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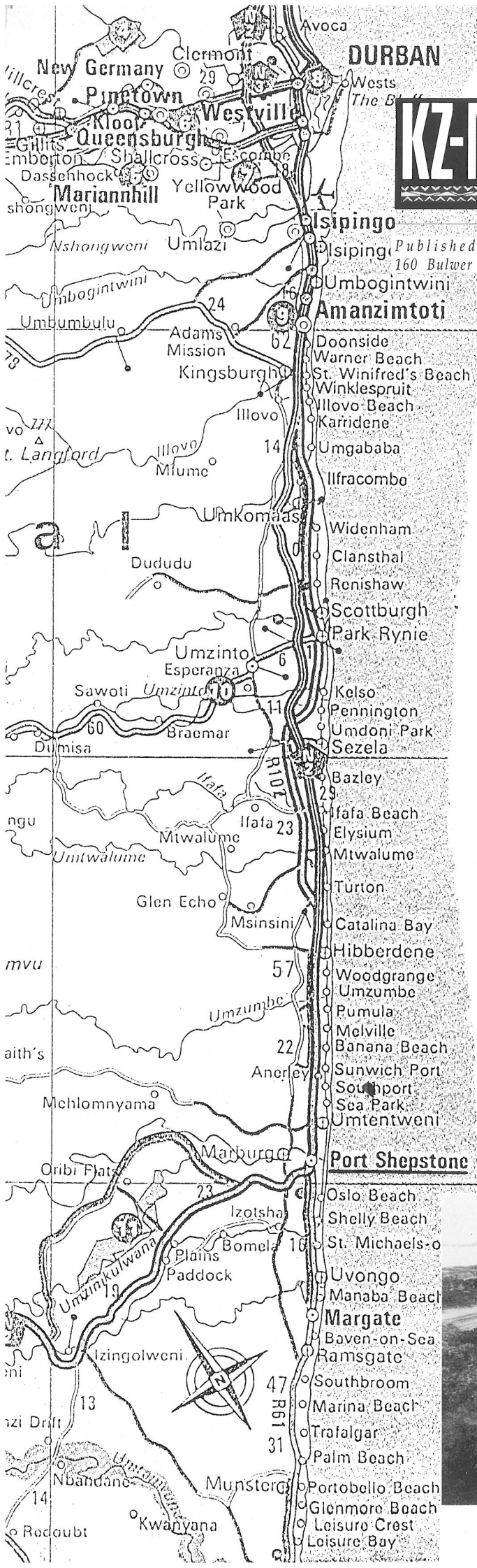
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KZ-NIA JOURNAL · ISSUE 1/1995 · VOLUME NO 20 · ISSN 0379-9301
Journal of the KwaZulu-Natal Institute for Architecture



The South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal



KZ-NIA JOURNAL · ISSUE 1/1995 · VOL 20 · ISSN 0379-9301

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Published by the KWAZULU-NATAL INSTITUTE FOR ARCHITECTURE
160 Bulwer Road, Glenwood, Durban 4001 · Telephone: (031) 21-7590 · Fax: (031) 21-7586

The South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal

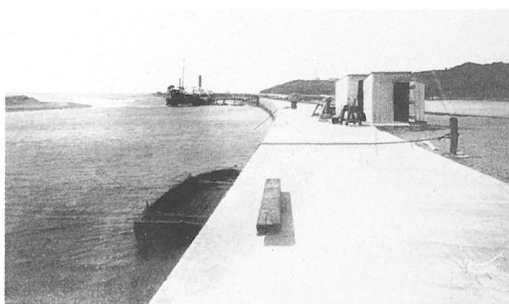
The 160km of coastline south of Durban is known as the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal. The area is characterised by a narrow ribbon of sub-tropical vegetation parallel to the Indian Ocean, with the railway line along the shore and

the N2 highway inland, and a necklace of towns, villages and holiday resorts strung along the old main road. On the fertile interior of this ribbon are farms densely cultivated with sugar cane, bananas and pineapples.

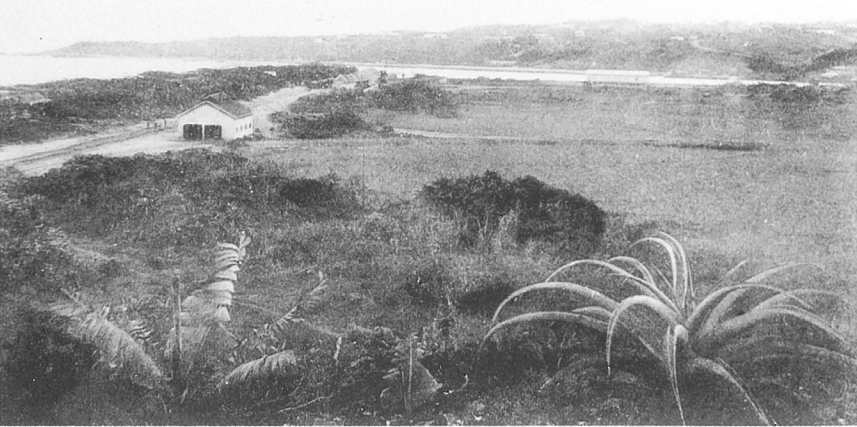
This is a coast of lagoons with rivers and streams crossing the sub-tropical ribbon at regular intervals. If it were not for the perennial bar of sand, Port Shepstone, which lies at the mouth of the Mzimkulu River, would probably still function as a port serving

not only the coast, but also the hinterland including Harding and Kokstad in East Griqualand. While Port Shepstone remains the largest town, Margate is the centre of the holiday playground with summer temperatures appreciably lower than Durban's.

While the region offers few locally available materials for building, architecture has the enviable advantage of being naturally screened in the shortest period of time with palms and lilies; strelitzias, seemingly always in flower; hibiscus; bougainvillea and frangipani.



Port Shepstone c. 1906.
Top: Police Station;
above: harbour mouth,
and, below: view of
town from north.
Reference: *Twentieth
Century Impressions of
Natal*.
COVER: Hibberdene
beach facilities.
Photograph: Craig
Hudson.



The South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal

Editorial

When I arrived on the South Coast two years ago, I was struck by the jungle of natural vegetation and an ever-present view of the sea. It may seem obvious that someone living in Ramsgate and working in Ramsgate should always be near the sea, but coming from Durban where a view of the sea means a special trip, this new backdrop was a welcome adjustment to my lifestyle.

Many holiday homes or units are commissioned by clients who live and work up-country. It is quite common for them to approach architects in their home area rather than here, to design and document their development. Again, this saps our local job market.

A rugged coastline, though scenic, is evidence of rough weather and high surf. The humidity and proximity of buildings

to the sea forces architects to utilise durable, low maintenance materials. Steeply sloping sites give fantastic views but again require clever design and plenty of engineer's advice! All these issues are seen as challenges rather than threats or problems and are outweighed by the benefits.

Good relationships are still the basis for most commissions in a small town. Word of mouth is your best PRO. This does not replace good business practice but rather enriches it.

The tourist industry is a solid generator of work, as is the growing retirement sector. In addition, Margate and Port Shepstone service a massive hinterland where very little infrastructure or development exists.

These small towns are characterised by the fact that no-one is anonymous – everyone is identified by the group to which he or she belongs (surfers, golfers, bowlers, fishermen, Rotarians, the Church etc.). A community building may serve one specific group but needs to be accessible to the general public as well. In this issue of the *Journal* we will be reviewing a few of these facilities. We have avoided retirement facilities and schools as the latter will be featured in a future issue. In closing, I would like to quote Svante Berg, a Swedish architect, who, I believe, describes in essence the starting point for the design of any community building:

Architecture is what you do for other people, for a client based on a commission. As an architect, you use other people's resources. This makes you responsible, towards your client and towards society. However you cannot be a good architect when your work is not done with artistry, which is such an essential element of architecture.

My thanks to Renée van Rensburg, Kevin Lloyd, Caroline Forbes-Hardinge, Roelof Meyer, Johann Schoeman and Roger Swinney for their help.

Marlene Heyns
Guest Editor

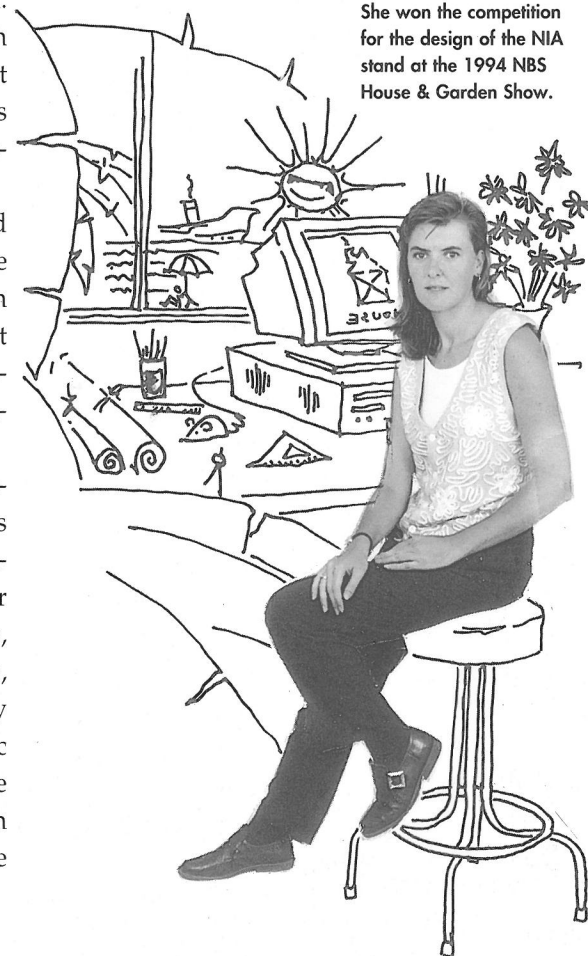
Marlene Heyns graduated from the University of Natal in 1990. Since then, she has travelled and worked in Europe, Israel and the USA. Before joining Theunissen Jankowitz, she worked for Carter-Brown & Baillon Architects and Gavin Bargate Architect. She won the competition for the design of the NIA stand at the 1994 NBS House & Garden Show.

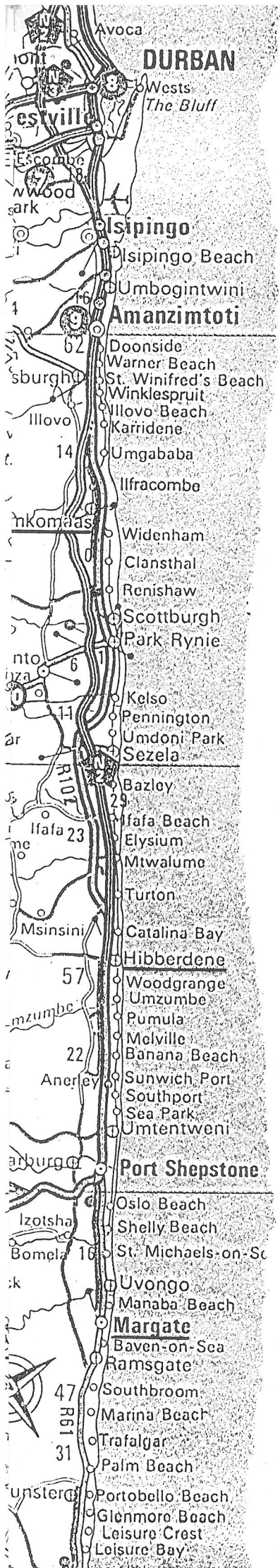


The strip of development wedged in between beaches and sugar cane fields, with road and rail lines traversing streams and river mouths – the typical South Coast characteristic. The inland highway is the N2 under construction at the time of the photograph.

Despite a seasonal fluctuating population, there remains a neighbourly attitude amongst the townsfolk. Living and working in this environment is rewarding, but not without its own challenges.

The local population has a limited understanding of the services offered by architects, and local developers prefer to use draughtsmen or designers, whose fees easily undercut those of architects. The situation has been aggravated by local municipalities, who do not strictly enforce the Reservation of Work for architects. With time however, clients are beginning to see the benefits of professional services.



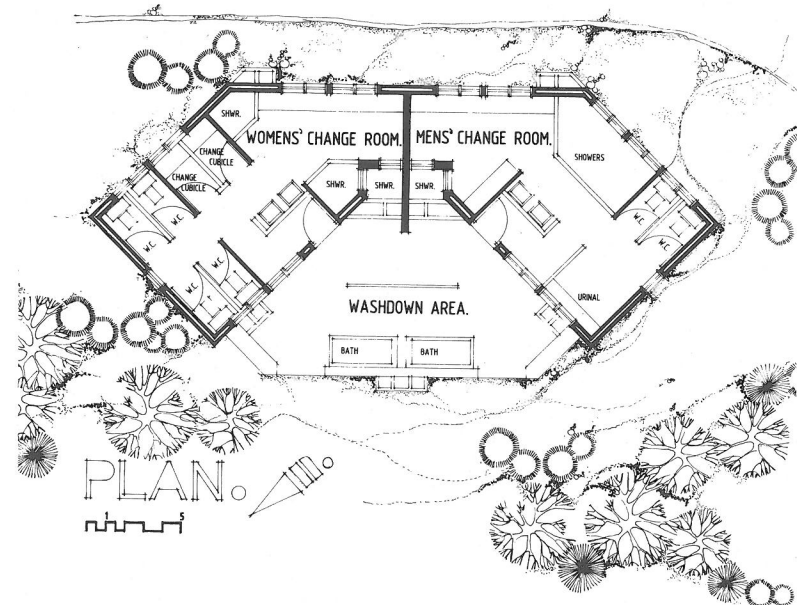


The South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal

The beaches

Changerooms at North Beach Umkomaas

The client's brief was to provide change facilities for the scuba divers and all beach-users.



In carrying out the brief the following factors had to be carefully considered:

- The siting of the building in a highly sensitive environmental area with due regard being given to the movement of people and vehicles through the dune area.
- Frequent flooding due to the proximity of the river mouth.
- The choice of

materials with regard to colour and specification owing to the visual impact on the surrounding environment and potential vandalism.

The building provides change and ablution areas for both sexes, with specialised rinsing facilities for diving gear.

The structure consists of a waterproofed concrete roof with facebrick walls colour-matched to the beach sand. Fixed louvre ventilation units have been installed; all external finishes are maintenance free and sanitary and other fittings are as vandal proof as possible.



Architects: Artek 4

The South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal

The beaches

Margate Beach Facilities

The client's brief was to provide a building on the main beach to house the following facilities:

1. Beach Office and public change rooms
2. Lifesavers' headquarters consisting of: duty room; first Aid room; Boathouse; and lookout Tower.

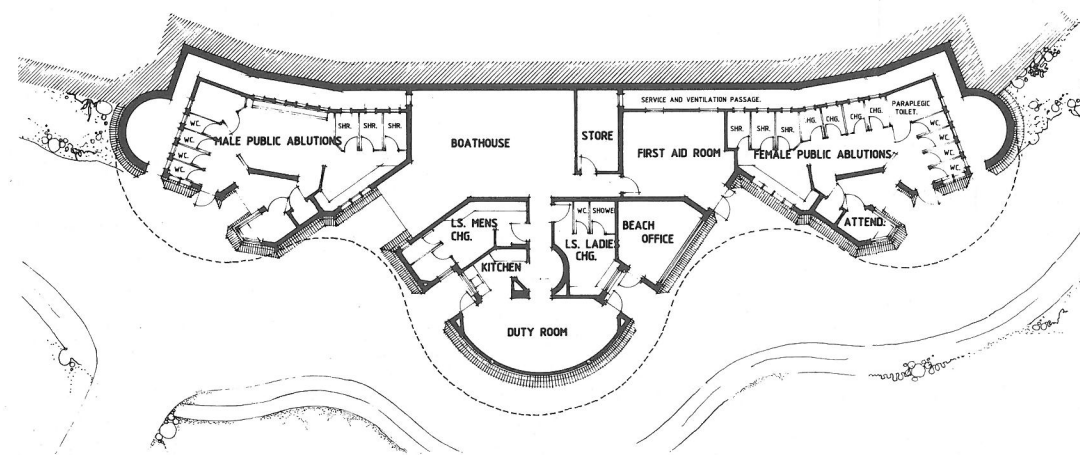
The location of the building took into account the geomorphology of the beach area; access and overview of the main beach; the context of the existing facilities; possible future development; and the beach itself with

its various seasonal activities.

The design criteria were:

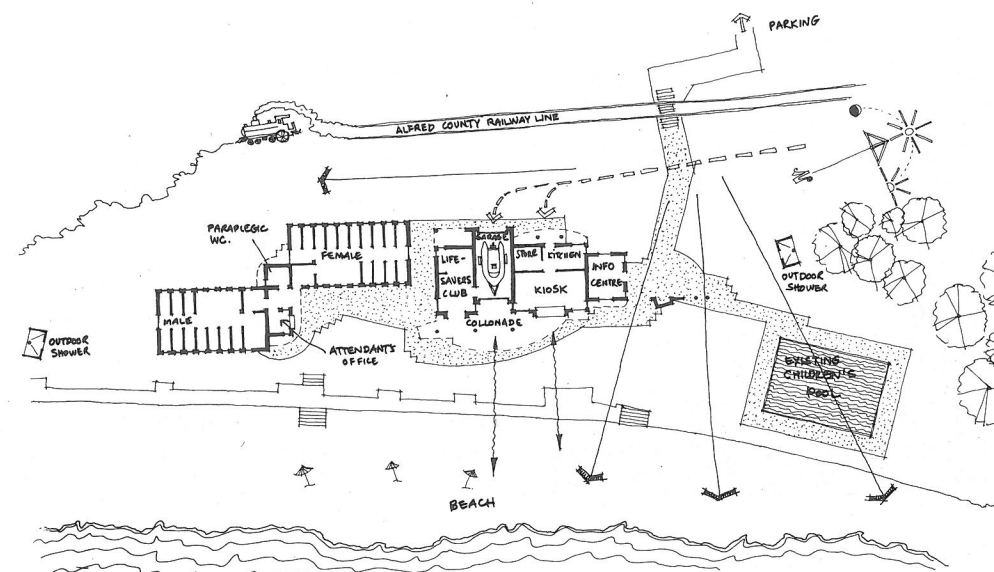
- it must be environmentally sensitive;
- create a seaside/holiday ambience; and
- it must be functional and easily recognisable as the building that accommodates the emergency facilities and Beach Office.

In order to achieve the above, the building took on an organic shape with well landscaped approaches and rear space that brings the ground level onto the roof creating a sunbathing area, and on approaching the beach from town presents you with a view over the beach instead of the "rear" of the building. In addition the organic shape helps to generate the required seaside holiday ambience as well as an environmentally sympathetic form. From the beach the building was to make a positive statement and be easily identified in an emergency.



Architects: Artek 4

Hibberdene Beach Facilities



The new beachfront facilities building at Hibberdene was one of several similar projects on the South Coast funded by the Natal Provincial Administration, through Local Authorities, during 1993/1994.

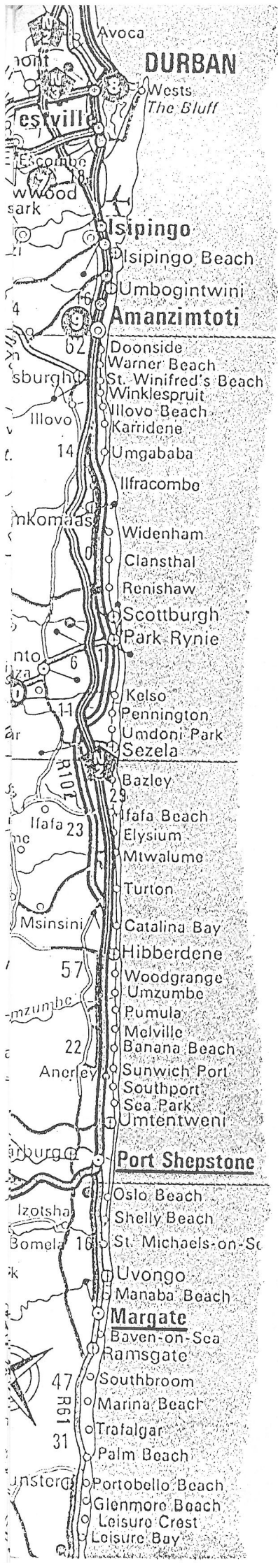
The new facilities consist of an information centre, kiosk, lifesavers' base and ablution facilities. The accommodation was designed in separate buildings, spaced in a fragmented, linear arrangement due to the narrow wedge-shaped site. The site is boxed in by a railway line at the back, and towards the ocean by an existing promenade and seawall. The approach across the railway line opens up a wide view onto the sea and beach, with picnic areas below trees surrounding a paddling pool.

The influence of the setting of sea and beach is captured in the curvilinear, elongated, fragmented forms on the plan and elevational treatment. 'Porthole' windows and stone-chip 'waves' combine with colour accents to strengthen the nautical and somewhat frivolous holiday feeling.

Johann Schoeman
Architects: Theunissen Jankowitz Architects, Margate
Structural Engineer: Mostert van der Berg & de Leeuw
Main Contractor: Carrick Construction

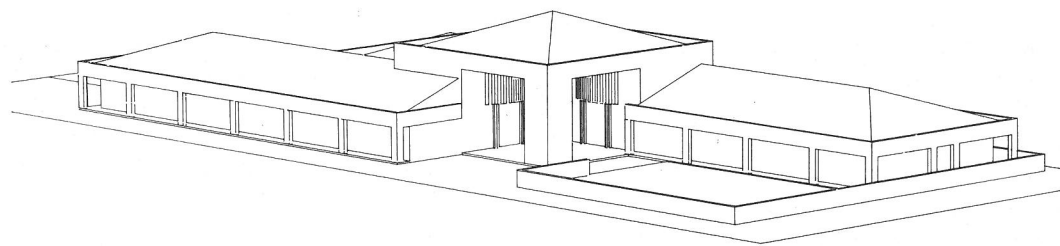


Craig Hudson



The South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal

Port Shepstone Civic Centre

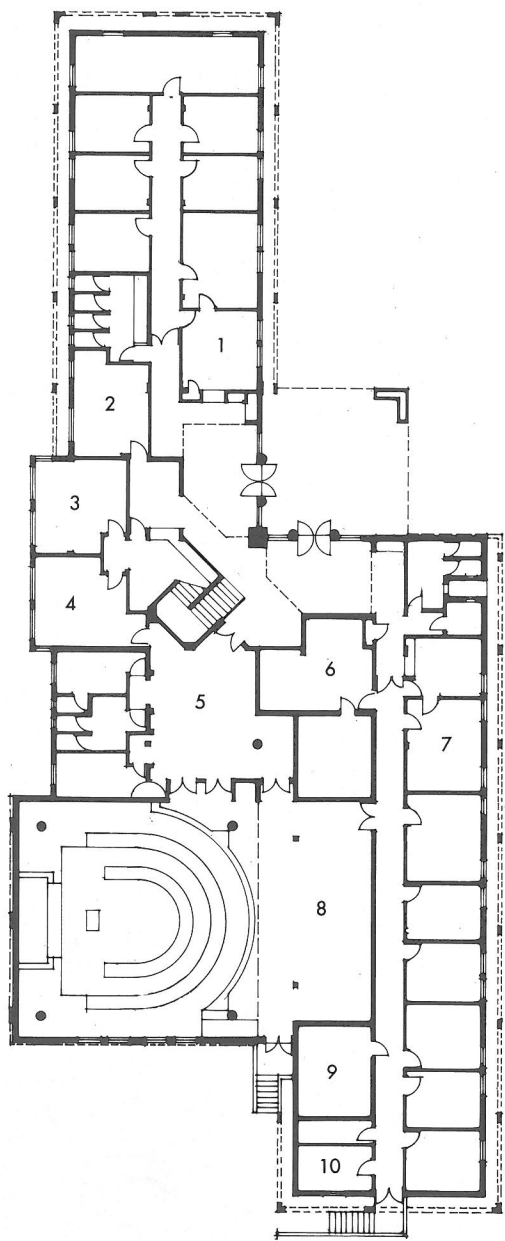


Although the project planning commenced before the transformations in local government, the main core of the building will be utilised by the Port Shepstone Local Negotiating Forum (or the Port Shepstone Municipality, as it may finally be referred to).

The main core consists of a Council Chamber seating 40 Delegates, an adjacent Committee Room/Public Gallery seating 44 people, a Reception area, and Offices for the management team.

An elongated plan form was necessitated by the narrow site, with road frontages on three sides. The building was designed for a further two floors with a framed concrete column, beam and slab system. Varying colour face-bricks were used to accentuate the outer colonnade and the recessed wall, and the band at window level.

Architects: *Theumissen Jankowitz Architects, Margate*
 Electrical Engineers: *Shepstone Krause Hayes*
 Mechanical Engineers: *AJ Milne Consultants*
 Quantity Surveyors: *Schoombie Hartman Inc.*
 Structural Engineers: *Kantey & Templer*
 Main Contractor: *Stocks Housing (Ntl) (Pty) Ltd*



- KEY:**
- 1. Health Services
 - 2. Manco Chairman
 - 3. Town Clerk
 - 4. Mayor's parlour
 - 5. Reception
 - 6. Registry office
 - 7. Town Secretary
 - 8. Committee room
 - 9. Strong room
 - 10. Tea kitchen

The South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal

Margate Art Gallery

The Borough of Margate has for some years been collecting works of art in various media produced by both local and national artists.

Encouraged and assisted by the Museum Services of the Province, the Borough decided to take the bold step of providing a building in which to house and exhibit the paintings, ceramics and pieces of sculpture, which at that stage were housed in the existing Civic offices. Not only would the public be able to view this collection but artists would now have a venue in which to exhibit their work and promote the cultural activities in the Margate area.

Owing to limited funds, the final brief was to provide a building of acceptable standard which would form the nucleus of the future Art Gallery and Museum complex, at a cost not exceeding R300 000.

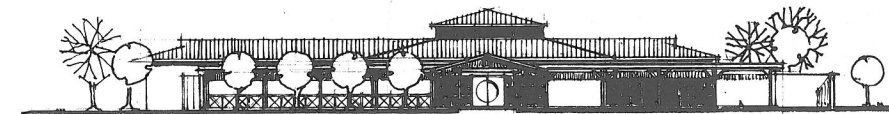
A master plan for the Civic Centre complex had first to be designed and approved before the siting and design of the Art Gallery and Museum could be achieved. The Art Gallery building would be self-sufficient until the completion of the envisaged centre.

The plan was evolved around a 3,3m x 3,5m 'viewing' module which enabled a gallery area of some 190m² with adjoining toilet facilities to be constructed within the strict budget limits.

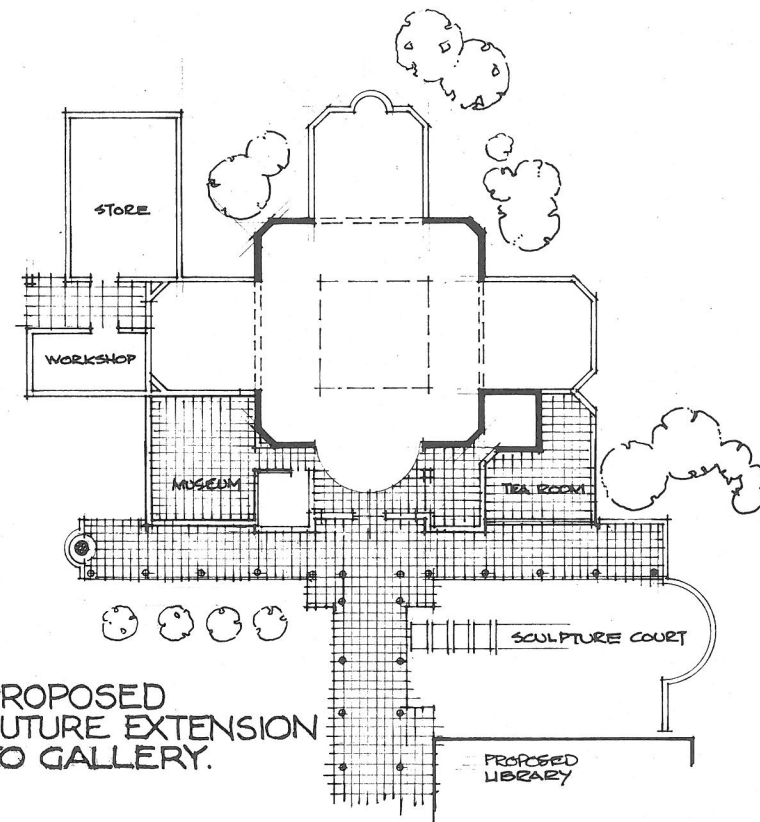
The necessary air conditioning/humidity control and lighting norms for this specialised building type were achieved, with clerestory natural lighting augmenting the latter.

The choice of external finishes was influenced by the proximity of the existing "Calci-brick" and concrete tiled roof of the Civic Offices, as well as the availability in future years of the selected materials.

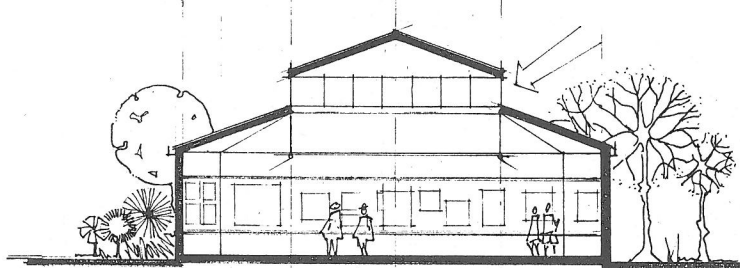
Architects: *Artek 4*

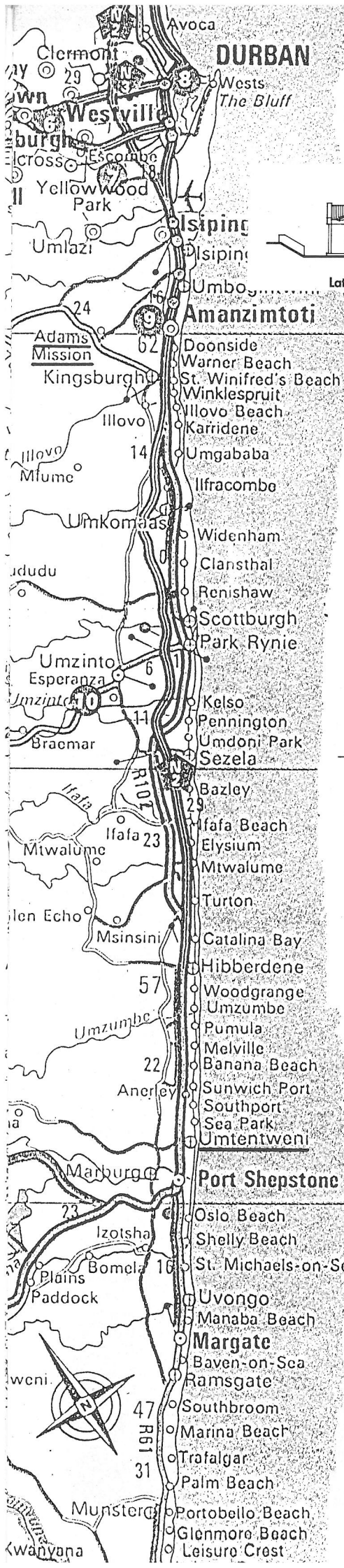


ELEVATION OF GALLERY AFTER EXTENSION.



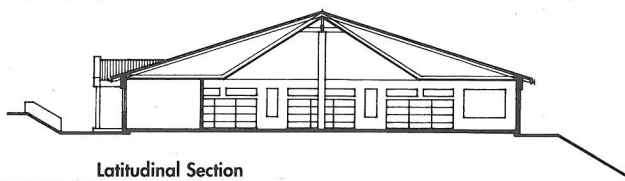
PROPOSED FUTURE EXTENSION TO GALLERY.





The South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal

Umtentweni Public Library



The Umtentweni Public Library was completed in 1993. It is located to meet the needs of the communities of Umtentweni and the surrounding areas, being situated on a major north-south road, on a platform carved out of thick Natal coastal bush, and adjacent to a proposed shopping mall.

The low-slung appearance belies the airy, cool interior. Built on a tight budget with security a major criterion, the small windows frame views of the lush vegetation outside. Careful positioning of these windows, complemented by artificial lighting, creates a well lit interior.

The exposed roof members with the ceiling on the rake open up the central library space, creating a high double-volume area. Built out of concrete block, plastered and painted, a tiled roof, and shielded by being below the road level, the building fits snugly into its environment.

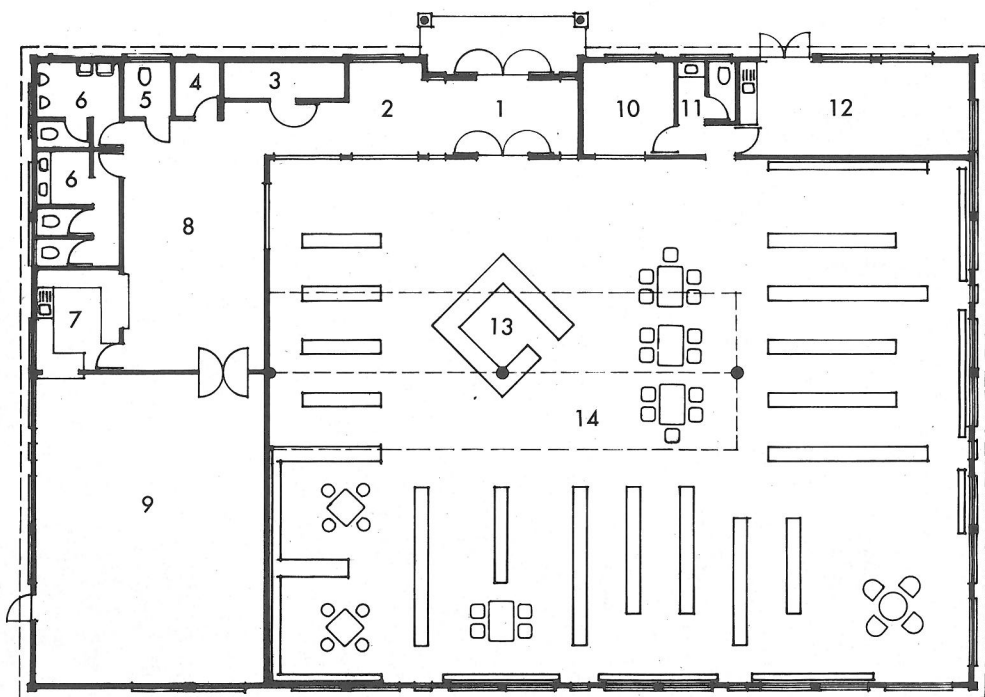
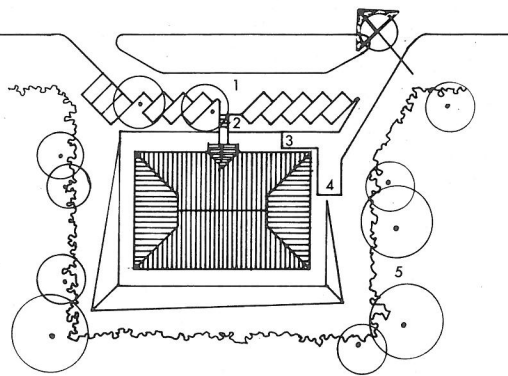
Client: Umtentweni Town Board
 Architect: McLagan & Plekker Architects
 Engineer: Kantej Templar
 Quantity Surveyor: Vivier Joubert & Versveld

LEFT: Site Plan

- 1. Parking
- 2. Main entrance
- 3. Delivery bay
- 4. Disabled parking
- 5. Indigenous bush

BELOW: Plan

- 1. Entrance foyer
- 2. Display area
- 3. Chair store
- 4. TV store
- 5. Disabled WC
- 6. Public WC's
- 7. Tea kitchen
- 8. Entertainment foyer
- 9. Group activities room
- 10. Librarian's office
- 11. Staff WC
- 12. Workroom
- 13. Issue desk
- 14. Main library



The South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal

Resource Centre, Adam's Mission

The original brief was to provide a community building that could function as a library. As building use was to some extent conjectural, the library facility was therefore planned as a self-contained unit that could be isolated either with or without the reference section.

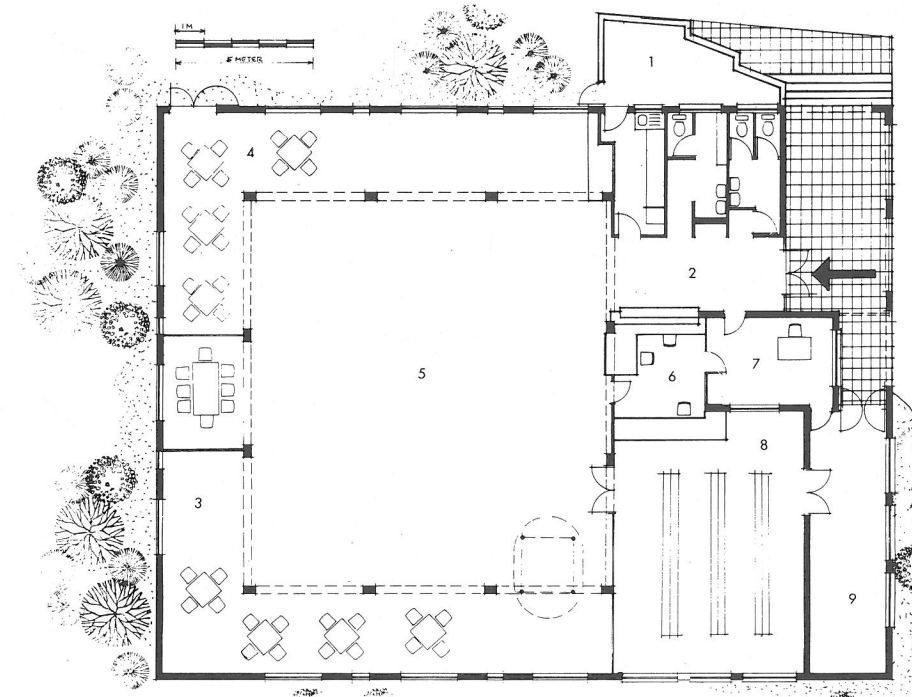
The local community was consulted and a decision taken to plan for tight control of incoming and outgoing books.

The centre section is a double void, with concrete frame and timber trusses. The kitchen and toilet facilities provide for community functions of any type. The floor tile pattern guides the setting out of furniture.

The single-volume surrounding areas are divisible by demountable screens allowing for individual teaching areas.

The original proposal included a small rondavel roof on poles where children could hear folk tales. Unfortunately, funding would not allow it's inclusion.

Client: KwaZulu-Natal Government
 Funding source: Durban Corporation
 Architect and Principal Agent: Kass & Watkins
 Structural Engineer: Dennis Cress & Associates
 Electrical Engineer: Bosch & Associates



ABOVE: Plan

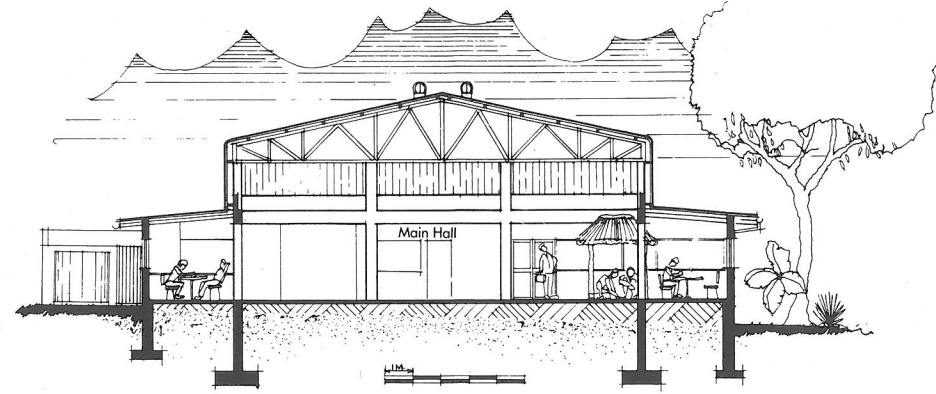
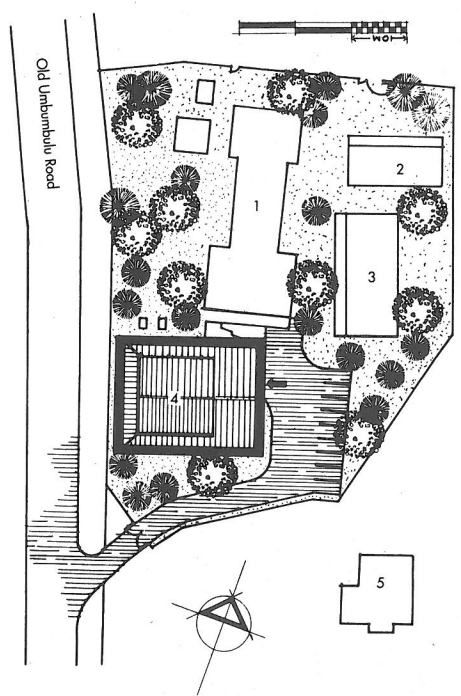
- 1. Kitchen yard
- 2. Entrance
- 3. Verandah
- 4. Teaching/Study areas
- 5. Main hall — double volume
- 6. Control room
- 7. Office

8. Reference library

- 9. Store and stock room

RIGHT: Site Plan

- 1. Hoskens Hall
- 2. Post Office
- 3. Classrooms
- 4. Resource centre
- 5. House





The South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal

Folweni Adult Learning Centre

My first meeting with the Folweni Committee took place in October 1987. The brief was to design a building that would provide facilities for an adult learning centre. The community had a general idea of the type of training required, eg. functional literacy, sewing, cooking, first-aid, motor mechanics; but it was difficult to assess how many people would support the centre. This meant providing a mix of room sizes, from a multi-purpose training hall to smaller training workshop spaces.

The committee requested the following:

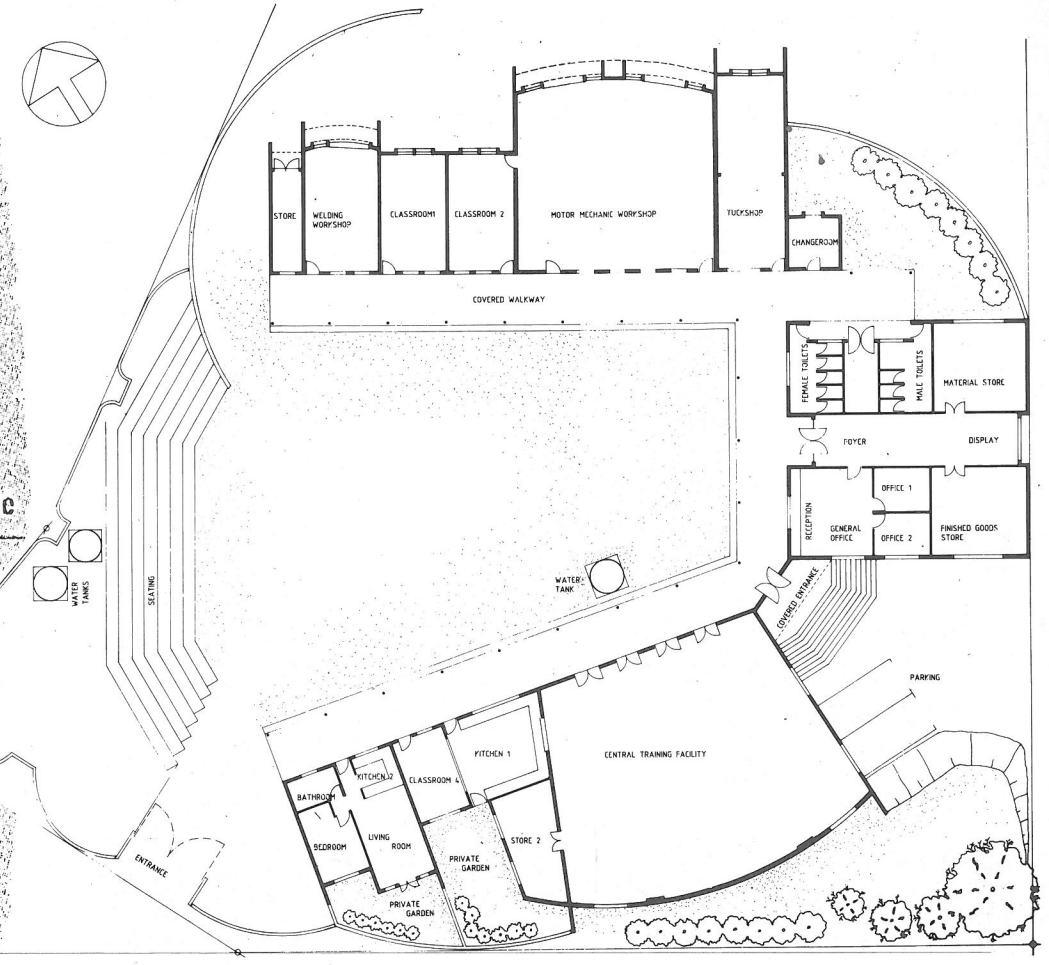
- that the building should not resemble a

“standard government hand-out”;

- no high security fences, which would make the complex look hostile; and
- a master plan of the building should be prepared, so that construction could be undertaken in stages, as funding became available.

The site is located in Folweni Township, approximately 30km south of Durban, in the Umbumbulu district. The Community obtained the site from the Regional Authority.

The design solution was to use the external perimeter of the buildings as the line of security through which access is gained, at controlled



points, to an open court. Most of the rooms open onto the court and are linked by means of a covered walkway. The open court can be used for gatherings and spectators can make use of the stepped seating.

For the construction of phase I, the community, assisted by staff from the KwaZulu Training Trust, managed to raise R800 000 through private sector donations and a low-interest loan from the Development Bank of Southern Africa. For phase II, the Isipingo Prospecton Rotary Club applied on behalf of the community for a grant of R310 000 from the Joint Services Board.

Construction
Phase I (1991): The need to contain building costs led us to bypass the traditional ‘main contractor’ approach and to investigate a managed ‘owner builder’ style of construction. This phase was managed by a project team consisting of the Community (assisted by KTT), the Architect/Project Manager, the Quantity Surveyor (also in charge of purchasing materials), and the Structural Engineer.

Phase I comprised the administration offices, public toilets, a multi-purpose training hall, the kitchen, store room, and a caretaker’s flat.

KTT provided training for a group in the community who started a concrete block-making business on the site. Once they had mastered the process, bricks were purchased from them for the construction of the complex. This group is still operating successfully from the centre.

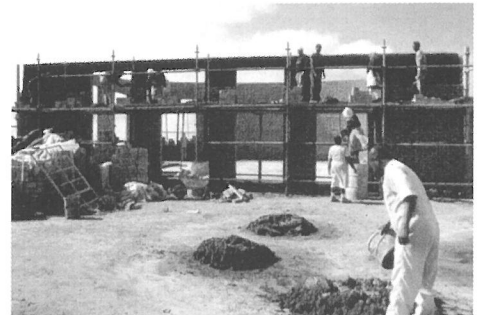
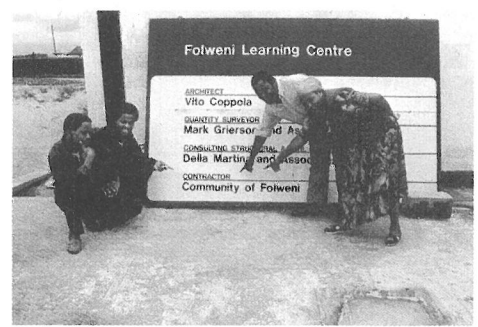
Phase II (1992): This phase comprised the teaching workshops. With the experience gained during construction of phase I, the project team was modified as follows:

- Community – providing the labour;
- Architect – providing the traditional professional service; project/construction management; materials purchasing; and cost control;
- Engineer – providing foundation and retaining wall design.

Conclusion
 The Umbumbulu area was declared an unrest area, and Folweni was the scene of rampant

violence for many years. The shells of many destroyed houses can still be seen around the the Folweni Adult Learning Centre. The centre owes its success to the dedication of the community to the upliftment of its people.

Architect: Vito Coppola



ABOVE: Community leaders with Folweni in the background; Members of the community proudly point to their entry on the consultants board; Work by the community for the community



People & Practices

KwaZulu-Natal Institute for Architecture

On 1 March, Sylvia Grobler, Secretary to the Institute, celebrated 30 years of service to the Institute. Congratulations!

Natal School of Architecture

With effect from 1 January, Professor Walter Peters has been appointed to the second Chair in the Department of Architecture.

Corobrik Student of the Year

Winner of the 1994 KwaZulu-Natal regional Corobrik Architectural Students’ competition was Don Albert for his thesis “An Urban Transport Node”.

Obituary: Gary Kelly 1963 -95

Gary Michael Kelly died tragically on 29 January 1995. He qualified as an architect at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1989 and joined the Physical Environment Service Unit in the Department of Development Control of the City of Durban in September 1993. He fitted in very quickly; and his extrovert nature and industrious approach permeated the areas in which he worked. The Department is devastated at his passing. He leaves his wife Ann, and a gap in the lives of all who worked with him.

Joan Seirlis

Membership

- New Members**
 TP Lewis – (Ordinary) – Shop 12 Granada Centre, Chartwell Drive, Umhlanga Rocks 4320
 Mrs LD Ignat – (Ordinary) – PO Box 412, Empangeni 3880
- Change in Address**
 Mrs JAM Kode (née MacKenzie) to 3 St Johns Wood, Lambert Road, Morningside 4001
 BMB Stafford (Stafford Associate Architects cc) to 13th Floor, Metlife Building, 391 Smith Street, Durban 4001
 HA Thompson to 69 Buckingham Road, Kloof 3610
 HLH Cockerill to PO Box 1308, Wandsbeck 3631
 AC Hallam to 22 Springvale Road, Westville 3630
 ND Hayes Hill to 23 Shutter Road, Glenwood 4001
 DC Moffett to PO Box 2096, Empangeni 3880
- Change in Partnership, Practice etc.**
 Mrs TL Gevers is now practising under the style of Gevers & Gevers Architects from PO Box 2224, Pietermaritzburg 3200
 PR Ries is now practising under the style of Peter Ries Architect from PO Box 998 Kloof, 3640
 Mrs VM Dalrymple is now practising as Ing Jackson & Dalrymple Architects from PO Box 229, Empangeni 3880
- Change in Class of Membership**
 Ms AB Butler AnT to Ordinary
 GB Bartley Ordinary to Retired
 EE Jackson AnT to Ordinary
 Ms AJ Lead AnT to Ordinary
- Deceased**
 Tom Murgatroyd · Gary Kelly