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**Black heritage resources in central Durban** · Vol 45 · 3/2020 · ISSN 0379-9301



# 2020 SAIA-KZN

## EDITOR'S NOTES

**B**lack Lives Matter. These three words have been said many times in many ways. And they still need to be said. Today. (<https://blacklivesmatter.com>)

In this issue we feature black heritage resources in central Durban, a built environment that has its origins in settler colonialism, which located buildings 'invisibly', that is, in marginalised settings, for the accommodation and control of black people both indigenous and exogenous.

The article by Len Rosenberg is an edited adaptation of his recent Ph.D. thesis and presents the context for the ways in which segregation shaped central Durban, facilitated by architecture.

Despite forced removals and erasures or 'bleaching' during the apartheid era, a fair portion of this marginalized legacy has survived and remains in use. This Journal issue aims to help make 'visible' that heritage and thereby promote appropriate curatorship.

Also included is a courthouse in Verulam, the design of which was informed by the abandoned and decayed prison on the site; a new teaching building 'slipped in' on Howard College campus of UKZN; and a restaurant building 'in deep water' of Durban's harbour refurbished.

I hope that you will enjoy a read of all of this and the 'travel diary' on Ghana. Stay safe,  
*Walter Peters, Editor*

### SAIA-KZN NEWS

#### SAIA-KZN Regional Committee, 2020 - 2022

The outcome of the recent election for the new regional committee is as follows: Ian Bell, Antonio Blanco, Robert Brusse, Adheema Davis, Monique Gillespie, Somers Govender, Pauline Hayward, Richard Horner, Mfundo Maphumulo and Sikhumbuzo Mtembu (right). At a subsequent meeting Sikhumbuzo Mtembu was elected President with both Adheema Davis and Monique Gillespie as Vice-Presidents.

#### SAIA-KZN President

After serving two terms as vice-president, Sikhumbuzo Mtembu has been elected SAIA-KZN President for the years 2020-22.

Skura, as he is known to all, was born in Flagstaff, Eastern Cape, and moved to Durban to pursue his studies in Architecture in 1999 at Technikon Natal, now Durban University of Technology. On graduating in 2001, he accepted an internship with Stauch Vorster Architects, Durban. With a bursary by that practice, Skura enrolled at UKZN for the professional degree, M.Arch, which he completed in 2007 in emphatic fashion by earning the title of *Corobrik* Regional student of the year.

The topic of his design dissertation 'A new commuter station for King's Park sports precinct' inadvertently triggered his involvement in



Photo: Jethro Snyders

station modernisations. Most of the projects were carried out while in the Durban office of the practice Architectural Design Associates, until in 2012 he commenced practice for his own account as Striation Architects, a name derived from the patterns on a rock forged by the forces of water and wind.

Besides his input in the KZN Institute and guest-editing *Journal 3/2018 Changing Colour*, Skura was appointed a representative on Region 5 (Africa) of the Union of International Architects (UIA) Young Architects and Students' Committee in 2014, and he was elected chairperson of the Green Building committee of the Africa Union of Architects (AUA) for the period 2018-21.

#### UKZN Architecture Learning Site

The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) remains confident that with the delay to the commencement of the 2021 academic year caused by Covid-19, the governmental Department of Higher Education and Training, will approve the new B.Arch (Hons) degree for timeous implementation as of March.

Students who already hold an honours degree or postgraduate diploma in Architecture, may enrol for the one-year coursework masters' degree in 2021. Students within the current, two-year, M.Arch programme will have until 2022 to complete the degree. Most important, UKZN remains a fully accredited Architecture learning site.

#### Architect among 'Top 200 Young South Africans'

Each year, the weekly newspaper, *Mail & Guardian*, publishes their choice of 200 Young South Africans aged between 18-35. Of the 6000 nominations received, Jhono Bennett, a 2007 BAS-graduate of UKZN was chosen, possibly the first time an architect has ever made the grade.

Following on from his professional M.Arch degree, conferred with distinction by University of Pretoria in 2011, Jhono co-founded '1to1 – Agency of Engagement' in Johannesburg, a design-led social enterprise. This pursuit saw Jhono being chosen first as an Ashoka Global Social Entrepreneurial Fellow in 2015, an honour conferred on "individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social, cultural and environmental challenges" before only a year later being selected for the Young African Leaders Initiative, a programme initiated by former US-President, Barack Obama, which enabled participation in a summer programme of the University of California, Berkeley, and a Mandela-Washington Fellowship.

After eight years of co-leading 1to1, Jhono took on a sabbatical teaching appointment at CEPT University, Ahmedabad. During this time, he was accepted as a Ph.D. candidate within the EU-funded Communities of Tacit Knowledge (TACK) programme, offered by Bartlett School of Architecture, University College of London. Here he began in September 2020, while continuing as an adviser to 1to1. *Many congrats, Jhono!*



#### Correction: Journal 2/2020, Point Promenade

The curriculum vitae of John Ferendinos, p3, should have included a significant achievement in his adopted country, namely the elevation as a director of Cox Architecture in 2017.

**COVER:** A streetscape in Durban's Block AK, perhaps of the early 1960s, awaiting 'forced removal' of residents, expropriation and demolition of property (Source: Mohamed Vahed)

This journal, now in its 45th year of publication, has from inception been sponsored by *Corobrik*.



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# ORIGINS & SITING, VULNERABILITY, THREATS & SURVIVORS



THE LIVING, CULTURAL, political and commercial urban space occupied by the collective of African, Indian and coloured people, referred to here as the black presence, as opposed to non-European or non-white, was distinct yet as 'invisible' as possible to the privileged racial group of the colonial and apartheid periods. This invisibility is reflected in Durban's urban history, particularly its spatial development and built environment.

The urban space, perceived to be for whites, has been documented, visually illustrated, its heroes honoured and the architecture preserved, whilst the 'invisible' black presence was marginalized before being 'bleached' from central Durban by the process of 'forced removals', which started in earnest in the late 1950s and continued until the mid-1980s.

Race played an important role in the spatial development of cities in South Africa, and Durban had been a leading proponent since the late 19th century. According to Caroline Knowles, Professor of Sociology at University of London, built environments are shaped by a past recognised in some of its "monuments and markings" whilst omitting some of that past, and that "race making is a spatial practice, and space contains important information about racial grammar as forms of social practice to which race gives rise" (2003: 97).

This article examines the spatial evolution and built environment of central Durban to demonstrate a connection between space and race, and argues that the practice of 'race making' was governed by

attitudes and legislation that enabled the clustering of blacks into undesirable spaces from the 1870s on.

## The 'Old' Borough of Durban, 1854

When Durban acquired borough status in 1854, the settlement pattern around the Bay of Natal consisted of three dispersed clusters of communities at varying stages of development. Congella, a small residential area had been established by Boer trekkers at the western end of the Bay; British endeavors had established a nascent town on its northern shore in 1824; and a rudimentary settlement that served maritime interests on the Point near the mouth of the Bay. The 'old' borough included these three nodes within the land that stretched up to the Berea ridge, the boundary of which is marked today by Peter Mokaba (Ridge) Road, with the farms of Cato Manor, Brickfield and Springfield inland.

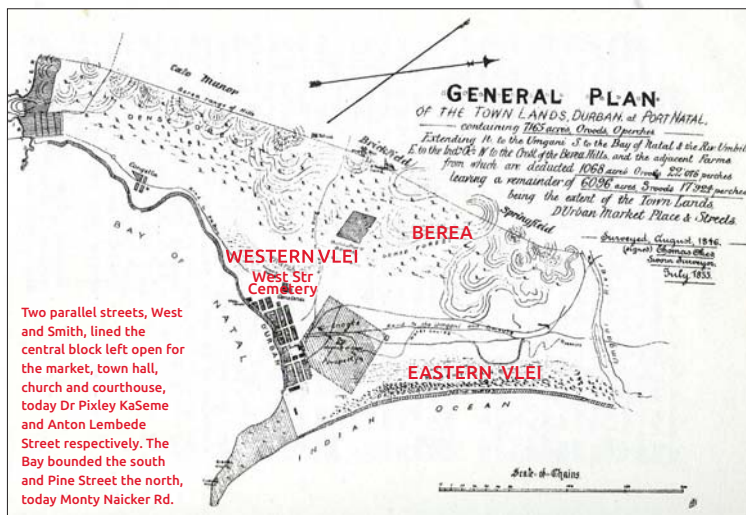
The main geographic elements were the Bay, the dry portion of land on which the town was laid out between two marshlands known as the Eastern and Western vleis respectively, the Berea hills in the west and the sea frontage to the Indian Ocean on the east.

## A diverse population from the beginning

Besides [European] white settlers, Boer and British, Durban as of 1860 had a growing Indian population in addition to the African. In 1862 the black presence in the fledgling town of 2 567 white settlers consisted of 1 593 Africans and 153 Indians. An early reference to a separate 'mixed and others' group, that later became classified as coloured\* was in a census conducted in 1904 which listed 31 302 Europeans, 18 929 'Natives', 15 631 Indians and 1980 'mixed and others' consisting of Griquas, Hottentots, St Helenians, 'coloured Cape people' and Mauritians (Mayor's Minute, 1904: 70).

Different processes and mechanisms were employed to marginalise and exercise control over Africans, Indians and coloureds, but the focus of segregation was initially directed at the two larger race groups, African and Indian. »

\* See Russell, G (1899). or Kearney (2013: 1252).



Two parallel streets, West and Smith, lined the central block left open for the market, town hall, church and courthouse, today Dr Pixley KaSeme and Anton Lembede Street respectively. The Bay bounded the south and Pine Street the north, today Monty Naicker Rd.

Fig 1. The three original settlement nodes of Congella, town and Point indicated on a map of the 'old' Borough of Durban by surveyor Thomas Okes, 1855 (Russell, 1899).

# PLAN OF DURBAN

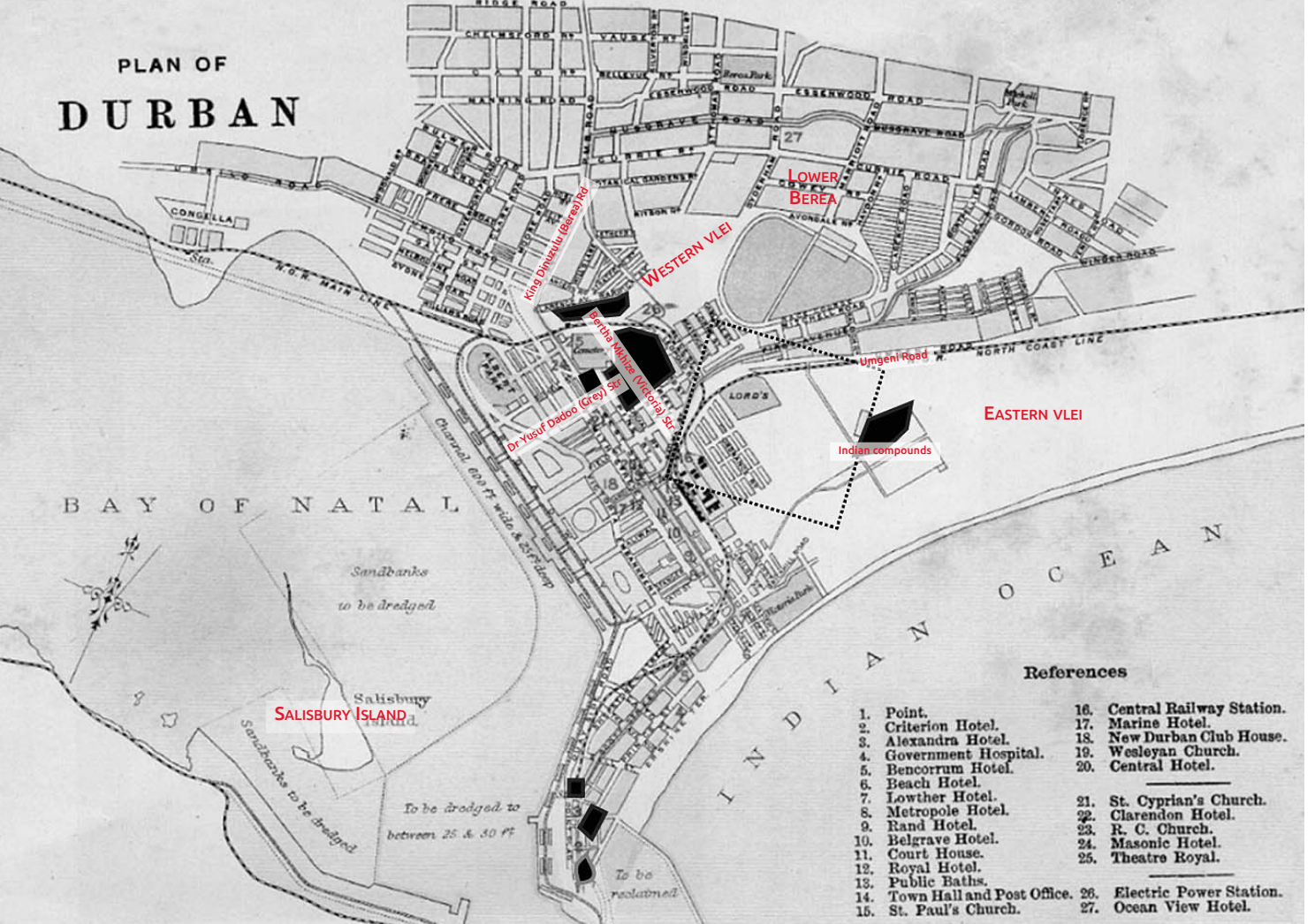


Fig 2. Black presence in central Durban by 1903 (Harrison, C (1903) Natal – an illustrated official railway guide and handbook of general information. London: Payne Jennings).

## COLONIAL AND UNION PERIOD SPATIAL PRACTICE: MARGINALISATION

TOP: Thokoza Women's Hostel, corner Dr Yusuf Dadoo (Grey) Street and Gladys Manzi Road (formerly Dartnell Crescent). (Source: Local History Museum [LHM] ) [36 on centre-page map]

BOTTOM: Dalton Men's Hostel. Dalton Rd corner Sydney and Canberra Rds, Congella. (LHM) [17 on centre-page map]



**Legislative measures: Indians.** By the early-1870s Indians were squatting on land at the foot of the Berea, by 1880 a number of concentrations had developed on the Western vlei, while yet others settled at the west end of the fledgling town. Measures were then introduced to control Indian immigration, trade and particularly the location of living and trading areas.

White settler concerns about Indians settling in their midst centered on habits and customs and resulted in the passing of the Retail Dealers' Act in 1897, which steered Indians from Durban's three main streets, West, Smith and Pine (today Dr Pixley KaSeme Street, Anton Lembede Street and Monty Naicker Road respectively) towards the Yusuf Dadoo (Grey) Street area. The latter then developed as the Indian commercial and residential hub, occupied mainly by the trading class, and subsequently expanded towards King Dinizulu (Berea) Road on the northwest, straddling the Western vlei, and northward adjacent to Umgeni Road.

**Legislative measures: Africans.** At the beginning of the 20c legislation was directed at the increasing African population. The Beer, Togat (casual labour hired by the day) and Locations Acts marked the beginning of an influx control system for Africans (Swanson, 1961: 15), which developed into the notorious 'Durban system' administered by the Native, later, Bantu Affairs Department.

**The 'Durban system'.** The apparatus of control over the presence of Africans in the city was funded by the municipal monopoly on the brewing and sale of sorghum beer. The basic components of the 'Durban system' were breweries, beerhalls and barracks.

This monopoly was critical for the control over employment, housing and social space. It was also a lucrative business and provided the funds that built beerhalls, rudimentary residential accommodation, schools, social centres or recreational facilities for Africans. The 'Durban system' essentially made African males fund, through the beer they consumed, the construction of basic facilities and the administration that controlled and policed their lives.

**Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923.** The introduction of the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 linked African lodgings to employment, by making employers responsible for providing housing for their African workers. This Act entrenched the provision of hostels, barracks and private quarters. The municipality, railways, harbour, commercial enterprises, nursing homes and blocks of residential flats all had to comply with this requirement (Research Section, Dept of Economics, 1952: 325-327). »

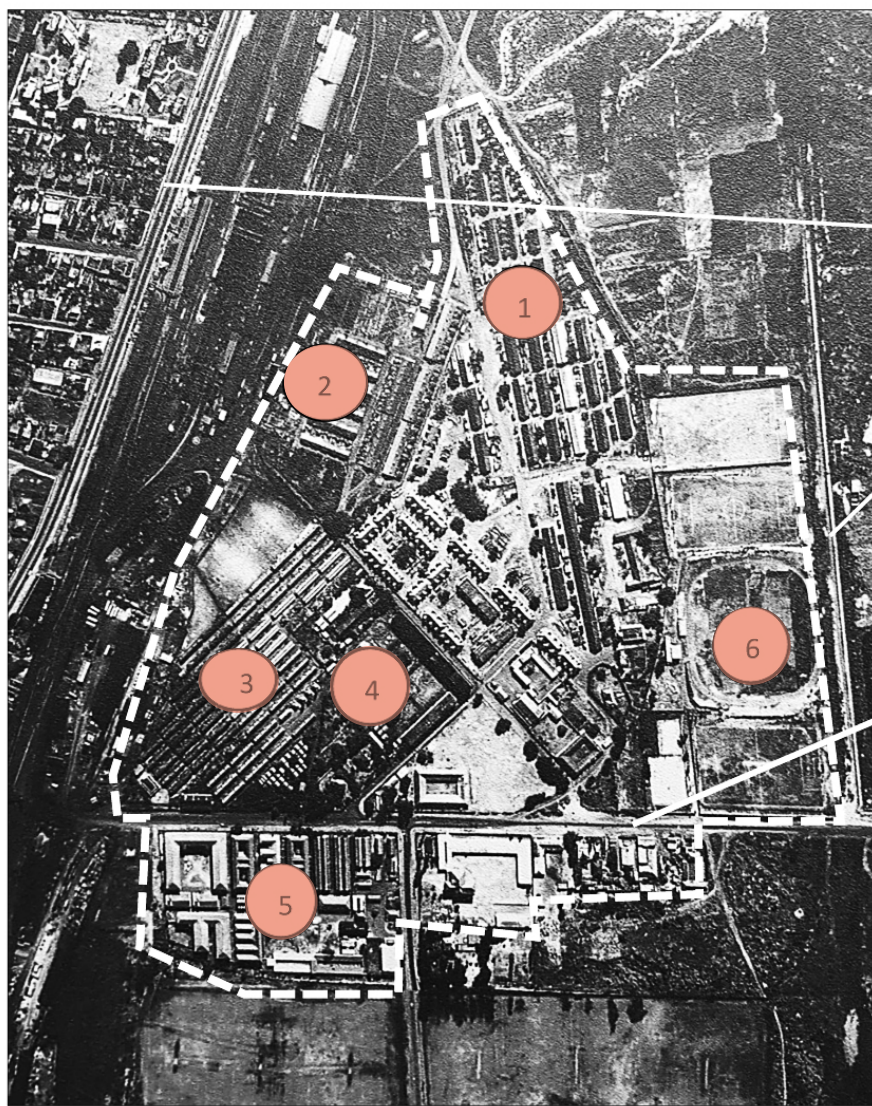


On graduating from Natal/UKZN in 1987, Leonard (Len) Rosenberg joined Paul Mikula Associates before commencing private practice in 1991, alongside part-time teaching in the Architecture Department, ML Sultan Technikon. This was followed by a full-time lecturing post in 1994 and the appointment as Head of Department, 2001-2004.

After the merger of the ML Sultan and Technikon Natal in 2004, Len was appointed Campus Planner for the newly formed Durban University of Technology (DUT), the Physical Planning Department of which he went on to head until retirement end 2019.

In 2007 Len founded the 'Research of Curries [Fountain] and Surrounds (ROCS)' project, which focused on this marginalised area rich in history. The research led to three collaborative publications: *Currie's Fountain, sports, politics and identity* (2013); *The Making of Place. The Warwick Junction Precinct 1870s to 1980s* (also 2013) and *Dirty Linen, 'other' Durban 1870s-1980s* (2014, coincident with the Durban UIA Congress, see *KZNIA Journal* 3/2014). He has also curated photographic exhibitions focussing on Durban's inner-city history: *Dirty Linen, Forced Removals; Dirty Linen, Other Durban; and Dirty Linen, the 'Kitchen Suit'*.

Len holds an M.A. degree (2013) and a Ph.D. (2019), both conferred by UKZN.



Umgeni Road

Milne's Drain

Somtseu Road

1. Magazine Barracks
2. Baumannville
3. Railway barracks for Indian workers
4. Railway barracks for African workers
5. Somtseu Location for African workers
6. Somtseu Road sports grounds for Africans

Fig 3. African and Indian workers' compounds on the Eastern vlei, euphemistically termed 'villages'.

## BLACK NEIGHBOURHOODS

By the beginning of the 20c, the spatial practice of 'race making' was well evident in the town.

### Eastern vlei

In 1871 the Town Council considered the establishment of African and Indian compounds where 'all coloured people' would be compelled to live, and by 1874 a site on a high and dry portion of the Eastern vlei had been selected for this purpose.

Magazine Barracks, for Indian municipal employees and their families, named after an existing powder magazine building in the vicinity, was built in 1880 of wood and iron structures. Railway Barracks for Indians employed by the railways was established soon after, adjacent to Magazine Barracks.

With the establishment of a Native Affairs Department, three contiguous 'locations' for Africans were commenced. The first was the Married Natives' Quarters, subsequently renamed Baumannville, established in 1916 for the accommodation of families (Institute for Social Research, 1959). The second was Somtseu Location for African males, also established in 1916 on Somtseu Road. The third, was the Railway Barracks for Africans, built adjacent to that for Indians, which

also included a hospital specifically for African and Indian employees. The workers' compounds were later complemented by African and Indian schools, three temples, a church, a small library, a hall, sports grounds and a police station.

### Western vlei

The passage of the Retail Dealers' Licensing Act, 1897, confined Indian commerce to Ward 4, located north of the first railway line, which ran parallel to Monty Naicker (Pine) Street and marked the edge of town. As the three main streets of town were considered to be for whites, Ward 4 evolved into the 'Indian Quarter' along Dr Yusuf Dadoo (Grey) Street, dominated by the Grey Street mosque, established 1881 (see *KZNIA Journal* 3/1996), with a fresh produce market in its courtyard by 1890.

When the railway line was re-routed around the western end of the West Street Cemetery, a bridge was constructed over the railway at the convergence of Bertha Mkhize (Victoria) and Denis Hurley (Queen) Streets. The bridge became known as Victoria Street Bridge and provided access to and from the Grey Street precinct to the Berea across the Western vlei (see *KZNIA Journal* 1/2012). »

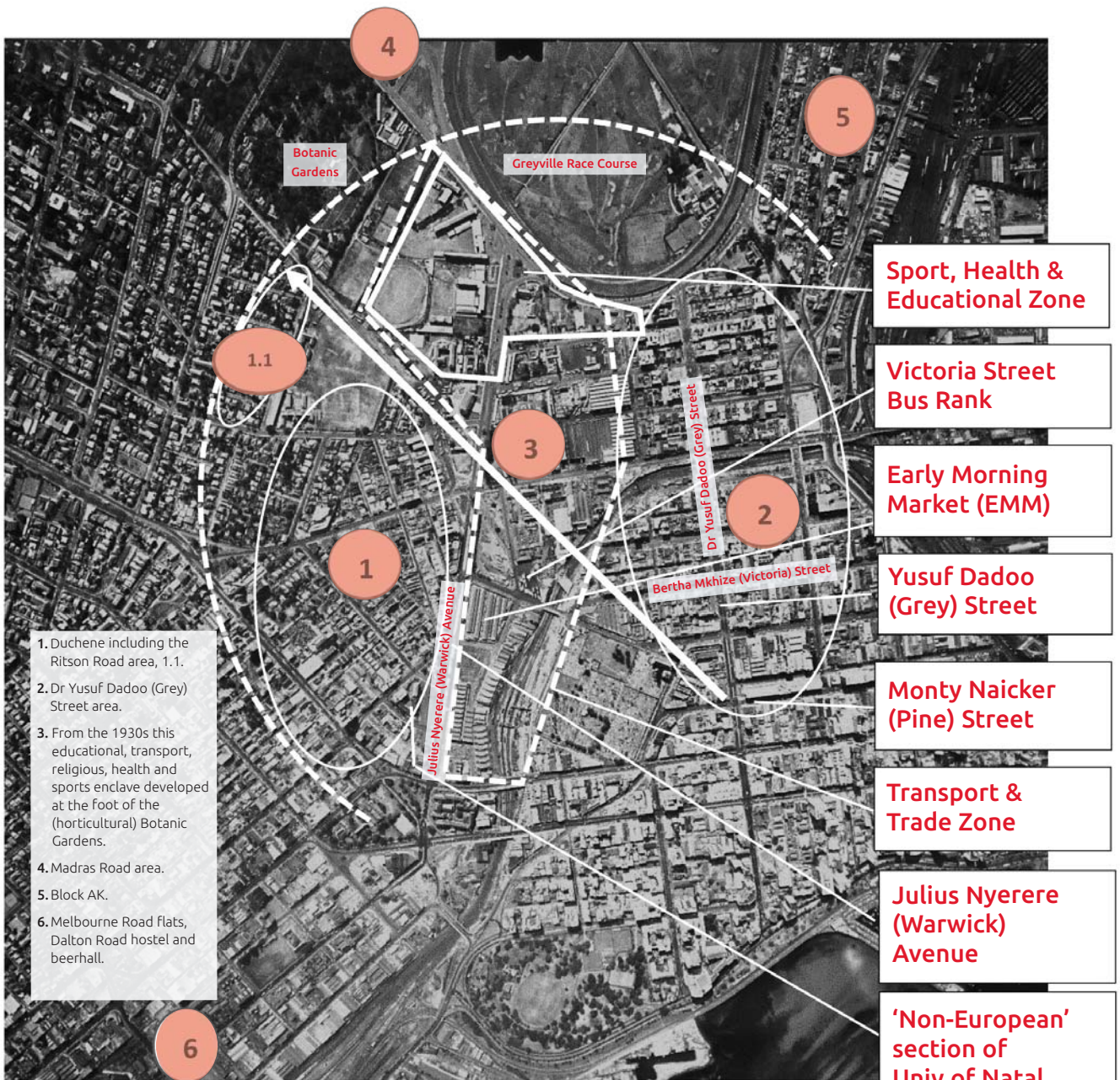


Fig 4. Neighbourhoods on the Western vlei, which comprised 'black town' by the 1960s.

When the Western vlei was drained and the Early Morning Market (EMM) reconstituted in 1934 from being a street market in Victoria Street, temporarily closed-off for this purpose, to being permanently located on Julius Nyerere (Warwick) Avenue, the link across Victoria Street Bridge developed into a major social, commercial, religious, rail and bus transport node for blacks.

Because of the business opportunities presented by the link, the establishment of the EMM, schools and bus ranks in the 1930s, more Indians acquired properties on the lower Berea. These were located around Currie's Fountain, in Madras Road, Ritson Road, Block AK abutting but north-eastward, and 'Duchene'\*. The latter two areas were originally white residential with small plot sizes indicative of a poorer class of settler bordering the mosquito-prone Western vlei, which would have been an undesirable location.

Nevertheless, businesses thrived and the proximity to Dr Yusuf Dadoo (Grey) Street, the markets, transport and schools, made the lower



Early Morning Market, Julius Nyerere (Warwick) Avenue. (LHM) [10 on centre-page map]

\* Term used in Hassim, A (2009) *Revenge of Kali*. In this publication Hassim dedicated a chapter to the area commonly referred to as *Duchene*, describing the roads, institutions, notorious characters and the feared Duchenes street gang. On enquiry, Hassim believed that the origins of the name were derived from Old Dutch Road, today Chris Ntuli, the major road that traversed the area (author).



Bantu Social Centre with Ndongeni Library, now YMCA, Beatrice Street. The library was named after Dick King's accomplice on the epic horseback ride to Makhanda (Grahamstown), 1842, to seek reinforcements for the besieged British garrison at Port Natal (Durban) (Editor). Architect: Geoffrey E Le Sueur, 1941. (LHM). [37 on centre-page map]

Fig 5. (Below) The black presence in Durban identified on a map of 1963.

A represents the Eastern vlei;  
 B the Western including Grey Str precinct, the 'Duchene' and Madras Rd, with Block AK taking up the extension northward; and  
 C the Point.

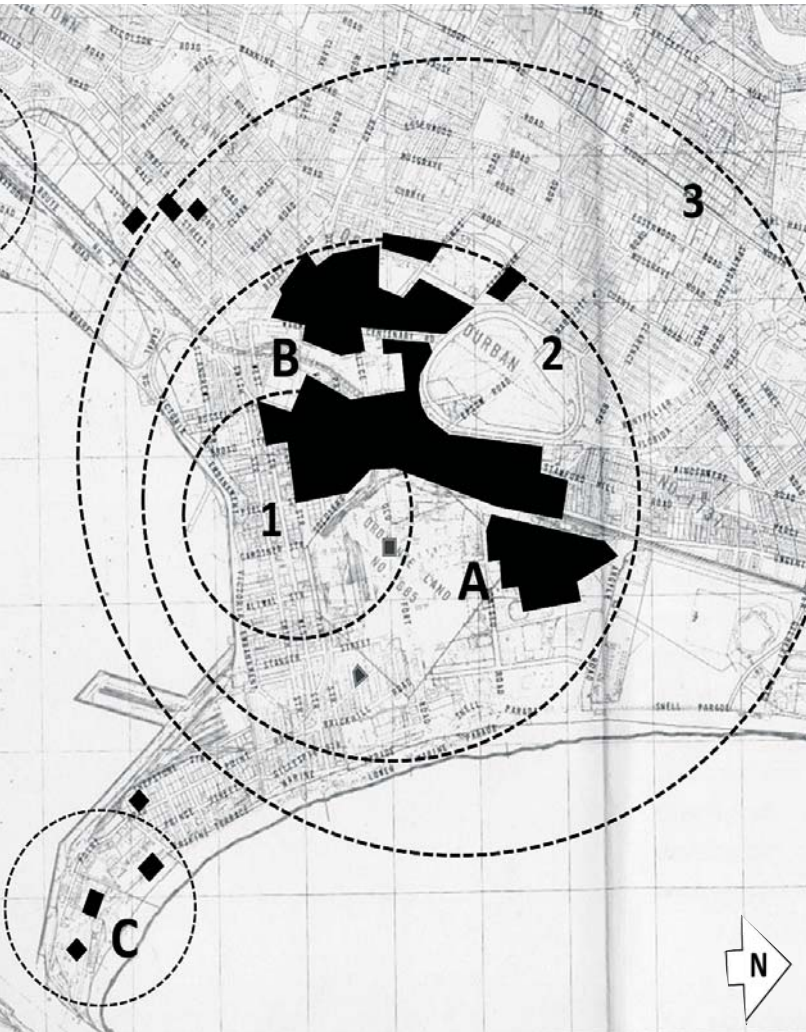
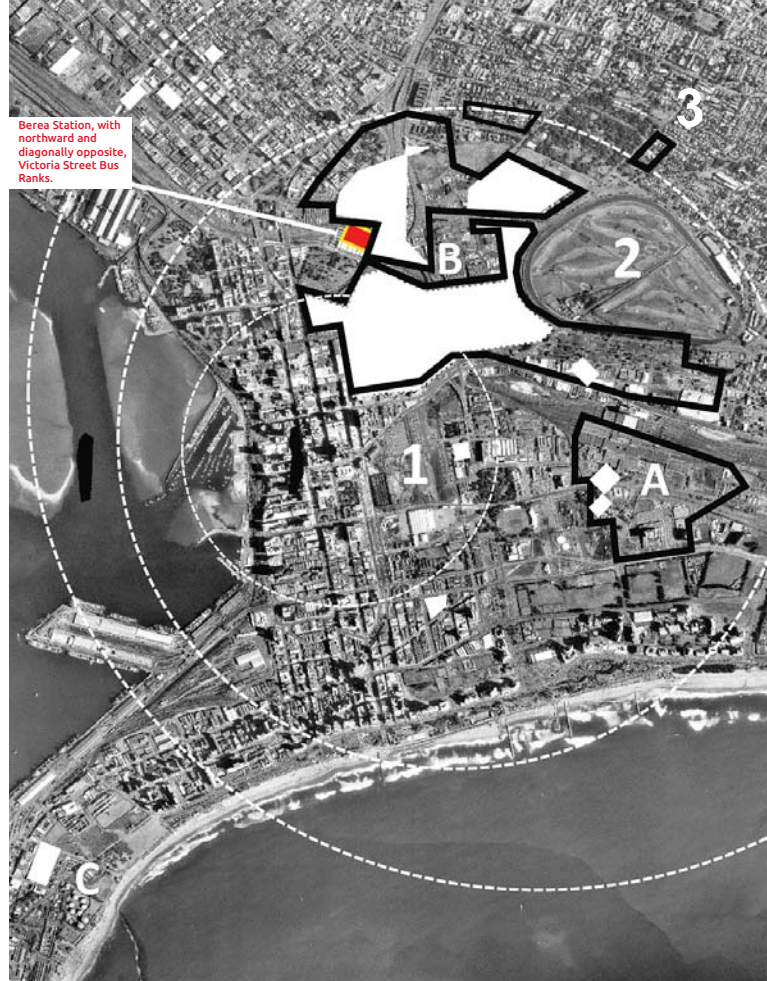


Fig 6. (Right) Aerial photograph of 1985. By this time the black presence on the Eastern vlei (A) had been decimated while that on the Western vlei (B) had contracted and a wedge inserted, mainly to accommodate the campus of Technikon Natal for white students. Settlement on the Point (C) had shrunk.



**URBAN GROWTH BY WAY OF ECCENTRIC RINGS** (superimposed by author, Figs 5 & 6). Because of the geographic and socio-political conditions of Durban, eccentric zones, an adaptation of the more typical concentric zonal formation of city growth, are a more accurate representation of the evolution of its settlement pattern.

Superimposing an eccentric zonal pattern over maps depicting the growth of the Durban's town centre from 1855 to 1903, 1963 and 1985, provides a composite spatial view of the black presence and makes clear that the site

features, Bay, marshlands, Berea hills and Indian Ocean, and the socio-political context, enabled the spatial practice of 'race making'.

Zone 1 contains the formal town and the commercial centre, zone 3 represents the residential areas of the Berea, which by the 1900s reached the boundary on the ridge. Zone 2 represents the interstitial space, the low-lying Eastern and Western vleis, generally unhealthy because of the marshy ground and temperature inversion, parts of which were utilised for sports fields and Greyville racecourse.

Berea a much sought-after residential area. It became home to seven Indian schools, one coloured school, one African school, a hospital & three churches, and from the 1930s on came to represent the cultural, sports, educational, health and religious heart of Durban's Indian community, which developed on three sides of the legendary sports field, Currie's Fountain, at the foot of Botanic Gardens.

### Point

Though officially known as 'Indian and Native cantonment' the informal settlement was commonly referred to as 'Bamboo Square' and housed Indians, 'Natives of all tribes', St Helenians, Malays, some Chinese and a few whites. The unsanitary conditions and building standards at Bamboo Square were a source of major concern to the Council for decades and, after being in existence from the 1860s, it was finally demolished in 1903 (Kearney, 2013: 1254).

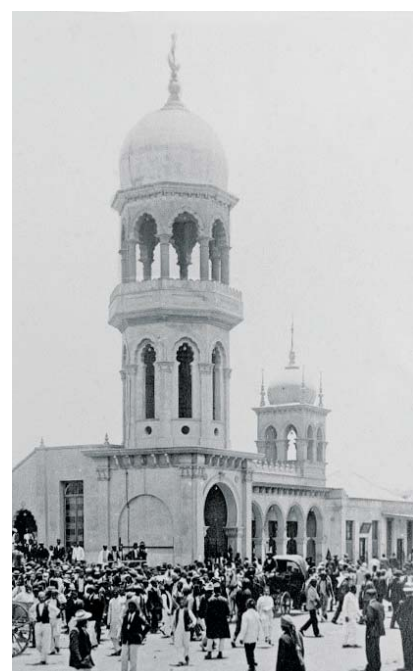
To cater for the labour needs of the harbour, shipping and commercial activities at the Point, in addition to barracks for Indians an African 'togt' or day workers' wood and iron barracks was established in

1890 on Bell Street. The Indian Immigration Hospital and its associated Depot Barracks was an important health and residential facility for Indians at the Point.

### Borough extension, 1932, and Slums Act, 1934

By the late 1920s, space for development within the 'old' Durban borough had become scarce, which resulted in an extension to the boundary in 1932, ostensibly for more room for African and Indian housing. However, the hygiene and housing standards applied by the Town Council in the 'old' borough were largely non-existent in the newly incorporated areas, described as a 'black belt' due to 'shack farming'.

Subsequently the incorporated areas together with the older residential precincts within the 'old borough', particularly around the Western vlei, were considered slums prompting the introduction of the Slums Act of 1934. Between 1939 and 1944 these areas in the 'old borough' together with the 'black belt' of shacks, and Cato Manor in particular, were declared part of twelve slum zones in the city. »



Grey St Mosque, Dr Yusuf Dadoo (Grey) Street. (LHM) [33 on centre-page map]



\* The term is adopted from Jeppie, S & Soudien, C (1990) *The struggle for District Six, past and present*. The authors chose this term to explain the purpose of 'forced removals' as the 'unambiguous' process of 'bleaching' the city.

\*\* The Natives Resettlement Act (1954) provided the mechanism for removing African owners and tenants from the city. The Natives (Urban Areas) Amendment Act of 1955 was introduced to remove concentrations of Africans from urban areas, such as servants in blocks of flats. The Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act (1945), with its various amendments provided the basic framework for the establishment and control of African Townships.

# APARTHEID ERA SPATIAL PRACTICE: BLEACHING\*

## Bleaching the Eastern vlei

Before the process of removing blacks from the city centre could commence, vast racially defined townships first had to be built, starting with KwaMashu for Africans in 1957, 12km northward. The removal of Cato Manor, on the outskirts of the city, had been a priority since the 1940s and as soon as the first batch of houses was completed in KwaMashu in 1958, the removal of Cato Manor residents started.

The process of bleaching in central Durban begun when barracks on Ordnance Road and on Bell Street, Point, were vacated over a weekend in 1959, followed by Baumannville and Somtseu Road Location by 1962. All residents were relocated to KwaMashu and resettled in houses, or hostels for single men.

Employers providing accommodation in the city for unregistered Africans were referred to as 'harbouring' which was outlawed, prompting inspections and prosecutions to remove Africans from the city centre and white suburbs. Only registered domestic servants in white residential areas, hotels and flats together with African workers accommodated in licensed premises were permitted in Durban by the early 1960s.

Although the Group Areas Act (GAA) did affect Africans, as Christopher (1994: 105) noted, it was more specifically applicable to Indians and coloureds, because the Ministry of Native Affairs was sufficiently powerful to retain control over the African population through separate legislation.\*\*

Indians who were accommodated in Magazine and Railway Barracks were the first to be removed and relocated, in 1964-65, to the newly established Chatsworth Indian township, 14km south-west. The workers' compound that had developed from the 1880s into a substantial Indian and African workers' complex, was obliterated by the mid-1960s.

By then the Eastern vlei had become prime property and the city embarked on a master plan for Durban to be achieved by 1985. Durban's new railway station, magistrates' court, office parks and modern sports facilities were located in the previously undesirable, mosquito-infested vlei. The Temple, a girls' school and Taylor Street Government Native (Loram) School are the only remnants of the workers' compound.

## GROUP AREAS ACT, 1950

Whilst coming to grips with the lack of housing provided for Africans and Indians, which by the City Council's own admission, created slum conditions, a racial zoning plan was formulated in 1943. After being often revised, it was approved in 1952 and provided the framework that guided the creation of distinctive 'group areas' for each race thereafter. It is evident that the concept of 'racial zoning' as envisaged by Durban was no different to that envisaged by the national government. Both concepts were spatial in nature and based on race criteria, except that Durban had conceptualised it seven years earlier.

The Group Areas Act of 1950 (GAA) provided the much sought-after legislation and ideology to implement the racial zoning plan conceived as a masterplan for future housing provision for Durban's growing multiracial population. The ideology of apartheid was based on separating the different race groups, defined by the Population Registration Act (1950), ostensibly to reduce points of conflict. Durban's experience with segregating Indians was drawn upon to assist with the formulation of a spatial framework, or template, to create specifically classified areas, which were used by other cities to spatially re-organise urban spaces on a racial basis.

Armed with that framework, the Land Tenure Advisory Board later renamed as the Group Areas Board (GAB), formulated proposals for the proclamation of different racial zones. The GAB made recommendations to government that promulgated and announced proclamations for central Durban on 4th October 1963. These mainly affected the same Indian and coloured residential areas in central Durban that had already been identified as inner-city slums in 1939.

Concerns about slums, lack of acceptable housing and the scale of the (black) housing 'problem' in the 1930s, initially framed as a health issue, evolved into a racial zoning solution by the 1940s, which then fused with a political ideology in 1950 to be re-framed as 'Group Areas' to reduce conflict between races. The minimalisation of friction was the basis for 'bleaching' the cities, touted as an inconvenient but necessary consequence to achieve racial harmony.

## Bleaching the Western vlei

This zone experienced the most change because of GAA removals as well as the transportation plans by traffic consultants De Leuw Cather & Assocs prepared in co-ordination with the planning team of Holford and Kantorowich in the mid-1960s. The entry and exit systems of the Western freeway, the overhead Eilat viaduct and the massively widened railway lines, straddled by the new Berea railway station, carved out massive chunks and dissected this once empty urban space that was the erstwhile Western vlei.

With the decision to build railway lines as the main transportation system to and from the racially defined townships, KwaMashu and Chatsworth, the new Berea railway station on Julius Nyerere (Warwick) Avenue together with the Victoria bus ranks became the major inter-nodal transportation hubs for blacks in the apartheid period.

The 1963 GAA proclamations first targeted the slum zones identified in 1939, surrounding the Western vlei and the base of the Berea. Black areas



Top to bottom:

City Building, University of Natal, University Avenue, later 'Non-European' section of the University. Architect D. Calvert McDonald, 1936. (Biermann Architecture Library, UKZN). [13 on centre-page map]

ML Sultan College, original building 1956 (now ML Sultan campus, DUT). (Mohamed Vahed). [25 on centre-page map]

Red Square, political protest venue, now Nicol Square parking garage. (LHM). [35 on centre-page map]

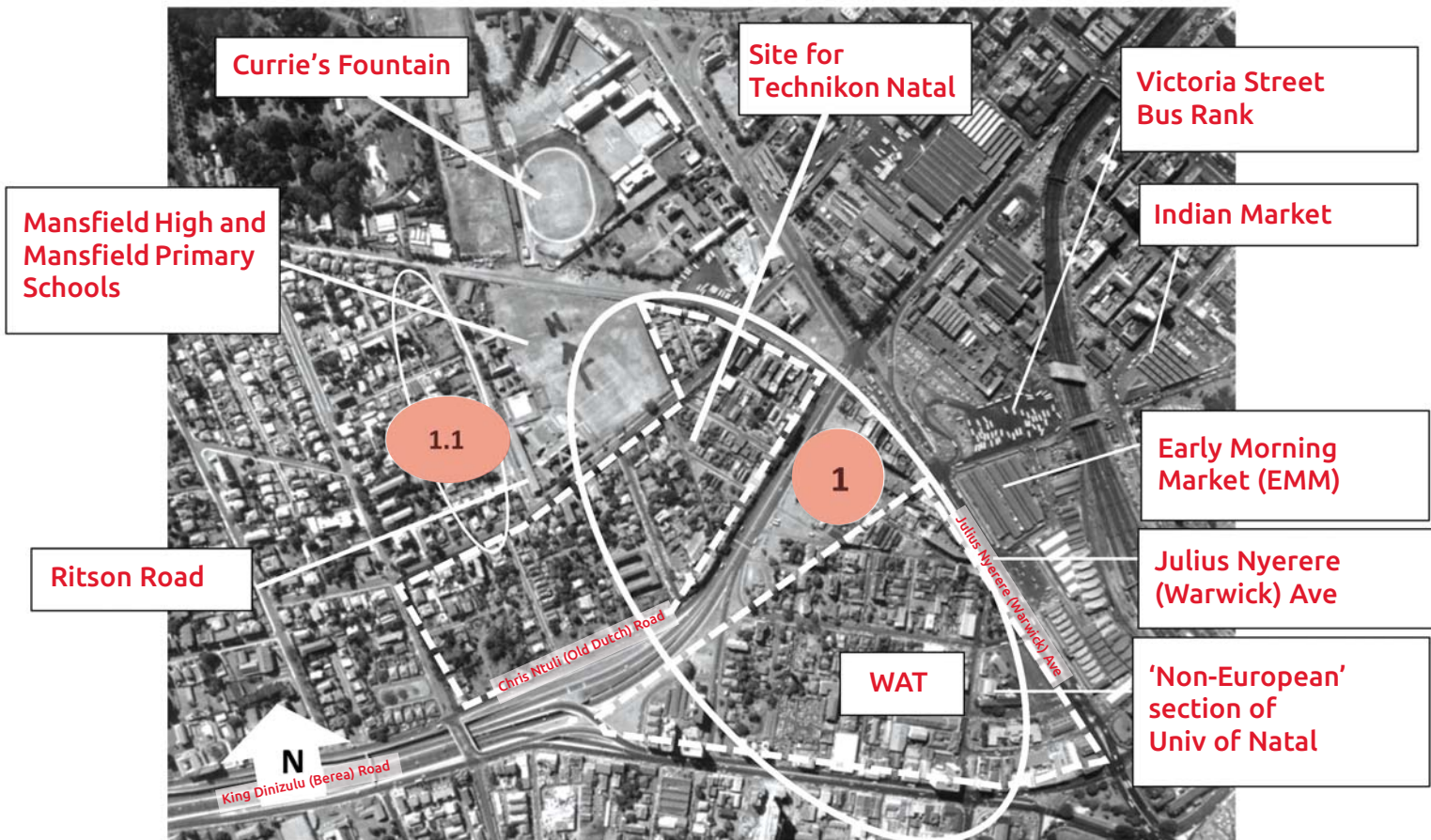


Fig 7. The 'Duchene' neighborhood (1) with Ritson Road area (1.1). The slither of land earmarked for Technikon Natal in the early 1970s is identified by the broken line north of the crescent of Chris Ntuli (Old Dutch) Road. After the construction of the Western Freeway, the remaining triangulated portion on the south became known as Warwick Avenue Triangle (WAT), defined additionally by King Dinizulu (Berea) Road and Julius Nyerere (Warwick) Avenue on the east.

to the west of Julius Nyerere (Warwick) Avenue, the 'Duchene' and Madras Road neighbourhoods, and also Block AK north-eastward, were all proclaimed as Group Areas for whites.

Numerous properties in the 'Duchene' were expropriated from the late 1950s onward for the construction of the Western freeway entering the city on Chris Ntuli (Old Dutch) Road, which dissected the neighbourhood and became a major barrier between its two parts.

Residents in the small Madras Road area had to vacate and relocate to Chatsworth by the end of 1964. Block AK property owners, both white and Indian, were served expropriation notices in 1969, and by 1978 all privately owned land had been expropriated and the buildings demolished by 1980, except May Street mosque and Greyville School. Large parts are still vacant in 2020, 57 years after the GAA proclamations.

Whilst the relocations were going on, a University College for Indians was established on Salisbury Island. Here Indian seine netters had settled on release from indenture before being relocated, finally in 1965 to Chatsworth, while in 1971 the College re-emerged as the University of Durban-Westville, now UKZN Westville campus.

Simultaneously and by contrast, the portion of land skirting Chris Ntuli (Old Dutch) Road was zoned for a tertiary educational institution for

whites, Technikon Natal\*, resulting in residents of 214 properties being banished, many Indian and coloured.

The residents of Warwick Avenue Triangle (WAT), located west of Julius Nyerere (Warwick) Avenue, resisted moving, supported by the Durban Housing Action Committee, an activist organization. Although many residents eventually relocated after their residential area was physically scarred by years of neglect and stagnation and large parts became derelict, substantial areas remained intact by the late 1980s when the relocation plans were abandoned.

By the mid-1980s, when the bleaching process was incomplete a new process of greying\*\* the city had started. »

\* Now Durban University of Technology, Steve Biko campus.

\*\* This term was used to describe a phenomenon of the 1980s, which described how black people had started living in parts of the white city before apartheid had been abolished e.g. in Durban black people started moving into areas such as Albert Park suburb. See Cloete, F. Greying and free settlement, in: Swilling, M, Humphries, R & Shubane, K (eds) (1991) *Apartheid city in transition*. Cape Town, Oxford Univ. Press.



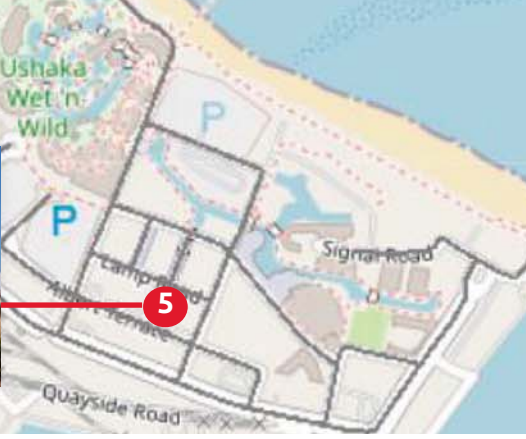
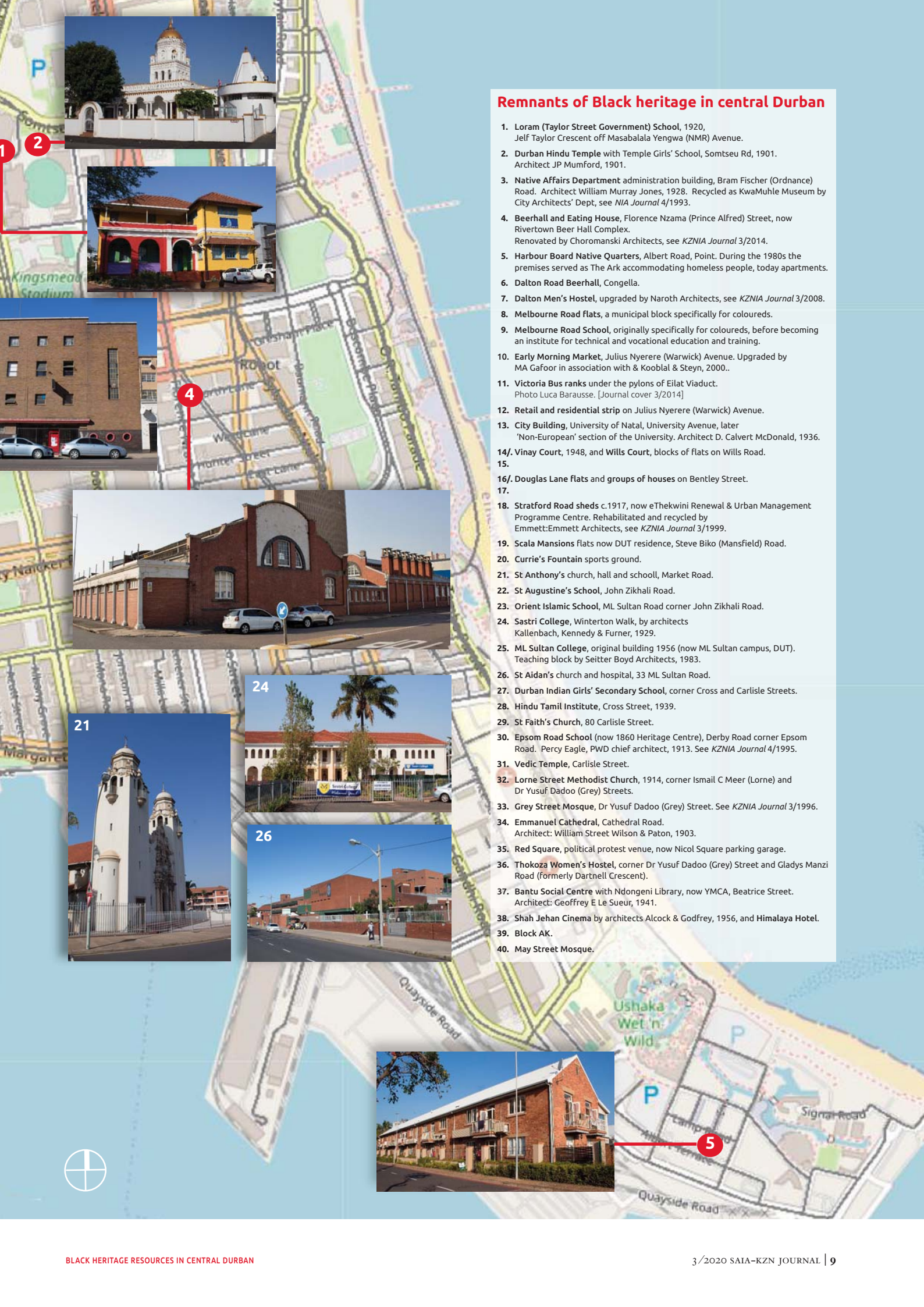
ABOVE (and cover image):  
Block AK. (Mohamed Vahed)  
[39 on centre-page map]

INSET:  
May Street Mosque. (Mohamed Vahed)  
[40 on centre-page map]

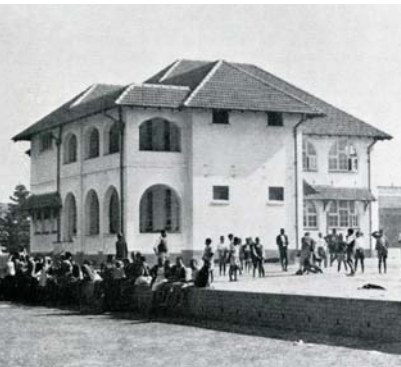


## Remnants of Black heritage in central Durban

1. Loram (Taylor Street Government) School, 1920, Jelf Taylor Crescent off Masabalala Yengwa (NMR) Avenue.
2. Durban Hindu Temple with Temple Girls' School, Somtseu Rd, 1901. Architect JP Mumford, 1901.
3. Native Affairs Department administration building, Bram Fischer (Ordnance) Road. Architect William Murray Jones, 1928. Recycled as KwaMuhle Museum by City Architects' Dept, see *NIA Journal* 4/1993.
4. Beerhall and Eating House, Florence Nzama (Prince Alfred) Street, now Rivertown Beer Hall Complex. Renovated by Choromanski Architects, see *KZNIA Journal* 3/2014.
5. Harbour Board Native Quarters, Albert Road, Point. During the 1980s the premises served as The Ark accommodating homeless people, today apartments.
6. Dalton Road Beerhall, Congella.
7. Dalton Men's Hostel, upgraded by Naroth Architects, see *KZNIA Journal* 3/2008.
8. Melbourne Road Flats, a municipal block specifically for coloureds.
9. Melbourne Road School, originally specifically for coloureds, before becoming an institute for technical and vocational education and training.
10. Early Morning Market, Julius Nyerere (Warwick) Avenue. Upgraded by MA Gafoor in association with & Kooblal & Steyn, 2000..
11. Victoria Bus ranks under the pylons of Eilat Viaduct. Photo Luca Barausse. [Journal cover 3/2014]
12. Retail and residential strip on Julius Nyerere (Warwick) Avenue.
13. City Building, University of Natal, University Avenue, later 'Non-European' section of the University. Architect D. Calvert McDonald, 1936.
- 14/. Vinay Court, 1948, and Wills Court, blocks of flats on Wills Road.
- 15.
- 16/. Douglas Lane flats and groups of houses on Bentley Street.
- 17.
18. Stratford Road sheds c.1917, now eThekweni Renewal & Urban Management Programme Centre. Rehabilitated and recycled by Emmett:Emmett Architects, see *KZNIA Journal* 3/1999.
19. Scala Mansions flats now DUT residence, Steve Biko (Mansfield) Road.
20. Currie's Fountain sports ground.
21. St Anthony's church, hall and school, Market Road.
22. St Augustine's School, John Zikhali Road.
23. Orient Islamic School, ML Sultan Road corner John Zikhali Road.
24. Sastri College, Winterton Walk, by architects Kallenbach, Kennedy & Furner, 1929.
25. ML Sultan College, original building 1956 (now ML Sultan campus, DUT). Teaching block by Seitter Boyd Architects, 1983.
26. St Aidan's church and hospital, 33 ML Sultan Road.
27. Durban Indian Girls' Secondary School, corner Cross and Carlisle Streets.
28. Hindu Tamil Institute, Cross Street, 1939.
29. St Faith's Church, 80 Carlisle Street.
30. Epsom Road School (now 1860 Heritage Centre), Derby Road corner Epsom Road. Percy Eagle, PWD chief architect, 1913. See *KZNIA Journal* 4/1995.
31. Vedic Temple, Carlisle Street.
32. Lorne Street Methodist Church, 1914, corner Ismail C Meer (Lorne) and Dr Yusuf Dadoo (Grey) Streets.
33. Grey Street Mosque, Dr Yusuf Dadoo (Grey) Street. See *KZNIA Journal* 3/1996.
34. Emmanuel Cathedral, Cathedral Road. Architect: William Street Wilson & Paton, 1903.
35. Red Square, political protest venue, now Nicol Square parking garage.
36. Thokoza Women's Hostel, corner Dr Yusuf Dadoo (Grey) Street and Gladys Manzi Road (formerly Dartnell Crescent).
37. Bantu Social Centre with Ndongeni Library, now YMCA, Beatrice Street. Architect: Geoffrey E Le Sueur, 1941.
38. Shah Jehan Cinema by architects Alcock & Godfrey, 1956, and Himalaya Hotel.
39. Block AK.
40. May Street Mosque.



# AREAS & BUILDINGS THAT SURVIVED THE BLEACHING PROCESS



**Taylor Street Government Native School, 1920, Jelf Taylor Crescent off Masabalala Yengwa (NMR) Avenue. Following the death of Dr CT Loram, Natal's first Chief Inspector for Native Education, the school was renamed Loram School (Waetjen, T (2007) *School Days. Historical Studies, UKZN*). (Institute for Social Research, 1959). [1 on centre-page map]**

\* After the birth of COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) and the UDF (United Democratic Front) political activities at Currie's Fountain intensified. When political parties were unbanned in 1990, the ANC (African National Congress) Women's League and the SACP (South African Communist Party) staged homecoming rallies at Currie's Fountain. One of the last significant events saw the military wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK for short, meaning 'Spear of the Nation'), disband to become a Peoples' Army in 1993 (Rosenberg et al, 2013).

**Currie's Fountain sports ground in the 1970s. (R Kally) [20 on centre-page map]**



Almost all surviving areas and buildings are to be found on the former Western vlei, among them Currie's Fountain. All the facilities are extant, but the removal of the surrounding residential areas and the establishment of schools and sports facilities in the townships, had a negative impact on those activities at Currie's Fountain sports ground. Currie's Fountain however, entered a new phase of purpose and increasingly became a political protest site, synonymous with the non-racial sports and political struggle\*.

'Duchene', this old part of Durban, subjected to the Slums Act, 'Pegging Act' and the GAA, was one of the few racially integrated communities in the country, and survived the destructive removal process, and the WAT was largely still in existence in the late 1980s. Other areas that survived the bleaching process were the EMM and Victoria Street bus ranks while the new Berea railway station became part of the remaining black presence from the mid-1980s.

Dr Yusuf Dadoo (Grey) Street residential and commercial complex, largely survived the Group Areas scourge when, after years of uncertainty and lack of development, in 1973 it was initially proclaimed an Indian 'commercial' area, ostensibly to force out the more than 13 000 residents. Most residents were still living there in 1983 when it was finally proclaimed as an Indian Group Area, but indecision had taken its toll on this once vibrant and colourful area.

The Native Quarters at the Point survived as did Melbourne Road flats and school for coloureds in Congella. The Native Affairs building on Bram Fischer (Ordnance) Road, Thokoza Women's Hostel on Yusuf Dadoo (Grey) Street and the Bantu Social Centre on Charlotte Maxeke (Beatrice) Street survived. The Beerhall on Florence Nzama (Prince Alfred) Street,

now Rivertown Beer Hall (see *KZNIA Journal* 3/2014), and Dalton Road Beerhall and Hostel now upgraded for occupation by families (see *KZNIA Journal* 3/2008), are the only remnants of the infamous 'Durban System'. The municipal brewery on Bram Fisher (Ordnance) Road was demolished.

## Conclusion

Although a major part of Durban's urban history, sadly, the forced removals of established communities and remaining parts of tangible heritage, which have been identified and described, have not been acknowledged by the new democratic government that came into power in 1994. As a result, the remaining areas such as Currie's Fountain, Florence Nzama (Prince Alfred) Street and Dalton Road beerhalls, WAT, EMM, May Street mosque, Harbour Board Native Quarters, and Bantu Social Centre have not been included in the local, provincial or national heritage estate. An exception is Native Affairs building, which was restored and recycled as KwaMuhle Museum, which seeks to engage with the urban history of Africans.

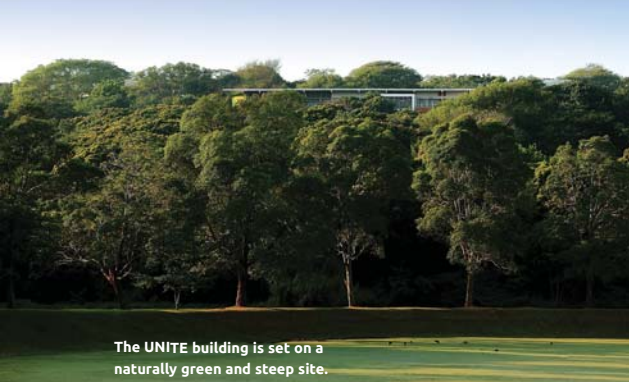
Given the trauma and dispossession experienced by so many communities, not only in Durban, but South Africa as a whole, the legacy of colonial and apartheid spatial planning, and how remaining sites of tangible heritage could be celebrated and utilised to serve as reminders of a dark past, is an important and necessary research area in need of further exploration. ○

**Len Rosenberg**

*This edited and adapted article draws on the Ph.D. thesis of Dr Rosenberg, the degree for which was conferred in a virtual graduation ceremony of UKZN in April 2020. —Editor.*

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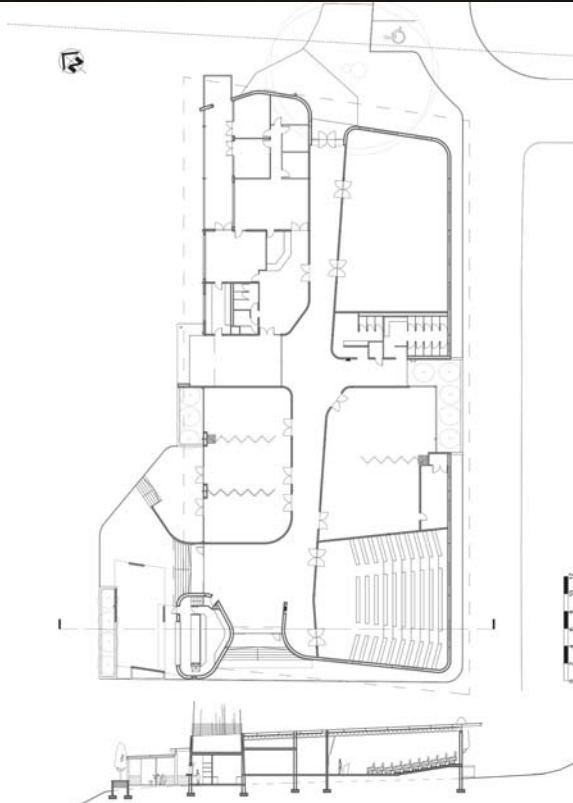
The UNITE building is set on a naturally green and steep site.



View from west.



Entrance on south-west.



UKZN BUILDING, UNITE HOWARD CAMPUS

UNITE BUILDING was conceived for providing aspirant engineering students from disadvantaged backgrounds with an alternative means for accessing the discipline by participating in the University Intensive Tuition for Engineering (UNITE) programme. The site is on the western edge of the campus, opposite Mechanical Engineering building, an area steep and naturally well greened of which the flattest portion was chosen.

The brief was to stretch student perceptions of space, colour and technology, and the architects set out additionally to challenge the concept of classroom and teacher. They opted for a series of pods, either open or closed depending on function. The main lecture theatre and the computer space are closed while the sub-divisible tutorial and office spaces interact with the landscape to allow for visual relief and contemplation. Similarly, the canteen on the western end serves the deck under the trees.



Well illuminated central circulation spine, naturally and artificially.

The assembly of pods along a circulation spine was covered with an oversailing mono-pitched roof on castellated beams, penetrated by slots to allow natural light into the central circulation area. In meeting with the brief, different building elements and services were exposed and presented in bright palette in the fluid forms of the spaces and the connections to the landscape.

In addition to limiting impact on the natural environment, this hi-tech structure with its modern facilities is environmentally friendly and energy efficient. Because of this and UNITE being technologically well resourced, the building has gained a reputation as a meeting place for the university, industry and local communities.

A double-storey addition of office spaces has since completion been added on the eastern end. **Paul Phillips**

- Clients: UKZN (Noel Powell, Prof Cristina Trois)
- Architects: Walker Smith Architects (Project architect Paul Phillips)
- Civil & Structural Engineers: DE Consultants
- Electrical Engineers: UIC Control & Automation
- Mechanical Engineers: Dilhase Consulting
- Quantity surveyors: Felix & Msomi
- Contractors: Serengeti Projects; Blue Dot Projects

AN ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT FOR TEACHING, LEARNING AND SOCIALISING.



ABOVE: The former warder's house is acknowledged in form and scale by the new offices that accommodate court support facilities, see photograph at right.

RIGHT: View from the street corner along Court Lane. The public entrance is under the colonnade of pilotis.

## A BUILDING INFORMED BY HISTORY, YET CLEARLY OF THE PRESENT.



VERULAM  
COURT  
FAMILY

THE HISTORICAL VERULAM PRISON and courthouse, built in the 1890s, had long been abandoned and fallen into disrepair. The timber floors and roof structure were destroyed by fire, which together with vandalism and neglect, lead to the decay of the buildings over two decades.

In agreement with Amafa, the provincial heritage agency, the footprint of the building was retained, and the outer prison walls restored. However, due to the collapse of the east wall before construction started, this outer wall was rebuilt in its former location.

The old prison layout with its various cell blocks and warden's house informed the design concept and incorporated the existing courtyards to serve as a reminder of the stark history of incarceration and atrocities committed over many decades. The former facility housed 'infamous' political inmates, including Mahatma Gandhi and Isiah Shembe and became one of the first prisons to house females.

The project brief included four courtrooms for family matters, with the fifth serving as a district court for traffic offences. Accommodation included staff facilities for the existing courthouse, across the road, and offices for the local prosecuting authority, as well as staff and public parking.

The building is universally accessible. The main entrance is on Court Lane to the west, giving access to a spacious ground floor interior and courtyard as a public waiting area. The architectural intention was to create a quality outdoor space providing some respite to the stressful public legal process.

The family courts are structured around a central atrium accessible by lift or the elliptical main staircase allowing natural light and access to the centre of the building.

The street corner is architecturally defined in response to the original building and allows the offices and meeting rooms to overlook the courtyard space or enjoy a view toward the town square, now known as Gandhi Square.

While most of the building is plastered and painted in acknowledgement of the streetscape and the former buildings on the site, the family courts elevated to the upper floors are clad in aluminium as a modern intervention within the old townscape. The modern courtrooms 'float' above the old walls, clad in 'aged copper' providing a clear distinction between the old and new language of architecture and symbolising a future of hope without losing sight of the past. ○

**Marcel Henry**

Client: Dept of Justice & National Public Works Department  
Architect & Principal Agent: Urban Architects cc  
(Marcel Henry, Ian Barsley)  
Structural Engineer: Eyethu Engineering  
Electrical & Mechanical Engineer: AA Power



The elliptical main staircase in the central atrium of the courthouse.



- LEGEND**
- 1 Offices
  - 2 Main Stair
  - 3 Courtroom
  - 4 Meeting room
  - 5 Storeroom
  - 6 Clerks

**CROSS SECTION:**  
Entrance at left under the colonnade of pilotis, the stairwell in the atrium of the court house, and the prosecutors' building a courtyard away at right.



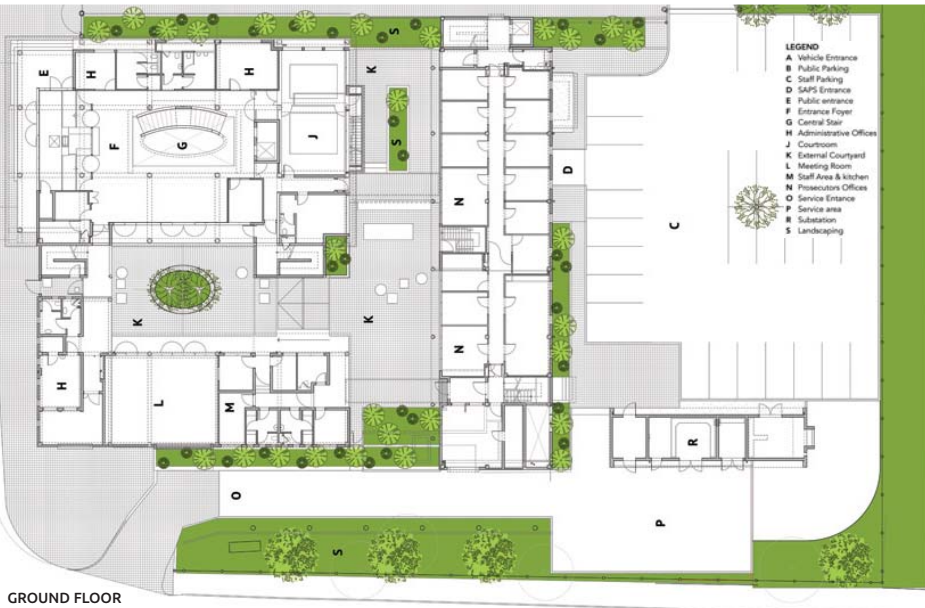
- LEGEND**
- 1 Offices
  - 2 Main Stair
  - 3 Equality Courtroom
  - 4 Meeting room
  - 5 Children's Court Admin.
  - 6 Maintenance Court Admin.
  - 7 Ablutions

**SECOND FLOOR**



- LEGEND**
- 1 Offices
  - 2 Main Stair
  - 3 Courtroom
  - 4 Meeting room
  - 5 Storeroom
  - 6 Clerks

**FIRST FLOOR**



- LEGEND**
- A Vehicle Entrance
  - B Public Parking
  - C Staff Parking
  - D SAPS Entrance
  - E Public entrance
  - F Entrance Foyer
  - G Central Stair
  - H Administrative Offices
  - J Courtroom
  - K External Courtyard
  - L Meeting Room
  - M Staff Area & kitchen
  - N Prosecutors Offices
  - O Service Entrance
  - P Service area
  - R Substation
  - S Landscaping



**TOP:** The family courts located on the upper floors are clad in aluminium to emphasize the contemporary intervention in the old streetscape.

**ABOVE:** A courtyard space for providing respite. The window of the meeting room at left offers a view southward to the Market Square now renamed Gandhi Square.

**LEFT:** The courtyards of the former prison informed the new design concept.



- LEGEND**
- A Recycling area
  - B Public Parking
  - C Staff Parking
  - D SAPS Vehicle Entrance
  - E Lift & stair
  - F SAPS service area
  - G SAPS parking
  - H Administrative Offices
  - J Courtroom
  - K External Courtyard
  - L Archives and Server room
  - M Security Control
  - N Prosecutions Entrance
  - O Secure stair to courts
  - R Interview rooms
  - S Holding Cells

**LOWER GROUND FLOOR**

**GROUND FLOOR**

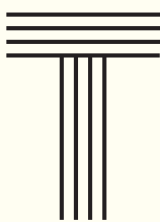




**Peter Engblom  
(1957-2020)**

*NEITHER AN ARCHITECT nor a member of SAIA-KZN, but the artist, Peter Engblom, who died suddenly and too young, touched the lives of many architects, in KwaZulu-Natal and beyond. He played an instrumental role in Durban winning the right to host the triennial International Union of Architects' (UIA) World Congress in 2014, following bids made in Istanbul, Turin and Tokyo, and he curated architectural exhibitions, like that of Rodney Harber in the Durban Art Gallery, 2014 (see KZNIA Journal 3/2014).*

*This poignant eulogy was penned by Nina Saunders who chaired the Durban organising committee. –Editor.*



The South African Institute of Architects (SAIA) decided to bid for the Union Internationale des Architectes (UIA) Congress in 2005. Trish Emmett was SAIA-President and Jonathan Edkins headed up City Architects Department of eThekweni Municipality. Durban's enthusiasm secured the city's place as the nominated South African city and eThekweni was in full support.

We did not have the budgets available to first world cities, which we were competing against, like Tokyo. In fact, things became quite bleak along the way as the budget and our ambitions were worlds apart. It was then that Paul Mikula recommended Peter Engblom.

- When we needed a story/a fable to draw people to Durban  
There was Engblom
- When we needed a creative producer/art-maker/fabric designer  
There was Engblom
- When we needed graphic designer/video producer/music-mixer  
There was Engblom
- When we needed a stand-builder/artisan co-ordinator /pull-it-all-together  
There was Engblom
- When we needed celebratory choreography/Max Mtambo presence  
There was Engblom
- When we needed a psyche fuel supplier/a passion generator/a believer  
There was Engblom
- When we needed an entire cavalry  
There was one man
- There was Engblom

What we got was unfiltered creativity, gusto, revelry, fun and passion.

Marching the hardware bazaars of Istanbul (as only Engblom with those wide strides can), the stationers of Torino, the Ikea's of Tokyo. There was always a wing-girl in tow. Except in Japan where I think Jack Chiang became 'wing-girl'. There were late nights in the Greyville Village house behind Bean Bag Bohemia, there was red wine, emotional eruptions. He knew how to reel-in the creatives of Durban who participated in model-making, lighting installation, banner production, printing...His irreverence for the 'high-art' of architecture and his middle-finger to doing things 'the way they are done' won us the bid. He appealed to one's sense of fun, sense of curiosity, the promise of adventure. The route to what was later termed 'architecture OTHERWHERE'.

You were so much fun, Engblom. So much fun. Not only was ours a professional relationship, you drew in my family and friends and I witnessed a slice of life where rules are flexible, generosity is the principle and the momentum full throttle.

The architects of South Africa salute you as you create your next work: maybe titled Zooloo-Valhalla or Zulu Nirvana. May you flourish there. ☉

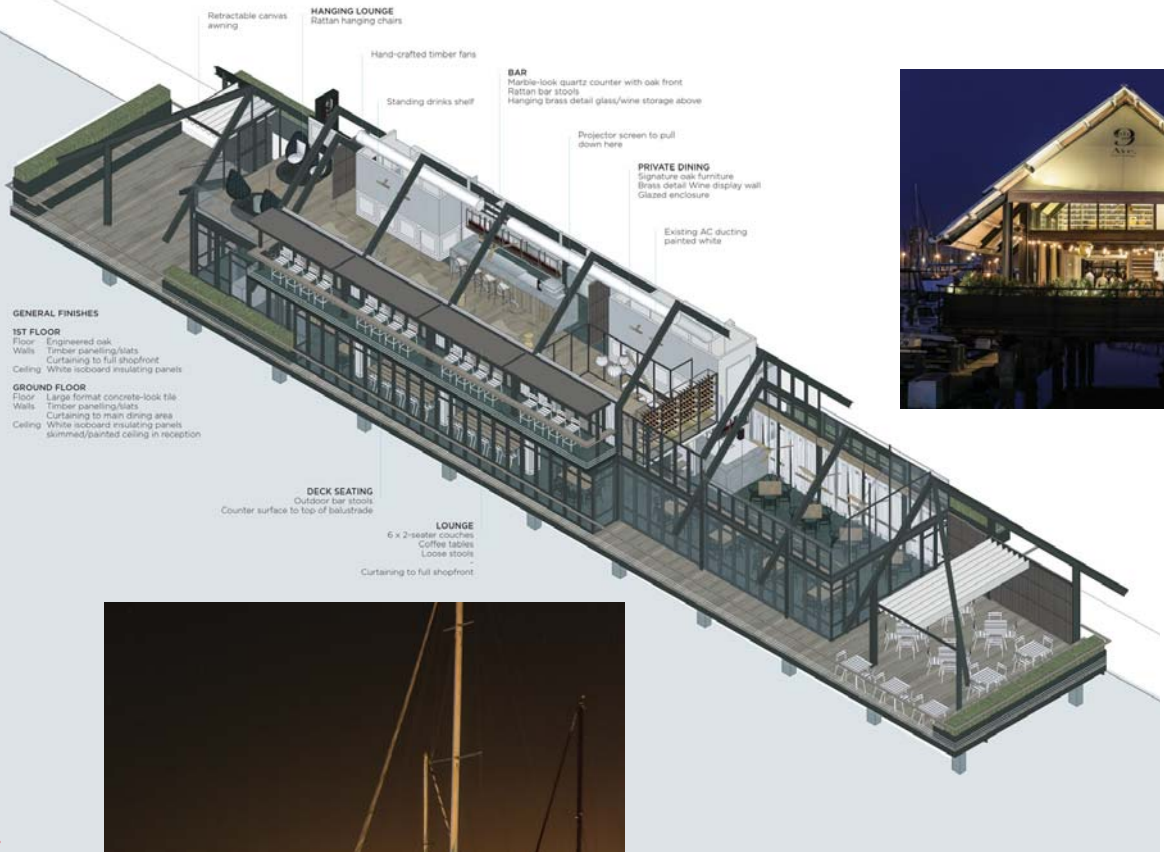
**Nina Saunders**

*Coincident with the wake held in Durban, an exhibition of Engblom's work was staged at Phansi Museum. –Editor.*

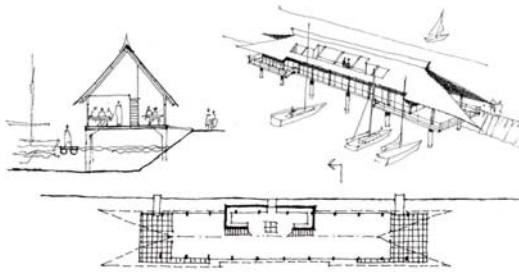


# 9TH AVENUE WATERSIDE

Refurbishment of the 1995 restaurant facility built in the water of the yacht mole.



**P**AUL MIKULA'S 'ground breaking' project in the yacht mole 25 years ago (see *KZNIA Journal* 2/1995) is a unique building design that has stood the test of time. However after lying vacant for seven years, and without maintenance, it was in a bad state of repair down to the steel structure rusting.



Original building by Architects Collaborative, 1995. Concept sketches by Paul Mikula.

The original engineer was asked to look at the structure before any evaluation of the aesthetics or the interior could be considered. We then set about to change the identity, and in a way almost mould 9th Avenue (fine dining restaurant formerly in

Avonmore Centre, Essenwood) to the new setting, to a new identity itself.

The first step was to look at the form factor, which we remodelled to assume a 'barn' form. On the interior we wanted to bring in a subtle yacht language in terms of colouring and materials.

Interestingly the building has two distinct faces, one that faces the attractive yacht mole and the other a parking lot. One of the major considerations was in looking at the approach façade which faces the parking lot, to largely just screen it off from that uglier side. This façade is then softened with the use of timber and planting.

On the water, or yacht mole side, it's completely opened-up. So even all the old sliding shopfronts, which used to open only in small sections, have been stitched together and slide right open, especially the area alongside the kitchen food pass. This means that when you're sitting in that area it almost feels like you're sitting right on the water.

We feel it's key, when designing restaurants, to consider the kitchen staff and their experience. They're there all day and shouldn't feel like they're trapped in a box with no outlook. Hence the knocking open of the 6,5m wide kitchen food pass. This not only allows customers to see in and see the workings, but also gives the staff a pleasant environment to work in.

We believe this intervention will bring interest back again into this area of Durban. Everybody loved the *Café Fish* venue and it's setting and the hope was always that 9th Avenue Waterside would follow in that legacy. ☉

**Kevin Boyd**

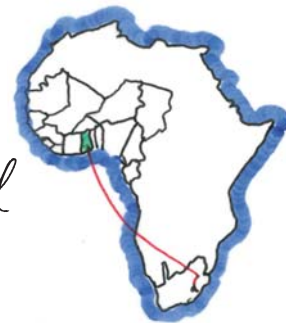
Interior architect: *Kevin Boyd Design*  
 Engineer: *Pieter Boorsma*  
 Photographer: *Clinton Friedman*



# A Travel Diary:

'Akwaaba': Ghana travel experience as an 'oburoni'

Welcome [akwaaba] to foreigners [oburoni\*] \*literally those who come from over the horizon (Google)



**M**Y TRAVELS TO THE COUNTRY originally called Gold Coast, the birthplace of African independence, the home of Kwame Nkrumah, began on invitation by a South African project manager friend in December 1998 and continued for another 23 visits through to 2012.

We were the beginning of the foreign and expatriate influx of professionals, developers, commercial retailers and big business. Since then the oil discoveries in Ghana saw this increase exponentially. The country's cities have 'boomed' with modern glass high rises and shopping malls.

I loved the Ghana I grew to know and become part of. The warm, friendly people, high-life music, the stool wood carvings, the *kente*\* cloths, *fufu* and *kenkey*\*\* , the old tropical architecture, the abundance and use of slate/stone, the huge trees in the forests and just the easy going style of life in a country still so 'British' in many ways. Where else but in a sweltering tropical country would one meet a gentleman in a pinstripe three-piece suit and bowler hat earnestly debating a matter so 'properly' with an associate.

Meals were taken from the many local street cafes, restaurants and pubs where football crazy Black Stars,



LEFT: Nyemitei House, office building for the state insurance company in the Accra suburb of Osu. Architects TJW Ghana Pty Ltd in association with Akuffo and Associates, 2001-02.



INSET: Silt stone wall using local skills and materials.



RIGHT: Modernist architecture.

\*Kente, an indigenous Ghanaian textile, made of interwoven cloth strips of silk and cotton (Wikipedia).



Asante Kotoka and Hearts of Oak fans amazed me in their enthusiasm and loyalty.

I was involved with local architects Hans Wersin and Akuffo Associates on two projects in Accra, a housing estate and an office building for an insurance company called Nyemitei House. The skills of the Ghanaians in the use of concrete, stonework and timber drove the design, together with historical and climatic considerations.

My visits were dictated by affordable flights and accommodation in the office's guest house. On Saturdays I managed trips west of Accra to Cape Coast and the towns of Takoradi, Sekondi and Elmina where the 'slave castles' are found, buildings in which slaves were held before being loaded onto ships and sold in the Americas or the Caribbean.

The visit to Kumasi the cultural heart of the Akan people of Ghana allowed me to see the traditional Ghanaian architecture and to experience 'bush meat' and a green soup from okra (eaten as a vegetable) and forest snail. We visited a forestry area where the huge tall equatorial forest can still be experienced and where these enormous round trunks are sawn up into logs and plywood for export. The African dream of Nkrumah to power Ghana by damming the once mighty Volta River by means of the Akosombo Dam was worth the visit.



On later trips I stayed with Hans at his family home in Aburi outside Accra, in the surrounding mountainous area where it was cooler with a more pleasant living environment. Close by were the National Botanical Gardens which provided much insight into the trees and plants I had seen on my visits across the country.

Accra is a big city with some well-known markets such as the Makola and Osu night markets. All along roads and at big roundabouts and intersections the industry of selling and making takes place. From hair salons, steelworks, block making, woodworking, clothes to you name it happens and gives the place such a vibe till late in the night.

The highlights of my trips were getting to know West Africa, the wonderful timber seats and carvings, the music, the stonework of the many walls and cladding, the skill of terrazzo still exists, concrete and timber shuttering skills, street food and the amazing people who I met and befriended me. ☉

**Kevin Lloyd**

*Work in Ghana commenced while a partner in the practice TJ Architects before in 2002 Kevin Lloyd Architects was established. –Editor*



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:**  
 Accra city centre in background.  
 Sketch of the local village housing in Aburi.  
 Timber seats brought in pieces to South Africa.  
 Tropical trees at Aburi Botanical gardens.  
 Sketch of tropical trees in Kitasi.  
 Traditional Ghanaian architecture.

**\*\*Kenkey** is a traditional Ghanaian dish made from fermented white corn. Fufu consists of starchy foods such as cassava, yams, or plantains that have been boiled, pounded, and rounded into balls (Wikipedia).

