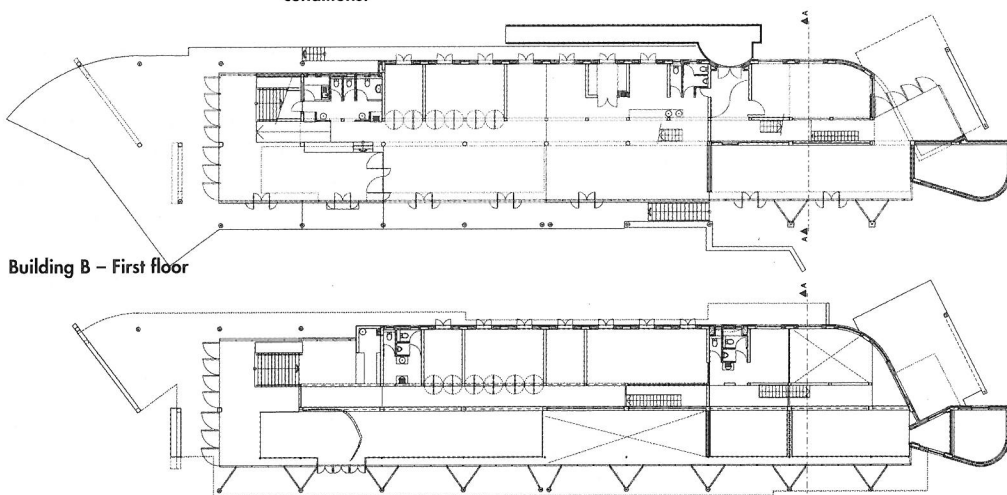


Building A – First floor

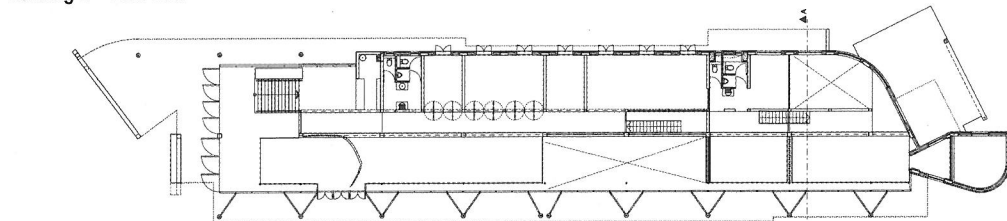


Building A – Ground

Variations to the ends
of each building
acknowledge site
conditions.

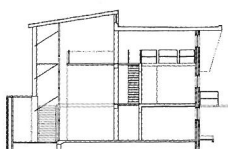


Building B – First floor

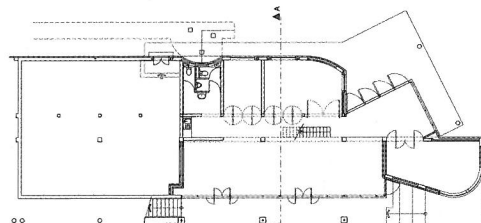


Building B – Ground floor

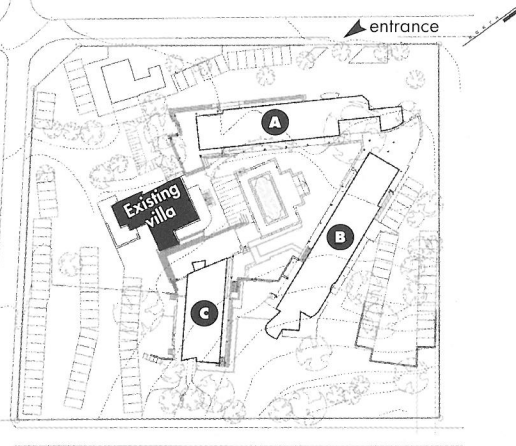
The extent of double-
volume space may be
reduced with lightweight
infill deck-panels, as
additional floor areas
are required later.



Building B – Section



Building B – Lower ground

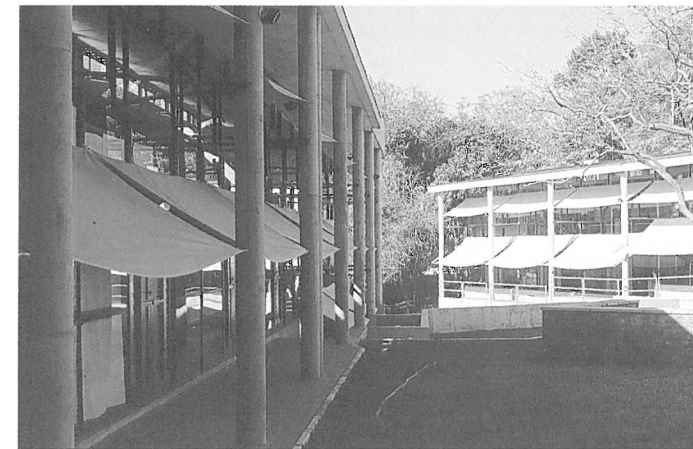


Building A – Section

Electric Ladyland is considered an outstanding example of the potential for architecture to transform a mundane programme (essentially lettable commercial accommodation) into an uplifting experience – achieved by the sensitive incorporation of an existing house and mature garden into a complex of three new buildings forming a courtyard.

Materials (principally concrete, timber and glass) are used directly with innovative detailing and assembly. The complex is both sensitive to context, but is also reflective of current international practice.

The jury was excited by the freshness of the architecture, the competency displayed in assembling a complex programme into a unified work, and the sensitive way in which the existing house and garden was then incorporated into the project.

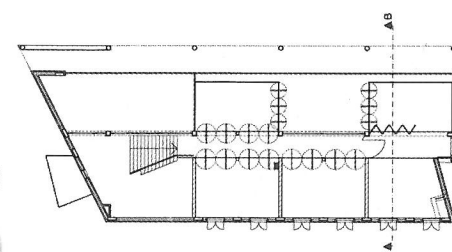


"The client desired an innovative, robust, versatile building to accommodate a range of uses". The envisioned environment would resemble "a collection of classrooms, gymnasium, high volumes, spaces that could respond to changing work teams".

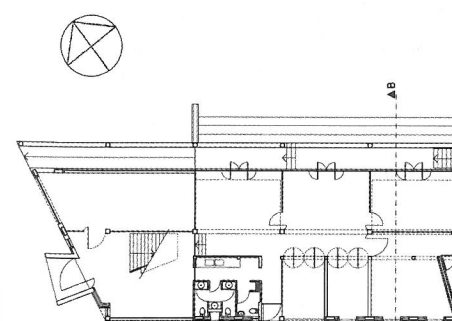
The language of the buildings is consistent. A hard edge of punctured openings faces the traffic and parking areas. The courtyard edge is an external circulation route/veranda, with glass curtain walls shaded by the projecting roof slab or by hanging sails.



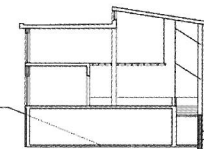
The villa became the pivot to the concept, analogous with an "old church" as the "landmark or point of orientation to a public space". The new buildings were positioned to create a series of courtyards, ranging in scale and "publicness" and of varying character.



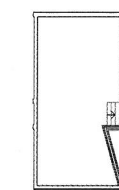
Building C – First floor



Building C – Ground



Building C – Section



Semi-basement

Each building has a forecourt or "mediating zone" between the outside, public areas, and the office areas inside.



A detailed survey of the existing plants and trees, the villa and garden structures was the first task. A horticulturist advised on clearance, and the new buildings were fitted into the vacant areas – some actually having to be 'cut away' to accommodate trees – giving the office environment an established character, with "what came first not always clear".

KZ-NIA 2001 AWARD OF MERIT LIBRARY at CHESTERVILLE EXTENSION

Booth Road, Cato Manor

Urban Architects (Pty) Ltd

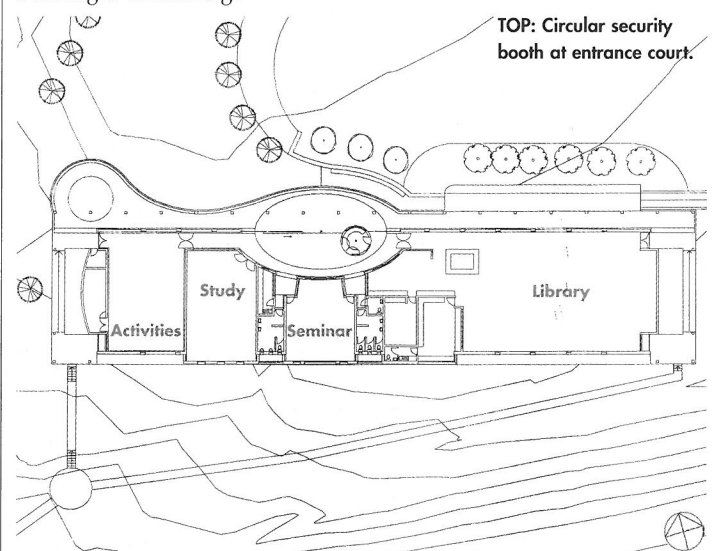
An exemplar of a developmental process, this library provides facilities for emerging communities, and is able to achieve architectural quality within the constraints of a limited budget. While reflective of international architectural practice and design agendas, it serves the needs of the local community. Apart from providing the educative function of a library, the building will also serve as a landmark to the future community, providing the enduring and universal qualities expected of public buildings and public spaces.

Of particular note is the manner in which necessary security and surveillance is achieved using intelligent planning, and the extent to which related devices have become an integral part of the architecture. Robust materials combined with elegant detailing should ensure that the overall quality will endure over long period.

This library with concomitant study, meeting and adult education spaces, forms part of a node of community facilities with a hall and a clinic on an outcrop astride a distributor road.

The concept was for the buildings to define an open space with the hall at the top, as an icon, and the library bounding the residential edge.

The veranda on the north provides for sheltered pedestrian circulation while tempering solar penetration to the library. But, the challenge to the design was to marry the conflicting requirements of openness and security, and to this end the movable screen at the entrance ensures that the building is welcoming.



TOP: Circular security
booth at entrance court.



Ramp up from ground floor.

Inset: View from the bus-shelter and street market opposite.

Patrick Royal

KZ-NIA 2001 AWARD OF MERIT PRINCE CYRIL ZULU COMMUNICABLE DISEASES CENTRE

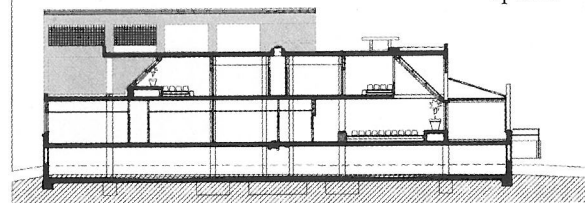
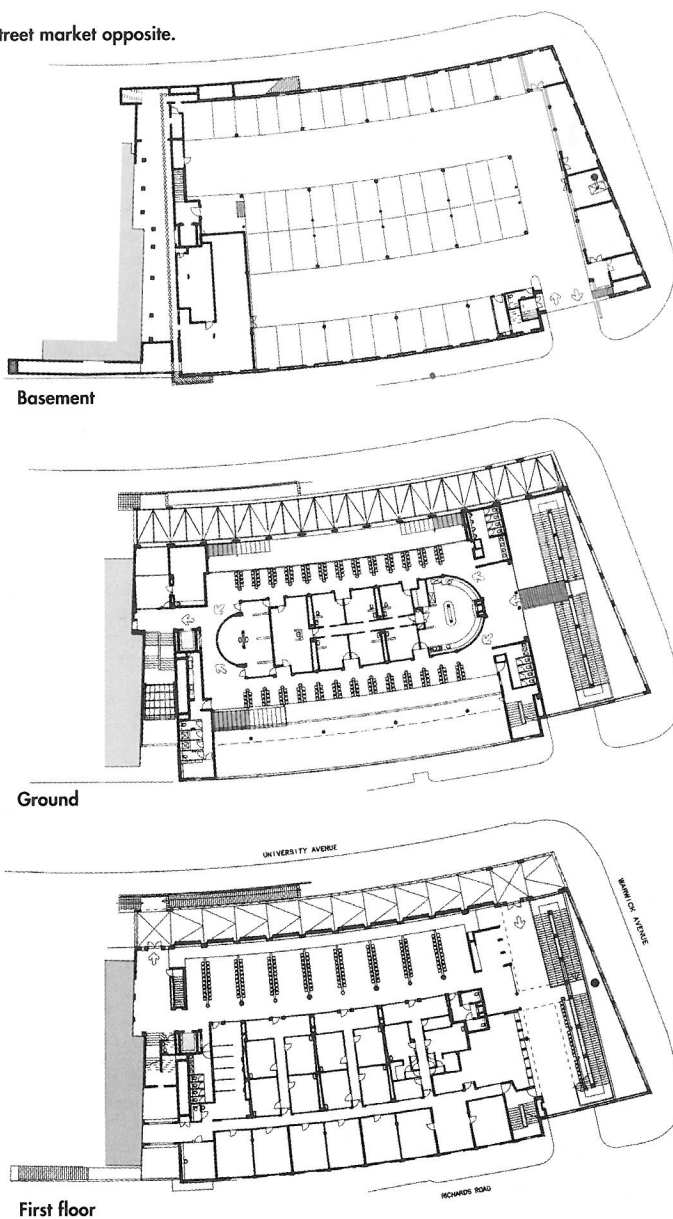
University Avenue, Warwick Triangle, Durban
John Royal Architects in association with
CNN Architects

The key challenge perceived by the jury in this project was to create a refuge for the suffering within the hard, tough context of the Warwick Street precinct and the constraints of a tight budget. Merit was found in the manner in which generous space is given to arrival and waiting areas within the building, and in the circulation areas, all enhanced by a subtle curve of plan. Although a health care facility, the building does not have a clinical feel.

A perceived shortcoming was a potentially lost opportunity for enlarged waiting and sitting areas by repositioning ventilation ducts. Notwithstanding, the jury was persuaded by the overall merit displayed in the work.

The Centre was to provide for the administration and treatment of tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases while ensuring a clear separation of each patient group; staff and visitor parking areas; waiting spaces; examination, treatment, recovery rooms and offices. Easy access and circulation for the frail and those with respiratory difficulties was required as was the maximization of sun penetration, as ultra-violet light sanitises and kills bacteria.

Public access is up a ramp and into a long veranda, north-east facing and concave, elevated above pavement level by the semi-basement parking level. The mezzanine level is reserved for TB patients; circulation to the upper floor is ramped, with an elevator for the disabled. Here patients wait on the naturally lit perimeters, with an island of treatment and laboratory spaces.



KZ-NIA 2001 AWARD OF MERIT MULTI-PURPOSE CENTRE at WIGGINS- UMKHUMBANE

New Dunbar Road, Cato Manor

Architects in Association: Matic + Van Zyl,
André Duvenage, Sally Adams, Urban Edge

Perhaps the largest of the submissions involving a team of different architectural practices, this development is an integral part of the Cato Manor Development Project, providing community facilities that include a library, hall and two schools.

Produced on a very tight budget on a site severely restricted by difficult terrain and soil conditions, merit is recognised in the dense assembly of the buildings on the hill top site. Despite the denseness, good spaces and spatial connections are established within and between the sets of buildings, to create a unified whole. Sensible choice of materials and detailing results in a robust yet appealing architecture that will maintain quality over time. Note was also made by the jury of the incorporation of landscaping into the project.

Some concern was expressed about the size of the internal courtyards to the schools in relation to the number of users, but this was recognised to be partly a consequence of the budget and site constraints. Special merit was however recognised in the extent to which different architects could collaborate to produce a coherent architecture that induces a sense of urbanity whilst achieving distinctiveness in each of the component buildings.

The brief for the design of the centre, consisting of a primary school for 800 learners, a secondary school for 1200, a community library and a

multi-purpose hall, spelt out the need to "demonstrate a new approach to institutional structures for large-scale development projects".

The concept evolved from this challenge and the topography of the site, with only a swathe of level land astride New Dunbar Road. This reality suggested the placing of the community buildings closest to the road, easily accessible to the public, and the creation of a precinct off which both are accessed, en route to the two schools.

The uniqueness of the project lies in the close relationship of the various buildings to each other on the least steep portion of the site, and the nature of the interspaces unified by their relationships to the public precinct.



Umkhumbane Library.



Community Hall and Secondary School at right.

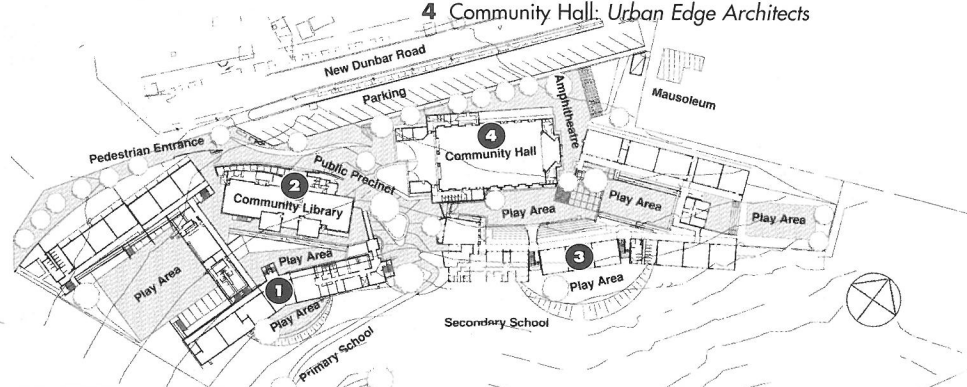
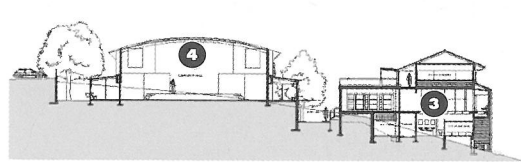


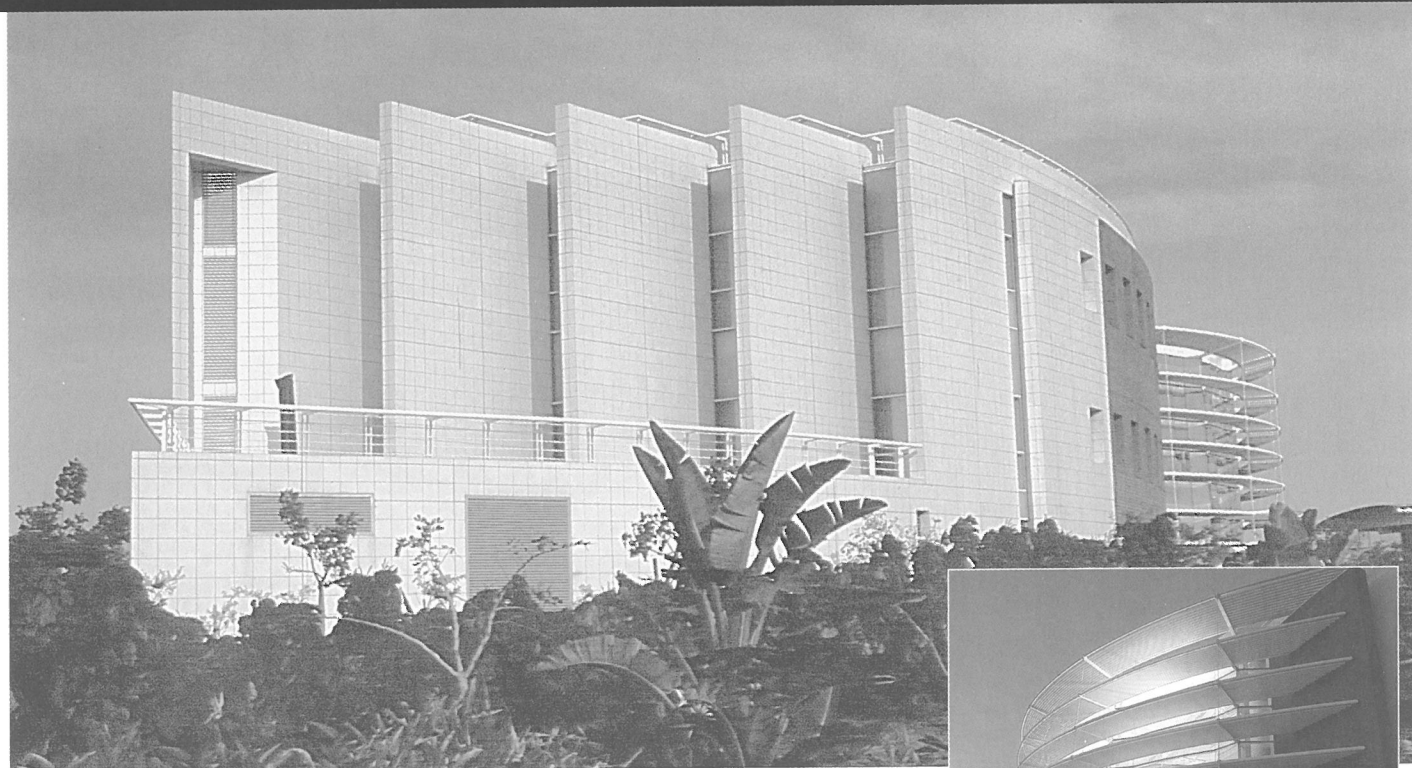
Primary School entrance.



Secondary School at left, Community Hall at right.

- 1 Wiggins Primary School: Matic + Van Zyl
- 2 Umkhumbane Library: Sally Adams Architect
- 3 Wiggins Secondary School: André Duvenage Architect
- 4 Community Hall: Urban Edge Architects





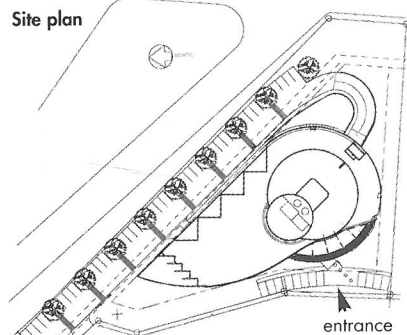
KZ-NIA 2001 AWARD OF MERIT
ALEXANDER FORBES BUILDING for
JOHNNIC PROPERTIES
 10 Torvale Crescent, La Lucia Ridge Office Estate
 Paton Taylor Associates Inc.

Set in the context of extensive new commercial development in La Lucia/Umlanga, this flagship building for a corporate client stands out for the consistent quality of the architecture, externally, internally and in its details. The interior planning maximises views over the Indian Ocean, and is organised to create a series of interesting and well-functioning spaces. Quality materials, textures and colours are combined to create a consistent

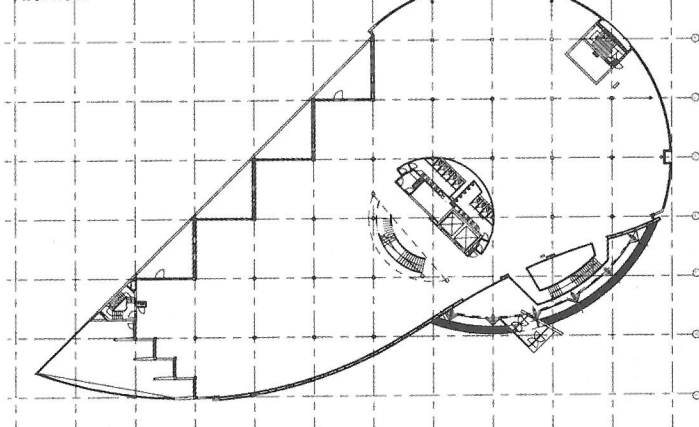
architectural experience, especially in the detailing and furnishings. The external form creates an appropriate visual prominence on its site to create a presence that qualitatively distinguishes it among other buildings in the area.

The site is endowed with splendid views both to the Indian Ocean and inland. While the design had to comply with the strictures contained in the development manual for the Estate, this intrinsic prospect was capitalized upon, by raising the building on a parking floor and by acknowledging views, tempered by orienta-

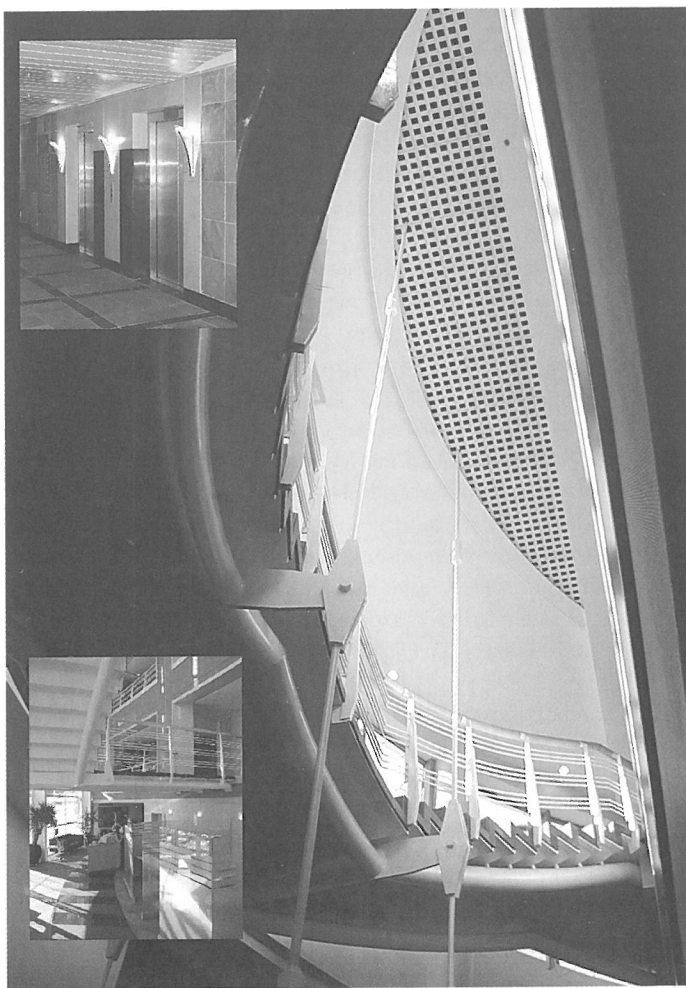
tion. Hence the stepped façade on the north, to afford better seaward views, the curved east, the convex south entrance, and the smaller windows to the inland views to the west.



First floor



The building was required to promote interactivity with easy floor communication. For this reason stairs are in high-volume spaces which provide 'release from the intensity of the office environment'.



KZ-NIA 2001
CONSERVATION AWARD
PLAISIR DU JARDIN
 102 Florida Road, Durban
 Emmett:Emmett Architects CC

This project was considered within the broader criteria for the conservation award used in the judging process.

The project involves the reuse of an historic house in the context of the historic precinct of Florida Road, Durban, for use as a commercial property requiring a floor area much larger than the original building.

Merit was perceived in the manner in which these difficult requirements were achieved. As seen from Florida Road, the original streetscape and historic character of the house is preserved, thus contributing to the larger conservation agenda of this part of the city. The interior, however, is gutted, and extended backwards to create the large area required internally. The resulting interior space not only meets the commercial needs, but also results in a spacious interior, with good natural lighting.

The building at 102 Florida Road was designed in 1902 as a "villa residence" by an unidentified author. Typically it had an asymmetrical gable atop a bay window to the street, with further bay windows to both the sitting and dining rooms, which opened to the wrap-around veranda.

While the fabric had deteriorated considerably due to lack of maintenance, but for the enclosure of the rear veranda, the building had survived intact for almost a century. Yet the owner had refused listed building status which,

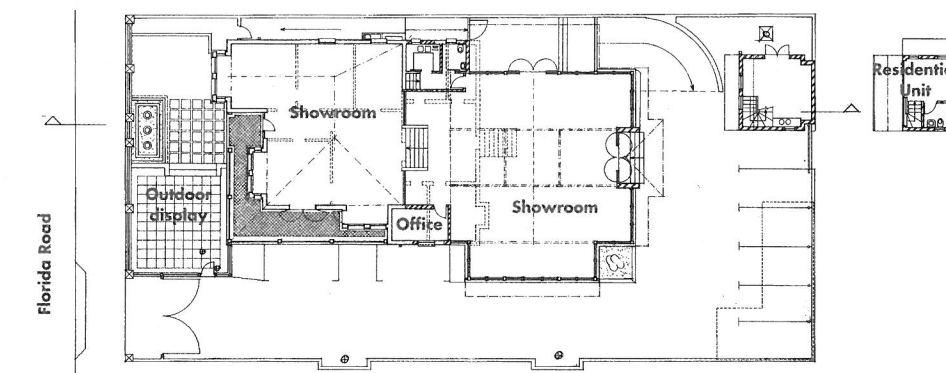
with the site zoned for 19 units, made its continued existence precarious.

When the building was sold, its contribution to the streetscape of Florida Road, an Architectural Heritage Precinct, facilitated the

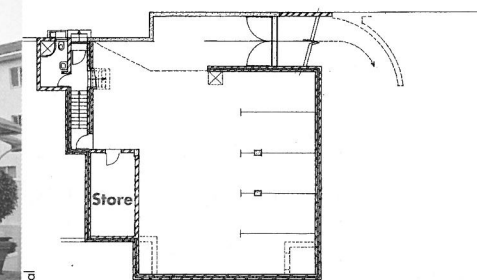
approval for its conversion to a garden furniture retail outlet. The brief called for high-volume showrooms, an outdoor garden ambience, parking space and the inclusion of an ancillary unit.



The internal walls were removed and the required high volume created by the removal of the ceiling and the insertion of new, exposed collar trusses. A flat roof links the house with the new and lower showroom, designed as a conservancy, with parking at the rear of the site and in a basement.



Ground



Lower level





KZ-NIA 2001 CONSERVATION AWARD DURBAN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTRE

St Thomas Road, Durban

Architects in Association: Bruce Clark,
Chen Sagnelli, John Frost, Roy Farren,
Urban Architects (Pty) Ltd.

The jurors were unanimous on two matters: that this project was deserving of an award, and that it should be in the conservation category.

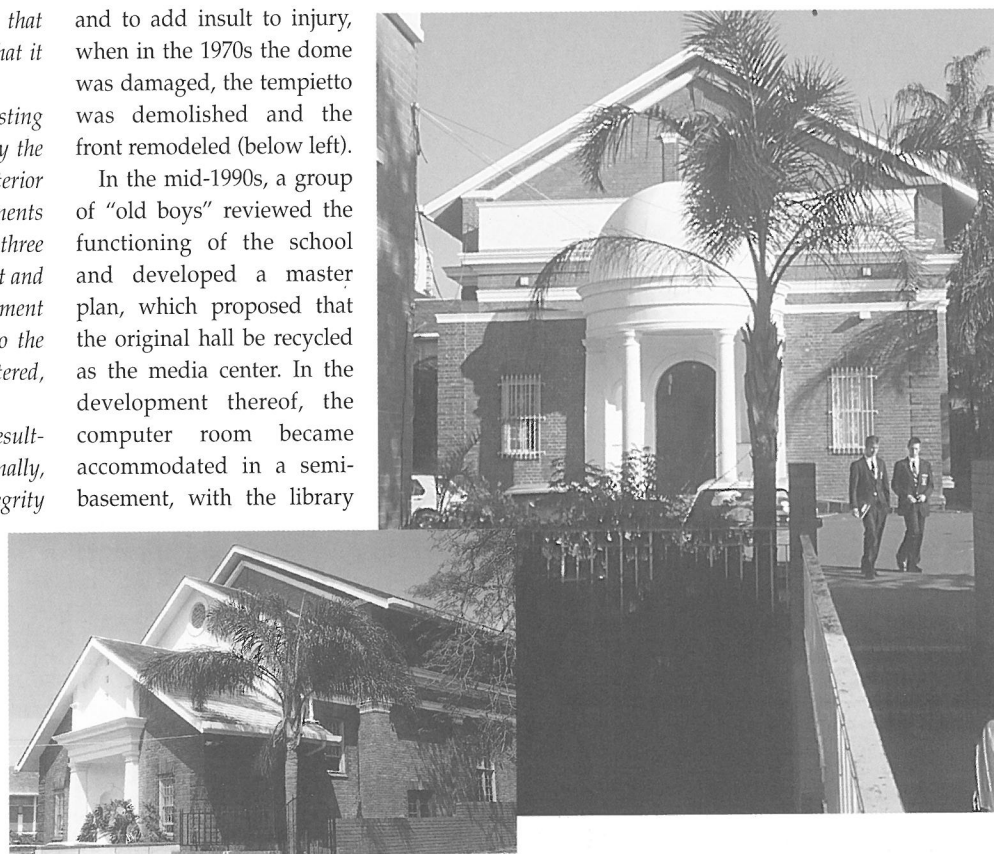
The project involves the re-use of an existing school hall, which has historic significance, by the insertion of a new media centre into the interior space. The complex programmatic requirements demanding a large area has been achieved over three levels within the interior space, to create a light and well-functioning centre. Besides the reinstatement of its distinguishing feature, the tempietto to the front, the exterior of the building remains unaltered, thus preserving its outward appearance.

Considerable merit was recognised in the resulting quality of the new spaces created internally, which nevertheless preserves the historic integrity of the original building and its streetscape values.

The hall by the architects of the Public Works Department was built in 1919. It is classical in concept, with walls of framed fields of brickwork, replete with rusticated pilasters, niches and bull's eyes, and stucco cornices, all deferring from the entrance, distinguished by a tempietto. With the building of a larger hall, this hall became the gymnasium,



on the main floor and suspended on a mezzanine level, thereby conserving the integrity of the hall space. To boot, the building was restored its dignity, with the tempietto reinstated (below right) and rededicated, as the 'Delville Wood Memorial Dome, 1916'. This project received a 2000 Durban Conservation Award.



Angela Shaw

Angela Shaw

Book Review

Wakkerstroom: A Re-assessment in Urban Conservation

As the title implies this conservation study, carried out by a group of senior architecture students under the direction of Prof Peters, is a revision of a previous study undertaken in 1995. It is also the latest in a series of such studies done within the School.

The impetus for almost all these studies originated in the local communities themselves, which typically do not have the technical expertise, or often the budgets to afford full scale professional help. For the School of Architecture the opportunity presented by a community's request was for the students to gain valuable 'hands-on' experience by applying the theories of conservation in a real life situation. The Wakkerstroom investigation was no different, however it did allow for a finer grain response due to the previous study.

The town is not a large one, in fact it is more correctly a dorp, one of many, and like those others, it suffers from a variety of problems, which are eroding the nation's built heritage outside of the main urban centers. Poverty and neglect are only two of the most obvious.

The bulk of the publication is written and illustrated by the students themselves and is based on their fieldwork. It consists of nine chapters each dealing with a selected aspect of the re-assessment and each one with a single author. For the information of the layman an appendix contains the major international charters, which articulate the standards which are supposed to govern all reputable conservation work.

One of the most neglected aspects of conservation locally, especially in the country towns, has been the problem of the ubiquitous township. Often larger than the town itself, the quality of life offered there is abysmal to say the least. This study is well aware of this and makes some brave attempts to meaningful address this issue.

Yet another interesting aspect of the study is the concept of extending the investigation into the equally important conservation of the surrounding landscape and the incorporation of sustainability and eco-design into future conservation strategies.

Other, perhaps less remarkable facets to the publication, are a revision of the listed buildings, a new townscape study and an extension of the cultural horizons both literally (outside of the town) and figuratively by extending the previous timeline.

While remembering that this is essentially a student study albeit whipped into shape by the editor, the publication will be a useful one not just for Wakkerstroom but also for the concerned layman. Beyond that, it gives a very good indication of the state of art – the act of conservation – in South Africa at present. Perhaps no surprises, but a workmanlike attempt to come to grips with a difficult problem – the conservation of our dorpe.

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